



**CareerEdge**  
**FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE**

CAREEREDGE FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE

# 2025 EVALUATION REPORT

CREATED BY: ELEVATE DATA

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# CareerEdge Funders Collaborative

## 2025 Evaluation Report

March 2026

### Evaluation Executive Summary

Year-Over-Year Totals

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2010-2025</b>
Invested in workforce development	\$1,536,547	\$20,000,850
Workers trained	447	8,588
Certifications earned	540	10,776
Workers who earned raises	217	5,409
Annual earnings gains	\$2,567,698	\$44,669,441
Return on investment*	\$9.11	\$9.83
Promotions earned by workers	100	1,937
New employers engaged	10	527
New jobs created by employer partners	78	2,078

\* ROI calculation: Total aggregate earnings gains over CareerEdge investment in wage-growth programs (excludes STC Tiny Home, Internship, and Leadership programs).

## 2025 Program Summary

### 2025 Training Inputs by Program

<b>Program</b>	<b>Total Invested</b>	<b>Partner Invested</b>	<b>CareerEdge Invested</b>
Upskilling Workers	\$1,347,970	\$1,174,865	\$173,105
Bridges to Careers  Fast Track	\$104,634		\$104,634
On-the-Job Training	\$11,341	\$7,294	\$4,047
Internship Reimbursement*	\$52,728	\$39,662	\$13,066
STC Tiny Home*	\$2,498		\$2,498
Leadership Training*	\$17,376	\$8,545	\$8,831
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,536,547</b>	<b>\$1,230,366</b>	<b>\$306,181</b>

\* Not a wage-growth program; not included in wage change calculation and ROI.

### 2025 Training Outputs by Program

<b>Program</b>	<b>Workers Trained - Duplicated</b>	<b>Workers Trained - Unduplicated</b>	<b>Credentials Earned</b>
Upskilling Workers	263	255	210
Bridges to Careers  Fast Track	91	91	152
On-the-Job Training	2	2	
STC Tiny Home*	41	41	178
Internship Reimbursement*	9	9	
Leadership Training*	49	49	
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>540</b>

\* Not a wage-growth program; not included in total direct investment and wage change calculation.

## Wage-Driven Trainee Outcomes by Program

<b>Wage-Driven Program</b>	<b>Start Wage</b>	<b>End Wage</b>	<b>Wage Difference</b>	<b>CareerEdge Investment*</b>	<b>Annual Earnings Gains**</b>
2025 Upskilling Workers	\$26.12	\$27.18	\$1.06	\$173,105	\$562,224
2024 Upskilling Workers***	\$30.75	\$32.25	\$1.50		\$602,160
Bridges to Careers Fast Track	\$12.83	\$20.20	\$7.37	\$104,634	\$1,394,994
On-the-Job Training	\$17.00	\$19.00	\$2.00	\$4,047	\$8,320
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$281,786</b>	<b>\$2,567,698</b>

\* Total investment for 2025 only.

\*\* The average hourly wage difference multiplied by the total number of unduplicated trainees at full-time equivalence of 2080 hours. Note that workers/trainees may be counted in more than one program category.

\*\*\* The 2024 Upskilling Workers data has been included to provide a comprehensive multi-year view of trainee progress. See the Outcome Evaluation Update section below for further details.

### Outcome Evaluation Update

As part of the 2025 evaluation analysis, the evaluation team reviewed the outcome reporting schedule in relation to the eighteen-month training cycle of the Upskilling Worker program. Because training spans multiple years, a natural disconnect exists between the year training ends and the year final outcomes are reported.

For example, of the 237 trainees who attended training in 2025, 71 (30%) reported post-training wages. The limited data is due to training programs that were completed near the end of 2025 or are continuing into 2026. The most comprehensive outcome data for the 2025 cohort of trainees will be finalized in the 2026 employee reports.

To provide a more accurate and complete picture of the program' impact, we have integrated the 2024 trainee outcomes into the 2025 annual evaluation report. While the 2025 data represents a "progress update," the 2024 data offers the final "year-two" outcome report, reflecting the full benefits of the completed training cycle.

## **Total Economic Impact**

The annual earnings gained represents the estimated income gains for one-year of full-time employment at the average hourly wage gain per trainee. However, the total economic impact for the area is greater than the trainees' annual income due to the additional economic activity generated from the increased earnings. The U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis provides direct effect multipliers by industry to estimate the total economic output of changes in earnings and employment (see methodology on page 25).

The total economic impact of the of nearly **\$2.56 million dollars** in increased earnings is roughly equivalent to **\$3.85 million dollars**.

The **78 new jobs** created equate to roughly **142 new employment opportunities** in the regional economy.

Additionally, the study by Hollenbeck (2012) demonstrates that for every \$1.00 spent on workforce upskilling, the public return (in the form of increased taxes and lower benefit usage) often ranges from \$2.50 to \$10.00 over the trainee's working life.

## Upskilling Workers

### Program Description

The goal of the CareerEdge Upskilling Workers program is to connect employers who need skilled workers with people looking for better jobs and higher wages. CareerEdge supports employers in the healthcare, manufacturing, skilled trades, and transportation industries. The partnership is employer-led and is designed to train the next generation of skilled workers.

