

CAMDEN WORKS



Reimagining Workforce
Development in Camden

Executive Summary

After 50 years of social and economic isolation, Camden is growing. Camden is the safest it has been in decades, K-12 education has improved in meaningful ways, over a thousand new housing units are being rehabilitated or built in neighborhoods and new park and road infrastructure projects are being constructed. Key to sustaining this growth is the City's ability to create employment opportunities for residents through a streamlined employment training and placement program called *Camden Works*.

Camden Works is a private initiative led by Managing Partners including the New Jersey National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Latin American Economic Development Association, Cooper's Ferry Partnership, Center for Family Services, Camden County Workforce Development Board and Hopeworks.

Camden Works will be supported by Funding Partners, including Co-Chair George E. Norcross, III, Chairman, Cooper University Hospital, MD Anderson Cancer at Cooper and Co-Chair Susan Story, President and CEO of American Water Works, Inc. along with philanthropic and corporate partners such as United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey, Wells Fargo, American Water, Conner Strong & Buckelew, The Michaels Organization, and NFI to name a few initial donors. In addition, *Camden Works* will be guided by a group of Advisory Partners, including government leaders, religious leaders and residents of Camden.

First, Camden has always had a strong "Eds and Meds" sector, which in recent years has become a substantial contributor to improving the City's economic climate. Premier institutions like MD Anderson at Cooper, Cooper University Health Care, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Coriell Institute for Medical Research, Cooper Medical School of Rowan University, Rutgers University - Camden, Camden County College and our K-12 schools have continued their capital investment to expand and reinforce Camden's emerging role as a research, health care and education hub. This growing sector already accounts for forty-percent of the jobs in the City and is likely to grow even more significantly, bringing more opportunities for Camden residents.

Second, not since the turn of the twentieth century, has Camden seen so much in-migration of businesses. The Economic Opportunity Act of 2013 has been a driving force, attracting businesses to Camden and in some cases helping those companies

already here expand operations. As a direct result of the tax incentives, some 20 companies have chosen to establish or deepen their roots in Camden with more arriving over the next few years. Today, Camden is fortunate to have large companies like Campbell Soup Company, Subaru, American Water, and EMR. Smaller companies like Contemporary Graphics and Camden Yards Steel also call the City home. These companies are becoming meaningful contributors by working in earnest to offer Camden residents employment opportunities.

Thousands of jobs have come to Camden and at least 1260 residents are working in the facilities that have received tax credits. The recent arrival of these companies underscores the fact that the process of engaging residents for employment is just beginning. The collective impact of all the investments in the city has and is helping lower Camden's unemployment rate.

Camden's unemployment rate fell to 6.8% during the summer of 2019, a 30-year low. The importance of Camden's current unemployment rate cannot be understated. As recently as 2012, Camden had the dubious distinction of being the poorest city in America. In that year, the annual average unemployment rate was 17.7%. Even during periods of economic growth in the nation and New Jersey, finding a stable economic footing always seemed to elude Camden and its residents. Equally important, during national and regional downcycles, Camden experienced an exacerbated and arguably disproportionate negative impact. Viewed holistically, these data points show just how far Camden has progressed from the depths of economic isolation.

To ensure Camden continues its path to progress, it is vital that we develop a comprehensive training and employment placement program. While the current efforts to train and place people are well intentioned, a clear and present opportunity exists to integrate a fragmented system into a more effective one. The goal of *Camden Works* is to support the employment opportunities at hand by streamlining the connection between employers and residents seeking jobs. By convening employers and helping residents overcome common barriers to employment, we will continue to build pathways for residents to participate in the City's economic growth.

Camden Works is designed to leverage resources from various entities to provide training, education, and placement but most importantly wrap around social services. We will focus on, but not be limited to, four categories of individuals: (1) city high school graduates, who are ready for training and employment; (2) returning citizens

or previously incarcerated; (3) recent local college graduates; and (4) displaced homemakers.

We propose the following strategies:

1. Facilitate the connection between local employment opportunities and local workforce development programs;
2. Partner with local workforce development programs that prepare the local talent pool of job-seekers; and
3. Monitor job retention of positions filled through *Camden Works*.

Camden Works is proposed as a four-year pilot and will focus on employment targets considering the absorption capacity of the companies and the need to carefully train, place and follow Camden residents to reach their maximum potential.

