



College of Southern Maryland  
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Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland  
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July 2, 2020

We are pleased to announce the formation of a regional workforce development collaboration that will immediately respond to the economic catastrophe caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Tri-County Council's Workforce Development Division and the College of Southern Maryland's Continuing Education & Workforce Development Division have partnered to launch the *Getting Southern Maryland Back to Work* initiative – a joint effort that will create a transparent, accessible and coordinated pathway to skills upgrade training and re-employment for individuals who are unemployed or underemployed as a result of the crisis. The initiative will also create new opportunities and training at a time when career change is a likely avenue for many affected workers.

Regional unemployment has risen<sup>1</sup> to 8.5% (*April 2020 data*) regionally,<sup>2</sup> with the greatest impact seen in the retail, healthcare and construction industries. Underemployment is an ongoing challenge in our region. The alignment of workforce development resources will provide targeted responses to critical needs for employers, employees and the unemployed, maximizing our regional impact, and preparing us for a future in which the workforce will be redefined.

The *Getting Southern Maryland Back to Work* initiative has one objective: To provide skill development and assist in the re-employment of our citizens. Our communities have suffered and are facing further economic risk. We are compelled to act now before people relocate to seek work thus making it harder for local industries to rebound. We plan to deliver real solutions that keep our neighbors working, keep our businesses open and create an employment ecosystem for new businesses to begin. This is the challenge we face, this is our why.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://wtop.com/business-finance/2020/06/marylands-first-time-unemployment-claims-jump-by-8500/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/lmi/areas/smdwia.shtml>

We are counting on your support and invite you share the news of this opportunity with your constituents. Please direct them to <https://somdworkforceboard.org/job-seekers/> and <https://tccsmd.org/backtowork/> where they can obtain additional information regarding this initiative and how to access the financial support and information they need to get started. We also welcome the opportunity to discuss this initiative with you further at your request.

For more information about the College of Southern Maryland's workforce training programs visit <https://www.csmd.edu/programs-courses/non-credit/career-development/>

For more information about the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's Workforce Division visit <https://tccsmd.org/workforce-development/>

Sincerely,  
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College of Southern Maryland

Ruthy Davis  
Director, Regional Workforce & Business Development  
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland