ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

JOBS NJ

ACCESS TO TALENT

Developing Talent to Grow Business in the Garden State

A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

Dear Friends,

On October 1, 2018, I unveiled an economic master plan to recapture our state's role as both a leader in the national and global economy and a center of innovation. For this vision to work, we need to ensure we have the workforce needed to make it reality.

We have put New Jersey back on a path of sustainable economic growth, and I am proud that more New Jerseyans are working now than ever before. Our private sector is growing faster than others in the region, and we are becoming a model of economic development that supports our workforce and maintains our values of equity, transparency, and fairness.

We have made great progress, but there is much more to be done to invest in New Jersey's strongest asset: our people. New Jersey residents must have the information, training, and support needed to succeed in the careers of tomorrow and claim their place in a growing and more secure middle class.

At the same time, we must help employers find and develop the talent they need to grow and expand. The first question I get asked from countless business leaders is not about the size of a tax credit, but rather, whether we have the home-grown workforce they need.

That is why I asked my Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council (JEOC) to develop Jobs NJ, a comprehensive plan to ensure that New Jersey is ready to lead the 21st century talent market. Especially in the innovation economy, global and regional competition and technology-driven change are relentless. This plan is about how we prepare our state to prosper in good times and overcome tough times, and it is about easing the anxiety so many feel as they wonder how the future will work for them, not against them.

This is a talent-based economic development approach that leverages the whole of government to build a stronger and fairer New Jersey economy. As with the economic plan, government cannot do this work alone. I am calling on stakeholders across the state – employers of all types, colleges and universities, workforce training organizations, business associations, labor unions, and all our community partners – to join us in a collaborative effort to make our economy work for us all.

My very best,

Governor Phil Murphy

A LETTER FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE JOBS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL

Building a stronger and fairer New Jersey economy that works for all New Jerseyans is a significant undertaking that requires addressing many overlapping and interconnected challenges. No single agency can achieve this goal alone. To drive long-term, equitable growth in the Garden State, we need to take a whole-of-government approach that engages students, workers, and businesses.

Governor Murphy understands the challenges New Jersey faces are complex and multifaceted, which is why he created the Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council (JEOC), a cabinet-level committee dedicated to delivering on the Governor's vision for a stronger and fairer New Jersey.

Over the past two years, the agencies that comprise the JEOC have worked to implement promising new initiatives and build on the progress of proven successful programs using the full range of tools available across state government. We have taken historic steps to address the factors that affect job creation and economic growth, including supporting our best-in-the-nation K-12 public schools, introducing free community college and apprenticeship programs, making unprecedented investments in New Jersey's transit system, and putting more money into working families' pockets through the Earned Income Tax Credit and the new Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit.

We have made substantial progress, but there is still more to do. Building on these accomplishments, Governor Murphy asked us to develop a cross-agency plan that will ensure all companies in New Jersey have access to the talent they need to grow and that all New Jerseyans can find high-quality jobs.

This was a significant task, but also a tremendous opportunity for our state. New Jersey already has many advantages that position us to succeed, including our enviable location, highly educated and diverse workforce, and our history as a leader in the national innovation economy. This plan builds on those advantages and the work we have done over the past two years, setting out bold goals that will make New Jersey not only a better place for students and workers to find good jobs, but also a better location for businesses seeking the top talent they need to grow. It also broadens our focus to provide comprehensive support for attaining high-quality, family-supporting careers through a variety of pathways.

In crafting this plan, we engaged a broad range of stakeholders, including representatives from our key industries, academic institutions, labor leaders, training providers, students, and workers. We used their input to identify the key challenges facing New Jersey's talent development system and to craft targeted solutions that capitalize on our strengths and proactively address the challenges of the 21st century economy.

This plan is a crucial next step that will improve outcomes for all New Jerseyans, but it is also only the start. The JEOC members will work collaboratively with our partners in industry, academia, and labor to ensure its implementation.

No matter what changes, our commitment to supporting our state's businesses and investing in New Jersey's people will remain the same. That is the path to a stronger, fairer economy, and we look forward to continuing down it together.

Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver

Robert Asaro-Angelo, Commissioner,
Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Marlene Caride, Commissioner,
New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance

Kathleen Frangione, Chief Policy Advisor,
Office of the Governor

Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Commissioner,
Department of Transportation

George Helmy, Chief of Staff,
Office of the Governor

Joe Kelley, Deputy Chief of Staff,
Economic Development, Office of the Governor

Elizabeth Maher Muoio, State Treasurer,
Department of the Treasury

Dr. Beth Simone Noveck, Chief Innovation Officer, State of New Jersey

Matthew Platkin, Chief Counsel,
Office of the Governor

Dr. Lamont Repollet, Commissioner,
New Jersey Department of Education

Dr. Zakiya Smith Ellis, Secretary,
Office of the Secretary of Higher Education,
Co-Chair Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council

Tim Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer,
New Jersey Economic Development Authority,
Co-Chair Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council

Dr. Carl Van Horn, Senior Advisor for Strategy and Planning, Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Jobs NJ: Developing Talent to Grow Business in the Garden State

The Murphy Administration is hard at work implementing the Governor's economic plan, "The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey," and higher education plan, "Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education." **Jobs NJ: Developing Talent to Grow Business in the Garden State** builds on these plans with a collaborative effort to re-establish New Jersey's leadership in the innovation economy. Jobs NJ has two mutually reinforcing objectives, each integral to the Governor's vision of a stronger and fairer New Jersey:

1. **Ensure all career-seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment**

2. **Ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs**

Achieving these objectives will cement New Jersey's position as a location of choice for growing businesses and top talent.

Opportunities for Growth

Talent is one of New Jersey's strongest competitive advantages, but we must continue to enhance our Talent Development System by focusing on three key opportunities:

1. Support all New Jerseyans to obtain education and training and find high-quality jobs
2. Better align Talent Development System programs and employer needs
3. Connect employers and job-seekers

Strategies

Jobs NJ lays out three strategies to address New Jersey's talent challenges from two sides: increasing the supply of skilled workers and creating talent solutions that connect companies to job-seekers.

1. Expand access to opportunity
2. Train individuals for in-demand jobs
3. Match talent to jobs

Strategy 1: Expand Access to Opportunity

New Jersey's greatest asset is its people. We must do more to prepare students and open doors for working people, and particularly for historically disadvantaged populations.

