

NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE HOLDERS



BALLARD COUNTY EMPLOYERS CONSIDER NCRC PROGRAMS

Ballard County's largest employer, NewPage Corporation is seeking a better way to identify applicants who can meet the challenges of their complex operating systems. They are interested in learning more about the WorkKey assessment and the how the NCRC can help their applicant screening process and internal promotions.

The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is designed to provide an evidence-based employability tool for workers and to help to take the guesswork out of the hiring process by employers. The credential certifies work readiness in the three areas of the ACT's WorkKeys: Reading for Information, Locating Information, and Applied Mathematics.

Ballard County Adult Education Center, a member of the West Kentucky Educational Cooperative, located in LaCenter, Ky., has been offering instruction and assessments to National Career Readiness Certificate seekers since 2003. The Ballard County Adult Education Center has, from the outset, worked with the business community to provide workforce testing to help provide a true measure of ready-to-work skilled employees. In addition, West Kentucky Community & Technical College offers the complete WorkKeys assessment.

Current NCRC Status

Ballard County has 70 residents who have earned their National Career Readiness Certificate, according to the NCRC July 2014 report. Ballard County has a potential working age force (age 18-64) of 4,971 adults. So, 1.4 % of adults of working age in Ballard County have NCRC WorkKeys certificates. Work Ready Community goals for Ballard would be to have nine percent certified workers (447) within three years, and 15 percent (746) within five years.

There is potential for Ballard County to significantly add to its numbers of people earning workforce readiness certifications as an employability credential. There are 13 percent (634) of Ballard's working age adults without a high school diploma or GED. Although Ballard County's percentage of high school graduates (92.4 %) is higher than the state of Kentucky average (86.1 %) only 23 percent of Ballard residents have an associate's degree or higher, compared to the statewide average of 31 percent and the national average of 39 percent. Therefore, the pool of people is significant who could potentially benefit from having a National Career Readiness Certificate.

It is incumbent on stakeholders in the business, industry, public education, judicial system, and adult education fields to network to set goals and strategies to equip and credential the workforce for career readiness.

In Ballard County, major employers like NewPage, a paper mill which employs more than 400 workers, will benefit from an adult education facility close to home that could provide instruction and assessments for critical problem-solving skills using WorkKeys and supplemental assessments tailored to that industry. (Currently, NewPage uses an alternative

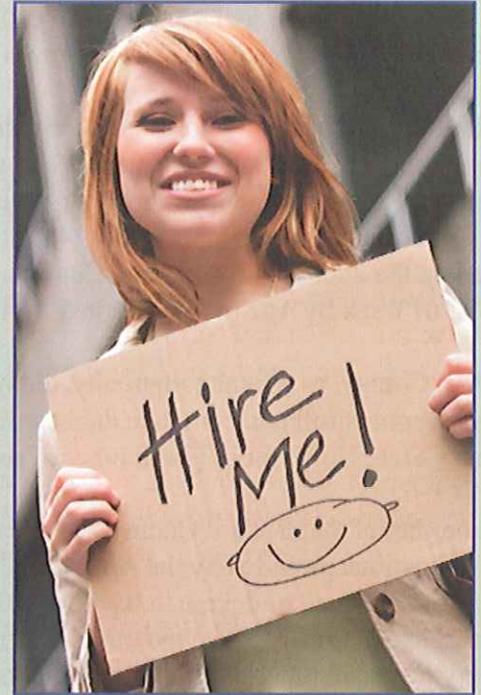
employability assessment but has plans to begin using the WorkKeys beginning in 2015.)

Small businesses all over the county need workers with a proven skill set to understand what they read, to locate and dig out information, and to be problem solvers who can handle math applications.

Plan to Achieve National Career Readiness Certificate Attainment

- Have each high school senior that did not meet college readiness benchmarks to take the three WorkKeys assessments so that they earn an NCRC.
- Adopt a policy to prepare and test all enrolled at the Ballard County Adult Education Center for the National Career Readiness Certificate.
- Work closely with Ballard County judges to assist in vocational rehabilitation of people coming before their courts to make earning this employability tool part of their work portfolio.
- Partner with West Kentucky Community & Technical College’s Workforce Solutions staff to refer local employers for WorkKey job profiling services therefore encouraging the local labor force to pursue NCRC certification.
- Partner with Kentucky Career Centers to develop a roster of companies that utilize the NCRC as part of their pre-hire rubric, and encourage veterans and dislocated workers to pursue NCRC certification.
- Network with area employers and news media to publicize and promote the National Skills Readiness Certificate when candidates attain the credential. (Potential ad shown left.)
- Support employers who have provided letters of support for the Work Ready Communities application on how to understand NCRC results.

Don't Take a Chance on Your Job Search



Document Your Job Skills with the NCRC!



TABLE 2 RUBRIC TO REACH 9% WORKING AGE LABOR FORCE

YEAR	BASE NUMBER	HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS	ADULT EDUCATION	LOCAL WORKFORCE	CAREER CENTER	TOTAL NCRC
2014	74	10	5	16	10	115
2015	115	40	8	30	15	208
2016	208	40	12	40	20	320
2017	320	40	12	60	30	447 (9%)
2018	449	40	16	60	30	595
2019	595	40	18	65	30	746 (15%)