### Population Served

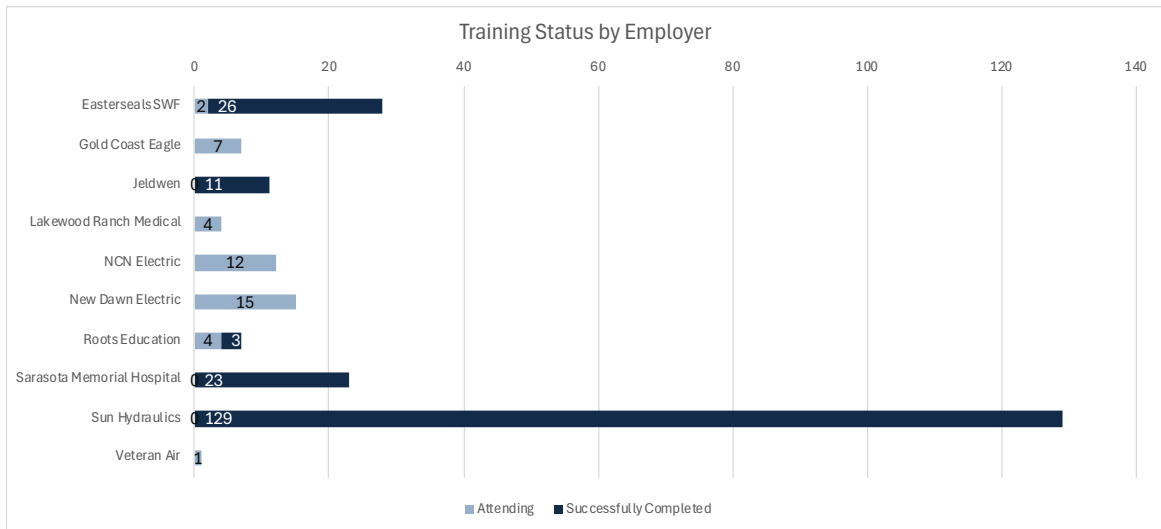
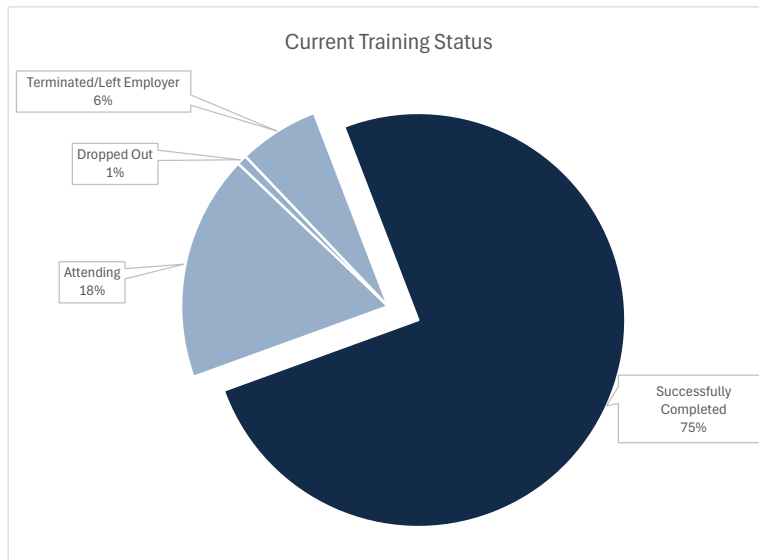
The CareerEdge Upskilling Workers program engaged thirteen employers in the Upskilling Workers program. Ten employers trained new employees in 2025, and 9 employers provided updates on their 2024 trainees.

<b>Employer</b>	<b>2025 New Trainees</b>	<b>2024 Trainee Update</b>
Adams Group		✓
Badger Bobs		✓
Bartelt Packaging		✓
Easterseals SWF	✓	✓
Gold Coast Eagle	✓	
Honeywell		✓
JELD-WEN	✓	✓
Lakewood Ranch Medical	✓	
NCN Electric	✓	
New Dawn Electric	✓	
ROOTS Education	✓	
Sarasota Memorial Hospital	✓	✓
Sun Hydraulics	✓	✓
Veteran Air	✓	✓

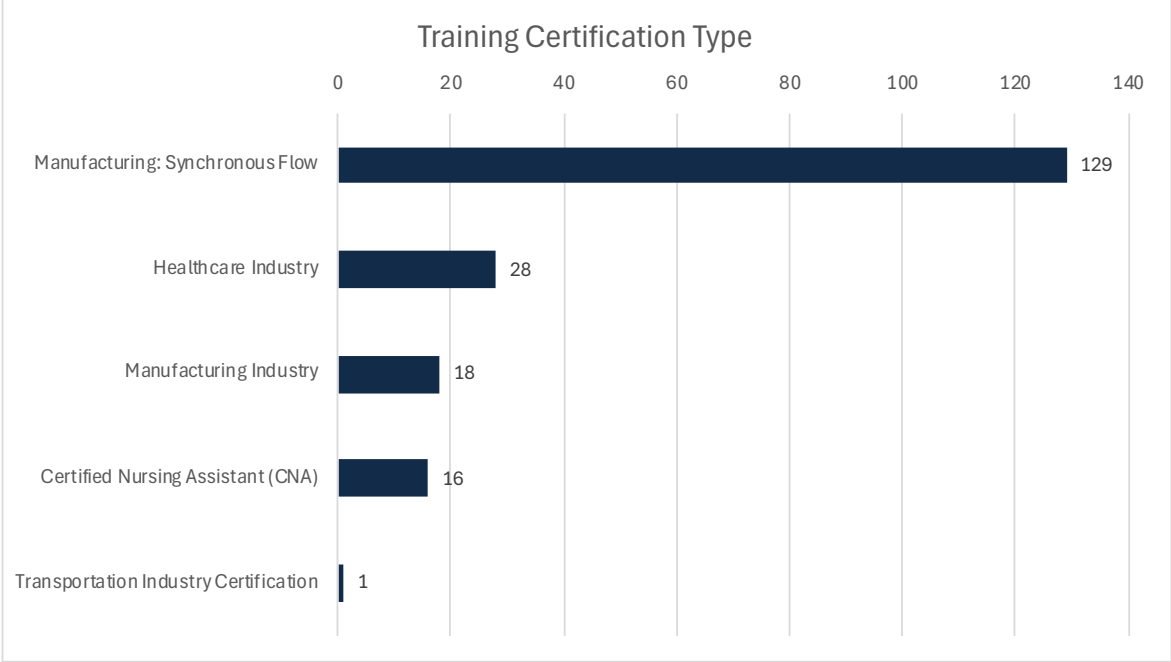
## Trainee Outputs

	Duplicated	Unduplicated	Certifications	Promotions
2025 New Trainees	263	255	210	48
2024 Trainee Update	194	193	7	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>

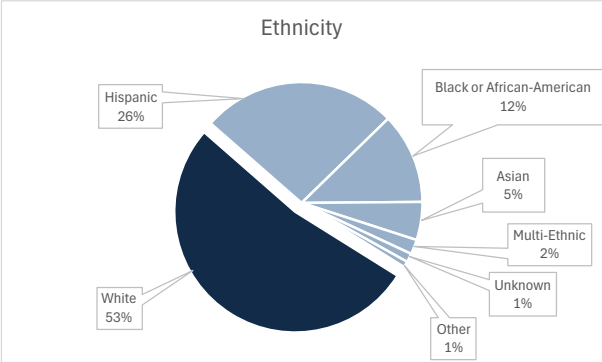
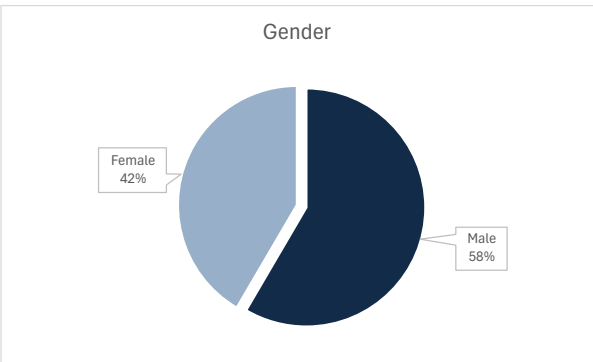
The Upskilling Workers program trained 255 trainees across 263 trainings in 2025. Of the 255 new trainees, 75% successfully completed their training in 2025. An additional 18% were still attending training as of December 31, 2025.