Aspirations by 2025

1. Ensure 250,000 additional Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals attain post-secondary credentials
2. Close the racial and gender wage and employment gaps by employing 42,000 more women and minorities and increasing wages by $15,000-$23,000
3. Raise postsecondary credential attainment in all counties to at least 45 percent

New Initiatives

- Launch the Opportunity Meets Innovation Challenge: Award grants to implement best practices that increase college completion
- Make College More Affordable: Establish transparent, predictable, and guaranteed higher education pricing
- Expand Access for Targeted Populations: People with disabilities, ex-offenders, immigrants, and veterans

Strategy 2: Train Individuals for In-Demand Jobs

Technological disruptions are creating historic changes in training systems and labor markets. Preparing workers is critical to ensure New Jerseyans can take advantage of available opportunities and businesses can continue to grow.

Aspirations by 2025

1. Increase the number of post-secondary graduates employed in high-demand industries by 10 percent
2. Ensure at least 25,000 additional adults enroll and graduate with a high-quality credential

New Initiatives

- Create Pathways for Younger Residents: Advanced courses for high school students and NJ Career Accelerator Internship program
- Increase On-the-Job Training: Expand apprenticeship and experiential learning opportunities
- Provide Customized Support for Growing Industries: Develop sector-specific programs
- Connect Education to In-Demand Career Opportunities: Ensure students are learning skills employers seek
- Support Rapid Re-Employment and Lifelong Learning: Launch Re-Employment Insurance Program (REIP) and implement Future of Work Task Force recommendations

Strategy 3: Match Talent to Jobs

Connecting companies with well-qualified job-seekers keep growing businesses in New Jersey and attract new companies. The Administration will provide employers coordinated assistance to address their talent needs.

Aspirations by 2025

1. Complete Talent Action Roadmaps for at least 100 companies
2. Celebrate 200 Governor's Choice employers
3. Annually publish materials on high-demand jobs and pathways to rewarding careers

New Initiatives

- Launch NJ Talent Solutions: Bring together government agencies to help businesses solve talent challenges
- Launch the New Jersey Career Network: A pioneering digital coaching and support platform for job-seekers
- Expand Customized Training Programs: Department of Labor (DOL) to expand training programs tailored to company and sector needs
- Launch the Governor's Choice Employer Program: Recognize companies with exemplary hiring and career development practices
- Publicize High-Demand Jobs Data: Release "High-Demand" jobs report and two career pathway maps annually
- Attract Talent: New marketing effort to ensure global talent pools are aware of New Jersey's benefits

At its heart, Jobs NJ has two mutually reinforcing objectives, each integral to the Governor's vision of a stronger and fairer New Jersey

OVERVIEW

In October 2018, Governor Murphy issued his economic plan, "The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey," outlining how this Administration is reclaiming New Jersey's place as a center for innovation where all residents can achieve economic security and emphasizing a renewed strategic focus on supporting key growth sectors in the economy.

Investing in New Jersey residents and using our state's strengths to advance inclusive economic growth are both central to this plan. New Jersey is well-positioned to succeed in today's knowledge-driven economy, and it is crucial that we take full advantage of our assets. Vital among these strengths are our best-in-the-nation public education system, our highly-educated and diverse workforce, and our long-time leadership in the national innovation economy.

In March of 2019, the Administration published its higher education plan, "Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education." This plan envisions a renewed commitment to students to lay the groundwork for every New Jerseyan, regardless of life circumstances, to have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality credential that prepares them for life after college. The central goal of the plan is for New Jersey to achieve 65 percent postsecondary attainment by 2025.

We have aggressively advanced the goals and priorities laid out in the Governor's economic and higher education plans. Jobs NJ builds on these efforts, demonstrating New Jersey's dedication to leading the nation in opportunities for career-seekers to gain skills and for employers to fill their talent needs. This talent-based economic development strategy brings together agencies throughout the state in a collaborative, sustainable effort to maintain New Jersey as the location of choice for workers and businesses and to re-establish New Jersey as a leader in the 21st century innovation economy.

Jobs NJ responds to businesses' input on their needs as well as feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including students, industry groups, schools and colleges, education and training organizations, elected and community leaders, and national workforce development experts. This plan includes carefully-crafted programs and policies that come together to create meaningful change that will have clear, positive impacts for individuals and communities over the long term. Investing in people to connect qualified workers with opportunities is the cornerstone of this plan.