Program Overview

In Camden there is a need to streamline the connection between employers and residents seeking job opportunities. The focus needs to be on building a pathway for residents to participate in the City's economic growth. The objective is to convene employers and assist residents to overcome common barriers in a unified system for verifiable, meaningful and achievable success.

The continuum of recruitment, training and education is complex. It becomes more complicated when candidates require intense wraparound case management and social services. In Camden, the ability of an individual to succeed is not just dependent on training, education, and placement but requires robust social support which will be at the center of our initiative.

Based on available data, we will focus on four categories of audiences which will include: (1) high school graduates, who are ready for training and employment; (2) returning citizens or previously incarcerated; (3) recent local college graduates; and (4) displaced homemakers.

We propose the following strategies:

1. Facilitate the connection between local employment opportunities and local workforce development programs;
2. Partner with local workforce development programs that prepare the local talent pool of job-seekers; and
3. Monitor job retention of positions filled through *Camden Works*.

In Camden, employee recruitment and placement are not centrally organized. Companies are more likely to seek out multiple entities for employee referrals, with no process to match the candidates with the skills required for the positions. Similarly, non-profits that are training Camden residents have no assurance that people in their candidate pool will get an opportunity to be employed, which leads to frustration among residents. Finally, residents do not have a structured mechanism, other than occasional job fairs, to hear about and apply for employment. We propose to serve as a central system and become a supplier of candidates to companies. In order to accomplish this, we will:

1. Recruit residents using a comprehensive community engagement approach that assesses job-seekers employment readiness through individualized case management;
2. Connect job-seekers to existing job training resources at non-profit partners as needed to overcome common barriers of success;
3. Provide a cogent mechanism for non-profits to train candidates to become part of the employment pipeline;
4. Become an active and primary interface with companies to determine employment needs and qualifications;
5. Match and facilitate the connection between vetted candidates and companies;
6. Provide social wraparound services initially and post-placement for one year;
7. Develop recommendations that can be implemented in companies to improve local, inclusive hiring practices; and
8. Monitor job retention of positions filled through *Camden Works*.

Case Management

Center for Family Services (CFS) will be primarily responsible for case management. CFS will offer resources and expertise in effectively blending workforce development and human services assets to streamline resources and improve service delivery to participants and employers through the following:

1. Creating a system to recruit, assess and place trained and qualified candidates who meet employer's hiring criteria; and
2. Layer in Individual Employment Plans (IEPs), skill building, training, certification, support groups, and human/social services to overcome existing and potential barriers to sustained success.

A Case Manager will be hired and managed by CFS and leverage its expertise in the Pathways to Success cadre of workforce development services. The Case Manager will:

1. Support the intake and Individual Employment Plan (IEP) development and management for participants recruited through various partners located in Camden City;
2. Be trained in topics that may include motivational interviewing, appreciative inquiry, trauma-informed care, Mental Health First Aid, etc. to reference and apply to each individual case and develop best practices; and
3. Work collaboratively with stakeholders to make cross-agency referrals and serve as an internal support system for resources and linkages for participants in preparation for employment.

Individuals will be engaged in identifying their own goals and defining success, work one-on-one with the Case Manager to document the design of that pathway in an IEP, and develop ways to measure, recognize and reward achievements. The Case Manager will support the assessments of basic adult skills, education and interests through modules such as CASAS and Conover.

Wraparound Support

Warm connections to supportive resources and service referrals will be made to assist participants in overcoming personal barriers to successful employment, including child care, transportation, driving record expungement, driver's license procurement/restoration, documentation retrieval and consolidation (i.e. social security cards, birth certificates, and other documentation required to begin formal work experience), and more to create a personalized pathway to success. In addition, individuals will have an opportunity to engage in weekly in-person one-on-one meetings with the Case Manager who will support them in identifying their goals and defining success, document the design of that pathway in an IEP, and develop ways to measure, recognize and reward achievements.

