



GEORGIA'S WORKFORCE READINESS OUTLOOK:

PREPARING TALENT FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

BUILDING ALIGNMENT ACROSS EDUCATION,
WORKFORCE, AND INDUSTRY TO SUPPORT LONG-TERM
COMPETITIVENESS

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Executive Summary

Georgia is entering a period of significant workforce transformation shaped by rapid technological change, evolving employer expectations, and new state and federal policy opportunities. The state of Georgia has the potential to strengthen its position as the nation's top state for business by becoming the nation's top state for talent. This white paper examines the forces influencing Georgia's workforce future and outlines strategies that support readiness, adaptability, and long-term economic competitiveness.

Key insights include:

- AI adoption, skills-based hiring, advanced manufacturing growth, and logistics expansion are reshaping the competencies required for success in Georgia's labor market.
- Employers across the state continue to report challenges related to talent shortages, workforce readiness, retention, and the need for adaptable workers who can learn and apply new skills quickly.
- State policy momentum, including the Top State for Talent Act, Workforce Pell expansion, and WIOA realignment, is creating new opportunities to strengthen Georgia's talent pipeline.
- Federal initiatives from the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education are accelerating the need for AI literacy, digital readiness, and modernized workforce training models.
- Workforce intermediaries serve as essential infrastructure for connecting education, training, and employment and are critical to a coordinated statewide workforce ecosystem.
- Workforce readiness and executive function skills are emerging as core predictors of long-term employment success and must be integrated into training, transition planning, and employer-aligned talent development.
- Short-term credentials, work-based learning, and employer-led upskilling models are becoming central to Georgia's talent strategy and require stronger alignment across systems.
- Georgia's workforce outlook through 2030 highlights both opportunities and risks, including the need to prepare workers for AI-enabled workplaces and high-demand career clusters.
- Strategic recommendations in this report outline a path for Georgia to build a fully integrated workforce ecosystem that supports readiness, adaptability, and long-term economic competitiveness.

Georgia has the policy alignment, employer engagement, and statewide infrastructure needed to lead the nation in workforce innovation. The next step is coordinated action that prepares every learner and worker for the future of work and positions Georgia as the model for developing adaptable, AI-ready talent.



Author's Perspective



Georgia is experiencing one of the most significant workforce transformations in its modern history. Landmark legislation, workforce system restructuring, employer-driven talent strategies, Workforce Pell expansion, and emerging Artificial Intelligence initiatives are reshaping how talent is developed across the state.

The convergence of state policy, federal investments, economic development expansion, and employer demand

has created a historic opportunity for workforce boards, educational institutions, employers, workforce intermediaries, and community organizations to redefine talent development for a rapidly evolving economy. At the center of this shift is a move from credential-based preparation toward skills-based readiness. Employers are seeking workers who bring technical competencies, executive-function skills, digital fluency, adaptability, and AI readiness.

Georgia's challenge is no longer job creation. Georgia's challenge is talent creation.

Workforce development is no longer simply about training people for jobs. It is about preparing individuals to navigate complexity, adapt to change, communicate effectively, collaborate well, exercise sound judgment, and sustain success in environments shaped by rapid technological change.

These human competencies have become essential workforce currency. The next frontier in workforce development is the intentional development and measurement of these skills alongside technical training, and the recognition that postsecondary transition planning is inseparable from workforce strategy. The pathways connecting education, training, employment, and economic mobility are increasingly interconnected, and success will require stronger alignment across systems and sectors.

Georgia has an opportunity to become a national model for talent development and AI-era employability by aligning employers, education systems, workforce boards, community organizations, and families around what matters most: Preparing people for sustainable success in work, education, and life.

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GEORGIA'S WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

A New Talent Development Framework

Georgia's workforce strategy is increasingly centered around:

- Employer demand
- Skills-based hiring
- High-demand career pathways
- Postsecondary completion
- Workforce readiness
- Industry-recognized credentials
- Work-based learning
- Artificial Intelligence readiness

The state's workforce ecosystem is becoming increasingly integrated across:

- K-12 Education
- Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)
- University System of Georgia (USG)
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs
- Economic Development agencies
- Employers
- Community-based organizations

This alignment positions Georgia as a national leader in workforce innovation.

STATE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE DRIVERS

Top State for Talent Act (HB 192)

The Top State for Talent Act represents one of the most significant workforce policy reforms in Georgia's history.

Key Provisions

- Aligns K-12, TCSG, and USG programs with workforce priorities
- Requires employer-validated pathways
- Establishes stronger accountability measures
- Aligns education and workforce investments
- Codifies high-demand careers into state policy

Strategic Significance

HB 192 formalizes a demand-driven workforce model in which public investments are directly connected to labor market outcomes and employer needs.

The legislation shifts workforce development from educational attainment alone toward workforce relevance, employability, and economic impact.

HB 38, HB 172, SB 85

Collectively these bills:

- Expand access to education and training that leads to in-demand careers
- Strengthen the connection between K-12, postsecondary education, and workforce systems
- Modernize Georgia's workforce governance and service delivery
- Improve readiness and reduce barriers for students and jobseekers
- Support employers by increasing the supply of skilled talent in high-demand fields

Strategic Significance:

These initiatives support learners who may otherwise step out of education while helping institutions improve completion and workforce outcomes.

