

Ageing Worker Initiative: Strategies for Regional Talent Development

Baltimore County Office of Workforce Development.

Grantee: Baltimore County Office of Workforce Development (Maryland)

Industry Focus: Healthcare

Location of Grant Activities: Baltimore City and Baltimore County, Maryland

Key Partners: Baltimore County Workforce Development Council; Mayor's Office of Employment Development; Baltimore Workforce Investment Board; Governor's Workforce Investment Board; Baltimore County Department of Aging (SCSEP grantee); Baltimore City Commission of Aging and Retirement Education; Maryland AARP; Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare; Johns Hopkins Health System; University of Maryland Medical Center; Northwest Hospital; Maryland Hospital Association; Community College of Baltimore County; Baltimore City Community College; University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Grant Amount: \$967,005

Leveraged Funds: \$829,216

Challenge: A shortage of skilled workers is a pressing concern among healthcare employers, and vacancy rates for skilled positions are steadily increasing even though older workers could meet the industry's workforce demand. Older workers – many of whom are displaced or retirees attempting to return to work – face unique challenges as they seek employment, such as lack of computer/technological skills, gaps in employment history, and desire for flexible or part-time hours. In addition, One Stop Career Center professionals are not sufficiently trained to address barriers to employment among older workers, and regional employers are not developing comprehensive strategies to attract or retain older employees.

Addressing the Challenge: To address the region's high demand for skilled workers in healthcare, the *Maturity Works: Tapping Older Workers for High Growth Healthcare Careers* project will strengthen the pipeline of entry-level older workers into the industry; move lower-skill older workers up career ladders; and retain experienced technical and professional workers after retirement age. One- Stop Career Center capacity will be expanded to provide job readiness opportunities tailored to older adults' learning styles and to provide career guidance to older workers on employment and training opportunities in the healthcare industry. Participants in the project will receive training in four types of health occupations, as well as basic skills training in language and math targeted to the health field. In addition, a regional campaign that encourages employers to hire and retain older workers will be implemented.

Projected Outcomes:

- 312 older workers will begin education/training activities.
- 260 older workers will complete education/training activities and receive a degree/certificate.
- 249 older workers who complete education/training activities will enter training-related employment
- 20 workforce development professionals (Older Worker Specialists) will receive training on serving older workers.
- A self-paced instruction tool for the Older Worker Specialists will be developed.
- 500 employers will be educated through various employer engagement strategies.
- An employer outreach communication toolkit will be developed.

