Initiative for Collaborative Government

Partnering for Mission Results

Creating Jobs in America: Case Studies and Recommendations for Local Job Development

Today, the opportunity exists to retain high-wage, high-skill, high-demand jobs in the United States by locating these jobs in rural and smaller metropolitan areas that have competitive cost structures, training workforces, and sufficient broadband access. In this report by George Mason University's Dr. Darrene Hackler, four case studies were conducted to demonstrate how four diverse U.S. communities are taking this opportunity to create and promote local job growth:

- **Russell County, Va.** The region is home to CGI's Southwest Virginia Center of Excellence, a software development and systems integration facility in Lebanon, Va. The area is a model of how a public/private effort can work to revitalize an economically depressed community with high-wage information technology jobs.
- **Northeast Pennsylvania** Nine counties worked closely with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to attract post-9/11 emergency data backup facilities that support New York City's financial services sector as part of a Labor Department WIRED grant, creating "Wall Street West."
- **Williamson County, Tenn.** This community is diversifying its economic base by recruiting biotechnology and bioscience industries to the region, leveraging its already strong health care industry to expand its economic base.
- **Ann Arbor, Mich.** This region in Washtenaw County is responding to job losses in the auto industry by creating state and local partnerships to expand the skills of local workers into new industries and diversify the regional economy.

These case studies draw a clear map of how to successfully develop infrastructure and a workforce in rural and smaller metropolitan areas in the United States to cultivate innovative industries and jobs. The case studies yielded the following 10 policy recommendations to public officials across federal, state, and local governments to help them accelerate economic development in rural and metropolitan America:

- **<u>Federal Government Should:</u>**
  - Work closely with state and local governments to develop new approaches to human capital development and innovation.
  - Fund technical assistance for local economic development strategies.
  - Link its workforce and economic development efforts.
  - Create a collaborative exchange between education and industry.

- **<u>State Governments Should:</u>**
  - Encourage regional collaboration.
  - Create a single point of contact for economic development.
  - Provide public venture funding.

- **<u>Local Governments Should:</u>**
  - Focus on regional collaboration
  - Consider the creation of public-private economic development organizations
  - Plan for the future of their region

With appropriate support from federal, state, and local policy-makers – and active involvement of private-sector partners – high-wage jobs in information technology, life sciences, and other areas can be created in many communities, providing the opportunity to revitalize those areas and achieve national security objectives.