

GO VIRGINIA REGION 2 TALENT EVALUATION | 2024

GO Virginia Region 2 evaluation assessment of medium-term outcomes and impacts of talent-focused projects taking place between 2017-2023. The objective of this evaluation was to understand how GO Virginia Region 2 investments contribute to regional outcomes. The evaluation included a review of 14 talent projects, staff interviews with 11 talent grantees to identify additional outcomes, 4 interviews with companies representing each regional priority cluster, and extensive collection and analysis of regional educational industry-relevant data.

14 Projects in 3 Categories

Planning

- Lynchburg Beacon of Hope: Future Centers Playbook
- Carilion Building a Regional Health Sciences Talent Pipeline
- Career & Technical Education Study
- Industry 4.0 for the Region 2 Workforce
- Stopping the Brain Drain

Training

- Region 2 Talent Collaborative
- Blockchain Ecosystem Catalyst
- Additive Manufacturing Partnership Labs (AMPL)
- Central Virginia Community College CTE Academy
- Enhancing the Region through New Technologies for Unmanned Systems (Drone Zone)

Internships

- Classrooms to Careers
- Developing a Destination for Talent
- Experiential Learning in Tech Employment (ELITE)
- Ignite Internship Expansion

Economic Contributions of Talent Programs

Short-Term Outcomes

Enhanced employer engagement in workforce activities

Improved understanding of job market for graduating talent

Improved understanding of the workforce

Increased skills of existing workers

Improved knowledge and promotion of workforce training resources

Medium-Term Outcomes

Increased regional completion of degrees or certificates

Attracting skilled talent to the region

Reduced brain drain

Strengthened pipeline to priority industry clusters

More skilled labor in target industry sectors

Long-Term Outcomes

Strengthened regional collaboration

Number of jobs retained/filled

Overall increase in above median wage jobs



OUTCOME 1: STRENGTHENED PIPELINE TO PRIORITY INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

Priority Industry Clusters

- ★ *IT and Emerging Technology*
- ★ *Life Sciences and Biotechnology*
- ★ *Transportation and Autonomy*
- ★ *Manufacturing, Materials and*
- ★ *Machinery Manufacturing*

Influential factors:

- Strong partnerships between industry and education strengthened the pipeline by filling gaps and improving efficiency.
- Tailored curriculum and program to be more specialized

Limiters:

- Technology readiness and understanding
- Highly specialized nature of work
- Contextual factors: market conditions, technology readiness, federal contracting variables
- Number of internship positions

Is there evidence that the pipeline is strengthening?

Some

Have GO Virginia talent projects contributed to that strengthening?

Yes

How?

- Training
- Credentials
- Improved efficiency and connections



CVCC CTE Academy: Professor Murphy trains students in the operation of industrial robotics

“ The CVCC CTE Academy benefits us... we can recruit students that already know how to read a tape measure, already know how to use power tools. It's also a safety issue if they don't. If they're already in the classes, then they're ahead of someone that hasn't taken any classes, in skill set and education. The academy definitely benefits us and them. - Southern Air, served by the CVCC CTE Academy grant ”

OUTCOME 2: ENHANCED EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Is there evidence of enhanced employer engagement?

Yes

Employers engage with:

- Students
- Educational Institutions
- Each Other

Have GO Virginia talent projects contributed to that?

Yes

How do employers engage?

Events
Advisory Groups
Directly with students

Influential factors:

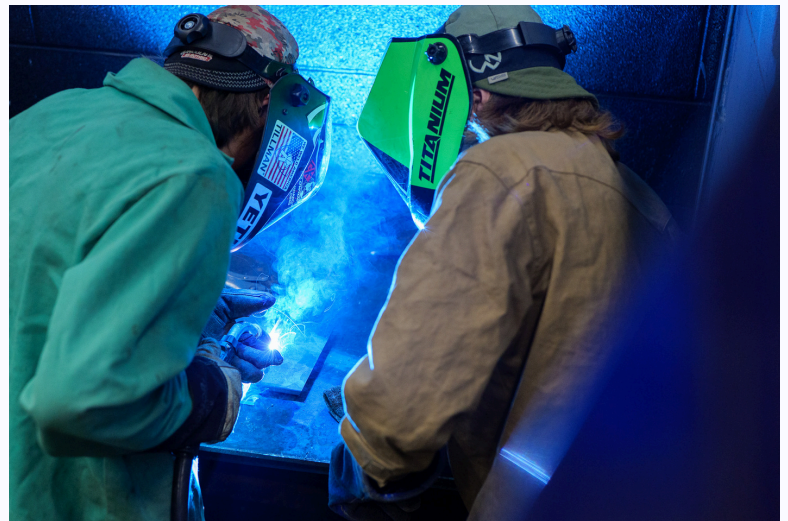
- Mentorship, Professional development programs, and networking opportunities
- Trust building through program development

Limiters:

- Time constraints for managers and mentors
- Uncertainty about short-term return on investment

“ What we give them is the ability to get in and work side by side with our full-time engineers and make the most of it. The interns are immersed in it, and it's a phenomenal internship from that perspective.” - MOVA ”

★ MOVA expanded their internship spots by 200% through the financial support from the ELITE grant



Expanding Welding Training Capacity and Jobs in the Roanoke Valley: Welding students enhance their technical skills through a training course offered by Botetourt Technical Education Center.