Trauma Informed Practices

Policies implementing trauma informed practices are reflected throughout all of CFS' programming and are governed by evidenced-based and promising approaches and informed by initiatives such as Safe-Child Standards and the Six Core Strategies. During the agency's orientation process, all staff are trained in the Nurtured Heart Approach, an essential set of strategies for shifting negative behavior and inspiring thriving relationships with children and adults. The program staff apply this training and approach in their daily interactions which indicates their recognition and validation of the challenges faced by participants and provides a tool for effective engagement and trust building. At CFS, programming and practices are supported

by a strengths-based framework grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the unique impact of trauma for our participants and an emphasis on the physical, psychological and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and, ultimately, creating opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment in the process.

Deliverables and Outcomes

We understand that it took many decades for Camden to decline and likewise it will take some time for the city to reach its maximum potential. Understanding that this is a process that requires extraordinary effort and time, we will focus our efforts to make progress on the following long-term outcomes. Using a logic model, we have identified the following long-term goals:

1. 40% of employees of Camden companies, anchor institutions, and small businesses are Camden residents;
2. The unemployment rate in Camden decreases;
3. The poverty rate in Camden decreases;
4. Awareness of job opportunities increases among Camden residents;
5. A streamlined process for recruitment of residents is in place;
6. Camden residents are connected to full-time positions with upward mobility; and
7. Camden residents are employed in jobs that earn sustainable wages that increase each year.

Monitor and Quality

We will have several monitoring opportunities to assess progress on initial plan and viability of accomplishing outputs. This feedback system will allow us, if necessary, to modify direction in order to achieve the outcomes noted in the logic model.

We will facilitate regular communication with Advisory Board members and stakeholders such as workforce development partners and local employers to present on the state of the plan and progress toward streamlining the connection between job-seekers and local employment opportunities. Advisory Board members will be able to understand the progress made toward implementing the action steps of the

strategic plan. These members will be able to provide ongoing, feedback to the overall initiative, along with suggestions for corrective action, if needed.

Besides measuring certain concrete outcomes, such as changes in unemployment rate and number of residents living below the poverty line, we will measure change in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of job-seekers exposed to our efforts. A simple survey will be administered to participating residents capturing baseline data on their experience in securing and retaining work. This survey can then be repeated on a yearly basis to measure changes in attitude and behavior. This kind of monitoring is particularly important because a large-scale reversal of the unemployment trend may take years.

A survey will be administered to local employers measuring their knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs around recruiting and hiring in Camden. This survey will be given again to employers who increase their employment of Camden residents. A basic customer satisfaction survey could also be given to Camden residents hired by local employers measuring their personal goals in upward mobility, their satisfaction with their employment process and support.

To entice completion of this survey, an incentive would be provided to each participant. A potential measure of the City's capacity to sustain system changes in workforce development can be tracked through attendance at workforce development events including community engagement sessions, educational/training programs, and specific programs associated with this initiative.

With regards to outcome measurement, we will use publicly accessible data on city-level demographics such as the unemployment and educational attainment rates to serve as a baseline. However, we plan to use data collected by workforce development partners for subsequent years and will collect data on job retention on a yearly basis in order to evaluate progress.

Some other specific measures are:

1. Number of available job opportunities in each industry on a quarterly basis;
2. Number of attendees at job fairs and community meetings;
3. Number of jobs secured before/after this initiative;
4. Number of residents completing job training before/after this initiative;
5. Utilization of program application process; and
6. Retention rate of Camden residents working at local employers.

Funding permitted, we plan to hire an evaluator to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of our efforts. Specifically, the evaluator can design and administer all evaluation instruments, such as surveys and focus groups, collect and analyze city-level public data and help determine the most effective and efficient methods for collecting measurement data, as well as synthesizing and presenting the collected data to all partners.

Logic Model

GOAL: To streamline connection between local job-seekers and local employment opportunities.

Strategy 1: Facilitate the connection between local employment opportunities and local workforce development programs.

Strategy 2: Partner with local workforce development programs that prepare the local talent pool of job-seekers.

Strategy 3: Monitor job retention throughout the initiative.