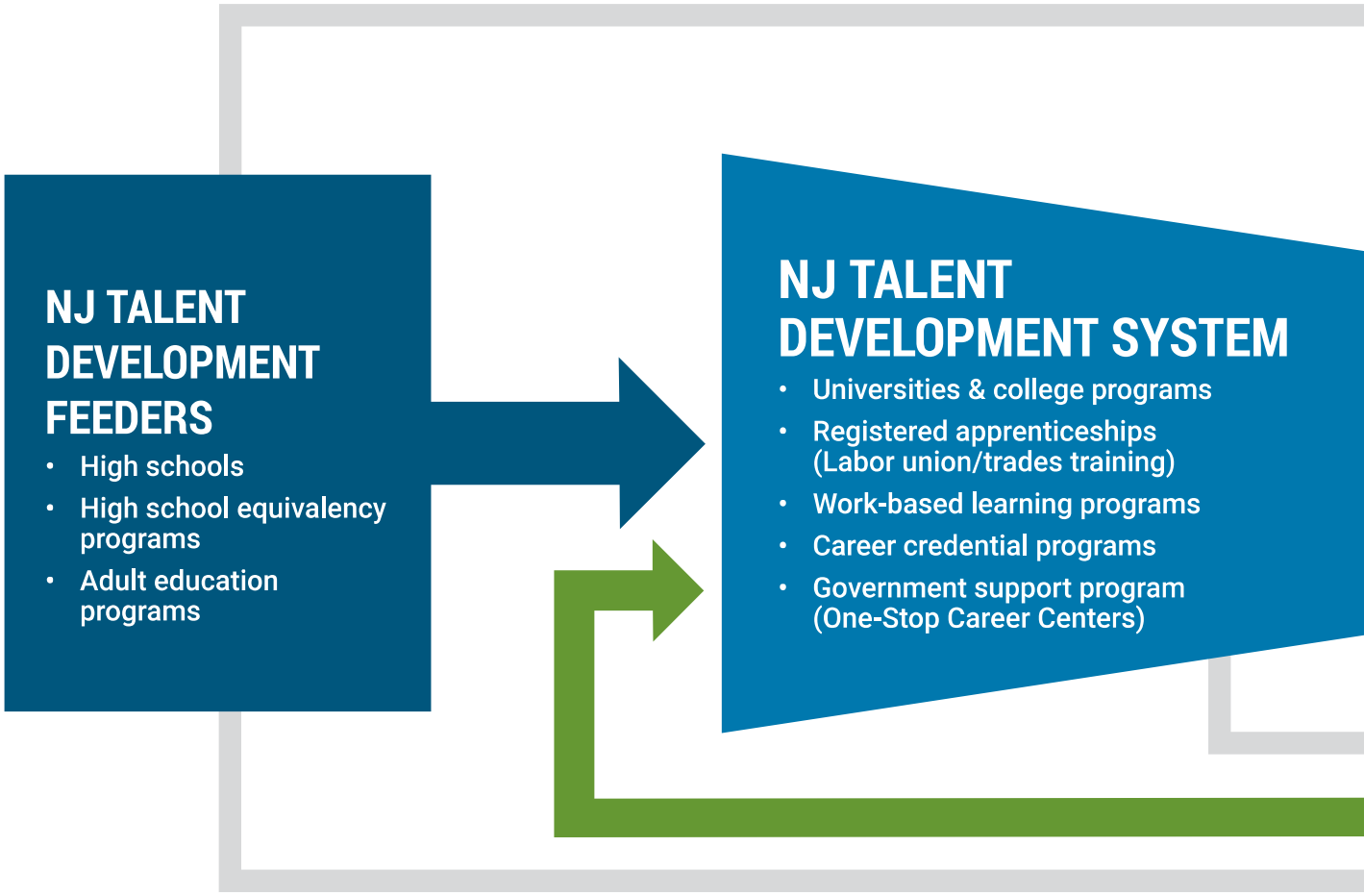
New Jersey is increasingly becoming a location of choice for talent. In fact, substantially more millennials are moving to New Jersey than ever before[1], and Hoboken is home to a higher concentration of millennials than Boston, MA or Austin, TX.[2] We must do even more to ensure that our existing talent stays in New Jersey and to attract new residents. Governor Murphy's investments will continue to improve New Jersey's quality of life by strengthening our exceptional school system, making college costs more affordable and predictable, improving NJ Transit, driving transit-oriented development in our cities, and making child care and health care more affordable.

As workers continue to move to the state and our innovation economy continues to grow, the strategies and proposals in this plan will ensure businesses in New Jersey or considering locating here are able to find the talent they need to grow and thrive. At the same time, we will help our residents secure the necessary skills and training to ensure family-supporting careers.

At its heart, Jobs NJ has two mutually reinforcing objectives, each integral to the Governor's vision of a stronger and fairer New Jersey:

1. Ensure all career-seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment
2. Ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs

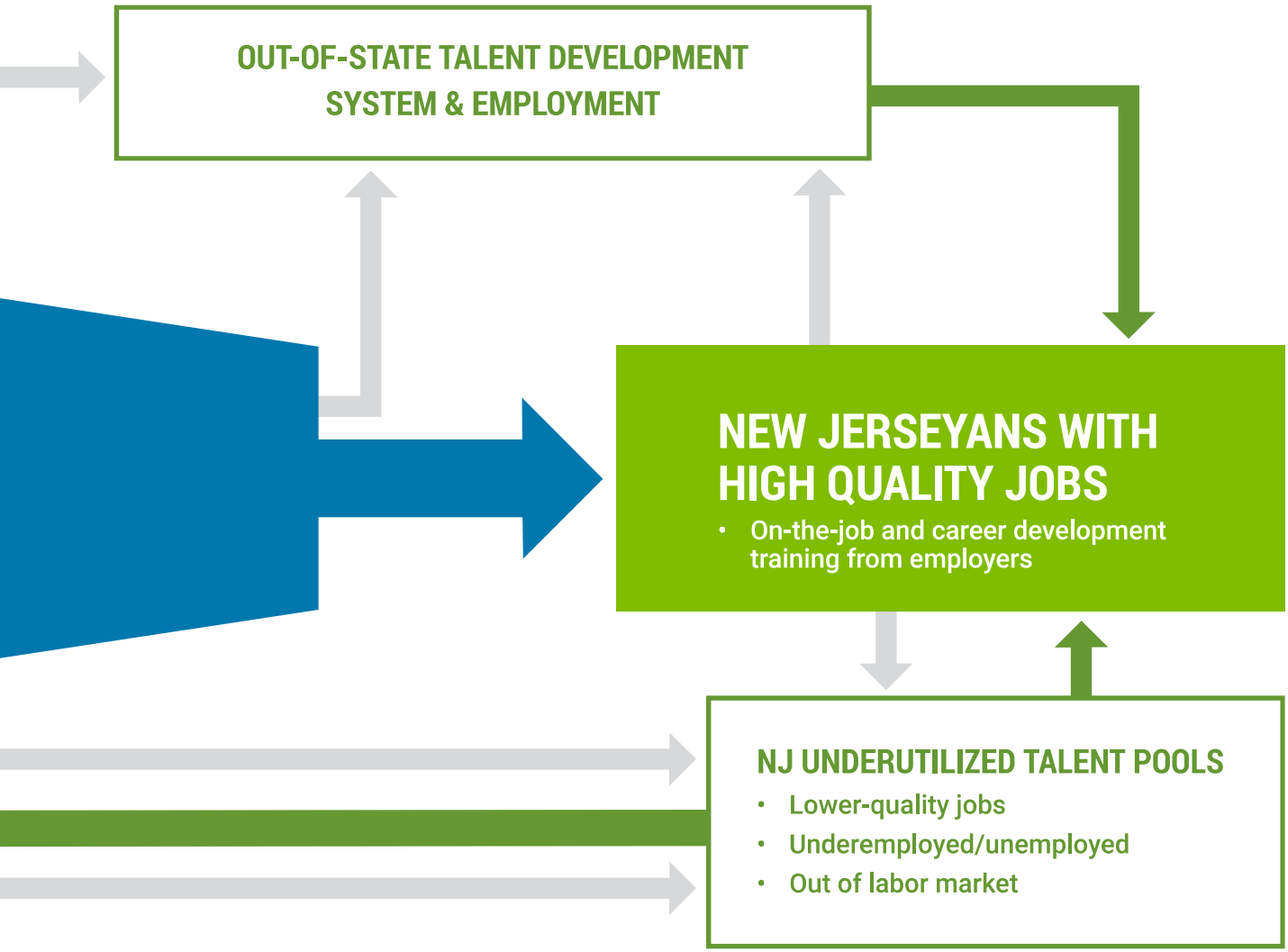
Achieving these objectives will cement New Jersey's position as a location of choice for growing businesses and top talent.



