

USDA ANNOUNCES RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANT

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is accepting applications to support economic development and create jobs in rural America. The Rural Business Development Grant program is for eligible entities to support business opportunity and enterprise projects in rural communities. It is designed to provide technical assistance and training for small rural businesses (fewer than 50 new workers and less than \$1M in gross revenue).



The funding may be used to establish business support centers or to finance job training and leadership development in rural areas. Projects must be consistent with any local and area-wide community and economic development strategic plans, support other economic development activities in the project area, and be consistent with any Rural Development state strategic plan. The NEGRC maintains a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Plan, available at negrc.org/home/resources. To learn more about statewide rural initiatives, visit: <https://www.georgia.org/rural-georgia-initiatives>. Funding for enterprise projects must be used to finance or develop small and emerging businesses in rural areas.

For more information on USDA's Rural Business Development Grant, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants/ga> or view the USDA Rural Business article on negrc.org/news.

Applications must be submitted to the nearest USDA office by 4:30 pm local time on March 31, 2021. To request assistance, contact your local USDA Contact (see below) or **Eva Kennedy**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at ekennedy@negrc.org.

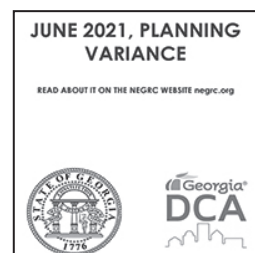
Northeast Georgia USDA Contacts:

Area Two (Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, and Walton counties) | Contact: Monroe Office, Kathy Forster (770) 267-1413 x114

Area Three (Jasper County) | Contact: Fort Valley Office, Stephanie Freeman (470) 291-3074.

DCA VARIANCE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING DEADLINE

Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner, Christopher Nunn, recently issued an order allowing local governments with June 30, 2021 planning deadlines to seek a deadline variance. To request a variance to extend this deadline to October 31, 2021, the local government must submit a variance request, signed by the chief, local-elected official or city/county manager, to planning@dca.ga.gov or by mailing a hard copy to DCA. Variance requests should be submitted by June 1st, 2021.



A link to the full order issued by the DCA Commissioner is available through the DCA Variance News item on negrc.org/news. To check your local planning deadlines, visit <http://apps.dca.ga.gov/dcacommunity/default.aspx/default.aspx>.

For an editable version of the variance request or for questions and assistance, please contact **Eva Kennedy**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at ekennedy@negrc.org.



Foothills Welding Program

SUCCESS STORY

Foothills Charter High School and WorkSource NEGA partnered to offer students in Barrow and Walton counties the opportunity to complete a 10-week welding program. The students earned an American Welding Society WPS Certification, along with Six Sigma, OSHA 10 Certification and CPR Certification.

Foothills provided funds for personal protective equipment, a portion of the instructional costs, background checks for instructors, costs for certification testing, and support with recruiting and job placement for the trainees. WorkSource NEGA and the Workforce Development Board provided the training trailer, the balance of the instructor costs, and supplies.

In February, classes began Monday to Thursday from 5 to 8 p.m. This was in addition to any schoolwork needed for other Foothills courses.

As the pandemic set in, the training pivoted to an online platform to teach resume writing, interview skills, problem-solving, financial literacy and Six Sigma. The welding instruction was completed June 2 – 12.

Despite challenges, the students earned multiple certifications that prepared them for jobs in the industry. At the program's conclusion, 11 of the 15 students who were 17 and older were asked to interview for full- and part-time jobs with local businesses. All of the students were qualified for work-based learning opportunities in the fall and spring of 2021.

Students stated the program gave them a sense of accomplishment and introduced them to possibilities they didn't know existed with manufacturers in the area. Plans are underway to support a new cohort of students in January 2021.



Prepared by
NEGRC Workforce Development Division
negrcc.com | (706) 369-5703
[December 2020]

Northeast Georgia WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

Number served through Workforce
Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Formula Funds

	# Served	\$ Spent
Adult	640	\$2,607,952
Youth	358	\$993,341
Dislocated Worker	49	\$325,319
Total	1,052	\$3,926,612

Northeast Georgia WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Performance Outcomes

[July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020]

Adult	
2nd Quarter Employment Rate	81.5%+
4th Quarter Employment Rate	76.2%+
Median Earnings Per Quarter	\$5,598
Credential Attainment	78.2%+

Dislocated Worker	
2nd Quarter Employment Rate	81.8%+
4th Quarter Employment Rate	78.4%+
Median Earnings Per Quarter	\$10,211+
Credential Attainment	78.4%+

Youth	
2nd Quarter Employment Rate	85.1%+
4th Quarter Employment Rate	81.1%+
Credential Attainment	69.2%

Overall Program Performance*	
Adult	105.3%
Dislocated Worker	126.5%
Youth	100.9%

*Overall Program Performance calculated by averaging the individual indicators for each program
+ Exceeded negotiated percent
Source: TCSG Office of Workforce Development 11/17/20