OUTCOME 3: REDUCED BRAIN DRAIN

Is there less Brain Drain in Region 2?

Yes

Have GO Virginia talent projects contributed to that?

Yes

How did the projects reduce brain drain?

- Interactions between companies and students
- Exposure to regional work-lifestyle

Examples:

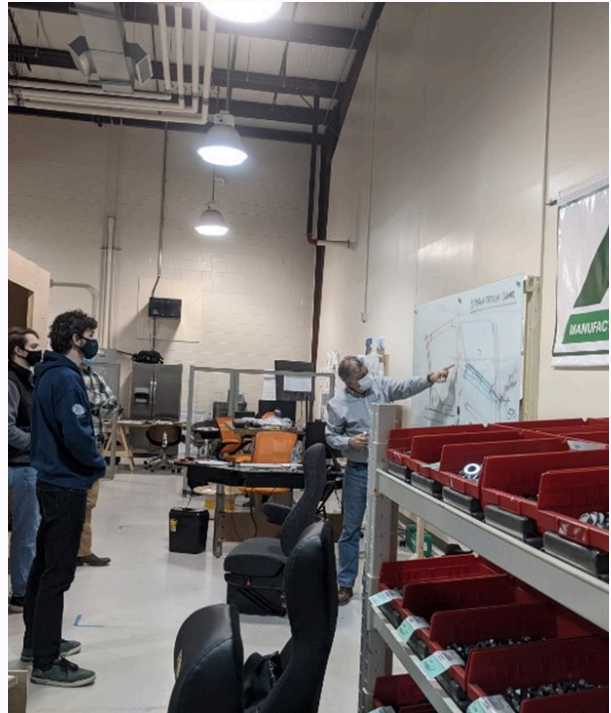
- Brain Drain catalyst for regional collaboration
- Interactions with local companies
- Strong collaboration

Influential Factors:

- Exposure to local job opportunities
- Competitive salaries and benefits

Limiters:

- Competition from larger tech hubs
- Fewer amenities compared to big cities



Developing a Destination for Talent: Student interns work with Trova leadership.

“... around 22% of local interns we've hosted, have historically ended up working with us again... These students are an important pool for us because they already know this area.” - Novonesis, ELITE grant ”

OUTCOME 4: ATTRACTING SKILLED TALENT TO THE REGION

Is skilled talent being attracted to Region 2?

Yes

Have GO Virginia talent projects contributed to that?

Yes

How did the projects attract skilled talent?

- Wraparound internship programs
- Interaction with local companies
- Long-term relationship building

Influences:

- Offering flexibility
- Ability to work on cutting edge technology
- Partnering with universities

Limiters:

- Challenges of relocating talent to smaller towns or rural areas
- Perception of more opportunity in large metros



Experiential Learning in Tech Employment (ELITE) implementation grant funded internships through Novonesis (formerly Novosymes).

“I would highly recommend this program to another engineering student. I got to do things that I only read about in school. I worked on a real project to help the company.” - exit interview from student intern with Novonesis, funded through the ELITE grant ”

OUTCOME 5: MORE SKILLED LABOR IN TARGET INDUSTRY SECTORS

Is there more skilled talent in target industry sectors?

Yes

Have GO Virginia talent projects contributed to that?

Yes

How?

- Certifications
- Collaborations
- New courses
- Access to specialized equipment
- Interns hired full time by companies

Industry specific R2 vs. State Degrees Awarded

- Life Science and Biotechnology
- IT & Emerging Technology
- Manufacturing (Materials + Transportation + Autonomy)
- Engineering Degrees



TORC student interns learn technical and soft skills that lead to permanent employment post-graduation.

Influences:

- Hands-on experience with industry specific technologies
- Technical and soft skills opportunities
- Full time employment and internship opportunities

Limiters:

- Ability to convert all interns to full time
- Rapid technological changes require frequent upskilling

“ We've had 100% acceptance rate when it comes to our student interns that have received an offer from Torc Robotics and 0% turnover within the first year. So our students are staying. - Torc Robotics, ELITE grant ”