



# **Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Maryland**

**Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and  
Regulation**

**August 20, 2018**



## What is EARN?

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- A **paradigm shift** – Industry collaboration with critical and diverse partners to meet changing workforce needs and skills shortages
- Targets low and no-skilled workers as well as incumbent workers to eliminate barriers and create responsive career pathways
- Organizes formal sector partnerships in collaboration with the public workforce system, higher education, and community service organizations

## What is EARN?

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- Established in 2013 through SB 278
- State General Funds - about \$4 million annually
- Grants awarded through competitive process
- Led by Department of Labor in consultation with Department of Commerce and Governor's Workforce Development Board



- Strategic Industry Partnerships *must* include
  - At least 5 employer and industry partners
    - ✓ Over 950 employers and industry partners participate, representing an increase of over 350% since program inception
  - 2 “diverse entities”
    - ✓ Higher Education, Non-Profit or Community Based Organization, Local Workforce Development Boards, Local Government
- Collaboration is key – each partner plays a unique role in program’s success

- Providing CNC/Welding/IW training in West Baltimore
  - Industry Advisory Council consisting of 15 employers
  - Partners with Maryland Volunteer Lawyer Service, CASH Campaign, Office of Child Support, Vehicles for Change, Probation/Parole, Mayor's Office of Employment Development
- Best Practices
  - Open Entry/Open Exit
  - Friday Soft Skills/Financial Literacy
  - Bridge Program
  - Simulated Work Environment
  - Intense case management/wrap around services

# Role of Employers in SIP

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- Identify common workforce and skills needs and challenges
- Participate in training
  - Teaching, Mock Interviews, Job Shadowing, Tour of Facility
- Commit to interviewing trainees
  - Provide interview feedback
  - Be involved in placement
  - Identify strengths and weaknesses of training program

# Role of Diverse Entities

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- Participant Management
  - Recruitment to Placement
    - Pipeline Development, Recruitment and Screening, Case management, Job Coaching, Wrap Around Services, Placement
- Job Readiness/Essential Skills Training
- Partnership Management
  - Entity/individual lead – credibility with industry, trust of diverse set of partners
  - Coordination and accountability among partners
  - Continuous feedback loop with employers – success of training graduates, training modules, screening design





**EARN**  
**MARYLAND**

## EARN Maryland by the Numbers

- 59 Strategic Industry Partnerships and growing
- Over 2,700 (81%) of EARN Maryland participants have obtained employment
- Over 5,200 incumbent workers have been trained
- Over 950 employer/industry partners have participated
- For every \$1 invested, \$18.97 in economic activity is created





### 2013

- Targeted messaging to stakeholders
- Information-gathering on best practices
- Planning Grants
  - 3 months, capped at \$25,000
  - Meant to identify and assemble partners, identify skills gaps, develop a solution to submit a proposal for Implementation Grant
  - At least 2 employers, 2 “diverse entities”
  - Received 68 proposals, funded 29



## 2014

- Implementation Grants: 2 competitive rounds
  - June 2014
    - Received 39 proposals, funded 28
  - December 2014
    - Received 18 proposals, funded 12
  - Awards range from \$52,000 to 450,000

## 2015-2016

- Sustained successful partnerships through Letter of Intent process



## 2017/2018

- EARN budget for FY18, FY19 doubles to \$8 million
  - \$3 million for Cyber (FY18)
  - \$3 million for Green (FY18, 19 and 20)
- New Solicitation for Implementation Grant Proposals released for the first time in nearly 2 ½ years

- BEACON at Salisbury University
- Evaluates the effectiveness of overall program and each partnership
  - Calculates Return on Investment
    - Wage improvements
    - Improvements of firm outputs attributable to an improved workforce
    - Reductions of public expenditures as workers retain or attain better jobs
  - Developing a measure for employer satisfaction
  - Best Practices Guide
- An added tool to illustrate program success for our stakeholders

- Flexibility of grant parameters is key
  - Must be responsive to industry changes
  - Allowable costs
  - Outcomes: how do we determine success?
    - Quantitative: Placements, Upskilling, ROI, Leveraged Funding
    - Qualitative: Business Improvement, Systems Change
- Importance of Partnership Management
- Apples and Oranges Comparison
  - Must account for regional, industry differences
- Balance of data collection
- Responsible Growth

- Peer-to-Peer learning opportunities
  - Sector, “Rookie,” General
- Comprehensive Essential Skills
- Barrier Removal
- Flexibility
- Continual Employer Engagement
- Leveraged Funding
- Relationship building
- Industry-specific Technical Assistance

# Contact Information

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**Mary C. Keller**

EARN Maryland Program Administrator

Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning

1100 North Eutaw Street, Room 108

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

[mary.keller@maryland.gov](mailto:mary.keller@maryland.gov)

410-767-2017