2025 trainees earned a total of 192 certifications through their participation in the Upskilling Workers program. Most certifications were earned in the manufacturing industry, either as Manufacturing: Synchronous Flow (67%) or as a general manufacturing industry credentials (9%). Healthcare certifications as both general industry certifications (15%) and Certified Nursing Assistant licenses (8%) make up most of the remaining certifications.



Of the 2025 trainees, 42% of trainees were female and roughly 46% were non-white/BIPOC. The 2025 percentage of female and non-white/BIPOC participants grew from 22% female and 32% non-white/BIPOC in 2024.



## 2025 Training Outcomes by Industry

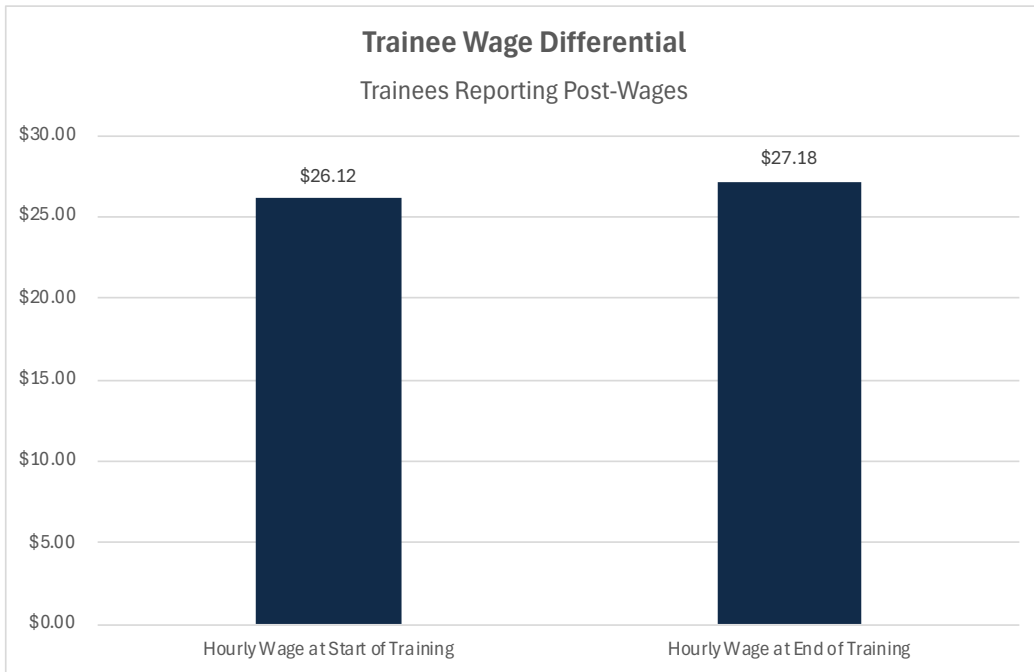
	# Trained	# Successfully Completed	#Attending	# Earned Raises	# Earned Credentials
Manufacturing	154	143	4	13	147
Healthcare	68	49	6	15	44
Skilled Trade	29	0	28	9	0
Transportation	12	0	7	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>192</b>

## 2025 Training Outcomes Progress Update

For those who successfully completed their training or were still attending as of December 31, 2025, the average wage at start of training was \$23.12.

Note that the average starting wage in 2025 was \$7.66 (25%) less than the 2024 average starting wage of \$30.78. This starting wage reduction indicates that CareerEdge was successful in reaching a population with greater financial need. Consistent with the findings of Hendren and Sprung-Keyser (2020), CareerEdge’s strategic shift to lower-wage trainees maximizes the economic return for the community. Shifting lower income trainees into high income employment has the dual benefit of lowering public benefit usage and increasing tax contributions.

Of the 71 trainees who provided the post-training wages in 2025, the average pre-training wage was \$26.12 and the average post-training wage was \$27.18. The average wage increase of \$1.06 represents a 4.1% increase, which equates to an additional \$2,205 in earned income per trainee per year for full-time employment and \$562,224 in annual earnings gains across all trainees.



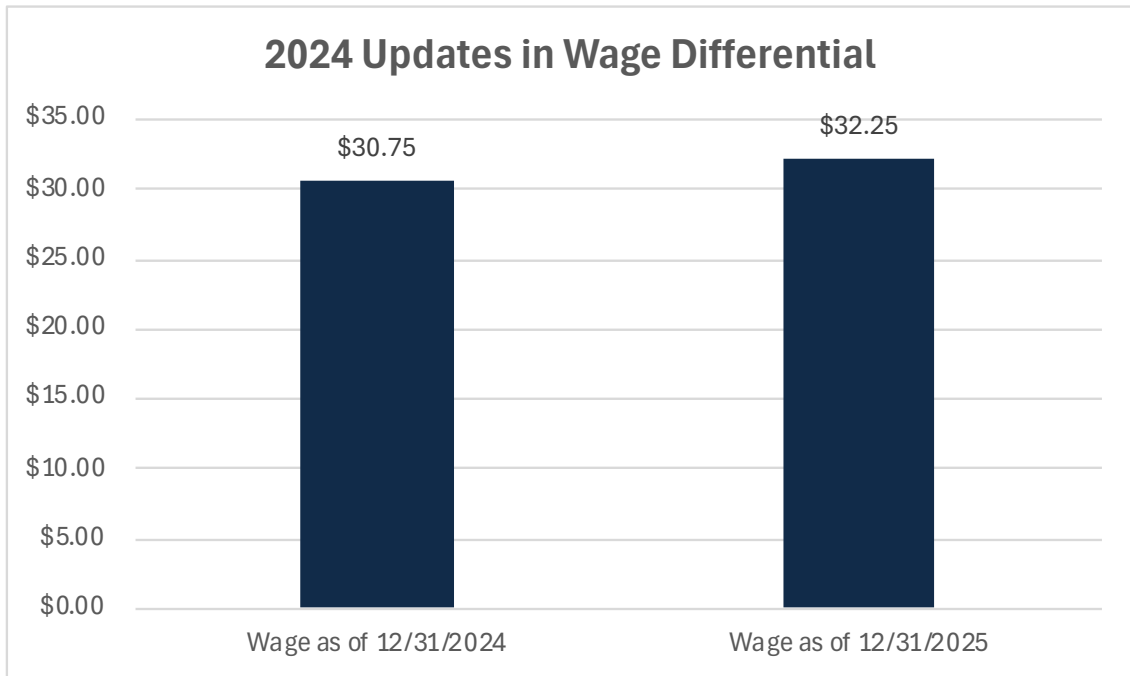
## 2024 Trainee Outcomes and Update

Second year updates of the Upskilling Workers trainees who completed or were attending training in 2024 reflect the long-term benefits of trainings on employees.