NEW JERSEY'S CURRENT TALENT DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Currently there are 4.4 million people working in New Jersey[3], which means there are 4.4 million pathways New Jerseyans have taken to the jobs they now hold. Our workforce is among the best and most diverse in the nation; almost one million New Jersey workers have advanced degrees, 225,000 work in high-tech jobs, and no state has a higher concentration of scientists and engineers.[4] Talent is one of New Jersey's strongest competitive advantages, but in order to maintain and expand that advantage for the next generation of companies and residents, we need a bold action plan to provide opportunities for residents to gain the skills and knowledge they need to launch high-quality careers.

For most New Jersey residents, the journey to success starts in our top-ranked public education system. Many students – more than 531,000 in 2018 – then decide to matriculate to one of our 85 institutions of higher education.[5] This includes public and private research universities, comprehensive and private colleges, as well as our state community college system. Currently 52.7 percent of working-age adults in New Jersey have attained a high-quality certificate or degree. This puts New Jersey ahead of 42 other states, but still falls short of our 65 percent attainment goal.[6]



Thousands of other New Jerseyans choose to participate in our state's wide range of apprenticeship, training, and industry-accepted certificate programs. As of January 2020, there were 8,468 active apprentices enrolled in one of the state's 956 programs. These numbers reflect a 25 percent increase in apprentices since the fourth quarter of 2017 and a 56 percent increase in apprenticeship programs since January 2018.[7]

Most adult New Jerseyans who are not in school join the workforce. Some New Jersey residents work in jobs that matter to the overall health of our state and our economy but still struggle to make ends meet. Many of them are benefiting from the Governor's work with the Legislature to raise the minimum wage. Thanks to these efforts, our state minimum wage is broadly $2.15 more per hour as of January 1, 2020 than it was on January 1, 2019, and it will continue to grow to $15 an hour in 2024 for most workers.[8]

Still other New Jerseyans start a job or launch a career only to later find themselves out of the workforce, unemployed, or in roles that underutilize their skills. Many workers are also underemployed or working in positions that do not give them the opportunity to use their full skill sets. These workers need opportunities to maximize their skills or learn new skills that utilize their full potential.

No matter which path – or which combination of paths – a New Jersey worker takes, they and the institutions they interact with are part of our state's Talent Development System, the bridge from early education to a high-quality career.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Through conversations with a broad range of stakeholders, the Administration identified three critical opportunities to enhance New Jersey's Talent Development System. Jobs NJ lays out the Administration's plan to use these opportunities to jumpstart growth and continue building a stronger, fairer economy in the Garden State.

1

Support All New Jerseyans to Obtain Education and Training and Find High-quality Jobs

New Jersey's highly-educated workforce is one of our top competitive advantages in today's economy, but educational attainment is not distributed equally among New Jersey's diverse residents. Postsecondary education opens the door to a fulfilling career, but many New Jerseyans are not able to complete college. This problem is particularly apparent in Black and Latinx communities, with only half of New Jersey's Black or Latinx students who seek a bachelor's degree graduating within six years, compared to almost three quarters of their white peers.[9]

Low-income and minority students, adult learners, and other historically disadvantaged groups also face barriers to high-quality employment. Jobs NJ includes strategies that will help immigrants find work in New Jersey, provide pathways to employment for chronically unemployed and underemployed workers and individuals with disabilities, and facilitate a smooth re-entry into the workforce for previously incarcerated individuals. Providing the support historically disadvantaged groups need to take full advantage of the opportunities available to them will strengthen the state's workforce and move us closer to a stronger, fairer economy that works for all New Jersey residents.

2

Better Align Talent Development System Programs and Employer Needs

Employers in New Jersey and across the country consistently point to a lack of workers with the requisite skills as an obstacle to their success. On-demand employment and remote work are transforming what jobs look like in New Jersey and around the world, while increased use of computerization and robotics accelerate the pace at which job requirements in most fields of work change from year to year. This creates new opportunities for lifelong learning and skill building, but also disrupts the labor market in ways that will make training, certificate programs, and college credentials even more important in the future and create a pressing need for up-skilling and re-skilling the state's adult population. Proactively addressing these changes will not only enable New Jersey businesses to grow but will also position us as a location of choice for talent-driven and innovation-oriented companies.

We have seen a decline in private-sector investments in training, particularly for those workers who would benefit most.[10] Since 2018, state government has stepped up to help address this gap. This Administration has championed a variety of programs to ensure we support all pathways to high-quality employment and promote first-rate employers. Jobs NJ continues this work by establishing regular, systematic feedback loops that will allow employers to inform and support ongoing development of K-12 and higher education credentials, work-based learning options, and training programs to ensure workers have the skills they need and employers can hire talent that fits their requirements. Many of these programs encourage New Jersey businesses to partner with the State to enhance programs' reach and reverse the trend of falling private-sector investment in training.

3

Connect Employers and Job-seekers

At the same time as employers report trouble finding workers with the necessary skills[11], many qualified workers fail to secure high-quality jobs because of information gaps, recruitment blind spots, locational mismatches, and structural impediments.

Jobs NJ addresses these challenges in a way that acknowledges hiring challenges vary by sector and occupation. The plan lays out a coordinated, whole-of-government approach that takes advantage of web-based tools to solve information gaps in ways that are accessible for job-seekers and allow us to track our progress and improve performance over time.

