

**BRAC Regional Task Force
Workforce Development Program
Initiatives, Innovations, and Accomplishments
2007 – Present
November 10, 2010**



The growth at Fort Bragg created by the move of US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) and the US Army Reserve Command (USARC) presented this region with many substantial growth related challenges. The BRAC Regional Task Force (BRAC-RTF) was formed to help the affected local governments address those challenges and maximize the positive impact of any opportunities to the benefit of the citizens in the region. This document discusses the major efforts that have been made by the BRAC-RTF to address workforce issues.

In November 2008, the BRAC-RTF completed a Comprehensive Regional Growth Plan (CRGP) that identified 10 major impact areas, including Workforce and Education, Social Services and Healthcare, along with recommendations to manage physical and human infrastructure growth. This was accomplished with match funding from the Department of Defense (DoD), Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA). OEA continues to support the region's efforts to plan and address these and other issues. Status: ongoing study of, planning for and/or implementation of findings and recommendations.

As a result of the early and initial CRGP gap findings and recommendations, the BRAC-RTF wrote a proposal to address the workforce needs and shortfalls in 11-county region surrounding Ft. Bragg. In response, BRAC-RTF was awarded a \$5.0 million Workforce Demonstration Program (WDP) grant by US Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) in July 2007 to develop programs and initiatives that would align, integrate and transform the region's education, workforce and economic development (i.e., labor supply, employment and training capacity), and meet the occupational demands of existing, expanding, and emerging employers across all sectors. The results of the BRAC-RTF WDP grant were intended to be innovative and transformational (versus traditional and transactional). Therefore, a comparison using the usual WIA performance measures (i.e., program completers/job placements) is not possible. However, the transactional data of these efforts is building and the results over time will be extremely impressive. Status: On-going; based on Implementation Plan approved by DOL. The following items were either funded by the US DOL WDP grant and/or resulted in opportunities that in effect leveraged additional funds from the various sources listed.

1. Created a regional and multi-disciplinary 15-member BRAC-RTF Board of Directors sub-committee - Workforce Demonstration Program Steering Group – including representatives from k-20 education, workforce and economic development, and business to help oversee and advise the BRAC-RTF DOL funded program. A larger, 90-member regional Education and Workforce Advisory Group was also created. Met monthly via in-person, webinar, and video-conference formats for 3 years. Status: Completed.

ALL AMERICAN CENTER FOR WORKFORCE INNOVATION

2. Established All American Center for Workforce Innovation (AACWI) at Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) as a regional hub [supported with BRAC-RTF staff] through a one-time \$500K investment from US DOL grant to connect the educational and training resources in the region through disruptive technology:
 - AACWI hub includes offices, Visual Discovery Learning theatre, interactive 3-dimensional or i3D cave, and i3D classrooms situated at 2 different sites on the FTCC campus, plus equipment, software, and visual learning objects. In addition to the physical and actual ‘brick and mortar’ aspect, the AACWI is also an umbrella concept that incorporates the Distributed Learning Network and a virtual entity that leverages our regional career platform – PipelineNC.
 - Expanded hub at FTCC to include sister regional community colleges. Status: Partially Completed. We introduced i3D projection technology to each of the region’s other seven community colleges with \$200K from DOL. But the distance learning piece has not been completed and is extremely important to the success of our overall workforce training efforts.
3. Leveraged the DOL WDP grant in order to expand the innovative delivery of knowledge and skills. While some of the work identified under the two bullets below is completed, the overall initiative has not been completed. The demand for the Enhanced Technology Classrooms (ETCs) and their i3D capability is already outstripping the availability. The BRAC-RTF is actively engaged in the pursuit of additional funding to increase the availability of ETCs in our region both at the community college and high school levels. The community colleges are in desperate need of ETCs to be able to more efficiently and effectively use their existing teaching resources and satellite campuses. With the same amount of money (\$1.1 million) that it would take to hire 15 or 20 teachers for one year, the community colleges could leverage existing resources for many years to come and in the process serve a much broader constituency. Similarly, the pilot ETC program in the high schools is ramping up exponentially. The feedback from teachers and students is that they want more, so it is clear that this pilot program must be expanded into a regional demonstration program that encompasses all of our high schools.
 - Co-wrote (with FTCC) a technology innovation grant application to the Golden LEAF Foundation to introduce i3D projection technology in eleven pilot high schools. Awarded a \$200,000 grant. Status: Completed.
 - Awarded \$800,000 ARRA grant from NC Department of Commerce’s Division of Workforce Development (NCDOC/DWD) and part of Gov. Perdue’s JOBS Now

Initiative to expand the AACWI distributed learning network, install 12 Enhanced Technology Classrooms in high schools in the 11 counties, train teachers and staff, and develop i3D learning objects for use in these classrooms. Status: On-going.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