Employers provided updates on 194 total trainees, of whom 175 had completed training and 19 were still attending in 2024. Of those still attending, seven completed their training in 2025.

Of the total trainees providing updates, 157 were still employed and 145 received an additional wage increase. Additionally, seven trainees received additional certifications and 52 received a promotion.

Of the total 194 trainees providing updates, 159 provided updated wage data as of year-end 2025. For those reporting end-wages, the average hourly wage as of the end of 2024 was \$30.75 and the average hourly wage as of the end of 2025 was \$32.25. The \$1.50 per hour wage increase equates to an additional \$3,120 in earned income per training and \$602,160 in annual earnings gains across trainees.



### **2024 Additional Compensation**

In addition to hourly wage increase, employers frequently provide additional compensation in the form of commissions, bonuses, shift differentials, and overtime pay that can boost the earning potential of employees post-training.

Of the 194 trainees included in the 2024 trainee update report, employers indicated that 56 trainees (29%) received some form of additional compensation. One employer provided annual bonuses of \$10,000 to six of their ten trainees. Another employer provided commission-based compensation of over \$80,000 to one employee, with an average of \$30,000 in commission across their five employees.

The inclusion of additional compensation in the data analysis suggests that the trainings provide a gateway to significantly higher total earnings, extending beyond the standard hourly rate.

CareerEdge will continue to explore the impact of additional compensation on trainee outcomes in future evaluations.

### **Employer Qualitative Feedback**

Employers were asked to provide information about how the CareerEdge Upskilling Workers program positively impacted their workforce. Employer feedback highlighted several benefits, including improved retention and morale, operational

efficiency and safety, professional growth and credibility, and direct financial impact. Representative responses include:

"Our root cause/counter measure training has improved our leaders' ability to identify actions to improve and resolve problems. Resolving the root cause vs a surface cause...has improved our labor costs by 3% per unit."

"The training platform...has assisted many technicians, beyond those enrolled, to complete training safety, trade-specific, and general leadership...We saw a reduction in driving and on-the-job safety incidences in 2025 and an improvement in employee Net Promotor Scores by 21 points."

"Apprentices require less correction, allowing forepersons to focus on execution and productivity. This impact was recently demonstrated on a project that was completed three weeks ahead of schedule, with several apprentices actively contributing on the job."

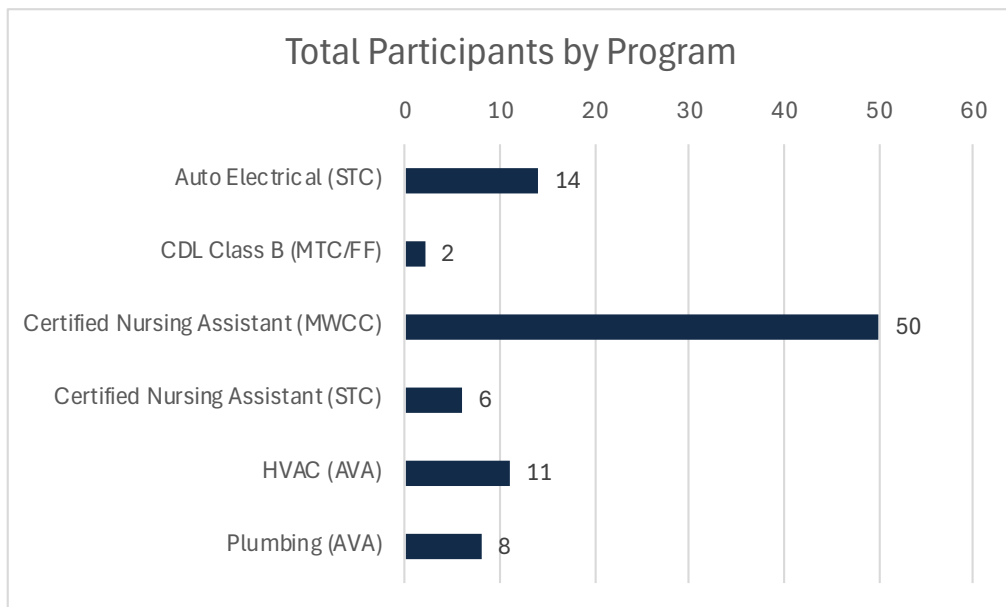
## Bridges to Careers

### Program Description

Bridges to Careers is a program designed to enhance the skills and earning capacity of our community members by providing necessary training and credentialing to enter the workforce successfully. Training may take place using a “FastTrack” approach, upskilling the participants in an accelerated timeframe while preparing them to meet the skills employers need in today’s job market.

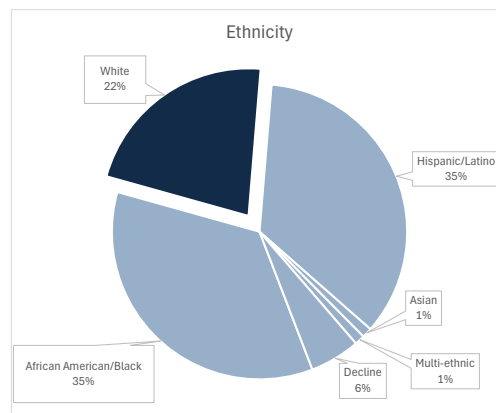
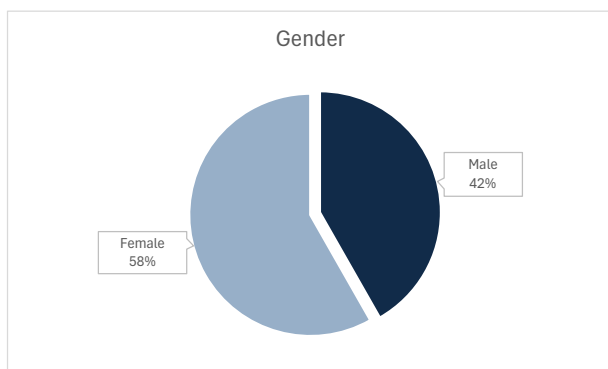
### Population Served

The Bridges to Careers program provided training to 91 trainees\* in 2025 across six training programs. The Bridges to Careers program collaborated with Manatee Technical College/Fleet Force (MTC/FF), Suncoast Technical College (STC), American Vocational Academy (AVA), and Meridian West Central College (MWCC).



Over 58% of participants were female and over 73% were non-white/BIPOC.