STRATEGIES

Jobs NJ lays out three strategies to address the challenges the Administration identified. These strategies take on New Jersey's talent challenges from two sides: increasing the supply of qualified workers with the skills needed to succeed in today's economy and creating talent solutions that connect companies seeking to hire with workers looking for jobs. The proposals call for additional investments in people and continued collaboration with employers to implement effective solutions. In order to build on our strong economy and position New Jersey for the decade ahead, we will:

1. Expand Access to Opportunity

by increasing educational attainment among underrepresented minorities and other targeted populations and ensuring equal access to opportunities in all regions of the state

2. Train Individuals for In-Demand Jobs

by connecting educational and training programs to industry needs and leading the region in programs that prepare adults for high-quality jobs throughout their entire careers

3. Match Talent to Jobs

by ensuring access to up-to-date job information, celebrating employers that provide high-quality jobs, and creating a dedicated team to craft individualized solutions to complex access-to-labor problems

Strategy 1

Expand Access to Opportunity

In an increasingly competitive global labor market, New Jersey's greatest asset is its people. Today, technology and innovation are disrupting legacy sectors and business models and creating entirely new, talent-driven industries. New Jersey is already well-positioned to succeed in this new economy, but in order to take full advantage of our incredible talent assets, the State must continue preparing students to thrive in their careers and opening new doors for people who are already working. This is particularly important for historically disadvantaged populations, who often face significant barriers to educational attainment.

Aspirations by 2025

1. **Increase educational attainment among historically disadvantaged populations by ensuring 250,000 additional Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals attain post-secondary credentials**

2. **Close the racial and gender wage and employment gaps by employing approximately 42,000 more women and minorities and achieving a $15,000-$23,000 increase in annual wages**

3. **Improve educational attainment in lagging regions of the state by raising postsecondary credential attainment in all counties to at least 45 percent**

Programs Launched Since January 2018

Expanding access to opportunity is a central tenet of Governor Murphy's vision for a stronger and fairer economy. The Administration has already initiated many efforts that support this priority, including:

- **Increased Funding for Our Schools:** Governor Murphy increased K-12 funding by more than half a billion dollars and raised funding for pre-K by more than $100 million over the last two years.[12]
- **Computer Science for All:** The Administration has invested $4 million in education grants over the past two years and created a Computer Science for All State Plan outlining the State's goals to expand access to rigorous education programs.[13]
- **Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act:** Approved by New Jersey voters as part of a $500 million package in November 2018, this act increased support for vocational-technical schools and community colleges.[14]
- **Perkins V State Plan:** The Department of Education (DOE) has drafted a plan for federal funding authorized by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), which outlines the State's blueprint to prepare students for 21st century careers through instructional approaches such as work-based learning.[15]
- **Community College Opportunity Grant (CCOG):** This historic commitment enables low- and moderate-income students to attend any of the 18 county colleges tuition- and fee-free. CCOG awards cover any balance of tuition and approved educational fees that remain after accounting for all other grants and scholarships that an eligible student receives. More than 7,000 students received CCOG grants in the most recent semester, and thousands more were found eligible for other federal and state grants that enabled them to attend county college tuition- and fee-free.[16]
- **Higher Education State Plan:** The Administration's implementation of the higher education plan introduced New Jersey's first outcomes-based funding rationale for higher education and created the Making College Affordable working group to consider partnerships with four-year colleges and universities to establish transparent, predictable, and guaranteed pricing that students from all backgrounds can count on.[17]
- **Educational Opportunity Fund:** The New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) provides financial assistance and services such as counseling, tutoring, and developmental course work to students from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The Administration has added $3.75 million to the EOF to support 650 more students at over 40 participating institutions.[18]
- **Criminal Justice Reform:** In addition to providing additional funding for re-entry programs, Governor Murphy convened the New Jersey Criminal Sentencing & Disposition Commission to address racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system. The Commission released its report in November 2018 and called for the elimination of mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent drug and property crimes.
- **New Resources for Immigrants:** Governor Murphy increased funding for the Tuition Aid Grants program by over $12 million and expanded its reach to working adults and undocumented students.[19] He also established the Office of New Americans through Executive Order No. 74 to advance immigrant and refugee integration.
- **Expanded Addiction Recovery Initiatives:** Part of the Governor's opioid strategy, the Opioid Recovery Employment Program is a $5 million competitive grant that supports training and employment opportunities for 600 individuals in 6 targeted counties whose workforce conditions or trajectories have been impacted by the opioid epidemic.[20]
- **Broader Support Services:** The Administration has changed policy and increased outreach to make it easier for community college students to access food assistance and to improve access to child care services.
- **Expanded Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities:** In 2018, the Administration launched NJ ABLE to allow individuals with disabilities to save tax-free for expenses, including education, without losing eligibility for Medicaid and other benefits.

Strategy 1

Expand Access to Opportunity

New Initiatives: Access to Opportunity

New Jersey's existing initiatives have made important strides in minimizing the barriers between many of our residents and career success, but we can still do more. The following new efforts will build upon the Administration's existing commitments to ensure equitable access to opportunity for all Garden State residents.

Launch the Opportunity Meets Innovation Challenge

Building on the higher education plan, the Opportunity Meets Innovation Challenge will strengthen New Jersey's colleges, support the next generation of diverse leaders in our state, and maintain New Jersey's place as a leader in higher education. This new competitive grant program will be open to all public and nonprofit colleges and universities and will focus on helping these institutions implement best practices for helping students complete their degrees that have been vetted by Governor-appointed working groups. The grants issued through the Challenge have the potential to benefit more than a half-million college students across New Jersey.

Make College More Affordable

Leaving New Jersey for an out-of-state college should not be seen as a cost-saving measure. Ensuring that New Jersey's colleges and universities are affordable for students who remain in-state is crucial for retaining the students who come out of our top-notch K-12 education system and keeping top talent in the state. Significantly expanding affordable college options to even more low- and moderate-income students is critical to growing New Jersey's talent pipeline.

Building on the Murphy Administration's historic commitment to tuition-free community colleges and the recommendations of the Making College Affordable working group, the State will consider new ways to partner with four-year colleges and universities to establish transparent, predictable, and guaranteed pricing that students from all backgrounds can count on from their first class to commencement day.

The CCOG is one example of these efforts in action, as are guaranteed predictable pricing models at Rutgers-Camden, Rutgers-Newark, New Jersey City University, and William Paterson University. In order to facilitate this kind of commitment on an even broader scale, New Jersey will continue to move toward a more equitable distribution of funding for higher education by improving upon the completion- and equity-focused funding rationale launched in 2019 to reward colleges that support low-income and minority students.

