

**WORK READY COMMUNITY:** *Must present a plan to reach 9 percent of the working Kentucky NCRC age population (18-64) holding NCRCs within three years and 15 percent within five Coordinator. See years. Plan should include promotional strategies, training availability, and encouraging employer recognition of the certificate.*

## **NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE HOLDERS**

At the time of our Work Ready in Progress update, we reported to you that 1080 Union County working-age residents possessed the NCRC. As of August 31, 2015 there are now 1,289 Union County working age residents possess the NCRC certificate. Based upon a working age adult population of 9,503- that is an increase of 2.2%.

(<http://workready.ky.gov/Downloadable/Resources/NCRCMonthlyStatusReportbyCounty.pdf>) To attain the 5 year goal of 1,425 residents we need to attain 136 more NCRC holders by 2017. Over the next two years, that's an average of 68 people (per year) earning the NCRC. Since 2013, three-hundred six Union County High School seniors have earned the NCRC (ninety-two students in 2013, one-hundred thirteen students in 2014 & one-hundred one students in 2015). That's a three year average of 102 students per year. (The average pass rate has been 79%. 391 students have taken the test, 306 have passed). If this trend continues, over the next two years, an additional 204 NCRC's will be attained by UCHS seniors. This ALONE will put us beyond the 5 year NCRC attainment goal.

### **Earle C. Clements Job Corps Academy**

Our local Job Corps Center (which houses roughly 1,000 students) provides students from all over the country with opportunities to achieve and learn skills that are needed to succeed in today's work place. Our center recently obtained a license and authorization to administer the Work Keys test.

Results are as follows:

2013-Gold (18), Silver (71), Bronze (87) -Total: 176

2014 (through July 31<sup>st</sup>) - Gold (10), Silver (67), Bronze (83) -Total: 160

2015- (August 25<sup>th</sup>) – Platinum (1), Gold (7), Silver (26), Bronze (34) – Total: 68

Three year total: 404 [Platinum (1), Gold (35), Silver (164), Bronze (204)]

We have seen a decrease in NCRC's attained in 2015 because of recent changes in credential certification requirements. Now, the center uses Work Keys more sporadically.

Nonetheless, even if they just maintain their current 2015 attainment for next year, an additional 136 NCRC's will be attained by Earle C. Clements Academy students by 2017.

This ALONE, not factoring in the NCRC's being attained by seniors at UCHS, or our continued efforts to make the NCRC the preferred test among our local employers, to assist with hiring and job placement, will allow us to achieve our 5 year goal.

Following is an update and some strategies that we are currently using to increase NCRC test takers at our local Adult Education Center and increase the number of Union County businesses that use the test as a screening and job placement measure.

### Adult Education

- Any student that comes in seeking employment testing is referred to the NCRC test.
- Any student at GED passing level is referred to the NCRC test.
- Adult Education trying to get approval for the Health Services version of the NCRC to count and try to work with the Union County Methodist Hospital.
- Also, with TrelleborgVibracoustic, Adult Ed. is currently trying to get them to use the NCRC in their decision process of promoting of employees. They feel it is a good idea.
- Adult Ed. is teaching an Employment Readiness class at the jail that consists of taking the NCRC.
- Qualifying inmates can now take the NCRC test through the Union County Adult Education Program and can be tested in-house. The jail will pay for all testing through funds raised by their commissary items.

### Training Availability

Both the Herron Tech. Center (Adult Ed.) and Henderson Community College will provide training as well as be resources for individuals who are preparing to take the NCRC test. At both of these locations, individuals will have the opportunity to retake the test to improve upon their past scores. At Union County High School, during iTime, students are able to work for 30 minutes each day to prepare for the NCRC test they'll take near the end of the school year. During this time students are allowed to take practice tests, focus on areas of weakness, and consult with their teacher.

### Employer Recognition

We will continue to work to persuade our local business and industry to implement the NCRC test through presentations to association boards and/or committees, i.e. business associations, human resource manager groups, and industry associations.

We then hope to secure a definite commitment from employers that they will actively support the NCRC effort. We will also continue to encourage our local businesses/industries to give preferential treatment to applicants who possess a NCRC certificate. Since starting our work ready endeavor, this has not been an easy task. We are hoping that strategies suggested by JFF (to be mentioned later) will help us in this aspect.