FEDERAL WORKFORCE POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act remains the nation's primary workforce development framework.

Federal priorities include:

- Sector Partnerships
- Registered Apprenticeships
- Skills-based Hiring
- Industry-recognized Credentials
- Workforce System Integration
- Employment Outcomes
- Workforce Equity

Georgia's decision to place WIOA administration under TCSG represents a major structural change that aligns workforce programs more closely with employer demand.

Strategic Opportunity

Organizations capable of demonstrating measurable outcomes in:

- Employment placement
- Retention
- Credential attainment
- Wage progression

Will become increasingly competitive partners within Georgia's workforce ecosystem.

Perkins V: A Strategic Lever for Georgia's Workforce and Economic Development

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, reauthorized as the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), is the primary federal investment in career and technical education.

Who Perkins Supports

Perkins V provides formula funding to states to strengthen career pathways, modernize instructional programs, expand work-based learning, and ensure that learners gain the academic, technical, and employability skills needed for high-demand careers.

In Georgia, Perkins supports secondary and postsecondary CTAE programs by funding equipment, curriculum updates, instructor training, dual enrollment expansion, and career exploration beginning in middle school.

Why Perkins Matters for Georgia's Workforce Strategy

For Georgia, Perkins V functions as a strategic workforce lever that supports the state's shift toward skills-based talent development. The funding helps modernize programs in advanced manufacturing, logistics, healthcare, information technology, and skilled trades, all of which are central to Georgia's economic growth. Perkins also reinforces the development of employability skills, executive function, and career navigation competencies that employers consistently identify as essential for workplace success. As Georgia expands its focus on AI readiness, digital fluency, and human skills, Perkins provides a stable and flexible mechanism to support these priorities.

How Perkins Advances Economic Development

Perkins V strengthens the bridge between K through 12 education, technical colleges, employers, and workforce systems. It ensures that learners gain the skills needed to enter high-demand fields and supports regional economic development by aligning programs with employer needs. In a rapidly changing economy, Perkins remains one of Georgia's most powerful tools for building a future-ready workforce.

Perkins V remains one of Georgia's most powerful tools for aligning education and workforce systems to build a skilled, future-ready talent pipeline.

Workforce Pell: A Transformational Opportunity

Beginning in July 2026, Workforce Pell expands Pell Grant eligibility for short-term job training (8 to 15 weeks).

Eligible programs must:

- Align with high-demand occupations
- Deliver employer-recognized credentials
- Achieve strong completion rates
- Demonstrate employment outcomes

Strategic Implications

Workforce Pell fundamentally changes access to workforce training by allowing learners to pursue short-term credentials without traditional degree enrollment.

This expansion is expected to increase demand for:

- Technical training
- Career coaching
- Retention services
- Wraparound supports
- Workforce readiness programming

Higher Education Act (HEA): Federal Framework for Postsecondary Access and Accountability

The Higher Education Act of 1965 is the foundational federal law governing postsecondary education, financial aid, accreditation, and institutional accountability. HEA authorizes Pell Grants, federal student loans, campus-based aid, and Title III and V programs. It establishes the rules that determine which programs qualify for federal aid, how institutions demonstrate quality, and how students access and complete postsecondary education.

For Georgia, HEA shapes affordability, access, and completion across the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, and private institutions. As the state expands short-term training through Workforce Pell and strengthens skills-based pathways, HEA remains the federal anchor that connects financial aid policy, institutional performance, and student success.

HEA is central to Georgia's efforts to improve postsecondary transitions, increase credential attainment, and support equitable access to high-demand career pathways.

National Apprenticeship Act: Strengthening Earn-and-Learn Talent Pipelines

The National Apprenticeship Act of 1937 establishes the federal framework for Registered Apprenticeships, Youth Apprenticeships, and Pre-Apprenticeships. It sets quality standards, protects apprentices, and supports employers and intermediaries in developing earn-and-learn programs aligned with industry needs.

Apprenticeships are a critical component of Georgia's workforce strategy, particularly in advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare, logistics, and skilled trades. The Act enables Georgia to expand structured pathways that combine paid employment, technical instruction, and industry-recognized credentials.

As employers seek talent with both technical skills and workplace readiness, apprenticeships offer a scalable model for developing future workers while meeting immediate labor market needs. The National Apprenticeship Act supports Georgia's efforts to build sustainable talent pipelines that strengthen economic competitiveness and increase access to high-quality careers.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Advancing College and Career Readiness in K-12

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 governs federal K-12 accountability, school improvement, and college- and career-readiness requirements. ESSA supports academic achievement, career exploration, work-based learning readiness, and early postsecondary opportunities.

Because ESSA delegates authority to the state and local levels, implementation varies depending on where you are. In Georgia, the Georgia Department of Education oversees the state's ESSA plan. It utilizes the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) as its accountability system to measure school progress, student achievement, and readiness.

As Georgia focuses on readiness, executive function, and employability skills, ESSA provides a federal foundation for aligning K-12 education with the state's broader workforce and economic development goals.

ADA and Section 504: Ensuring Access and Equity in Education and Workforce Participation

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination and ensure equal access for individuals with disabilities in education, training, and employment.

