



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Florida Ready to Work is an innovative, new workforce education and economic development program. It is helping build a skilled workforce – a catalyst for retaining and creating high-wage jobs, attracting business investment and growing Florida's economy.

- ❖ Fully operational since only fall 2007, Florida Ready to Work has momentum and is poised to become a national model:
 - **49,500+ Credentials Awarded** – public high schools continue to be the Credential leader followed by regional workforce boards and public technical centers.
 - **151,500+ Courseware Hours Used** – equivalent of 17.3 years of job skills development in just 21 months.
 - **202,700+ Students/Jobseekers Enrolled** – a strong indicator of continued program growth in 2008-09.
 - **600+ Assessment Centers Registered** – high schools, community colleges, technical centers, adult education programs, regional workforce boards, juvenile justice programs, corrections and community-based organizations.

- ❖ More than 400 private and public employers statewide are using the program to identify qualified new hires, reduce hiring/training costs and build the skills of their workforce including:

Shands Jacksonville is one of the largest of nine hospitals in the Shands HealthCare family, serving Northeast Florida and employing more than 3,300. Employees at every level impact patient care, so every employee must have strong communication, reasoning and problem-solving skills. "Florida Ready to Work is helping us identify trainable employees who are up for the challenge," says Pamela McCaleb, Director of the Success Academy at Shands Jacksonville. Shands Jacksonville has hired 50 new employees using the program. Results include double-digit reductions in new hire turnover, faster training times and better attendance.

PGT Industries, the nation's leading manufacturer and supplier of residential impact-resistant windows and doors, has manufacturing and distribution plants in Venice, Fla., and Salisbury, N.C. and has 1,300 Florida-based employees. PGT is using the program as a hiring and promotional tool. Within the first 10 months of implementing the program, PGT reduced performance-related turnover among new hires by 30 percent and cut training time in half. "The program has been good for our business and for our employees," says Liz Evers, PGT manager of training and development. "Our employees are excited about the possibility of learning more to earn more."

Volusia County government has 3,500 employees and was looking for a way to identify more qualified, trainable employees, streamline its hiring process and reduce hiring costs. This spring, Volusia County government will begin requiring the Florida Ready to Work credential from all potential new hires for administrative support positions and all current employees being considered for promotion into administrative support positions.

- ❖ One of 30 states with similar programs, making the Florida Ready to Work Credential portable nationwide.
- ❖ Starting with the 2008-09 school year, all high school students who earn the Credential will receive a Florida Ready to Work designation on their high school diploma.
- ❖ Supported by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Florida, the HR Florida State Council, Manufacturers Association of Florida, and other business/industry groups statewide.