Expand Access to Opportunity for Targeted Populations

Creating more opportunities for immigrants, justice-involved individuals, veterans, people with disabilities, and other targeted populations is crucial to preparing New Jersey's talent system for the future.

To improve outcomes for people with disabilities, we will implement the $10 million tax credit enacted in the $15 minimum wage law to help them join the workforce.[21]

The Department of Corrections (DOC) has begun a prerelease inmate employment navigation program that is helping inmates prepare resumes and job applications, hosting job fairs, and actively matching employers with inmates as they are ready to return to work. This program will strengthen DOC's partnership with DOL to connect ex-offenders with jobs in targeted industries. In addition, DOL's One-Stop Career Centers, which provide job search and training assistance, will continue to provide customized supports for ex-offenders.

DOL will also expand contextualized learning programs serving adult basic education and English-language learners so that they are ready for employment in high-demand jobs. New Jersey was recently selected to participate in the World Education Services (WES) Skilled Immigrant Integration Program (SIIP), a national program that provides technical assistance to help skilled immigrants and refugees integrate into the workforce.[22]

The plan will also support veterans' transitions to civilian life by developing collaborative partnerships with colleges and universities to recognize the credentials and experience veterans earn in service for degree credit. This will accelerate veterans' progress toward college degrees.

Finally, we will work with unemployment offices and DOL's One-Stop Career centers to ensure adult learners are aware of the CCOG Program.

Strategy 2

Train Individuals for In-Demand Jobs

Technological disruptions in legacy economic sectors and new, innovation economy business models are creating historic changes in our training systems and labor markets. Preparing workers with the skills they need to succeed in modern jobs is critical not only to ensuring New Jerseyans are able to take advantage of the opportunities available to them, but also to growing businesses currently located in New Jersey and attracting new businesses from around the country and across the globe.

New Jersey's top-ranked education system and highly-skilled workforce have put us in a position of strength. As the economy continues to change, stakeholders from across New Jersey's Talent Development System, including higher education institutions, organized labor, government, nonprofits, and the business community, will have to work together to retain and train our talent in-state while simultaneously attracting new talent. This will require a multifaceted approach that adapts our education and training systems to meet the needs of the contemporary economy in which workers often have multiple jobs over the course of their careers, automation is replacing jobs that involve predictable cognitive or manual tasks, and companies' skill needs are rapidly changing.

Aspirations by 2025

1. **Better connect education and training to industry needs by increasing the number of post-secondary graduates employed in high-demand industries by 10 percent**

2. **Lead the region in preparing adults for in-demand jobs by ensuring that at least 25,000 additional adults enroll and graduate with a high-quality credential that helps them advance their careers**

Programs Launched Since January 2018

The Murphy Administration has re-established New Jersey's leadership in workforce training by implementing a variety of new programs and initiatives, including:

- **New Jersey Apprenticeship Network (NJAN):** In March of 2018, Governor Murphy created the first Office of Apprenticeship in New Jersey and launched the New Jersey Apprenticeship Network to improve New Jersey's apprenticeship offerings. The Network has launched the Growing Apprenticeship in Nontraditional Sectors (GAINS) and Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) programs, which have provided over $7 million in grants to fund training for over 1,200 apprentices and pre-apprentices in programs ranging from auto mechanic to dementia care to computer support specialist.[23] These programs have more than doubled the participation rates of Black, Latinx, and female apprentices compared to other programs in the state.

  In addition to direct funding, NJAN is focused on driving economic development by concentrating efforts on sector-focused, demand-driven training and education programs that lead to better-paying careers, advanced credentials, and skills attainment. NJAN develops sector and occupation apprenticeship pipelines by aligning state and federal pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. Examples include three technician apprenticeship programs at Princeton Plasma Physics Lab to further fusion energy research and a technical sales representative program with the NJ Manufacturers Extension Program. DOE's EXpanding Pre-Apprenticeship in a New Direction (ExPAND) grant also supports these efforts by helping high school students develop career-focused competencies and skills in New Jersey's key industries.

- **Dual Enrollment and Early College High School Initiatives:** DOE and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) are focused on creating on-ramps for students to explore postsecondary pathways. Last year, for example, the Administration launched the P-TECH model in New Jersey to bring together public high schools, community colleges, and businesses and provide students a chance to earn STEM-related associate degrees while still in high school.[24]

- **NJ Career Accelerator Internship Program:** This program provides on-the-job learning opportunities in STEM industries for students by reimbursing participating employers up to 50 percent of wages paid to new high school and college interns.[25]

- **STEM Loan Forgiveness:** The Administration created this program to attract high-skilled workers to the state by providing graduates of New Jersey colleges employed in STEM fields with $1,000 per year toward their student loans for up to 4 years. Funding is matched by the participant's employer. [26]

- **Innovation and Research Fellowship:** This fellowship funds PhDs continuing their research at New Jersey companies.

- **Wind Innovation and New Development (WIND) Institute:** Governor Murphy signed Executive Order No. 79 to create a council that will develop a plan for the creation of the WIND Institute, a regional hub for New Jersey's burgeoning offshore wind industry. As part of this work, the Administration is analyzing current training resources in New Jersey and the region and identifying the education and workforce development investments necessary to ensure New Jerseyans can participate in the state's new offshore wind industry.

- **Sector-Based Site Tours Program:** Aimed at piquing students' and families' interest in sectors of the economy that have long-term labor needs, this New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) pilot program brings students considering advanced manufacturing programs at vocational technical schools on fields trips to local manufacturers to learn more about their career opportunities.

- **New Jersey's Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS):** The adminstration is commited to leveraging this powerful longitudinal dataset that provides the basis for monitoring and evaluating New Jersey's talent development programs.

Strategy 2

Train Individuals for In-Demand Jobs

New Initiatives: Training Individuals for In-Demand Jobs

Continuing to invest in New Jersey's workforce is critical to supporting our residents and keeping the state competitive in today's economy. In addition to maintaining and improving existing programs, the Administration will launch new programs to address the following key priorities.

Create Pathways for Younger Residents

Taking college-level classes while still in high school provides the opportunity for students to explore both college and career options. New Jersey will continue to support the computer science industry by creating new opportunities for high school students to take advanced coursework, including rolling out the P-TECH 9-14 School Model in more schools. We will expand the number of school districts that partner with community colleges to provide high school students access to early college credits. The Administration will also scale up engagement programs in targeted sectors, such as the NJEDA's Sector-Based Site Tour program. These efforts will ensure families and learners have a better understanding of how their education decisions can set them up for high-quality careers.