\* One trainee was identified as an outlier due to high initial and end wage. The trainee is included in trainee outputs, but not in outcomes.



In 2025, MWCC provided a Spanish-language Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Bridges to Careers program to 15 participants. The percentage of participants that are Hispanic/Latino jumped from 7.5% in 2024 to 35% in 2025.

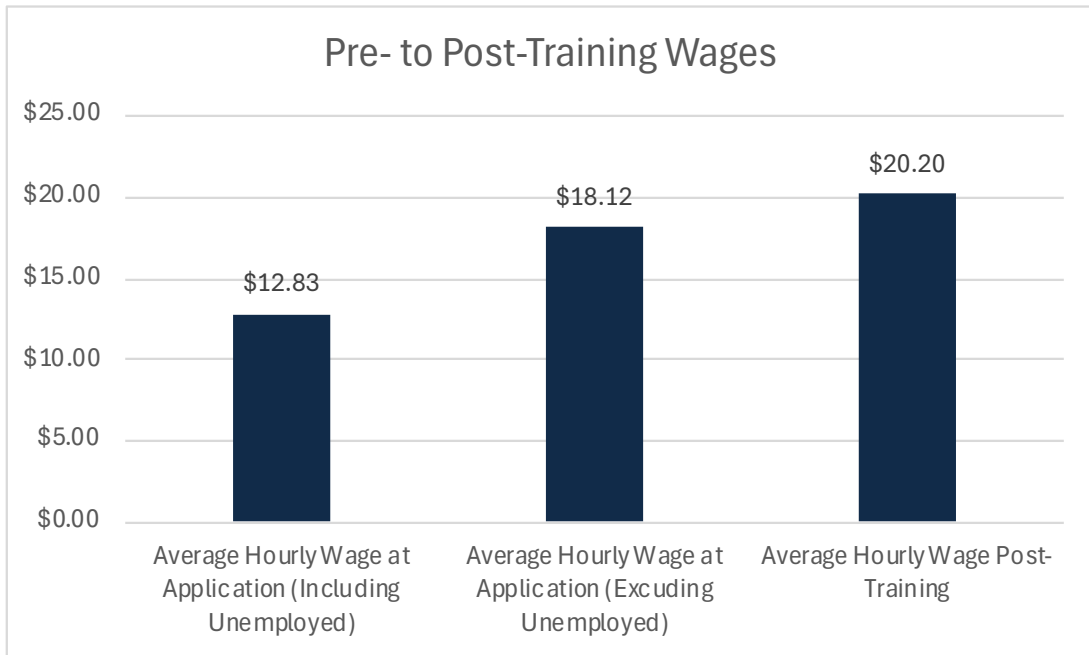
Twenty-nine (32%) participants were unemployed prior to starting the program. Of all employed participants, the average number of hours worked per week was 34.5.

The overall average starting wage (including unemployed participants) was \$12.83 and the average starting wage for employed participants only (excluding unemployed participants) was \$18.12.

New in 2025, participants provided information on their household income and public benefits at the start of their training. Of those who provided this data, 87% were less than 200% of the federal poverty level and 27% received public benefits. Targeting low-income participants may have an outsized effect on the local economy. By moving individuals from public assistance into tax-contributing roles, Bridges to Careers is helping to reduce public expenditure while expanding the local tax base.

## Outcomes

Of the 91 total participants, 83 participants (91%) completed training. Of the training completers, 46 provided post-training outcome information. Ninety-one percent of participants were employed post-training and 72% received a wage increase. The average hourly wage for employed participants post-training was \$20.20. The average wage increase exclusive of unemployed participants is \$2.08 (\$4,326 annual earnings gain). The average increase in wages, inclusive of unemployed participants, is \$7.37 per hour (\$15,330 annual earnings gain).



## Qualitative Feedback

Bridges to Careers participants were asked to provide feedback on the impact of their program participation in terms of their personal and professional growth as well as specific success stories as a result of the program. Participants highlighted the technical skills gained, the hands-on learning opportunity, and the increased sense of community with their program cohorts.

### Personal and Professional Growth

"The program had a dual impact: it sharpened my professional technical skills—like mastering vitals and safety protocols—while helping me grow personally in my communication and resilience. I graduated not just with a certification, but with a clear sense of purpose."

"Our instructors were nurses who shared valuable, practical tips and techniques—insights that most people would otherwise only gain after spending a significant amount of time working in the medical field or as a CNA."

"Participating in the auto electrical course has taught me a lot about persevering through learning complicated new topics to excel in my career."

## Personal Success Stories

"I was assigned to a resident who was frequently agitated and refusing care. Instead of rushing... I used the communication techniques we learned in class—lowering my voice [and] making eye contact... By the end of the shift, she was calm and thanked me for 'actually listening' to her. That was the moment I realized that being a CNA is as much about emotional support as it is about physical tasks."

"One standout moment was when the program connected me with a mentor... who reviewed my portfolio and introduced me to a hiring manager... That referral led to an internship I wouldn't have landed on my own. The program also covered my certification exam fees, which would've been a barrier otherwise."

"Being together with like-minded individuals throughout the process was an amazing opportunity... specifically because two of my classmates worked at our sister store... Seeing how different a store can be even when it works with the same vehicles... was very illuminating."

Participants were also asked to provide personal insight into how their participation in the program increased their access to resources and opportunities. Participants highlighted the importance of removing the financial barrier to training and how this allowed them to focus on the training materials and learning new skills. They also mentioned the importance of having access to the mentorship and networking opportunities that are not available through traditional job searches.

## Access to Resources and Opportunities

"CareerEdge didn't just fund a class for me. They helped open the door to a new chapter, new opportunities, and a future that feels 10 times bigger than what I thought was possible before... This opportunity is what allowed me to move to a new city and step into a completely different environment filled with growth."

"By covering 'hidden costs,' CareerEdge allowed me to focus 100% on my studies rather than worrying about how to fund my next step. Without their assistance, I might have struggled to afford the certification exam fees or the necessary clinical supplies like scrubs and a stethoscope."

"[CareerEdge] consistently ensured we had access to the right resources—whether that meant connecting us with professionals to guide us on topics many adults are expected to navigate independently, such as presenting

oneself professionally... or arranging financial guest speakers who offered valuable advice on credit."

"Sin dudas es lo más relevante facilitarnos recursos a los que por supuesto nos sería imposible acceder por nuestra cuenta en estos momentos, lo que constituyó una aclaración en lograr planes y avanzar." (*Without a doubt, the most relevant thing is providing us with resources that would have been impossible for us to access on our own, which helped us clarify our plans and move forward.*)

Participants were also asked to provide feedback for improvement. Participants generally focused on enhancements to the programming, suggesting a strong programmatic foundation. Suggestions included increased hands-on learning, greater workforce partnership, and streamlined onboarding.

