

Conquering Possibility through Workplace Learning

Education on its own is not enough. Studies have shown the impact of learn and earn work experience can greatly increase a student's chances of social and economic upward mobility.¹ The Workplace Learning team strives to foster and create long-lasting employer relationships, with an understanding that Workplace Learning is a strong reflection of Central Piedmont's vision:

- Champion of students
- Catalyst for opportunity
- Exceptional provider of learning experience
- Transforms lives and strengthens our community.

At Central Piedmont, Workplace Learning is categorized into three areas:

1. **Internships**

Internships are flexible, non-credit work experiences that allow current students or recent graduates explore a career or gain practical field experiences. Positions may be short-or long-term.

2. **Work-based learning (WBL)**

Work-based learning is a course in which students earn college credit by spending a semester working with an employer in a position directly related to their field of study. In collaboration with their faculty coordinator and employer, the student identifies three Measurable Learning Objectives (MLOs) for their course.

3. **Apprenticeships**

Registered apprenticeships are long-term positions with employers that consist of structured on-the- job training coupled with related instruction and built-in progressive wage scale resulting in a national occupational credential issued by the state of North Carolina and US Department of Labor.

For the purposes of this document, our focus will be on Work-based Learning as Central Piedmont received an allocation of \$250,000 via funding source S.L. 2021-180 Appropriation Funds with funds available for expenditure until June 30, 2023. Central Piedmont expended \$118,984 (48%) of the allocated funds. This final report constitutes learnings and a summary of the measurables included which are (i) the number of students enrolled in work-based learning courses and the number of students earning certificates, by program of study, (ii) the incorporation of WBL into certificate programs and Career and College Promise pathways, (iii) the findings and recommendations of stakeholder group meetings regarding statewide implementation of WBL programs, and (iv) the use of funds for outreach and marketing or other activities under this section.

¹ Saltikoff, Nathalie. "The Positive Implications of Internships on Early Career Outcomes." *NACE Journal*, 1 May 2017, www.nacweb.org/job-market/internships/the-positive-implications-of-internships-on-early-career-outcomes

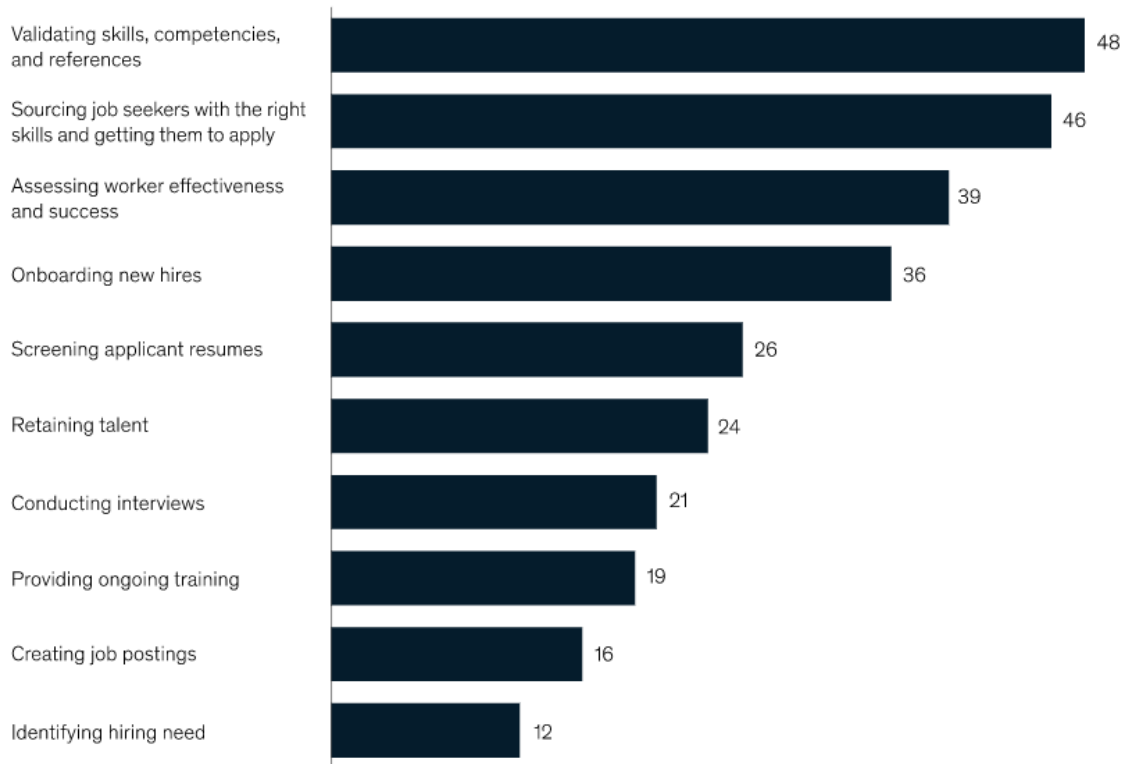
Historically across the state, Central Piedmont has had the largest number of students participating in Work-based Learning (WBL). With this funding, utilized across three semesters (Fall 2022, Spring 2023 and Summer 2023), we were able to serve a total of 517 students by providing financial support to cover their Work-based Learning class(es), student accident insurance, and liability insurance. Most of our students are local to the Charlotte market and immediate-surrounding counties. Most of our students are placed in small businesses of less than 500 employees, so there is opportunity to align labor analytics and employer needs to programs to create a pipeline of prospective talent for our local employers. To illustrate, the college has a partnership with The ROC (Rebuilding Opportunities in Construction), whereby high school juniors and seniors take Career and College Promise (CCP) courses through Central Piedmont. Successful completion of these courses leads to certificates in construction management; electrical systems; and air conditioning, heating and refrigeration. Once the curriculum is completed, the students then are eligible to participate in a paid (minimum \$15.00/hour) summer Work-based Learning course, WBL111 and WBL 121 (for returning seniors) paired with local employers in the construction and trades industry.

