



Southern Nevada is stepping up its workforce game with key partnerships and initiatives.

Ask any sports fan in Las Vegas and they'll tell you — teams from Southern Nevada know how to get to work and succeed. From three-time Super Bowl champions, the Las Vegas Raiders, to the Vegas Golden Knights meteoric rise in the National Hockey League — it is easy to conflate Las Vegas with teamwork and success. There are good reasons why the Raiders and the Golden Knights picked Las Vegas as their home.

In Southern Nevada, the world of professional sports is just a mirror of the region's overall workforce. Simply put, dream teams are made in Southern Nevada — both on the field and in the office.

Scoring Big in Southern Nevada

Bolstered by strong regional partnerships and collaborations, companies in Southern Nevada have access to a host of business development teams willing to roll up their sleeves and find solutions

to workforce needs. In fact, Southern Nevada's attitude of teamwork and strategic problem-solving is earning national recognition.

Earlier this year, The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) awarded its prestigious Laurie Moran Partnership Award to Workforce Connections, Southern Nevada's Workforce Development Board, and the Vegas Chamber

by SAVANNAH KING

for their joint efforts in advancing the region's workforce and economic development. The award highlights the collaborative and innovative talent pipelines their teams have established in the region.

"Along with our partners at the Vegas Chamber, we were proud to receive the 2020 NAWB Laurie Moran Partnership Award," said Jaime Cruz, executive director of Workforce Connections. "It recognized our efforts in advancing workforce and economic development in Southern Nevada. The two go hand in hand and are both critical in the road to economic recovery and growth



“We congratulate Workforce Connections and the Vegas Chamber for winning their Super Bowl. Way to represent our community with a commitment to excellence. Go Raiders.”

— Marc Badain, *President, Las Vegas Raiders*

post-pandemic. There are 550 local workforce development boards across our nation, and many of them are deserving of this award. We are humbled to be this year's recipients.”

Winning an award of this magnitude does not happen by chance. It happens with teamwork and a clear game plan.

Haas Automation Picks Southern Nevada

Nevada is home to more than 3 million residents, with 2.3 million clustered in the state's southern portion. The state's largest county, Clark County, is also one of the fastest growing in the nation.

“Our high population growth rates prove Southern Nevada is a place where people want to live,” explains Jonas Peterson, President and CEO of the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA). “For employers, this ability to attract new talent is often a very powerful advantage. The workforce in Southern Nevada is a pleasant surprise for many of our employers. Here you'll find a highly diverse, customer service focused, flexible, socially intelligent and abundant workforce.”

The region's strong workforce is what lead Haas Automation to build its new 279-acre manufacturing facility in Henderson, a Las Vegas suburb. With plans to hire 1,400 employees at an average wage of \$24 an hour, the company needed a reliable, trained talent pool to draw from — and quickly. To meet this need, the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) granted \$2 million to the College of Southern Nevada

(CSN) to develop an advanced manufacturing rapid response program.

“Nevada's commitment to developing the programs necessary to grow a skilled manufacturing workforce is proof that Haas Automation made the right decision to invest in Southern Nevada,” said Gene Haas, Founder and CEO, Haas Automation. “Our new 2.5 million square-foot state-of-the-art factory is scheduled to be completed in 2023 in the City of Henderson and is set to employ thousands of local Nevada residents. As the largest manufacturer of machine tools in the U.S., we understand that skilled workers are essential to our success.”

GOED established the Workforce Innovations for the New Nevada (WINN) Fund in partnership with CSN to create training programs that will meet the needs of manufacturers in the region.

“We applaud and are grateful for GOED's decision to use WINN funding to support this advanced manufacturing initiative and the endorsement we have received from our private sector partner, Haas Automation, Inc.,” said Dr. Federico Zaragoza, President, CSN. “This effort bolsters CSN's plan to develop a skilled workforce and support the state's efforts to diversify Nevada's economy.”

Developing a Game Plan

As one of the top travel destinations in the U.S., Las Vegas' hospitality industry is a mainstay in the region. However, in recent years, the region's



“We congratulate Workforce Connections and the Vegas Chamber for winning their Stanley Cup. On behalf of the Vegas Golden Knights and the Henderson Silver Knights, congratulations and Go Knights Go.”