### Improvement Suggestions

"Suggestions I would make would be to add more shop time into the course. I realize there's a lot to learn in the classroom but I feel the class learned the most on shop days."

"Maybe try to get a list of companies to apply to before graduation... and [include] even more hands-on practice with real equipment and real-world troubleshooting."

"It would be nice to explore other facilities or environments such as nursing homes, rehabs, and hospitals for the clinical rotation to receive a variety of experiences."

## Apprenticeship/On-the-Job Training

### Program Description

The Apprenticeship/On-the-job (OJT) training is a hands-on approach to workforce development that enables employees to build the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to perform a specific job. Through CareerEdge funding, employers received partial wage reimbursement during the training period, reducing the cost of upskilling their workforce. Employees earn a paycheck while learning in the actual work environment, creating application of skills while supporting both employee retention and employer capacity building.

### Population Served

OJT supported two trainees from one business in 2025. All trainees (100%) were male and white. The trainees were between the ages of 18 and 29.

### Outcomes

Both OJT trainees received a \$2.00 per hour wage increase post-training. The average wages increased from \$17.00 per hour during the training period to \$19.00 post-training. The wage increase indicates a positive wage growth following program participation.



## Suncoast Technical College - Tiny Home 2.0

### Program Description

CareerEdge is a sponsor of the Suncoast Technical College Tiny Home 2.0 project, which allows Sarasota students to apply hands on construction skills. Students collaborate to construct a tiny house, providing them with comprehensive construction experience across various trades including building, carpentry, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and drafting. Once completed, the tiny house construction serves as an educational tool, being showcased at job fairs, schools, and parades.

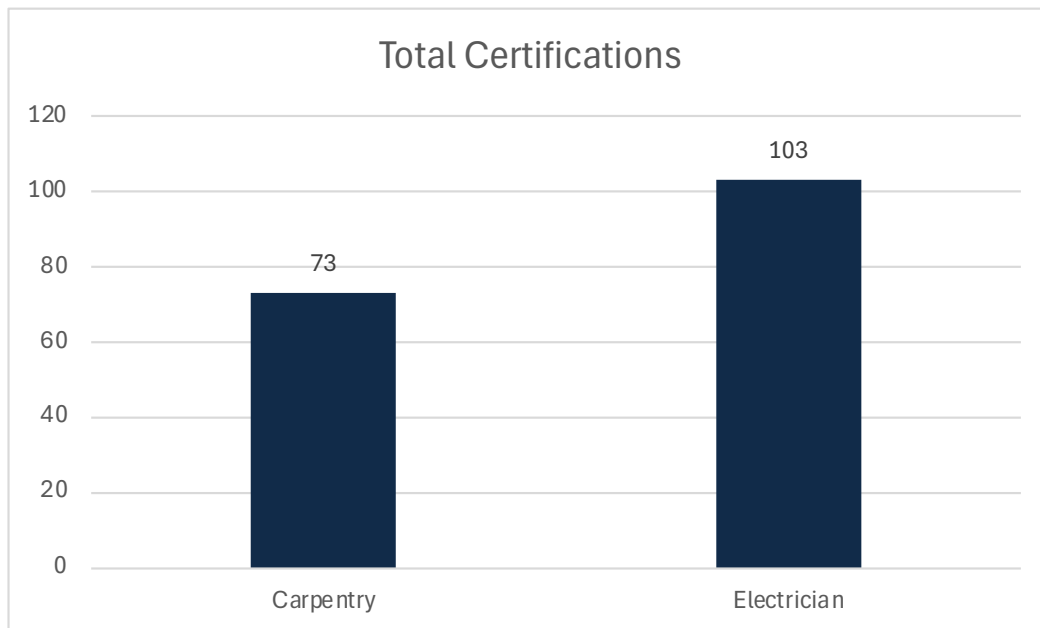
### Population Served

The CareerEdge STC Tiny Homes supported 41 trainees in 2025 in both carpentry and electrician programs. Less than 5% of trainees were female and 12% were non-white/BIPOC.

By the end of 2025, twenty trainees (49%) completed training and eighteen (44%) were still attending.

### Outcomes

The 2025 STC Tiny Home trainees earned a total of 176 certifications in 2025, 73 certifications (41%) in carpentry and 103 (59%) in electrician. Participants averaged 4.3 certifications per student.



# Internship Wage Reimbursement

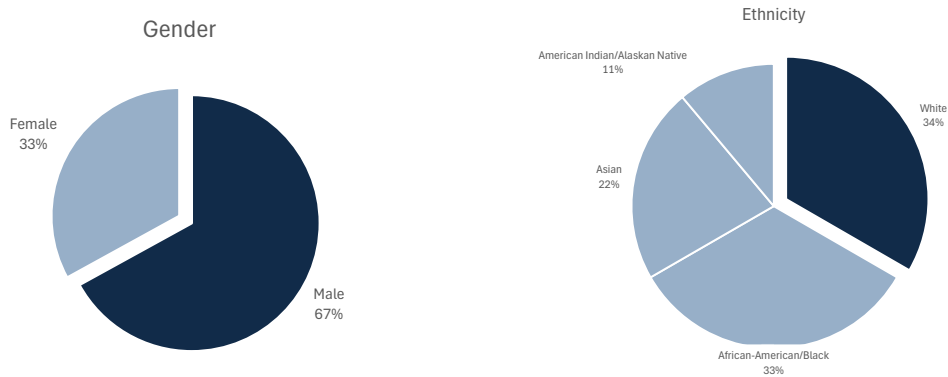
## Program Description

CareerEdge’s Internship Wage Reimbursement Program provides financial support to employers while supporting students’ employers. Employers can receive up to \$1,500 per intern for a maximum of two interns per calendar year. The program helps interns gain essential technical and professional skills needed for success in today’s workplace, while offering employers an affordable way to meet workforce needs and develop future talent.

## Population Served

The CareerEdge Internship Reimbursement program supported nine interns in 2025. All interns worked in the manufacturing industry. The average hourly wage during the internship period was \$18.72.