In addition, the college has set up its first dual enrollment continuing education Work-based Learning course starting in the summer 2023 semester, also in partnership with The ROC. A key consideration in the expansion of Work-based Learning in continuing education (CE) is that the class length must be at least 96 instructional hours, and enrolled students must complete a minimum of 48 instructional hours prior to entering the Work-based Learning experience. One component that differentiates continuing education (CE) Work-based Learning from curriculum Work-based Learning is that the CE pathway must lead to a state-regulated or industry-recognized credential. Having industry credentials can lead to an increased likelihood of being selected for an interview, higher pay, and long-term upward mobility.

“Skill and credential barriers can deter qualified workers from seeking out higher-wage positions.” Twenty-six percent of respondents in [McKinsey’s 2022 American Opportunity Survey](#) cited the need for more or different experience, relevant skills, credentials, or education as the most significant barrier to seeking employment elsewhere. As noted in a recent McKinsey Global Survey, 87 percent of executives said they faced a skills gap in the workplace, adding that recent college graduates, a traditionally reliable source of talent, often lack the required competency level for key skills. The McKinsey study chart referenced below highlights validating skills, competencies, and references as the top hiring and talent challenge. Work-based Learning, in both curricular and continuing education programs provides work experience validation and, in some cases, industry credentials where the instruction is aligned as such.

Employers reported skills validation and sourcing as their main challenges.

Top hiring and talent challenges, % of respondents indicating step as a top 3 challenge

