

# New Tools for Skilling up Oregon Workers

Back to Work Oregon, BOOST, and  
the Employer Workforce Training  
Fund

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# The Oregon Workforce Partnership

# The association of Oregon's 7 Local Workforce Investment Boards

- **Mission: Better Skills – Better Jobs:**
  - Businesses have the skilled workforce they need to grow and thrive
  - Individuals have the ability to succeed in their careers and prosper

# Major trends in workforce funding

- Federal dollars on the decline
- Yet skill gaps remain a challenge
- We need to recognize both sides of the equation
  - The employee
  - The company
- Incenting companies works

# Overview of several programs that fit this new reality

- Back to Work Oregon
- BOOST Grants
- The Oregon Employer Workforce Training Fund

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**Back to Work Oregon**

# The reason for Back to Work Oregon

- Create jobs by incenting companies to hire sooner by covering the cost of new hire training (OJT).
- Large numbers of skilled workers “on the bench” who need company specific knowledge and skills to become employed
- We can’t just continue to put people into training programs and assume they will find jobs.
- We need to better information on employee skills to better place them.
- Individuals need to prove their skills.

# The program

- On-the job training paired with
- The National Career Readiness Certificate
- One of the Governor's first 5 economic development priorities

# On-the-job training

- A hire first program
- Recognizes that there is a real cost to training a new employee
- Focuses on jobs that require more than 1 month of training for new hires
- Focuses on companies that offer good wages/benefits/career pathways
- Implemented by Oregon's seven Local Workforce Investment Boards
- Requires a retention period to complete the program

# National Career Readiness Certificate

- Provides a portable credential
- Certifies skills in reading, math, locating information
- Part of the Work Keys system
- Correlated to over 17,000 job profiles
- Deployed in 35 other states

# The end game

- 1,325 Oregonians complete the program (earn and NCRC and complete an OJT)
  - 663 come from the Governor's and legislature's \$3.4 million investment
  - 662 come from LWIBs matching the program

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# Back to Work Oregon/BOOST Comparison

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# Employer Workforce Training Fund

# Based on a federally funded program

- The EWTF was created in 2003 to help companies skill up their existing workers
- The program was extremely popular with business, economic development professionals, and Local Workforce Investment Boards
- In 2010 the Oregon Workforce Partnership work with businesses, OEDA and others put the program into state statute
- In 2011, federal funding for the program was eliminated

# Current status

- Program in statute
- Fund for the program in statute
- No resources yet available

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