These laws require institutions and employers to provide reasonable accommodations, accessible learning environments, and inclusive workforce practices. In Georgia, ADA and Section 504 support learners and workers across K-12 schools, technical colleges, universities, workforce programs, and employer settings. They play a critical role in expanding access to high-demand fields, supporting special populations, and ensuring that workforce development strategies are equitable and inclusive.

As Georgia strengthens its talent ecosystem, ADA and Section 504 remain essential to ensuring that all individuals can participate fully in education, training, and employment pathways that lead to economic mobility.

Additional Federal Programs Influencing Workforce Participation

- **TANF** (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) provides income support, work requirements, and employment services that help low-income families gain stability and enter the workforce.
- **SNAP** Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) funds employment, training, and supportive services for SNAP recipients to help them transition into sustainable employment.
- **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act** (IIJA) invests in broadband, transportation, construction, energy, and EV infrastructure, creating significant workforce demand in skilled trades and technical fields.
- **CHIPS and Science Act** expands domestic semiconductor manufacturing and advanced technology research, driving workforce needs in engineering, advanced manufacturing, and high-tech production.

FEDERAL AI WORKFORCE POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

The federal government has launched a coordinated set of AI-focused workforce and education initiatives across the Department of Labor and the Department of Education to prepare the nation for rapid technological change. These initiatives are designed to expand AI literacy, strengthen digital skills, modernize training programs, and ensure that workers, learners, and employers can adapt to an economy increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence.

Department of Labor Initiatives

- **The Make America AI Ready Initiative** focuses on building AI literacy and expanding AI-aligned training programs across the national workforce system.
- **The AI and Emerging Technologies Workforce Initiative** supports sector partnerships and training models that prepare workers for AI-impacted occupations.
- **The Pay for Performance Apprenticeship Expansion Program** prioritizes apprenticeships in AI, IT, cybersecurity, telecommunications, semiconductors, and advanced manufacturing.
- **YouthBuild AI Literacy Expansion** integrates AI and digital skills into pre-apprenticeship programs.

Department of Education Initiatives

- **The AI Ready Workforce Initiative** supports the integration of AI literacy, digital skills, and responsible AI use across K through 12, postsecondary, and adult education systems.
- **DOE's AI in Education Policy Guidance** provides direction on safe, effective, and equitable use of AI in teaching, learning, and school operations.
- **The National AI Research Resource Pilot** includes an education and workforce track that expands access to AI tools, data, and training for educators, students, and researchers.
- **Digital Equity and AI Literacy Initiatives** strengthen access to technology and foundational digital skills.
- **Career Connected High Schools Initiative** supports pathways that increasingly include AI, IT, and other technology-aligned fields.

Together, these federal initiatives signal a national shift toward preparing learners and workers for an AI-enabled economy. They reinforce the importance of AI literacy, digital fluency, human skills, and continuous learning as core components of workforce readiness.

For Georgia, these policies provide a federal framework that aligns with the state's economic development priorities and supports the development of a future-ready talent pipeline.

AI LITERACY AS A FOUNDATIONAL WORKFORCE SKILL

AI literacy is rapidly becoming a core workforce competency alongside:

- Reading
- Writing
- Communication
- Digital literacy

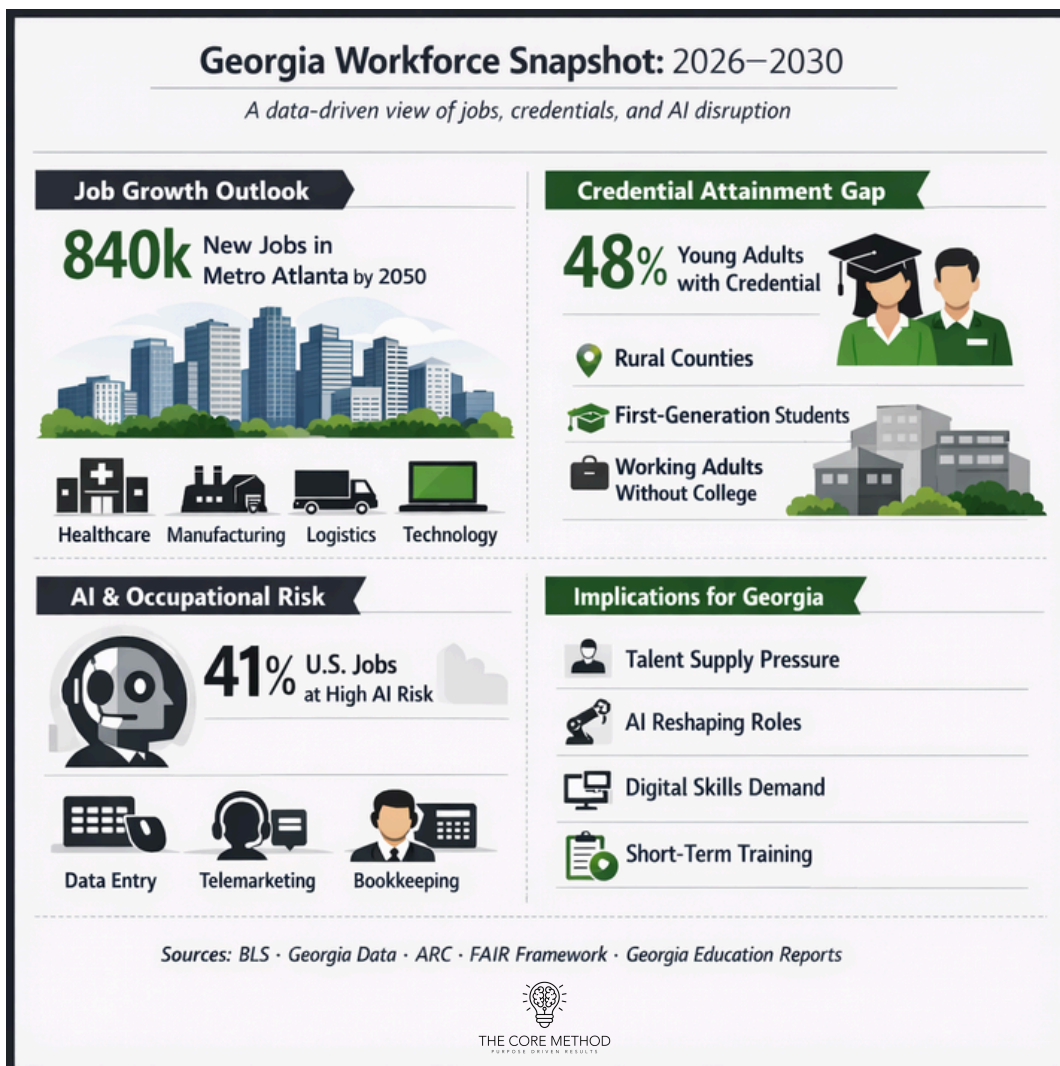
Future workers will increasingly require:

- Prompt engineering fundamentals
- AI-assisted productivity skills
- Data interpretation
- Critical evaluation of AI outputs
- Ethical AI practices

Industries expected to experience significant transformation include:

- Healthcare
- Manufacturing
- Information Technology
- Logistics
- Business Operations
- Finance

WORKFORCE DATA



Workforce Data

Georgia Job Growth

- The Atlanta region is projected to add 840,000 new jobs by 2050, bringing total employment to 4.58 million.
- Employment in the region is expected to grow 22% between 2020 and 2050.

Georgia's Postsecondary Attainment Gap

- Only 48% of Georgia's young adults currently hold a postsecondary credential, despite over 60% of Georgia jobs requiring one (2025).
- Georgia's overall adult postsecondary attainment rate is 45%, leaving a significant gap between workforce demand and credentialed workers.

AI Displacement Risk

- 41% of jobs analyzed across 26 industries face critical or high AI displacement risk.
- Highest-risk occupations include data entry, bookkeeping, telemarketing, and administrative support.
- AI-impacted roles span IT, finance, legal, engineering, and business operations.

Georgia's workforce future will be shaped by its ability to respond to rapid technological change, close persistent credential gaps, and prepare workers for an economy increasingly influenced by artificial intelligence. Strong job growth will continue, but the state must accelerate skills-based pathways, expand access to short-term credentials, and integrate AI literacy and workforce readiness across every stage of the talent pipeline

GEORGIA'S HIGH-DEMAND CAREER CLUSTERS

Georgia has identified seventeen priority career sectors that guide workforce investment decisions.

- Health Science
- Information Technology
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
- Manufacturing
- Business Management & Administration
- Finance
- STEM
- Architecture & Construction
- Human Services
- Education & Training
- Energy
- Marketing
- Government & Public Administration
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Law, Public Safety & Security

These clusters now influence:

- State funding priorities
- Curriculum design
- Workforce programming
- Employer engagement
- Postsecondary alignment



EMPLOYER WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Across sectors, employers consistently identify workforce gaps in three critical areas.

Executive Function Skills

- Prioritization
- Time Management
- Organization
- Task Initiation & Completion
- Adaptability

Human Skills

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Conflict Resolution
- Teamwork
- Coachability

Digital Competencies

- Technology Utilization
- AI Literacy
- Data analysis
- Digital Communication

The workforce challenge is increasingly not technical training alone, it is workforce readiness.

EMPLOYER-LED UPSKILLING MODELS

Socomec

Partners with Georgia Quick Start (TCSG) and Gwinnett Technical College to deliver workforce-aligned training in:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Electrical safety and diagnostics
- Power systems assembly
- Quality and production operations

Socomec's partnership demonstrates how employer-designed, state-supported training can rapidly build a skilled workforce for high-tech manufacturing in Georgia.

IBM SkillsBuild

Provides workforce-focused training in:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Cybersecurity
- Data Analytics
- Professional Skills

Employers are increasingly partnering directly with workforce systems to build talent pipelines.

Google Career Certificates

Offers workforce-aligned credentials in:

- IT Support
- Cybersecurity
- Data Analytics
- Project Management
- AI Essentials

Industry-recognized credentials are becoming increasingly valuable workforce currency. 14



EMPLOYER-LED UPSKILLING MODELS

Accenture Workforce Skilling Partnerships (Walmart + Unilever)

Focus Areas:

- Skills-based mobility across roles and industries
- Identifying hidden and transferable skills using AI-driven analysis
- Preparing workers for emerging roles created by automation
- Cross-industry collaboration to support large-scale reskilling

Skills-based mobility models help workers transition into new roles by mapping transferable skills rather than relying on job titles.