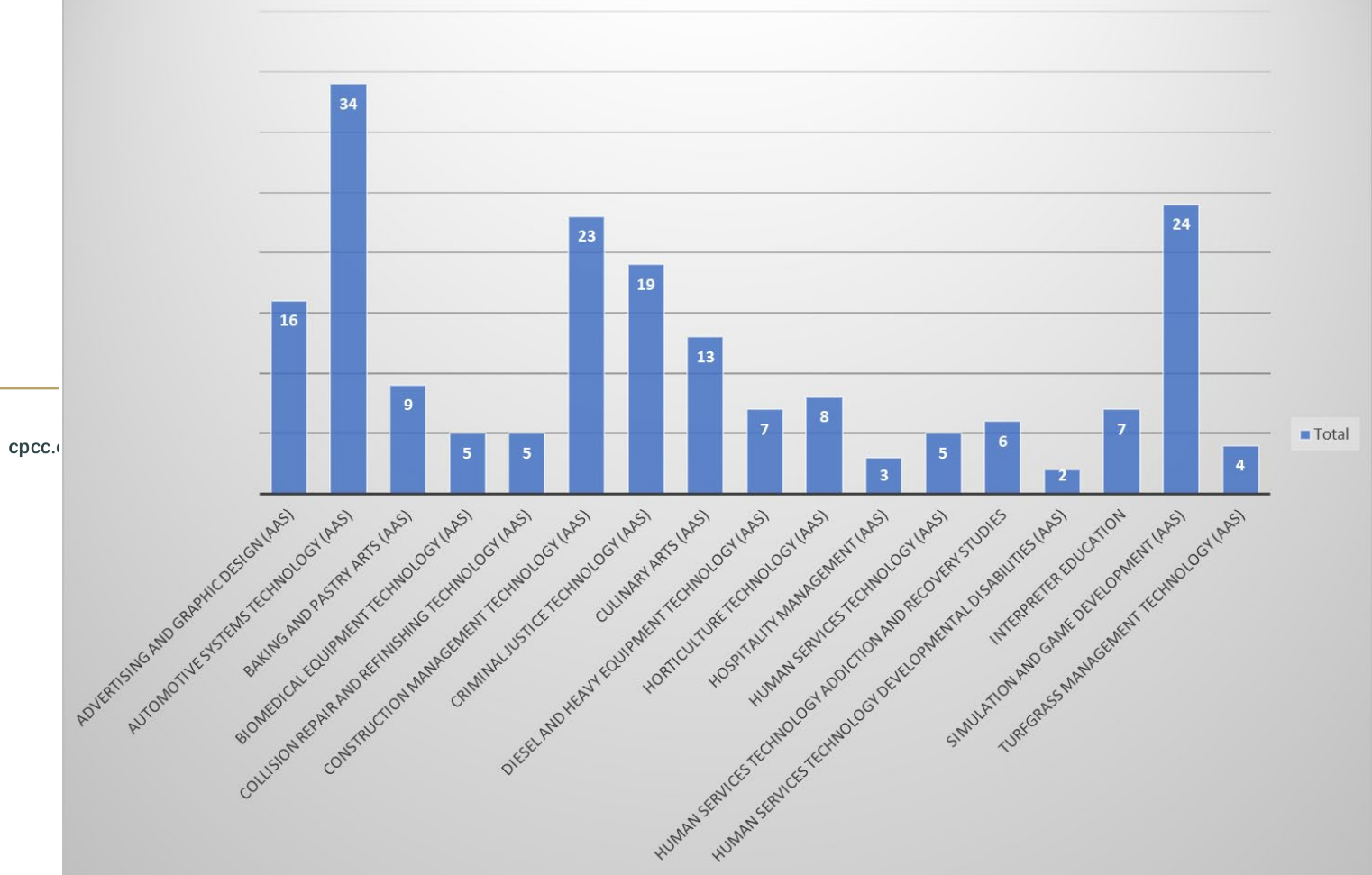


Source: McKinsey State of Hiring Survey, September 2021 to October 2021, n = 276, launched across the following metro areas: Austin–Round Rock–San Marcos, Atlanta–Sandy Springs–Alpharetta, Denver–Aurora–Lakewood, and Minneapolis–St. Paul

In addition to the ROC, Central Piedmont has continued to grow its partnership with YearUp. YearUp offers professional training opportunities, a corporate internship with a respected company, and the ability to earn while you learn with regular stipends during training and internships. Students in the business pathway complete two Project Management Certificates that have a required WBL course (WBL 112 and WBL 122). The certificates are a Business Administration Certificate with a Specialization in Project Management (C25120-C8) and a Business Administration Certificate Specialization in Advanced Project Management (C25120-C9).

Central Piedmont provides 49 approved programs that offer experiential learning, 17 of which require WBL for a student to successfully complete their program of study credential. For the period of Fall 2022-Spring 2023-Summer 2023, 190 students completed their WBL class requirements to earn an Associate degree.