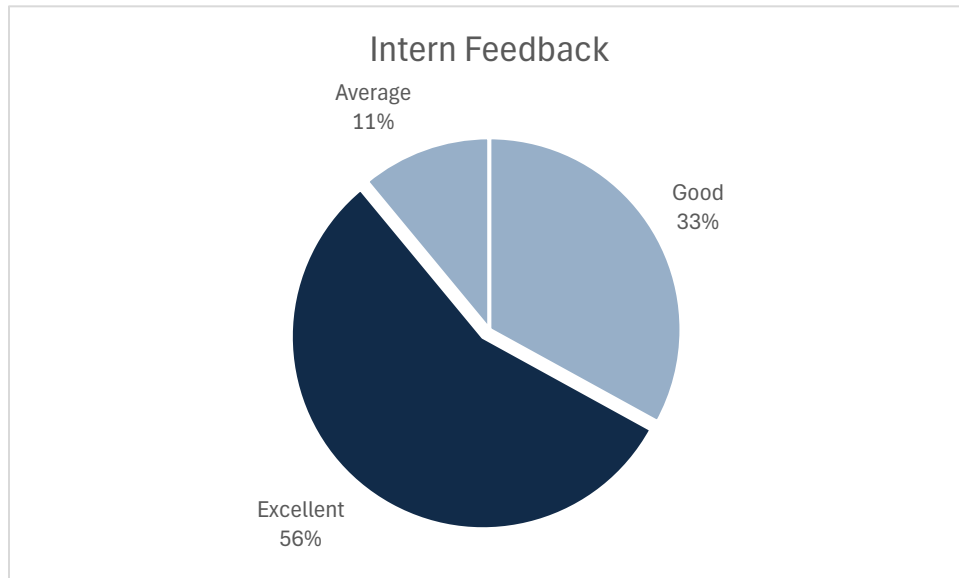
Of the nine interns, three (33%) identified as female and five (56%) identified as non-white and/or BIPOC.



All 9 interns (100%) indicated that they were planning to continue their education post-internship.

## Intern Outcomes and Feedback

Most interns rated their overall internship experience positively, with 56% rating it as “Excellent” and 33% rating it as “Good.” All respondents (100%) indicated that the internship experience better prepared them for the workforce.



### **Intern Qualitative Feedback**

In response to prompts related to their internship experience, interns repeatedly emphasized the practical, hands-on experience, the supportive work environment, and their improved career readiness.

#### Hands on Experience

"They trusted me with an important project."

"I got to work with different tools and machines while being able to see how a real engineering company works."

"Being able to design things and apply them in a real engineering setting was really engaging and valuable to me."

#### Supportive Work Environment

"There was a perfect level of assistance as well as independence."

"Everyone here was really nice and willing to help."

"I believe the best part of the experience was collaborating with all sorts of people."

### Career Readiness

"This internship provided me with relevant experience in the workforce, both technically and professionally, that I can apply towards my first job."

"I never got to experience a real work/corporate setting before, so doing this gave me an idea of what it would be like."

"I have learned a lot about what I surprisingly like and dislike."

### Suggested Areas for Improvement

When asked how the internship program could be improved, interns suggested clearer onboarding, more structured work, and an increase in opportunities for collaborations.

"More structure with intern onboarding would improve this internship."

"Having a set project or a set task to do every day would have made it better."

"Having the interns on at least one big collaborative project with the other engineers would have been beneficial."

### **Employer Feedback**

All intern employers who provided feedback indicated that the internship reimbursement program (1) added value to their organization, (2) that they believed the intern was better prepared to enter the workforce as a result of the internship, and (3) that they plan to continue to offer internships in the future.

Employers reported that interns delivered high-quality work with strong professionalism, gained meaningful real-world experience that increased workforce readiness, and provided significant organizational value by contributing to projects and strengthening future talent pipelines.

### Strong Intern Performance

"Consistently demonstrated strong work performance, completing tasks efficiently and with attention to detail."

"Everyone [Intern] worked with said she was a pleasure to work with and always had a great attitude."

“He was very professional in his interactions with teammates and was creative and offered alternative ideas.”

#### Increased Workforce Readiness

“[Intern] developed valuable technical and professional skills and adapted well to real-world work environments.”

“This internship gave him an opportunity to see what it is to work in a fast-paced professional engineering environment.”

#### Organizational Value

“Interns contribute meaningfully to ongoing projects while allowing our team to mentor and identify future talent.”

“We were able to gain a fresh perspective with a product that the sales had stalled.”

“This program allows us to identify and work with talented young interns that can benefit the organization.”

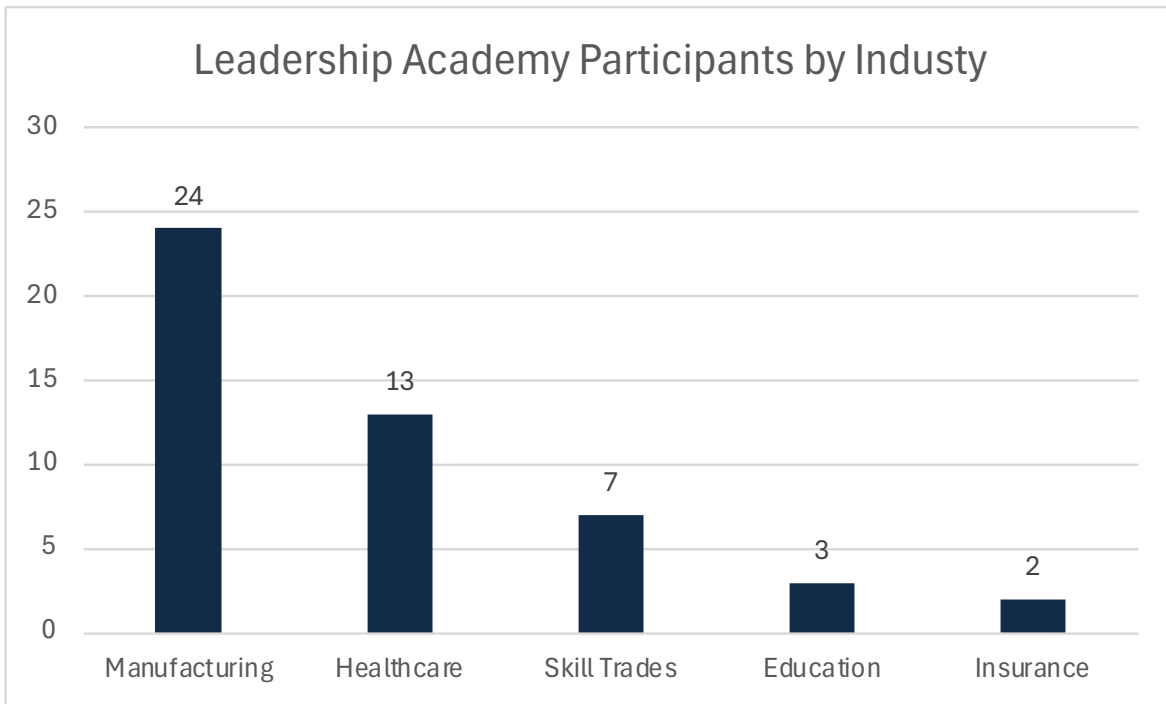
# Leadership Academy

## Program Description

In 2025, CareerEdge hosted two Leadership Academy training courses. Each course consisted of three interactive sessions designed to strengthen employee retention, improve team performance, increase confidence and self-awareness, and enhance communication and leadership skills.