Salesforce AI Upskilling Initiative

Focus Areas:

- Embedding quarterly learning days for AI skill development
- Upskilling 80% of employees in foundational AI competencies
- Creating a culture of continuous learning and internal mobility
- Preparing the workforce for AI-enabled roles

Embedding structured, recurring learning cycles accelerates AI readiness and builds a future-ready internal talent pipeline.

Delta Air Lines - Propel Career Path Program

Internal mobility, aviation career pathways, long-term talent development.

- Partner with Georgia colleges and flight schools to create structured pilot and aviation pathways
- Provide tuition support, mentoring, and guaranteed interview opportunities
- Build internal pipelines for high-demand aviation roles

Upskilling that aligns education, industry, and long-term workforce needs

Amazon - AI & Machine Learning University

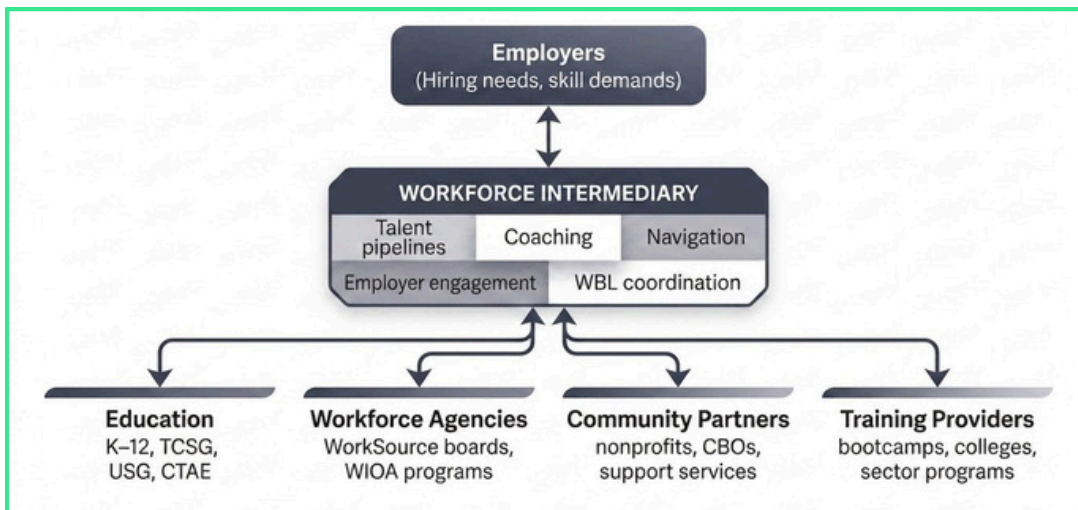
Provides workforce-aligned AI training in:

- Machine learning foundations
- Natural language processing
- Computer vision
- Generative AI applications
- Responsible AI practices

Amazon's internal MLU program equips employees (from non-technical roles to engineers) with AI competencies, demonstrating how large employers can democratize AI skills and build internal mobility pathways.

Large employers can drive economic mobility by reducing barriers to education.

WORKFORCE INTERMEDIARIES AS ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE



Workforce intermediaries are organizations that sit at the center of the talent ecosystem and coordinate the work of employers, education providers, workforce agencies, and community partners. They function as strategic connectors that translate employer needs into training solutions, support learners through career transitions, and ensure that talent pipelines are aligned with labor market demand. Intermediaries reduce fragmentation across systems, strengthen employer engagement, and help individuals navigate complex education and workforce pathways.

Core Functions

- Talent pipeline development
- Career navigation and coaching
- Readiness assessment and skill development
- Work-based learning coordination
- Employer engagement and partnership management
- Supportive services and barrier reduction

Workforce intermediaries are especially important in high-demand sectors where employers struggle to find skilled workers and where learners need structured guidance to enter and advance in careers. They help employers articulate skill needs, design training aligned to industry standards, and build pathways that connect education to employment. They also provide coaching, mentoring, and wraparound supports that increase completion and placement rates for learners.

As Georgia continues to build a skills-based talent ecosystem, workforce intermediaries serve as essential infrastructure that connects systems, reduces friction, and accelerates the development of a future-ready workforce.



National and Georgia workforce intermediaries demonstrate the power of coordinated employer-aligned talent development models. These organizations set the standard for skills-first hiring, coaching, and work-based learning at scale. Below is a sample list.

National Workforce Intermediaries

Year Up United

A national intermediary providing intensive training, coaching, and employer-aligned pathways for young adults into IT, business operations, and financial services.

Apprenti

A leading tech apprenticeship intermediary that partners with employers to create registered apprenticeships in IT, cybersecurity, cloud, and software development.

NPower

A digital skills intermediary offering IT training, certifications, and employer pipelines for young adults and veterans.

Per Scholas

A national intermediary delivering employer-aligned IT training, sector partnerships, and job placement in high-demand tech roles.

Opportunity@Work

A national intermediary advancing skills-first hiring and connecting STARs (workers Skilled Through Alternative Routes) to employers through data, tools, and employer partnerships.