Graduates in 2022FA, 2023 with a required WBL course



One of the keys to Central Piedmont's success with student and employer engagement in the Workplace Learning space is that the college has a dedicated team staffed with a director, six coordinators and a part-time administrative assistant who are placed at our respective campuses and paired with our academic program areas. This enables our team to be available to consult and assist our students and employer partners. We have learned from other sister community colleges that their team size and focus is vastly different as many have dual roles with Work-based Learning being one part of their responsibilities. The North Carolina Work-based Learning Association (NCWBLA) has been a valuable resource for convening individuals interested in furthering the principles of Work-based Learning for postsecondary students. As of 2020, there were 21 North Carolina community colleges who were members and at present, our Director, Ed Injaychock, is acting President. Based on meetings that were attended by member colleges and information gathered, we are learning quite a bit. Some of the trends that have surfaced include: continuing education Work-based Learning, the lack of students as opposed to employers who want a student for a placement, increased online presence, and on-campus internships to name a few. In the virtual realm, post-pandemic there is an increased online presence resulting in remote opportunities which

can pose challenges in oversight and connectivity as the accountability is placed more heavily on the student. Setting expectations initially and ensuring the student and employer buy-in is important. We also have learned that there is a greater trend toward on-campus placements, perhaps a Human Services student assisting the Adult Basic Skills area by aiding in GED attainment via translation. Posting Work-based Learning opportunities also varies at the colleges. Central Piedmont utilizes Handshake, an app that enables students to set up profiles and search for opportunities on a larger scale. Some colleges post opportunities on their own Human Resources website.

Through dialogue with other college system colleagues, we have learned that some of the opportunities and challenges in Work-based Learning have primarily been in the vein of marketing and engagement, documentation via paper or electronic methods, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems in tracking student and employer contacts and placements. In terms of outreach and awareness, from our own experience and in learning from others, there is an opportunity to more position Work-based Learning to several audiences more effectively, including: college faculty and staff, high school and existing college students, high school influencers including career counselors and Career and Technical Education (CTE) personnel, and employers. Feedback from other colleges has included a lack of faculty buy-in for Work-based Learning, lack of student interest for varying reasons including financial support and transportation, paperwork challenges, and staffing challenges. Identified opportunities include increased employer engagement via hosted “lunch and learns” and classroom tours for students conducted in person or virtually, highlighting Work-based Learning at advisory committee meetings across all academic program areas, the provision of scholarships for continuing education Work-based Learning since it’s not eligible for financial aid, a deliberate approach to the small business community as those companies would likely benefit from additional help, adding Work-based Learning to general A.A.S. and A.A. programs. A long-term plan of funding was to assist area community colleges to increase awareness of Work-based Learning through standard marketing material. After several discussions with the NCWBLA board members, we learned that marketing is vastly different across colleges relative to their approach. The concept of developing standard branding Work-based Learning material that could be leveraged by all community colleges did not seem a viable option in the use of funds and we were not able to directly infuse the individual colleges’ Work-based Learning departments with the funds so that they could create and customize their own marketing plans. One of our future goals is to build out an awareness campaign focused on our target audiences and develop key pieces of collateral that will effectively tell the success story of Work-based Learning.

In terms of student engagement and documentation, our team uses electronic forms so students and their respective employers have easy access to the Measurable Learning Objectives (MLOs), authorization forms, and timesheets. This provides a more efficient and effective way to collect required course paperwork and helps remove additional barriers to students who may already have schedule and/or transportation challenges. Funding was utilized to cover our annual software license (Docusign) for this important tool that has helped to meet the modern mobile student vastly decreasing

the need for hard copy paper and continuously following up with students to submit their paperwork in person. This has allowed for greater efficiencies for our staff to focus their attention on student and employer outreach versus chasing paperwork and to help ensure that audit requirements are met. Central Piedmont's Work-based Learning team is one of two colleges out of the NCWBLA members utilizing the Docusign software with future goals of reporting out successes, challenges, and outcomes. The need for an enterprise-wide Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is currently being discussed at varying levels throughout the college given the size of our institution and local community. This will allow for a more strategic and focused approach to employer outreach and identifying placement opportunities.