4. Created Construction Jobs Task Force comprised of four regional Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), Employment Security Commission, k-20 education, apprenticeship, Army Career Alumni Program, Army Community Services/Employment Readiness Program, NC Military Business Center (MBC) and construction contractors to build a supply pipeline for skilled trade crafts people. Resulted in a regional network and resource guide and the BuildBragg.com website. Status: Completed.
5. Developed BuildBragg.com to assist prime contractor Hensel Phelps (HP) with labor and subcontracting needs for the construction of a 700,000 sq. ft., \$292 million combined headquarters building on Fort Bragg. BuildBragg.com was a joint NC DOC/DWD, Hensel Phelps, and BRAC-RTF project to help HP source its workforce and material needs from the local area and North Carolina. The \$90K cost was equally shared between the three sponsoring organizations, and NCMBC provided in-kind support. Status: Ongoing – website still in use. Results: 70% of subcontracts went to small businesses and 75% went to NC companies, and 98% of the workforce hailed from NC. The contractor reportedly saved hundreds of thousands of dollars dealing with NC companies that pursued opportunities through the website.
6. Contracted with Joel Leonard, ‘Maintenance Evangelist’ of skillTV, to coordinate with 8 community colleges (and employers) to promote manufacturing and maintenance skills/labor needs across the region, including use of i3D for training. \$60K DOL. Status: On-going. One major success of this effort was that one of our region’s major employers is now saving \$300K annually due to their being introduced to a new technology for discovering air leaks.
7. Partnered with 4 WDBs, k-20 educators, and regional medical employers to successfully apply for a total \$500,000 in planning and implementation grants from NC DOC/DWD for two Regional Allied Health Skills Sector Partnership initiatives covering the 11 BRAC counties. Targeted gaps in career ladders such as for Physical Therapy Assistant. Status: On-going.
8. Launched PipelineNC.com, an 18-month effort and major component of our USDOL Workforce Demonstration Program, in January 2010. This internet-based workforce solution is a regional virtual career exploration and talent acquisition platform for all civilian and

military users whether student, job-seeker, employer, or service provider. This new workforce innovation combines self-assessment, career exploration, educational linkages and job connections in one comprehensive on-line system. \$1.1M DOL. [Initial pilot with Wounded Warriors- \$200K DOL.] Status: Ongoing; all four WDB JobLink staffs have been trained as well as all eight community colleges. The Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) is very involved with this effort and tremendous progress has been made in overcoming procedural barriers that negatively impact the ability of exiting military to access civilian jobs.

9. Joined with four regional Workforce Development Boards in a workforce collaborative funded through \$55,000 NC DOC/DWD grant. BRAC-RTF functions as the Economic Development partner and initiatives include: regional four-way WDB joint meetings; an MOU; a regional joint WD website; All American Gateway Workforce Region branding; and video-conferencing capability for joint meeting and training purposes. Status: Ongoing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

10. Participated in a state-level strategic planning exercise to determine how NC could attract more defense and homeland security businesses. Exercise participants recommended the BRAC-RTF explore the possibility of establishing a Center for Defense and Homeland Security in North Carolina to attract high skill/ high wage jobs and research and development project funding in related clusters. \$40K DOL study investment. Status: Ongoing.
11. The Defense and Homeland Security Defense Cluster Analysis, a major component of USDOL Workforce Demonstration Program completed in January 2010, identified high skill/ high wage employment growth in the region as a result of future mission requirements at Fort Bragg. It was based on US DOL “Illuminate” SWOT analysis guidelines. \$225K DOL. Status: Completed The information from this document continues to be disseminated and used to impact educational offerings, workforce development, and Economic Development (ED).
12. Commissioned joint Fayetteville State University and UNC-Pembroke study on the Impact of BRAC on the Economically –Disadvantaged across the mostly rural and highly poor 11-county region. The study identified the major barriers impeding this group from fully participating in the economic opportunities presented by the BRAC growth. These barriers include literacy, transportation, entrepreneurship, communication, and training. \$85K BRAC-RTF DOL; and in-kind and cash match from the two universities. Status: Completed. The literacy and entrepreneurship initiatives that you will read about below were implemented in 2010 in response to these gap findings and recommendations.

Additionally, the \$1.1 million being sought for establishing ETCs at the community colleges addresses the training barrier identified above.

13. Implemented 'Energizing Entrepreneurism' project across the region in conjunction with NC Rural ED Center. 85 members from all 11-counties representing 8 Small Business Centers, 2 Small Business and Technology Development Centers, 5 Chambers of Commerce, 11 Economic Developers, 4 WDBs, 2 Community Development Corporations, non-profits and entrepreneurs formed local teams to plan and provide "E" infrastructure supports. \$15K DOL total to date with in-kind match from NC Rural Center. Status: Phase I completed; Phase II on-going.

