

Workforce Development

Buffalo Niagara's economic growth is being challenged by our inability to place qualified employees in existing job openings and develop a strong pipeline of trained workers for the job opportunities we know are on the horizon. Success depends on our collective ability to invest in and support education and workforce development initiatives to build a qualified workforce with 21st century skills.

FOCUS ON UPSKILLING UNDEREMPLOYED



20% of the local workforce is expected to retire over next 10 years

In just the target industries of Advanced Business Services, Advanced Manufacturing and Tourism & Hospitality, there will be a total of 6,250 job openings due to retirements and growth

Without deliberate and sustained focus on **upskilling the region's underemployed**, we will never fully address our workforce challenges

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Pell Grant Program



- ▶ Support overdue reauthorization and expand eligibility to cover certificate programs and other job readiness training

Perkins Career and Technical Education Act



- ▶ Support overdue reauthorization with a focus on aligning programs and funding with the needs of regional, state and local labor markets

Community Colleges



- ▶ Support the key role community colleges play in workforce development and best position them to be responsive to employers' needs and the demands of regional labor markets

Workforce Investment Board (WIB)



- ▶ Continue to target WIB resources for training programs matching regional priorities and targeted industry sectors, including:
 - Incumbent worker training
 - On the job training
- ▶ Encourage city and county leaders to continue to appoint private sector employer representatives to local WIB

Professional Licensing for Immigrants



- ▶ Create a professional licensing program for immigrants and refugees so their skills and training can positively contribute to the regional economy