## Population Served

The Leadership Academy training sessions included participants from the manufacturing, healthcare, skill trades, education and insurance industries. The program reached 49 leaders from 17 different organizations, including seven organizations (41%) that were new to CareerEdge programming.



## Participant Feedback

Leadership Academy participants were asked to complete a satisfaction survey after attending the course. Overall, respondents rated the course an average of 4.56 out of 5, reflecting a high level of satisfaction with the training program.

## **Qualitative Responses**

When asked to provide feedback on the leadership training, participants highlighted the practical leadership skills gained through the training, especially in their communication skills.

"[I most enjoyed] actually learning practical tools that I will be able to use in my day to day life."

"[The biggest takeaway was] recognizing how people with different behavioral styles work, and the importance of being aware and thoughtful of the different styles."

"We can all work on being even better listeners."

"[At] my age I can still learn and grow as a leader."

## Key Highlights

### **Chamber of Commerce Recognition: Top 3 Chamber in the Nation**

In 2025, for the second consecutive year, the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce was recognized as one of the Top 3 Chambers in the Nation by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE). This distinction reflects the organization's sustained excellence, innovative programming, and measurable impact in advancing regional economic growth and workforce development. The ACCE Excellence Awards categorize applicants based on organizational size and capacity, including annual revenue, membership base, community demographics, and staff resources. Finalists are selected through a rigorous peer-review process conducted by experienced chamber executives from across the country. Earning this recognition two years in a row underscore both the strength of the organization's strategy and the consistency of its results.

A key contributor to this recognition is the CareerEdge program, which addresses critical skills and wage gaps in the Greater Sarasota region. This initiative intentionally works across both the supply and demand sides of the labor market—engaging employers to identify workforce needs while strengthening training pathways to prepare jobseekers for in-demand careers. Through partnerships with higher education institutions and intermediary organizations, the program builds sustainable talent pipelines that align training with real-time employer demand.

"Being named a Top 3 Finalist across the United States and Canada for two consecutive years is an incredible honor. This recognition validates the work our team and partners do every day to strengthen our business community, expand opportunity, and deliver measurable impact across our region."

–Heather Kasten, President/CEO Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce

### **First Fully Accredited Spanish Hybrid ESOL CNA FastTrack Program in the State**

The CareerEdge ESOL CNA Program, developed in partnership with Meridian West Central College, represents the first fully accredited hybrid CNA training model of its kind in the state of Florida. This innovative program expands access to healthcare career pathways for Spanish-speaking individuals while maintaining rigorous industry standards.

All 15 enrolled students successfully completed the program. Participants are currently awaiting state certification testing and will soon be eligible to enter the workforce as Certified Nursing Assistants. Early outcomes are being monitored, including licensure attainment and job placement rates, to inform potential expansion and future cohorts.

This program demonstrates how targeted, employer-aligned training can increase workforce participation while addressing critical labor shortages in healthcare.

### **Upskilling Workers Grants - Registered Apprenticeship Support**

Through the Upskilling Workers Grant, funding was secured to expand apprenticeship support and strengthen employer partnerships across key industries. Of the eight employers receiving awards, four were supported in launching or expanding registered apprenticeship programs, including two in electrical trades, one manufacturer, and one transportation employer.

These investments directly support employer-driven workforce solutions and help businesses build, train, and retain skilled talent. Importantly, these efforts are intentionally aligned with publicly funded registered apprenticeship programs, strategically braiding resources to maximize impact and reinforce high-quality, work-based learning models.

This coordinated funding approach enhances sustainability, reduces duplication, and strengthens long-term workforce outcomes for both employers and participants.

### **Momentum in Skilled Trades and Long-Term Sustainability**

Support for skilled trades training continues to grow. CareerEdge secured new private funding to expand the Bridges to Careers Fast Track program, increasing capacity to serve additional participants and accelerate employer-aligned training opportunities.

In addition, a long-term private donor has committed \$1,000,000 to establish CareerEdge's first endowment fund. This transformational investment will be contributed over four years and will provide a sustainable funding foundation for future workforce initiatives. Organizational leadership is currently developing endowment policies and governance structures for approval by the Sarasota Chamber Foundation Board of Directors.

The establishment of this endowment represents a significant milestone in long-term financial sustainability and reinforces the organization's commitment to strategic, community-driven workforce development.

## **Funders Collaborative Recognition**

We extend sincere appreciation to our 2025 funding partners whose continued investment makes this work possible. Funders include Charles and Margery Barancik Foundation, Dwyer Workforce Development, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Sarasota County Government, Bank of America, Eppard Family Foundation, Florida Blue Foundation, National Fund for Workforce Solutions, Regions Bank Foundation, Truist Foundation, and Janet and Lewis Solomon.

Their collective support enables the organization to respond to evolving workforce needs, expand access to career pathways, and deliver measurable results for employers and jobseekers alike.

## Methodology

### Evaluator Information

The CareerEdge Funders Collaborative 2025 Evaluation Report was created by Katie Brown at Elevate Data.

Elevate Data conducted quantitative and qualitative analysis of the raw data and summarized the key points for the 2025 Evaluation Report.

Questions/feedback regarding the CareerEdge Funders Collaborative 2025 Evaluation Report may be directed to Katie Brown at 651-504-4046 or [katie@elevatedataconsulting.com](mailto:katie@elevatedataconsulting.com).

### RIMS-II Direct Effects Multiplier

The RIMS II (Regional Input-Output Modeling System II) multiplier is a tool used by economists to estimate the economic impact of various activities within a specific region. Developed by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), this model captures the ripple effects that occur in the economy as a result of an initial expenditure or production change.

The RIMS II direct effect was used in this evaluation to estimate total economic impact of CareerEdge outcomes. The direct effect is the immediate economic impact of an initial expenditure or activity. These multipliers vary by region and sector, reflecting the unique economic structure and inter-industry relationships within a specific area.

For this evaluation, all effects were generated for the Sarasota, Florida and Manatee, Florida regions. The multipliers were generated for wages and for new positions created across the following categories: manufacturing, hospital/healthcare, construction, insurance and other (general).

The RIMS II multiplier is a powerful analytical tool that helps stakeholders understand the broader economic implications of various activities, enabling more informed decision-making in policy and business development.

### Citations

Hendren, N., & Sprung-Keyser, B. (2020). *A Unified Welfare Analysis of Government Policies*. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 135(3), 1209-1318.

Hollenbeck, K. (2012). *Return on Investment in Workforce Development Programs*. W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

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