

WhaleWorks Publication No. 005

Workforce Development & Career Readiness Institute

Preparing Youth for Meaningful Careers Through Real-World Experience

Mission

The WhaleWorks Workforce Development & Career Readiness Institute prepares youth and young adults for successful careers through mentorship, job-readiness training, leadership development, and real-world work experience. The program combines classroom instruction with hands-on opportunities that build confidence, responsibility, and professional skills.

Whale of a Cone Workforce Partnership

Whale of a Cone serves as the Institute's primary workforce training partner by providing supervised, real-world learning experiences. Participants gain experience in customer service, hospitality, food service operations, teamwork, inventory management, cash handling, conflict resolution, leadership, and small business operations. This unique partnership allows students to apply classroom knowledge in an active business environment while learning directly from experienced mentors.

Program Curriculum

- Career Exploration & Goal Setting
- Resume & Cover Letter Writing
- Interview Preparation
- Customer Service Excellence
- Hospitality & Tourism Careers
- Workplace Communication
- Leadership & Team Building
- Financial Literacy & Budgeting
- Time Management & Professionalism
- Entrepreneurship Pathways
- Volunteer Service & Community Leadership

Career Pathways

Students explore careers in hospitality, tourism, business ownership, nonprofit leadership, information technology, creative media, skilled trades, customer service management, retail operations, and community development. Local employers and community partners provide mentorship and career exposure.

Three-Phase Funding Strategy

Phase I – Workforce Launch (\$25,000)

Curriculum development, instructor support, career workshops, workforce materials, student uniforms, transportation assistance, and internships serving 50–75 youth annually.

Phase II – Expansion (\$80,000)

Paid internship opportunities, expanded employer partnerships, workforce certifications, career fairs, mentorship stipends, and year-round programming serving up to 250 youth annually.

Phase III – Regional Workforce Center (\$300,000)

Permanent workforce development center featuring career classrooms, interview suites, technology training labs, hospitality simulation areas, entrepreneurship training, and regional employer

partnerships.

Staffing, Partnerships & Outcomes

Staff: Executive Director, Workforce Development Coordinator, Career Coaches, Volunteer Mentors, Local Business Leaders, Community Partners.

Key Partnerships: Whale of a Cone, Ocosta School District, Grays Harbor employers, community colleges, workforce agencies, and local nonprofits.

Expected Outcomes: Increased employment readiness, stronger leadership skills, higher internship participation, expanded career awareness, improved financial literacy, stronger employer partnerships, and increased opportunities for youth throughout Grays Harbor County.