Logic Model				
Resources	Activities	Outputs (Delivered)	Short-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
SERVICES Liaison to Camden based employers and residents Community outreach/engagement Case management LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS Cooper's Ferry Partnership Center for Family Services Hopeworks Camden County Workforce Board LAEDA NJ NAACP EVENTS Stakeholder Convenings Job fairs Community meetings (English and Spanish) FUNDING Philanthropic and Corporate Resources	Adopt and implement a best-practice model/framework for workforce development	PRINT/DIGITAL Impact Report	Awareness of job opportunities is increasing among Camden residents	40% of employees of Camden companies, anchor institutions and small businesses are hiring Camden residents each year
	Hire/assign staff	Promotional materials of open positions, job fairs and announcements	Streamlined process for recruitment of residents is in place	Unemployment rate in Camden decreases
	Contract with data consultant to develop electronic platform that manages administration, data and generates reports	Communications Plan	Camden residents are placed into positions with upward mobility	The poverty rate in Camden decreases
	Contract with service provider for case management, training and referrals	Website & social media platform	Camden residents are employed in jobs that earn sustainable wages that increases each year	10% of local sourcing is contracted to Camden-based businesses
	Meet with workforce development partners on a regular basis to ensure constant communication among partners and share resources	Inventory of local businesses and services for local sourcing	Camden residents are employed in jobs that earn sustainable wages that increase each year	
	Establish an advisory board			
	Regularly meet with Camden companies, anchor institutions and small businesses to review/monitor open and upcoming job opportunities			
	Facilitate/coordinate collective job fairs on a regular basis to ensure a streamlines process			
	Hold community meetings (English and Spanish) to share information and get feedback about initiative			
	Develop and implement a communications plan for distribution of accurate and consistent information/announcements			
Evaluate, monitor progress and make adjustments as needed				
Develop database of businesses				

Partners

Conceptual models to building strong coalitions embody an iterative approach in which interdependent organizations assess community needs and resources. We have to focus on what's important, choose effective policies/programs, act on what's important and evaluate actions while constantly communicating, working together and learning more. In our experience, the only way to increase employment is by putting our learning into practice in the community with diverse partners, interdependent leadership, shared direction, alignment, and commitment.

Three categories of people will lead this effort: (1) Funding Partners who are and will commit resources for implementation and sustainability; (2) Managing Partners, made up of the State of New Jersey NAACP, LAEDA, Cooper's Ferry Partnership, Hopeworks, Center for Family Services, and the Camden County Workforce Development Board; and (3) Advisory Partners, made up of residents, government leaders, faith leaders, businesses and institutions.

FUNDING PARTNERS:

The following Funding Partners list identifies initial contributors to *Camden Works*. With the leadership and support of individuals and institutions, *Camden Works* will continue to raise funds over the next four years to implement the pilot initiative.

Co-Chair, George E. Norcross, III, Chairman Cooper University Hospital, MD
Anderson at Cooper

Co-Chair, Susan Story, President & CEO, American Water Works Company, Inc.
United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
The Michaels Organization

NFI

Conner Strong & Buckelew

Wells Fargo

Investors Bank

MANAGING PARTNERS:

Cooper's Ferry Partnership

State of New Jersey NAACP

Camden County Workforce Development Board

Latin America Economic Development Association

Center for Family Services

HopeWorks

Cooper's Ferry Partnership:

<https://www.coopersferry.com>

Cooper's Ferry Partnership (CFP) is a city-wide private non-profit community and economic development organization committed to the growth and preservation of Camden City. Over the past thirty-four years, CFP acquired a diverse skill set and project portfolio that uniquely qualifies the organization to effectively and efficiently respond to the City of Camden's mission and goals. Since its inception, CFP facilitated the revival of Camden City by creating an environment where people choose to live, work, and invest. CFP organizes its work around the following goals: (1) Create market conditions in the downtown that will allow for private sector investment and job growth; (2) Support the long-term development of neighborhoods outside of the downtown in order to ensure that the city's economic growth benefits all city residents; and (3) Make the Camden Waterfront a regional destination for activity and tourism in order to enhance Camden's image and create economic development opportunities.

Latin America Economic Development Association

<http://www.laeda.com>

LAEDA is a not for profit economic development organization dedicated to assisting emerging entrepreneurs and small business owners to start and grow their businesses in Camden, Burlington, Gloucester, Atlantic and Cumberland counties in New Jersey.

Center for Family Services to Camden Works

<https://www.centerffs.org>

Center for Family Services (CFS) has nearly 100 years of experience serving children and families in New Jersey. Their vision is for all people to lead capable, responsible, fulfilled lives in strong families and healthy communities. Our mission is to support and empower individuals, families, and communities to achieve a better life through vision, hope, and strength. CFS is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services (COA). As a multi-service human services organization, our comprehensive and holistic approach enables us to empower participants and clients to achieve success. CFS exists to provide high quality solutions to those most in need and hardest to serve.

