

For Immediate Release: Dec. 1, 2009



Gov. Joe

Manchin celebrates success of statewide work force credentialing program More than 10,000 West Virginians are certified in first year

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Gov. Joe Manchin today celebrated a milestone with the statewide work force credentialing program, WorkKeys, along with representatives from WorkForce West Virginia and partner agencies.

WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system developed by ACT, the same company that does testing for college applicants, that evaluates on-the-job skills for job seekers in West Virginia. This certificate offers nationally recognized credentials and helps individuals improve and match their skill levels with particular occupations.

Since the program launched in October 2008, more than 10,000 certificates have been issued.

Page 2 - Gov. Joe Manchin helps celebrate statewide work force credentialing program

112 California Avenue
Charleston, WV 25305-0112

An agency of the Department of Commerce
An equal opportunity employer/program and auxiliary aids are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

www.workforcewv.org

“WorkKeys is a win-win tool for both employers and job seekers,” said Gov. Manchin. “The assessments help satisfy our employers’ demands for certain types of employees or skills, making sure that the job seeker is a good match for the company. This helps reduce employee turnover and increase worker retention, in addition to providing job seekers with an objective way to demonstrate their skill levels to prospective employers.”

Individuals who take the assessments and demonstrate their job readiness levels receive a Career Readiness Certificate signed by the governor. A gold certificate denotes the highest scores, followed by silver and bronze certificates. Job seekers who want to improve their scores can get help before retaking the test.

“A Career Readiness Certificate program like WorkKeys enables educators, economic developers and businesses to work together toward our common goal of a well-trained work force,” said Russell Fry, acting executive director at WorkForce West Virginia. “It also represents the partnerships between WorkForce West Virginia and our Community and Technical Colleges.”

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation has been instrumental in supporting WorkForce West Virginia's efforts to promote WorkKeys. Other essential partners include West Virginia University at Parkersburg, the West Virginia Department of Education, regional Workforce Investment Boards and ACT.

The Governor’s Career Readiness Certificate partnerships continue to expand. This year, WorkForce West Virginia entered into an agreement with the West Virginia Department of Education and the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) to provide KeyTrain Career Skills at all WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers. Using KeyTrain, participants can assess their potential WorkKeys score, review topics in each skill area and practice problems similar to those on WorkKeys assessments.

Additionally, WorkForce West Virginia now has three ACT-authorized job profilers. Employers can make reliable, EEOC compliant decisions about hiring, training and program development by matching job profile information with individual scores on the WorkKeys assessments.

For more information about WorkKeys, visit www.workforcewv.org or contact your local WorkForce West Virginia Career Center.

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WorkKeys Success Stories 12/01/09

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RYAN BAILEY / BEN FRANKLIN CAREER CENTER

Ryan Bailey is an honors graduate of Sissonville High School. He attended Ben Franklin Career Center, where he completed his certificate in Building Construction. He also obtained a Gold level on WorkKeys assessments. Ryan is presently attending West Virginia University Institute of Technology. His goal is to open his own building construction business. Ryan is joined by John Baird, principal of the Ben Franklin Career Center.

DANA CUNNINGHAM / VERIZON

Dana L. Cunningham, Sr., was a Pipefitter for Union Carbide Technical Center, a subsidiary of Dow Chemical for 27 years. Due to the company's decision to outsource their work, Mr. Cunningham was dislocated in December 2007. As a Dislocated Worker, he successfully completed the WorkKeys® Assessment in March 2008; and graduated in December 2008 from West Virginia State Community and Technical College with an Associate's Degree in Applied Process Technology. Mr. Cunningham re-entered the workforce in March 2009 as a Sales Consultant for Verizon. Dana is joined by Mike Hathaway of Verizon.

JODY ADKINS / A PLUS MEDICAL

Jody C. Adkins is a former employee of Union Stamping and Assembly, where she served as a Manufacturing Associate. After 13 years of dedicated service, Mrs. Adkins was laid off from the company in October of 2006 and was eligible for Trade benefits. At this time, she decided to pursue training in hopes of becoming a Respiratory Therapist. After 2 years of education, she has successfully completed the WorkKeys® Assessment and graduated from West Virginia Institute Community and Technical College with an Associate's degree in Respiratory Care Technology. Mrs. Adkins is now employed as a Respiratory Therapist with A+ Medical. Dana is joined by Mike Hathaway of Verizon.

KIMBERLY TAWNEY / KUREHA

Kimberly Tawney, a Charleston resident, has a Bachelors Degree in Education from Marshall University. She has worked as a dispatcher, distribution manager, chemical operator and grades 7-12 teacher. A person with a strong work ethic and intense interest in science, she was attracted to Kureha and the opportunity to be part of a team producing a first of its kind product. Kimberly excelled on the Work Keys tests, performed extremely well on the Kureha day of Work Assessment, and successfully passed a six person panel interview to be selected as a member of the first Chemical Operator team at Kureha PGA, LLC. She is joined today by Tom Provost of Kureha.

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