Georgia Based Workforce Intermediaries

CareerRise

A regional workforce intermediary that builds sector partnerships, strengthens employer engagement, and coordinates talent pipelines across metro Atlanta.

Goodwill of North Georgia

A large-scale workforce intermediary that delivers training, career navigation, and employer-aligned placement services across the region.

Construction Ready

A sector-based intermediary that connects construction employers with trained workers through bootcamps, apprenticeships, and K through 12 partnerships.

TechBridge

A digital skills intermediary that provides IT training, certifications, and employer pathways for underserved populations.

Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency (ACSS)

A workforce intermediary focused on employment readiness, coaching, and employer engagement for individuals experiencing homelessness or instability.



Strategic Recommendations for Workforce Intermediaries

Workforce intermediaries are uniquely positioned to strengthen Georgia's talent ecosystem because they sit at the intersection of employers, education systems, workforce agencies, and community partners.

The following strategic recommendations outline how intermediaries can serve as essential infrastructure for Georgia's future workforce:

- Become the readiness engine of the workforce ecosystem by delivering executive-function development, workforce readiness assessment, and human-skills training.
- Align services to Georgia's high-demand career clusters and regional labor market priorities to ensure training and placement efforts match employer needs.
- Lead in AI workforce readiness through AI literacy, responsible AI use, and human-AI collaboration training that prepares workers for emerging roles.
- Build employer-led talent partnerships through apprenticeships, internships, advisory councils, and coordinated work-based learning opportunities.
- Serve as postsecondary transition and persistence partners supporting credential attainment, program completion, and long-term workforce success.
- Develop competency-based assessment systems that validate workforce readiness, employability skills, and AI literacy across training pathways.
- Act as regional workforce conveners connecting employers, education systems, workforce boards, and community organizations to reduce fragmentation and strengthen alignment.
- Strengthen outcomes measurement and data capacity to demonstrate workforce impact, improve program quality, and increase readiness for public and private funding.

To meet the demands of a rapidly changing labor market and support the state's economic development priorities, intermediaries must evolve into high-capacity, data-driven organizations that build readiness, expand access, and accelerate talent development.



GEORGIA'S WORKFORCE OUTLOOK: 2026-2030

The Next Era of Talent Development

Georgia's workforce landscape is entering a period of accelerated transformation, and these workforce drivers will determine how effectively the state adapts to emerging economic demands:

- The rise of skills-based hiring
- The integration of AI across every career cluster
- The expansion of advanced manufacturing
- The continued strength of logistics
- The growing importance of human skills

Together, these drivers signal a shift toward a workforce system that values adaptability, readiness, and continuous learning as much as technical expertise.

Skills-Based Hiring Becomes the Norm. Employers are increasingly prioritizing demonstrated competencies, industry credentials, apprenticeships, and skills assessments over degrees alone.

AI Transforms Every Career Cluster. Workers across all industries will require AI literacy, digital fluency, data interpretation, and human-AI collaboration skills. New occupations will emerge as AI becomes embedded in daily work.

Advanced Manufacturing Expansion. Georgia's manufacturing sector will continue to grow, driving demand for mechatronics technicians, robotics technicians, industrial maintenance technicians, and automation specialists.

Logistics Remains a Strategic Advantage. Georgia's logistics ecosystem will continue to fuel economic growth through supply chain management, distribution, transportation technology, and warehouse automation.

Human Skills Become More Valuable. As automation expands, communication, adaptability, judgment, leadership, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence will become essential differentiators in the labor market.

Risks to Georgia's Workforce Competitiveness

Georgia's economic momentum is strong, but several risks threaten long-term competitiveness:

- Talent supply gaps as employer demand outpaces talent production
- AI readiness gaps among workers and jobseekers
- Workforce readiness deficits, particularly in executive-function and professionalism
- Postsecondary completion challenges that limit credential attainment
- Rural workforce access barriers that reduce participation

These risks underscore the need for a coordinated, statewide workforce strategy.



Strategic Recommendations for Georgia

To remain competitive, Georgia must modernize its workforce systems and align them with emerging labor market realities.

Key statewide priorities include:

- Embedding AI literacy across all workforce development programs
- Developing statewide executive-function and workforce-readiness credentialing
- Expanding apprenticeships into healthcare, IT, logistics, education, and business services
- Investing in workforce intermediary capacity across Georgia
- Strengthening employer-led talent development partnerships
- Expanding Workforce Pell-aligned programming
- Increasing postsecondary transition supports for youth and adult learners
- Creating regional workforce ecosystems that align employers, education providers, workforce boards, and community organizations

These strategies position Georgia to build a future-ready, AI-enabled talent pipeline.

Implications for Georgia Employers

Georgia's workforce transformation is not simply a policy initiative. It is a business imperative. Employers across industries report increasing difficulty finding talent with the combination of technical competencies, workplace readiness, adaptability, and human skills required for success. At the same time, technological disruption and demographic shifts are reshaping how organizations attract, develop, and retain talent.

Talent Pipelines Must Become Strategic Investments. Employers must participate directly in talent development through apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, and upskilling partnerships.

Skills-Based Hiring Will Continue to Expand. Competency validation, industry-recognized credentials, and demonstrated readiness will increasingly outweigh degrees and job titles.