Number served by county					
County	Adult	Youth	Dislocated Worker	Total	Employers
Barrow	72	32	7	111	9
Clarke	180	113	10	303	58
Elbert	22	23	0	45	4
Greene	13	14	0	27	4
Jackson	95	34	4	133	37
Jasper	7	11	0	18	0
Madison	28	24	3	55	4
Morgan	7	11	0	18	4
Newton	119	41	16	176	7
Oconee	19	6	1	26	12
Oglethorpe	6	21	1	28	1
Walton	47	26	5	78	8
Disability Initiative				5	
Other [in-state]	25	2	2	29	92**
Other [out of state]					42***
Total	640	358	49	1,052	282

** Number of employers in other counties in Georgia hiring WIOA trainees

*** Number of employers in other states hiring WIOA trainees

WORKFORCE LEGISLATION REINTRODUCED

The “*Relaunching Americans Workforce Act*” (RAWA), was recently re-introduced by Bobby Scott (D VA-3), Chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, along with Representatives Andy Levin (D MI-9), Suzanne Bonamici (D OR-1) and co-led in the Senate by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA). This legislation was originally seen in the 116th Congress in response to the economic impacts of COVID-19. RAWA intends to provide both immediate and long-term supports to the U.S. workforce. The proposed funding structure in the legislation mirrors The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the stimulus bill passed in 2009 to address The Great Recession. Funding for the workforce system will be funneled through existing channels, to get resources to the local level as quickly as possible. RAWA aims to keep people on the job now, while also putting people back to work when necessary. RAWA focuses on maintaining core elements of WIOA and CTE by focusing on the most vulnerable populations and, while recognizing the definition of this will change due to the COVID-19 crisis, ensuring supports will be provided to those most effected. The RAWA legislation increases flexibility so more funding can be used for training, supportive services, and career services.

The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) is supportive of the RAWA legislation and how it will benefit Workforce Boards nation-wide. The proposed funding levels could potentially support local Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs through WorkSource Georgia as indicated in the allocations below:

- **\$500 million** for National Dislocated Worker Grants
- **\$2.5 billion** for State Dislocated Worker Grants
- **\$2.5 billion** for Youth Workforce Investment Activities
- **\$2.5 billion** for Adult Education and Training Activities

For further information about **WorkSource Northeast Georgia**, programs contact **(706) 369-5703**.

NEGRC’S KELLY SELECTED FOR LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

The Aging and Disability Business Institute is an organization that supports professional development of community-based organizations (CBOs) nationwide. One of their programs is called the Financial Acumen Learning Collaborative (FALC) that provides financial instruction on an annual basis.

Last month, **Michele Kelly**, NEGRC AAA Assistant Director, was one of fifteen (15) candidates selected through a nationally-competitive, selection process to participate in



Michele Kelly

the “2021 Financial Acumen Learning Collaborative.” The fifteen (15) candidates, from nine (9) U.S. states, will, over the next four months, engage in an interactive curriculum that covers financial topics like pricing services, assessment of net income using pricing methods, managing financial risk, and calculating return-on-investment (ROI) for health-care providers.

At the NEGRC, Michele manages the financial and budget operations of the Area Agency on Aging’s (AAA) programs that support senior services in Northeast Georgia. This training opportunity will provide advanced training and enhance the financial and accounting operations at the NEGRC. Congratulations to Michele for her selection in this national competition!

IN MEMORIAM: FRANK SHERRILL

Last month, **Frank Sherrill** passed away on February 18, 2021 at the age of 79. Mr. Sherrill was a strong advocate and supporter of Georgia’s cities and local governments. He served as Mayor of Social Circle from 1979-91 and first ran for that office as early as 1976. Originally from Miami, Florida, Mayor Sherrill attended Georgia Tech earning a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering and later a master’s degree in Business Administration from Georgia State University. In the mid-1970s, he located to the City of Social Circle with his wife, Joyce, and lived there for most of his life.



Frank Sherrill, 1942-2021

Sherrill was a trained civil engineer and worked as a professional engineer with Hightower Consulting Engineers based in Social Circle starting in 1977. He also applied his engineering and business skills to community service with involvement on development authorities, planning commissions, and environmental commissions. He helped create the Georgia Municipal Gas Authority (now Gas Authority, see: www.gasauthority.com) that, today, is a multi-state authority with 80-member local governments, serving 245,000 customers. Most notably too, Mayor Sherrill served as the Georgia Municipal Association’s (GMA) President in 1988. He was always supportive of regional-planning efforts, and particularly water planning, and was uniquely engaged with our agency over its evolution as the Northeast Georgia Area Planning & Development Commission (APDC), the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Commission (RDC), and the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (RC). He is survived by his son, Jeff.



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Athens, GA 30605

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Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS MARCH

9th	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board	TBD
18th	11:00 a.m.	NEGRC Council Meeting	Telephonic
24th	9:00 a.m.	UOBWA Meeting NEGRC	Atrium