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northeast florida

Workforce Development Assessment

September 2018

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Introduction



About the Strategy

In March 2018, JAXUSA Partnership, Northeast Florida Regional Council, CareerSource Northeast Florida, and other partners initiated a Regional Economic Development Strategy to improve regional competitiveness and collaboration throughout Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties. Avalanche Consulting, a national economic development consultancy, and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), a national nonprofit focused on lifelong learning, were selected to facilitate the preparation of the economic development and workforce development strategy.

Once complete, Elevate Northeast Florida will have four chapters:

Chapter 1: Economic Assessment & Community Benchmarking

The first chapter of the Elevate Northeast Florida Strategy includes an in-depth analysis of the region's current economic and demographic conditions, in comparison to national and statewide trends, as well as selected benchmark regions. The first chapter also includes a SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) based on both quantitative and qualitative information gathered through focus groups, interviews, and an online survey.

Chapter 2: Target Industry Validation & Update

Chapter 2 examines the current status of the region's existing target industries and niche sectors that can be integrated into an updated target list for future economic development efforts. This Target Industry Validation & Update includes written profiles for each target industry, marketing messages, and an industry trend analysis.

Chapter 3: Workforce Development Assessment

The Workforce Skills Assessment report analyzes the skill sets of Northeast Florida's workforce and highlights workforce attributes that distinguish Northeast Florida from the competition or need improvement. Chapter 3 will also include an examination of existing educational pathways, current and potential gaps in workforce supply, and opportunities for transitioning workers into higher growth careers.

Chapter 4: Marketing & Strategic Plan

The final chapter of Elevate Northeast Florida will provide marketing and community investment recommendations to help the region be even more competitive globally. Chapter 4 will also include an implementation timeline, estimated budget, and performance metrics that will equip Northeast Florida leaders with the tools it needs successfully implement the Strategy.



Project Partners

The Elevate Northeast Florida Strategy is being developed by JAXUSA Partnership, CareerSource Northeast Florida, and the Northeast Florida Regional Council in partnership with Avalanche Consulting, CAEL, and local residents, public organizations, and private businesses.

JAXUSA Partnership

JAXUSA Partnership is a private, nonprofit division of the JAX Chamber and is Northeast Florida's regional economic development initiative. Its mission is to be a catalyst for economic growth and maximize the region's unique resources to aggressively recruit jobs and private capital investment to the region. JAXUSA coordinates economic development efforts across a seven-county region that includes Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties.

Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC)

The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) is the regional planning organization for seven Northeast Florida counties (Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Putnam, Nassau and St. Johns) and their 27 municipalities. The mission of the NEFRC is to celebrate the unique assets of Northeast Florida and to engage its people, businesses, governments and organizations. In 2009, NEFRC adopted a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Updated in 2012 and 2015, the CEDS buttresses other economic development efforts in the region through identifying programs and projects essential to the region's economic development objectives.

CareerSource Northeast Florida

CareerSource Northeast Florida is a publicly funded agency that provides extensive workforce-related services to six counties on Florida's First Coast – Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties. CareerSource opens the door to improved employment opportunities through education, training, and career services for workers. CareerSource administers an annual budget of more than \$20 million.

Northeast Florida Residents & Businesses

Development of the Elevate Northeast Florida Strategy involved face-to-face discussions with private business leaders, representatives of philanthropic organizations, economic development professionals, and other civic champions. Additionally, more than 1,300 residents and business owners completed an online survey as part of the economic development strategic planning process.

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Project Partners (continued)

Avalanche Consulting, Inc.

Avalanche Consulting is the nation's premier economic development strategist. Avalanche is deeply driven to make a positive impact and seek clients who are equally inspired to energize their economies. Headquartered in Austin, Avalanche was established in 2005 and its team has a combined 80+ years of experience working with more than 150 cities, counties, and regions across the country.

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

CAEL is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to put meaningful learning, credentials and work within reach for every community. CAEL works to remove policy and organizational barriers to learning opportunities, identify and disseminate effective practices, and deliver value-added services. Since its founding in 1974, CAEL has been providing colleges and universities, companies, economic development organizations, labor organizations, and state and local governments with the tools and strategies they need for creating practical and effective lifelong learning solutions to address long-term skills needs.



Steering Committee Members

The Elevate project partners and consulting team sincerely thank the members of Elevate Northeast Florida's Strategy Committee for helping inform and guide the development of this strategic plan. Members include:

Tony Allegretti, *Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville*
 Katrina Austin, *Flagler County DEO*
 Dr. Perry Bechtle, *Mayo Clinic*
 Brian Bergen, *Putnam County EDC*
 The Honorable Aaron Bowman, *City of Jacksonville*
 Michelle Braun, *United Way of Northeast Florida*
 Debbie Buckland, *BB&T*
 Carolyn Clark, *Urban Land Institute*
 Josh Cockrell, *Infinity Global Solutions*
 Rena Coughlin, *Nonprofit Center*
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 Karen Everett, *St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce*
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Elizabeth Feustel, *Jacksonville Civic Council*
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 Jake Gordon, *Downtown Vision*
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 Will Ketchum, *Burdette Ketchum*
 Robin King, *CareerSource Flagler Volusia*
 Jana Kooi, *Florida State College at Jacksonville*
 Dr. Anna Lebesch, *Steering Committee Co-Chair, St. Johns River State College*
 Eric Mann, *First Coast YMCA*
 Phyllis Martin, *United Way of Northeast Florida*
 Trina Medarev, *World Affairs Council*
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 Sherri Mitchell, *Nassau County EDB*
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 Candace Moody, *CareerSource Northeast Florida*
 Alan Mosley, *Regional Transportation Commission*
 The Honorable Don O'Brien, *Flagler County*
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About This Report

This Workforce Development Assessment is the final piece of the Elevate Northeast Florida Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The assessment provides an in-depth analysis of the education, talent, and workforce in the JAX region. The report begins with qualitative analysis, followed by a gap analysis and ends with more detailed goals and strategies based on our findings.

Information Gathering and Key Takeaways

Stakeholder Engagement

During this project, CAEL and Avalanche hosted several workshops with the steering committee, workforce partners, and the regional forum. Additionally, there were 13 interviews, an online survey, 16 focus groups, and seven half-day county workshops with leaders and stakeholders across the region. From this outreach, key themes were identified and integrated into the goals and strategies.

Education & Talent SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis provides another format for sharing themes that evolved from Elevate Northeast Florida's to-date research. The SWOT melds quantitative analysis with stakeholder input in order to summarize the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as they relate to Education and Talent in the region. The SWOT serves as an inspiration for the final strategy's recommendations and marketing messages.

Workforce Plan: Goals, Strategies, and Best Practices

The Workforce Plan is a comprehensive analysis with detailed goals, strategies, and best practices based on all qualitative and quantitative data collected throughout this project. Key themes that are the focus of this strategy involve Awareness, Access & Alignment, Engagement & Career Mobility, Innovation & Elevation, and Resiliency.

Education Asset Inventory (EAI)

A review of secondary and postsecondary education and training programs identifies and inventories programs that support the target industries in the Northeast Florida region. We reviewed program offerings from secondary Career and Technical (CTE) programs, industry certifications, associate degrees, and doctorate level programs. The data in this analysis is based on institutions' course catalogs and available online information, and only includes program availability; student enrollment, and outcome measures were not included in the inventory. This section also includes the regional data overview, industry sector analysis and a review of workforce supply gaps.