AI Will Change Work Faster Than It Changes Occupations. Most jobs will evolve rather than disappear. Employers that prepare their workforce for AI-enabled tools and workflows will gain a competitive advantage.

Human Skills Are Becoming Competitive Advantages. Communication, collaboration, adaptability, leadership, and judgment are becoming essential for organizational success.

Workforce Readiness Drives Retention. Employers consistently report that retention challenges stem more from professionalism, communication, and adaptability than from technical skills.

The future of workforce development will focus on readiness, retention, and advancement. Not simply placement.



Why Workforce Readiness Matters More Than Ever

Workforce readiness has emerged as one of the most important yet underdeveloped components of workforce development. Employers increasingly report that success depends on competencies that extend beyond technical training, including communication, time management, prioritization, adaptability, problem-solving, teamwork, and accountability.

In today's environment, readiness is not supplemental. It is foundational. Organizations that intentionally develop workforce readiness will be better positioned to support retention, wage progression, and long-term success.

Postsecondary Transition as a Workforce Development Strategy

The transition between secondary education and adult employment is one of the most critical stages of talent development. Effective transition planning supports career exploration, credential attainment, employment preparation, and workforce navigation. As Georgia seeks to strengthen talent pipelines and improve labor force participation, postsecondary transition planning must become an integrated component of workforce policy and practice.

The Case for Executive Function as a Workforce Competency

Employers consistently identify performance and retention challenges linked to executive-function skills such as planning, organization, prioritization, self-regulation, and decision-making. These competencies influence nearly every aspect of workplace success and become even more important in an AI-enabled economy. Georgia's workforce systems must expand beyond technical competency models to include executive-function development as a core readiness strategy.

Questions for Workforce Leaders

To guide statewide strategy, Georgia's policymakers, employers, workforce providers, and educational institutions should consider:

- How should Georgia measure workforce readiness beyond credential attainment?
- How can Workforce Pell be leveraged to improve outcomes for underserved populations?
- How will AI literacy be integrated into statewide workforce strategies?
- What role should workforce intermediaries play in the future workforce ecosystem?
- How are executive-function skills assessed and developed?
- How are employer-defined competencies integrated into programming?
- How are learners being prepared for AI-enabled work environments?

These questions will shape Georgia's workforce agenda through 2030.



CONCLUSION

The future of workforce development extends far beyond training programs and credentials. Success in the next era will depend on an individual's ability to navigate complexity, adapt to change, collaborate with technology, and continuously develop new skills. This requires a broader approach that integrates workforce readiness, executive function development, career navigation, and AI literacy alongside technical training.

Georgia is well positioned to lead this transformation. The Top State for Talent Act, Workforce Pell expansion, WIOA realignment, AI workforce initiatives, and employer driven talent strategies are creating the foundation for a fully integrated workforce ecosystem. The organizations that will shape this next era are those that can bridge education, workforce development, and employment while developing talent that is technically trained, adaptable, AI ready, and equipped with the human skills needed to thrive.

Georgia has long been recognized as the nation's top state for business. The next challenge is to become the nation's premier state for talent development and the first truly AI ready workforce ecosystem. The choices made today will determine whether Georgia simply maintains its economic strength or sets the national standard for workforce innovation through 2030 and beyond.

CALL TO ACTION

Georgia's next step is to move from vision to coordinated action, guided by a shared commitment to building a workforce that is ready for the future of work.

Employers, educators, workforce agencies, and policymakers must work together to align strategies, strengthen talent pathways, and ensure that every learner and worker is prepared for the opportunities ahead.

APPENDIX A

Federal Workforce Policy & Legislation

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

U.S. Department of Labor- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa>

Primary federal workforce development legislation governing workforce boards, adult education, employment services, and workforce training investments.

Workforce Pell Grant Expansion

U.S. Department of Education- <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-issues-final-rule-create-new-workforce-pell-grant-program>

Federal expansion of Pell Grant eligibility to workforce-aligned short-term credential programs designed to support high-demand occupations and workforce mobility.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs

U.S. Department of Labor- <https://www.apprenticeship.gov>

National framework supporting employer-driven work-based learning and talent development strategies.

U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration (ETA)

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta>

Federal guidance on workforce development, apprenticeships, career pathways, labor market trends, and workforce innovation initiatives.

Artificial Intelligence Workforce Resources

U.S. Department of Labor AI Workforce Initiatives

<https://www.dol.gov>

Federal workforce readiness initiatives focused on Artificial Intelligence, workforce modernization, apprenticeship innovation, and future-of-work strategies.

U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Technology

<https://tech.ed.gov>

Guidance regarding AI literacy, digital readiness, and workforce preparation for emerging technologies.

National Science Foundation (NSF) AI Education Initiatives

<https://www.nsf.gov>

Research and workforce development initiatives supporting AI literacy and talent pipeline development.

Workforce Data

Sources: Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC); U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS); Lumina Foundation (Lumina); Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE); Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG); World Economic Forum (WEF); Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); McKinsey Global Institute (MGI); International Labor Organization (ILO).

APPENDIX A

Georgia Workforce Resources

Governor's Office of Education and Workforce (GOEWS)

<https://grows.georgia.gov>

Georgia's lead agency responsible for workforce strategy alignment, education-to-workforce pathways, and statewide talent development initiatives.