At the same time, the Administration will revamp the NJ Career Accelerator Internship program to increase the number of employers offering these experiences and ensure additional students gain work-based learning experiences through the program.

Increase On-the-Job Training

Internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training are all vital forms of work-based learning that bridge education, training, and employment to benefit both students and employers. Students and job-seekers "earn and learn" and employers have a direct pipeline to talent. Since January of 2018, the number of approved apprenticeships in New Jersey has increased by 56 percent.[27] The Administration plans to build on this success and make existing apprenticeship programs more relevant to today's economy by incorporating new offerings in the innovation sector and other targeted industries.

New Jersey launched NJPLACE (New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education) in 2010 to assist registered apprenticeship graduates with receiving college credit. In November of 2018, OSHE and DOL announced a partnership for the NJPLACE 2.0 initiative, which will expand the reach of degree apprenticeship programs across the state.[28] The Administration will soon announce grant opportunities for colleges to participate in NJPLACE 2.0.

Provide Customized Support for Growing Industries

Sector-based industry partnerships are a national employer engagement best practice that allows industry groups to inform government and educators on sector needs for economic growth. The Administration will launch New Jersey's own program in early 2020, starting with the manufacturing sector due to high employer demand. These partnerships will engage businesses in target sectors and use the insights gained from these conversations to help community colleges and early college high schools craft sector-specific programs that give students a head start on learning the skills necessary to succeed in today's economy.

The Administration will work with community colleges to build career pathways that allow students in at least two sectors to gain credits in non-degree programs and to continue on to degree programs. This will help people complete degrees while they work, opening new doors to higher wages, broader autonomy, and greater responsibility over the course of their careers. The administration will work to ensure residents across all regions of New Jersey have access to credentials that align with the in-demand sectors in the Governor's economic plan to realize their full career potential.

Connect Education to In-Demand Career Opportunities

To ensure students can compete in today's labor market, data on in-demand skills and jobs must inform postsecondary educational offerings. The Administration will increase efforts to connect postsecondary education to the skills employers are seeking by strengthening oversight and implementing new efforts to collect data that provides accurate information on labor market demand and the value of credentials. OSHE, DOL, and other relevant state agencies will collaborate to ensure that institutions align their career-oriented programs with labor market demand and that students and institutions alike can access the information needed to make strong decisions. We will also implement new mechanisms for soliciting feedback from industry and will make relevant insights available to postsecondary institutions.

Support Strategies for Rapid Re-Employment and Lifelong Learning

Research demonstrates that early intervention to assist newly unemployed job-seekers reduces the likelihood of chronic and long-term unemployment. To better serve unemployed workers, New Jersey will re-imagine the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program as New Jersey Re-Employment Insurance Program (REIP).

This re-envisioned program will provide unemployed people access to an active re-employment process, starting with mandatory meetings with re-employment counselors within two weeks of filing for benefits. The REIP model will incorporate national best practices and evidence-based interventions such as digital job coaching tools that will be available via the New Jersey Career Network, waivers, and bonuses for employers who hire workers in the program. REIP will also include workers who are self-employed or engaged in alternative arrangements.

To address large-scale challenges, the Future of Work Task Force appointed by Governor Murphy in 2019 will evaluate and prepare for the opportunities that technological advancement will bring, identify, and implement innovations to encourage employers to invest in training, protect worker rights and safety, and improve lifelong learning opportunities. The Task Force is currently exploring a wide range of policies and developing a series of pilot projects and initiatives with plans to release a comprehensive set of recommendations and initial projects in 2020. The Task Force has already created a free, open, and searchable Future of Work Policy and Practice Catalog,[29] which tracks best practices and policies regarding the future of work, including lifelong learning and skill building. We drew on the Task Force's ongoing work to help develop Jobs NJ.

Strategy 3

Match Talent to Jobs

Connecting companies that need to fill positions with well-qualified job-seekers is critical not only to keeping businesses in New Jersey and attracting new companies to the state but also to making sure New Jersey residents are benefitting from the state's expanding innovation economy. Fortunately, many New Jersey residents are already qualified for today's jobs, and Governor Murphy's investments in people are preparing the next generation of talent. To make sure companies can fill their positions with New Jersey workers and that workers from all backgrounds have equal access to these opportunities, the Administration will provide employers with coordinated assistance from the State to address their most pressing talent needs.

Aspirations by 2025

1. **Solve complex access-to-labor challenges by creating a Talent Action Roadmap process to craft and deliver custom talent development roadmaps for New Jersey businesses, with a goal of completing plans for at least 100 companies**

2. **Become a national model for hiring best practices and high-quality jobs by recognizing and celebrating Governor's Choice employers, including an initial cohort of at least 200 exemplar employers**

3. **Ensure access to job-demand information for job-seekers by annually publishing enhanced materials on high-demand jobs and pathways to rewarding careers**

Programs Launched Since January 2018

The explosion of the global innovation economy in recent years has caused major changes to economies around the world, and New Jersey has been affected by those changes just like every other state. To adapt to these changes and position New Jersey to benefit from this new economy, the Murphy Administration has launched a variety of initiatives, including:

- **Office of Economic Transformation (OET):** Created within the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) in support of Governor Murphy's economic development plan and innovation economy agenda, the Office of Economic Transformation (OET) accelerates the growth of the New Jersey's economy by developing and implementing a wide range of programs that enhance the State's long-term economic competitiveness in strategic sectors. [30] The OET has partnered with the Department of Labor (DOL), the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE), and the Department of Education (DOE) on workforce opportunities in both legacy economic sectors such as manufacturing and new areas of the New Jersey economy, including offshore wind and sports wagering technologies.

- **Data for the American Dream:** This foundation-supported initiative[31] aims to support innovative efforts to expand access to education and career data through partnerships that include both public and private agencies and organizations. New Jersey was one of only three states to receive funding through a competitive grant process. [32] These resources will enable New Jersey to modernize how it guides students and job-seekers toward better career decisions.