— Kerry Bubolz, *President, Vegas Golden Knights*

economy has diversified, quickly becoming a regional hub for technology, business, health care, manufacturing, distribution and more.

In 2019, the LVGEA, the Vegas Chamber and Workforce Connections released its Workforce Blueprint 2.0. The blueprint took an innovative, data-driven approach to prepare for the regional workforce’s future needs and identified its top 100 in-demand occupations. By determining the region’s high-growth jobs, Southern Nevada’s educational institutions are better able to create programs for successful job applicants upon graduating.

“Workforce Blueprint 2.0 creates a roadmap for workforce development for our region for years to come,” said Mary Beth Sewald, president and CEO of the Vegas Chamber. “It connects the dots on what credentials our workers need to build a successful career to the types of skills our employers need to thrive and grow. This is a major step forward in enhancing the talent pipeline in Southern Nevada.”

To encourage younger students to begin thinking about the many gainful opportunities in their own region, a scaled-down and easy to understand Workforce Blueprint 2.0 activity book was issued to local schools. Exposing younger students to the variety of job opportunities they’ll find when they’re ready to join the workforce gives them a sense of direction and appreciation for the skills they learn

in school.

“The Clark County School District works to ensure our students are college and career ready upon graduating,” said Clark County School District Superintendent Dr. Jesus F. Jara. “Workforce Connections is a great community partner that helps CCSD prepare our students for career ready opportunities through apprenticeships, vocational training and even providing our educators with professional development to utilize cutting-edge tools and resources that are passed along to students in the classroom,” Jara added. “Workforce Blueprint 2.0 is a dynamic plan that allows our students to grow their skills and ultimately produce the workforce our region needs.”

Back in the Game

In the first few weeks and months of the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses struggled to keep up between shutdowns and payroll. Fortunately, Workforce Connections deployed an immediate and innovative solution — the Layoff Aversion Pilot. To date the pilot program has assisted more than 88 Southern Nevada small businesses and nonprofits and kept 330 employees on the payroll.

The Layoff Aversion Pilot utilized \$694,000 of federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds provided by the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR). An additional \$100,000

SOUTHERN NEVADA IS WORKFORCE READY



was donated by Bank of Nevada, which significantly extended the reach of the initiative.

As small businesses get back to work following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, two new Employ NV Business Hubs have recently opened to provide small-business owners with support, guidance, training and other services as they recover and grow.

Opened in September and October, the two new Employ NV Business Hubs help provide employers with resources available through the public workforce development system, including on-the-job training opportunities.

With locations inside the Vegas Chamber and the Sahara West Library, these one-stop centers are business-oriented and staffed by personnel trained specifically to serve businesses. Services offered at the hubs include employer-driven training programs, employer-specific jobs postings, financial incentives for hiring, training, short-term talent development at community colleges (and long-term talent development at the K-12 level), labor market information and special hiring events among others.

Homefield Advantage

Clark is the first county in Nevada to be a certified ACT® Work Ready Community, a national designation that uses hard data to help close the skills gap and produce a workforce ready to meet the needs of current and future employers. Clark is home to 2.2 million people and is the largest county in the nation to receive the designation.

“We are proud that Clark became the largest county in the nation to be certified by ACT as a Work Ready Community. We will produce

a workforce that is ready to meet the needs of employers,” said Clark County Commission Chair Marilyn Kirkpatrick.

As an added benefit of being a Work Ready Community, the region has 12 ACT Authorized Job Profilers. The 12 profilers — from Workforce Connections, LVGEA, the Vegas Chamber, CSN, DETR, the Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovation (OWINN), and Nevada’s Department of Health and Human Services — specialize in helping local employers hire the best candidate for the job, the first time. Local employers can work with job profilers at no cost to analyze the specific skills needed for candidates to be successful at their particular jobs.

Additionally, these job profilers will continue to bolster the region’s workforce as they continue to outline qualifications in the emerging and in-demand Southern Nevada occupations outlined in Workforce Blueprint 2.0.

“Our investment in these job profilers will allow us to serve employers more effectively, particularly as Southern Nevada works through the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Cruz. “We can save businesses money by ending the expensive revolving door of hiring and rehiring, while providing job seekers a better opportunity for sustainable employment. It is a win-win.” ▼

This Investment Profile was prepared under the auspices of Workforce Connections. For more information call 702-638-8750 or email info@NVworkforceconnections.org.