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)

<https://www.tcsg.edu>

Georgia's primary workforce training and technical education system.

Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL)

<https://dol.georgia.gov>

State labor market information, employment services, workforce programs, and employer resources.

University System of Georgia (USG)

<https://www.usg.edu>

Public higher education system supporting workforce and talent development initiatives across Georgia.

Georgia Workforce Development Board

<https://gdol.ga.gov>

Statewide workforce planning and policy development.

Employer-Led Talent Development Models

Amazon Career Choice

<https://www.amazoncareerchoice.com>

Employer-funded workforce upskilling and educational advancement program.

IBM SkillsBuild

<https://skillsbuild.org>

Global workforce development platform focused on digital skills, AI literacy, and career readiness.

Grow with Google Career Certificates

<https://grow.google>

Industry-recognized workforce credential pathways aligned with high-demand careers.

Accenture Apprenticeships

<https://www.accenture.com>

Skills-based hiring and apprenticeship model supporting workforce inclusion and talent development.

Socomec & Georgia QuickStart (TCSG) & Gwinnett Technical College

<https://www.georgiaquickstart.org/projects/socomec/>

APPENDIX A

Salesforce

<https://www.salesforce.com/news/stories/reskilling-for-digital-labor-era/>

Delta Airlines

<https://www.delta.com/us/en/careers/pilots/propel>

Workforce Intermediary Organizations

Year Up United

<https://www.yearup.org>

National workforce intermediary focused on career readiness, workforce training, and employer partnerships.

Apprenti

<https://apprenticareers.org>

National apprenticeship intermediary supporting employer talent pipelines.

NPower

<https://www.npower.org>

Technology workforce development organization focused on underserved populations and employer-aligned training.

Per Scholas - <https://perscholas.org/>

Opportunity at Work - <https://www.opportunityatwork.org/>

CareerRise - <https://careerriseatlanta.org/>

Goodwill of North Georgia - <https://goodwillng.org/putting-people-to-work/>

Construction Ready - <https://constructionready.org/>

Tech Bridge - <https://techbridge.org/>

Atlanta Center for Self Sufficiency - <https://atlantacss.org/>

Recommended Readings

- Future of Jobs Report - World Economic Forum
- The Skills-Based Organization - Deloitte
- State of the Workforce Report - National Skills Coalition
- AI and the Future of Work - Brookings Institution
- Skills-Based Hiring Toolkit - U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- A Skills-Based Hiring Roadmap for the States - Workday



APPENDIX B

About the Author

Natalie R. Williams is the Founder and Principal Systems Architect of The CORE Method LLC and the author of *The CORE Method: Guide to Purpose Driven Results*. She is a workforce strategist, postsecondary transition specialist, and organizational development consultant with more than two decades of experience across workforce development, education, disability inclusion, talent development, leadership, and systems transformation.

Her work focuses on helping organizations, educational institutions, workforce agencies, and employers build stronger pathways from education to employment through innovative workforce readiness frameworks, transition assessment methodologies, and talent development strategies.

Natalie is recognized for her expertise in:

- Workforce Development Strategy
- Postsecondary Transition Planning
- Career Readiness Assessment
- Disability Inclusion and Employment
- Human Capital Development
- Executive Function Assessment
- Workforce Readiness Systems
- Talent Pipeline Development
- Organizational Leadership and Change Management
- AI Era Workforce Preparation

She has partnered with school systems, workforce agencies, employers, higher education institutions, community organizations, and advocacy groups to improve employment outcomes and workforce participation for diverse populations.

Natalie's work is grounded in the belief that successful workforce development requires more than technical training. It requires intentional development of executive function, human skills, adaptability, and career navigation competencies that support long term success in work and life.

"Preparing people not just for employment, but for sustainable success in work, education, and life."



APPENDIX C

About The CORE Method LLC

The CORE Method LLC is a workforce development and human capital consulting firm specializing in workforce readiness, postsecondary transition, executive function development, talent assessment, and systems level workforce solutions. The organization partners with educational institutions, workforce agencies, employers, community organizations, and government entities to strengthen pathways from education to employment and improve workforce outcomes.

The CORE Method's proprietary frameworks are designed to identify, develop, and measure the competencies most critical to success in today's workforce, including:

- Executive Function Skills
- Human Skills and Professional Behaviors
- Career Readiness Competencies
- Postsecondary Readiness Indicators
- Workplace Adaptability
- Workforce Navigation Skills
- Employability and Retention Factors
- AI Era Workforce Competencies

The firm's flagship frameworks include:

The CORE Method™ A competency based workforce readiness framework that measures and develops the foundational skills required for long term employment success.

Structured Postsecondary Transition Assessment and Support Plan (SP-TASP). A comprehensive transition planning framework that helps students, families, educators, and workforce professionals identify strengths, barriers, readiness indicators, and support needs related to postsecondary education, employment, and independent living outcomes.

Through consulting, assessment, training, strategic planning, and workforce ecosystem development, The CORE Method LLC helps organizations move beyond compliance and program participation toward measurable workforce and life outcomes..

For consulting inquiries, strategic partnerships, workforce initiatives, and training opportunities, please contact The CORE Method LLC