- In addition, joined with UNC-Pembroke, Lumber River WDB, and other organizations in application for and implementation of a rural regional entrepreneurial coordination grant program via the NC Rural Center. SEA (Southeast Entrepreneurial Alliance) supported by \$200K from NC Rural Center and UNC-Pembroke covers 4 BRAC-RTF counties.

14. Created Regional BRAC-RTF Economic Developers Committee consisting of economic developers from the 11-county region, NC Department of Commerce, and three regional ED partnerships. The economic developers in the BRAC-RTF region are now working together to build a defense industry cluster and attract businesses to the region. Some of the ideas and initiatives that have been implemented in this arena include:

- The All American Defense Corridor (AADC) was created by the BRAC-RTF to attract defense and homeland security businesses to the region. The new AADC brand was announced by then Lt. Governor Bev Perdue in Sep 2007, and is being aggressively marketed by the region. Status: On-going.
- Initiated the start-up of the All American (now North Carolina) Defense Business Association in March of 2009. In just over one year, the association has attracted over 270 memberships from businesses and defense contractors across the state. Status: On-going.
- Further evidence of the success of this regional approach is that this year the economic developers convinced the BRAC-RTF Board of Directors to hire an Economic Development Liaison to lead the regional ED effort for the AADC.

EDUCATION

15. \$1.5 million Robert Noyce II Grant from National Science Foundation grant awarded to NCSU on behalf of the BRAC-RTF established a 5-year Kenan Fellows Master STEM

Teachers program in the region. \$50,000 DOL. Status: Ongoing; 11 teachers have been enrolled to date. Six more will be announced within the next few weeks.

16. This region was selected by MCNC's NC STEM Community Collaborative as one of three pilot 'ready-to-launch' regions throughout the state (a Bill and Melinda Gates-funded initiative) to develop regional Educational Innovation Design Plan. Status: On-going.
17. In conjunction with four regional Workforce Development Boards a/k/a All American Gateway Workforce Region, developed and implemented Lifelong Learning and Literacy Campaign with DCA of Boston. Based on PTP's WIRED funded project and "Get *NOT* Out of Your Life" theme. 150 attendee regional kick-off summit held in July. \$50K DOL with matching contributions from all four WDBs. Status: On-going.
18. Promoted CareerStart lesson plan implementation in the region – providing teachers with concrete connections between standard course of study instruction and relevant skill sets in business and industry. Status: On-going.
19. Aailed all middle schools in the region site licenses for The Real Game Online through a public-private partnership (Futures, Inc. and Communities in Schools). This program for middle school students engages them in experiential career exploration and decision making that teaches life lessons such as the consequences of making the wrong decisions. Coordinate distribution, promotion, and training to all 65 schools. Status: On-going. The middle school on Fort Bragg was recently added to this initiative.
20. Introduced and encouraged regionally focused General Hugh Shelton Leadership Experience for high school students. Fayetteville State University hosted the first such weeklong residential program located in the BRAC-RTF region in summer 2010 for 22 students. The BRAC-RTF provided DOL WDP funded scholarships for 9 participants. \$5K. Status: Plan to fund additional scholarships in 2011.
21. Facilitated a 'Project Citizen' staff development that supported the development of structured practices for students to solve community problems. The program design encourages responsible civic engagement and leadership. Additionally, the program provides an organizational guide for students developing High School Graduation or Senior Projects. Status: Completed.
22. Coordinated and convened a 'Living in the New Normal' regional Public Engagement – the 2-day event informed a sustainable action plan for supporting children and spouses from the military community (active duty and reserves) through the trauma and loss associated with military casualties and extended deployments, or the 'new normal' for these families. Co-hosted event with Fort Bragg senior leadership. Initiative sustained through leadership of Partnership for Children. Status: Completed.

MISCELLANEOUS

23. Coordinated all media relations, communications and community outreach for BRAC-RTF, All American Defense Corridor, Workforce Demonstration Program, and All American Center for Workforce Innovation via brochures, website, DVDs, bill boards, press releases, and PSAs. Status: On-going.

24. Gained national recognition. Awarded 2007 Association for Defense Communities (ADC) Community Innovation Award, 2008 ADC Active Base Community of the Year Award, and North Carolina State University's Economic Development Partnership Award in 2009. BRAC-RTF Executive Director selected in 2009 as an ADC board member.

SUMMARY

Together, and as delineated in the original grant proposal and subsequent implementation plan, these separate but inter-related initiatives and projects compose the BRAC-RTF's larger umbrella Workforce Demonstration Program. Through these efforts, the region seeks to integrate and coordinate education and workforce so as to align these efforts with the region's other economic transformation initiatives. Through this coordinated approach, it is expected that the citizens in the region will be more able to benefit from any economic opportunity that becomes available. In fact, thousands of residents have already been exposed to and positively impacted from these efforts across the 11-county Fort Bragg BRAC region.