



BEDFORD AREA RESOURCE COUNCIL

Workforce Employment and Training Action Group
2025 Annual Report

Mission

To maintain an active community network focused on connecting and supporting Bedford County citizens who desire to improve employment and training opportunities that impact quality of life.

Vision

Citizens of Bedford County will have access to high quality resources and be empowered to secure and retain sustainable employment.

The BARC Employment and Training Action Group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 3pm. Andy Crawford is the Chair and Tim Saunders is the Vice Chair. Members of the Action Group represent a wide array of key partners:

- Adult and Career Education (ACE)- Luke Saechao
- Bedford Chamber of Commerce- Kayla Waller
- Bedford County Adult Education- Kathryn Smith
- Bedford County Department of Social Services – Andy Crawford, Amanda Powell and Tammy Lawhorn
- Bedford County Economic Development- Pam Armstrong and Lauren Thurston
- Bedford County Public Schools -
- Bedford Health Foundation- Denny Huff
- Central Virginia Community College- Richard Foster
- Citizen Member- Greg Modzelewski
- Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services (DARS)- Christian Wiscovitch
- Department of Corrections Probation and Parole- Stephanie Coughlan
- Five18 Family Services- Nicholette Antoniuk
- Lake Christian Ministries (LCM)- Michelle Swanson
- Town of Bedford Economic Development- Mary Zirkle
- Virginia Career Works Central Region- Traci Bildo and Tim Saunders

The meeting agendas are broken into Goals.

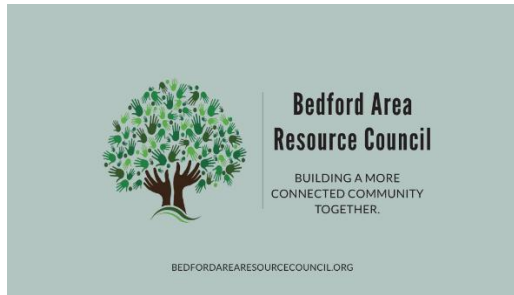
Networking

The Action Group has time each month for a partner presentation as appropriate. This year the group heard from Keith Kauhane, Virginia Department of Social Services, Regional Program Consultant for the Piedmont Region about the Public Service Program (PSP) and Community Work Experience Program (CWEP). These are work experience opportunities that can be arranged by each local Department of Social Services in partnership with non-profit community and government agencies to give citizens in the Virginia Initiative for Employment and Work (VIEW) volunteer work experiences to help them build their resume.

The group spends time announcing success stories and then time is allocated for people to ask questions or get feedback on citizen specific situations or barriers. This time has been helpful for the group to

hear specific examples about citizens who are trying to improve employment status or who are having barriers to training opportunities.

This year the group developed the BARC business card and flyer. This directs citizens to the BARC website via QR codes to the National Labor Exchange employment opportunities and to the Community Resource page. These cards will be shared with all partner agencies to connect citizens with the work being done by the BARC.



Community Engagement and Education

This year the members of the action group worked on the following events:

- The Bedford Chamber held a job fair at Jefferson Forest High School on April 18, 2025.
- Workforce Symposium on April 15, 2025, at the Virginian Hotel.
- Virginia Career Works and Bedford Economic Development worked jointly to sponsor a job fair at Staunton River High School on May 29, 2025.
- The Chamber of Commerce Job Fair in August.
- Virginia Employment Commission and Career Works sponsored a job fair in October in the VEC parking lot on Odd Fellows Road.
- CVCC career fair in October.
- Bedford ONE is a partnership between Bedford County Economic Development and Bedford County Public Schools. This partnership arranges tours of local businesses to help students prioritize their course work and other skills needed to obtain employment after graduation. Tours provided were:
 - The **2024–2025 Bedford ONE Tours** engaged almost 200 students, assisting in the development of a skilled and career-ready workforce.
 - September 25, 2024: Terry Volkswagen Subaru & Wicked Diesel/Automotive Tour (24)
 - October 30, 2024: VDOT / BRWA (17)
 - November 20, 2024: Southern Air / AMG (33)
 - January 29, 2025: Bedford County Fire & Rescue / 911 Center / BCSO (28)
 - January 30, 2025: Bedford Memorial Hospital / Bedford County Nursing Home (33)
 - February 26, 2025: Local & County Government — Waste Management, Tourism, Constitutional Officers (Reynolds, Perrow, Patterson), Community Development, Administration, Public Information (81)
 - March 26, 2025: Framatome (on site) / BWXT at LRBA (23)
 - The 2025 – 2026 school year:
 - October 22, 2025: Terry Subaru & Redco
 - November 19, 2025: Bison Printing & Smyth
 - January 22, 2026: Bedford Memorial Hospital & Centra College

- January 28, 2026: Sentry & Simplimatic
- February 18, 2026: F&R, 911, & Sheriff's Office
- February 22, 2026: All Things Government (this tour is exclusively for AP Government students)

In December 2024 the first Job Club was held at Lake Christian Ministries.

Adult Education began hosting their hospitality classes at Lake Christian Ministries in 2025. They are using the organization's new training room. This location is more centrally located and allows the ministry to make referrals directly to their recipients. Agape can send people to the class as well.

The Department of Social Services, Agape and Lake Christian Ministries met quarterly to collaborate on services and to discuss barriers/ ways to improve collaboration. These meetings prove to be extremely helpful for everyone.

Bridges Out of Poverty Classes were provided on March 14 and October 7, 2025, at the Bedford Welcome Center.

Getting Ahead Classes were held at the Agape Center and Lake Christian Ministries in the Spring and Fall of 2025.

This year the new CVCC Bedford Campus Director Richard Foster was hired. He is now attending the Action Group Meetings regularly. This collaboration initiated the addition of a link to the CVCC class schedule on the BARC website.

Data Collection

Virginia Career Works Central Region shared their data for Program Year 24 (ending in July 25) In that year there were 442 visitors to the center from Bedford. They also reported 90 Bedford County Citizens completed their orientation process and were referred to services.

Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services (DARS) reported in November the following data from their work with the Department of Social Services. In October 2024 DARS began using a conference room at the Department of Social Services once a month to meet with Department of Social Services referrals on site. Since that time, they have completed 35 Intakes. Of these, 19 have been placed in employment. Of this number 16 have been employed at least 90 days and were able to maintain employment and have been closed to services successfully.