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We utilized funding to provide a college-wide invitation to participate in a Fall Masterclass Work-based Learning series, of which 82 Central Piedmont faculty/staff registered. The series consisted of five keynote speakers with 80 plus years of experience and thought leadership in the Work-based Learning realm, followed with internal dialogue sessions with a core team of cross-functional peers from Work-based Learning, Corporate Learning, Career & Technical Education and Career Services serving as a springboard to identify a plan forward for Central Piedmont to continue to grow and enrich the student experience.

Some highlights of the speaker series included:

Brandon Busteed, discussed the merger of learning and opportunities to connect to work such as internships, co-ops, or apprenticeships. He covered demands of the modern workplace that require rapid and constant learning and skilling, learning to use new collaboration software tools, data analysis tools, and that formal training as 'learning' is becoming a critical aspect of work success.

Josh Davies, the CEO of The Center for Work Ethic Development, provided five key strategies for developing the essential work ethic skills that employers demand. These proven strategies are already being used by leading schools and organizations to improve performance, retention, and job satisfaction of their graduates. A key point for faculty was to focus on connectivity—connect what you are teaching in the classroom to the workplace.

Mike Rowe introduced the S.W.E.A.T Pledge. (Skills & Work Ethic Aren't Taboo) Teaching people that all Work-based Learning opportunities are opportunities to grow.

While there have been great strides in Work-based Learning there is still opportunity to increase awareness and placements such that each student who attends a community college has an opportunity for experiential learning before they complete their program or graduate. Future forward, we will continue to engage our students, employers, faculty/staff and our NCCCS colleges to share what is working well, and how we can overcome some of the challenges together. Work-based Learning is not a department, it is the pathway to work for a student, and ultimately, the responsibility of all.

Summary of Expenditures:

06/09/23		Central Piedmont Community College			Page: 1	
		Account Availability Report Ending 06/30/23				
		Options - Available/Met/Exceeded Budget				
Fiscal Year: 2023		UNIT: 31681 - Work-Based Learning				
GL Account		Allocated Budget	Actual	Encumbrances	%Committed	Available
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11-311-60-519990-31681	CONTRACTED SERV-BUDGET CONTROL	50,000.00	25,000.00	0.00	50.00	25,000.00
11-311-60-519990-31681	CONTRACTED SERV-BUDGET CONT	*	0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-519130-31681	Misc Service Contracts : Wo		25,000.00	0.00		
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11-311-60-531990-31681	TRAVEL-BUDGET CONTROL : Work-B	6,000.00	2,690.44	0.00	44.84	3,309.56
11-311-60-531990-31681	TRAVEL-BUDGET CONTROL : Wor	*	0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-531110-31681	In-State Ground Transportat		551.69	0.00		
11-311-60-531140-31681	In-State Lodging : Work-Bas		1,016.47	0.00		
11-311-60-531150-31681	In-State Meals : Work-Based		271.70	0.00		
11-311-60-531210-31681	Out-of-State Ground Transpo		0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-531220-31681	Out-of-State Air Transport		0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-531240-31681	Out-of-State Lodging : Work		0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-531500-31681	Registration Fees : Work-Ba		850.58	0.00		
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11-311-60-537000-31681	Advertising : Work-Based Learn	5,398.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,398.00
11-311-60-539690-31681	OTHER EXPENSE-BUDGET CONTROL :	12,500.00	112.50	0.00	0.90	12,387.50
11-311-60-539690-31681	OTHER EXPENSE-BUDGET CONTRO	*	0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-532100-31681	Postage : Work-Based Learni		0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-534000-31681	Printing & Binding : Work-B		0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-539500-31681	Other Current Expense : Wor		0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-546100-31681	College Memberships & Dues		112.50	0.00		
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11-311-60-544990-31681	SOFTWARE - BUDGET CONTROL : Wo	9,602.00	9,601.58	0.00	100.00	0.42
11-311-60-544990-31681	SOFTWARE - BUDGET CONTROL :	*	0.00	0.00		
11-311-60-544000-31681	Other Computer Software App		9,601.58	0.00		
11-311-60-544010-31681	Software License Renewal :		0.00	0.00		
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11-311-60-560000-31681	Student Loan/Scholarship Exp :	166,500.00	81,579.45	0.00	49.00	84,920.55
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Totals for UNIT: 31681 - Work-Based Learning		250,000.00	118,983.97	0.00	47.59	131,016.03

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