State of New Jersey NAACP:

<http://www.njscnaacp.org>

NAACP New Jersey State Conference. Is a storied civil rights organization led by President Richard T. Smith, and is comprised of numerous units throughout the state with dedicated volunteers with a passion for working towards progress.

Hopeworks

<https://hopeworks.org>

Organized in 1999 and with a focus on education, technology, and entrepreneurship, Hopeworks provides a positive, healing atmosphere that propels young people to build strong futures and break the cycle of violence and poverty in Camden, New Jersey. They connect youth to life-changing opportunities where their growing technology skills go to work for enterprising businesses within the community. Hopeworks believes that without addressing the unresolved traumatic issues in a youth's life - especially as they manifest in habitual patterns of protection (i.e. disengagement, disconnected emotional state, anger, emotional eruptions) they will not be able to take full advantage of opportunities in their lives.

Hopeworks will serve as the technology developer and data consultant. They will develop an online portal, mobile app, and connected database to allow applicants to submit their resumes and employment qualifications to employers as a "one-stop shop". The portal will generate an "online resume" based on applicants answers to questions about their work experience and history, ensuring that everyone who uses the portal can be considered for employment. The online portal and mobile app should be easy enough to use however, staff will serve as 'navigators' to help residents complete the online resume using laptops and tablets as needed. The portal will also serve as the primary interface with companies input their employment needs and qualifications.

Camden County Workforce Board

<http://ccwib.com>

The Camden County Workforce Development Board (CCWDB), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is a local partnership of representatives from the public and private sector who provide the coordinated planning, oversight and policy guidance for all of the workforce readiness programs in Camden County, New Jersey. The CCWDB coordinates existing federal, state and local workforce readiness programs and policies into a single, labor market driven system that delivers needed services to our local workforce in a cost-effective manner.

The Camden County WDB's role to the county it serves is to understand the needs of those job seekers and employers who can benefit from the services provided such as career counseling, pre-employment screening, trainings resulting in a certification, etc. The WDB strives to create a vision for success for the local workforce and continues to ensure services are of value to our customers by utilizing all available resources to improve the customer experience.

ADVISORY PARTNERS:

Hon. Donald Norcross – Congressman, 1st CD-NJ

Hon. Frank Moran - Mayor, City of Camden

Maria R. Louis-Slaby, Ph.D., - VP, Talent Management & Organizational Effectiveness American Water

Alexis Wolfson - Senior Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer - Conner Strong & Buckelew

Beth Green, SPHR, PCC - Senior VP, & Chief Human Resources Officer, Cooper University Health Care

Maureen Martin - Director of Human Resources, ResinTech

John Zimmerman - Regional Bank President, Wells Fargo

Donna Jack - Director of Human Resources, The Michaels Organization

Terry Pearce - VP Human Resources, US at EMR Group

Susan Bass Levin - President & CEO, Cooper Foundation

Valeria Galarza - Senior Project Manager, Cooper's Ferry Partnership

Damon Pennington - President, ATS Group

Jeff S. Swartz - Executive Director, Camden County Workforce Development Board

Holly Cass - Deputy County Administrator, Camden County

Wilbert Mitchell - Executive Director, Respond Inc.

Merilee Rutolo - COO, Center for Family Services

Dan Rhoton - Executive Director, Hopeworks

Hon. Dana Redd - CEO, Rowan University/Rutgers – Camden Board of Governors

Richard T. Smith - President, NJ NAACP

Raymond L. Lamboy - President & CEO, LAEDA

Sean Brown - President, DuBois Douglas Strategies, LLC

Michael Banks - Managing Director for Employment Opportunities & Entrepreneurship United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern NJ

Dan Lombardo - Volunteers of America

Minister Wasim Muhammad - Brother Minister at Muhammad's Temple No. 2

Derrick Gallashaw - Camden Resident

Jose Martinez - Camden Resident

Ray Jones - President, Camden Business Association

Shirley Irizarry - Camden Resident

Erin Johnson - Camden Resident

Kim Fortunato - President, Campbells Soup Foundation