- **Business First Stop:** This new web portal has been developed based on direct feedback from the business community to allow anyone interested in starting or expanding their business in New Jersey to get the answers they need in one location.[33]

- **UPSKILL:** This competitive grant program reimburses employer costs associated with upskilling frontline employees. UPSKILL provided funding to more than 220 businesses in 2019.[34]

Strategy 3

Match Talent to Jobs

New Initiatives: Matching Talent to Jobs

Our existing programs have put New Jersey at the forefront of the national innovation economy. Now is our chance to build on this strong foundation. The following new initiatives will cement New Jersey's place as an economic leader for years to come.

Launch NJ Talent Solutions

New Jersey businesses often require solutions that are specifically tailored to them, especially in today's rapidly-changing economic landscape. NJ Talent Solutions will help employers address their challenges head-on by bringing together multiple government agencies to use innovative hiring and training strategies to help businesses solve pressing talent challenges.

The NJ Talent Solutions process will begin with a comprehensive Talent Needs Assessment, a structured conversation with an employer about talent challenges. Based on this Needs Assessment, the Administration will create a Roadmap for the employer. This Roadmap could include support to access existing programs, training for new sourcing and development approaches, or the launch of a project to solve a structural barrier. Interventions could also include working with universities, colleges, or training providers to modify or create new credential granting programs.

NJ Talent Solutions will be able to scale up and down to address challenges of various sizes and complexities. If a sector-wide obstacle emerges, the program will have the capacity to coordinate a large-scale response that incorporates feedback from multiple leading businesses in the sector in alignment with the State's Industry Partnership approach.

Similarly, NJ Talent Solutions will also be able to work on a smaller scale, connecting small businesses and entrepreneurs exploring launching a business in New Jersey with the state's talent programs and initiatives to ensure that employers are aware of resources to help them recruit and train new workers and upskill their existing workforce.

1. Conduct a comprehensive talent needs assessment with a company

2. Coordinate across agencies (e.g., DOL, OSHE, EDA, BAC) to develop customized talent action roadmap
   - A. Facilitate access to existing programs and resources
   - B. Training on talent sourcing best practices
   - C. Support to solve a structural talent barrier (e.g., last-mile transit access, lack of nearby childcare)
   - D. Coordination with universities, community colleges and training providers to modify a certification program (if needed)

3. Work with employers to implement the talent action roadmap

4. Scale applicable solutions

Launch the New Jersey Career Network (NJCN)

The New Jersey Office of Innovation, DOL, and the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University have developed a pioneering digital coaching and support platform to help residents find meaningful employment. Following a pilot program, a beta version of the New Jersey Career Network[35] platform launched in January 2020. The NJCN digital platform incorporates best and promising practices from research on career coaching and high impact job search techniques to help job-seekers navigate the job search process and make good decisions about education and training options. Throughout 2020, NJCN will be enhanced to integrate labor market information and other key data to more effectively orient job-seekers' search activities by providing additional information such as industry demand trends and income opportunity. Additionally, in conjunction with the state's Data for the American Dream project, future development will also provide tailored guidance to job-seekers regarding training that meets their personal and career needs, helping them by screening out low-performing education and training programs.

Expand Customized Training Programs

The DOL will expand its existing customized training programs such as UPSKILL, a competitive grant program that reimburses employers for costs associated with training frontline employees. By helping employers source and grow talent from within, employers will benefit from more a productive workforce and employees can benefit from wage increases as they gain skills and become more valuable to the company.

These training programs will be crafted at both the company-specific and the sector levels, starting with pilot programs in the offshore wind and bio-manufacturing sectors in 2020. Customized training programs that address targeted workforce needs may be one of the potential outcomes for companies that go through the NJ Talent Solutions process. The allocation of training grants will prioritize those employers who have qualified for state tax incentive programs. Moreover, as part of any new corporate tax incentive regime, targeted training resources should be provided to ensure New Jersey residents can be trained for the in-demand jobs created by companies moving to or expanding in the state.

Launch the Governor's Choice Employer Program

Many companies in New Jersey already provide high-quality jobs, think creatively, and use innovative talent attraction and development strategies. To celebrate employers investing in a stronger and fairer economy, the Administration will create a "Governor's Choice" designation that recognizes companies that implement hiring best practices and provide good jobs.

Governor's Choice employers will represent the full scope of New Jersey's business landscape, including large, mid-size, and small organizations from both the for-profit and non-profit sectors. Certifications will last up to five years and can be earned by offering family-sustaining wages and benefits, pursuing skills-based hiring to combat stigmas associated with not having a Bachelor's degree, developing innovative education and training programs, or hiring from overlooked talent pools.

The Governor's Choice designation will recognize an initial cohort of at least 200 employers by 2025. The Administration will highlight awardees in marketing campaigns and Governor's Choice Employers will be able to advertise the designation to potential employees. To increase the number of high-quality employers in the state, the Administration will also offer assistance to companies that want to improve their hiring and compensation practices to achieve the Governor's Choice standard.

Publicize High-Demand Jobs Data

To help students, parents, prospective employees, and institutions make informed decisions, the State will provide transparent and accurate information about what industries and occupations are in high demand and lead to well-paying careers. The State will publish an annual "High-Demand" jobs report and will map two training and career pathways for high-demand industries each year. These resources will form the basis of a State marketing and outreach campaign to ensure that parents, students, and guidance counselors are using all available resources to make high-return talent investment decisions.

Attract Talent to New Jersey

To strengthen New Jersey's position as a location of choice for talent, the Administration will undertake a new marketing effort to ensure that workers in key industries residing in our neighbor states are aware of all the benefits New Jersey has to offer them and their families, including our top-ranked public school system. This information campaign will also specifically highlight new state initiatives – both part of Jobs NJ and beyond – including the recently enacted minimum wage increase and the state's expanded Paid Family Leave program.

New Jersey City University

IMPLEMENTATION

Jobs NJ is a valuable roadmap that lays out a clear statement of New Jersey's values and goals as we continue to address the evolving challenges our workers and companies face. However, it is critical that we see this plan not as a rigid prescription for New Jersey's future, but instead as a living, breathing vision that can grow and adapt as we implement new programs, experiment with new ideas, and see what works and what doesn't here in New Jersey.

We look forward to collaborating with a broad range of stakeholders that represent the full diversity of New Jersey's industries, students, and workers as we implement this plan. We are at the beginning of an exciting process, and we welcome the opportunity to engage the entire New Jersey community in this critical work.

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