

Governor Terry McAuliffe announced recently that, through the New Economy Workforce Credentials Grant program, Virginia's Community Colleges provided workforce training that enabled 2,173 Virginians to secure industry-recognized credentials, licenses, and certifications needed for high-demand careers, in the first year of the grant program.

This milestone nearly triples the number of people who were credentialed last year, bringing the total to 4,268 Virginians. More than half of the credential earners, 2,173, took advantage of the New Economy Workforce Credentials Grant program. Training for the remaining 2,095 credentials was funded by employers, federal grants, or other private sources.

Nate Humphrey of Amelia Court House enrolled in the power line worker program at Southside Virginia Community College.

The retired U.S. Army Ranger served seven combat deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq. When he came home, he was looking for that same camaraderie.

"When I retired, I missed it," he said. "And I found it being a lineman."

Just days after completing the program, he locked down a job at Southside Electric Cooperative.

"I think the course was just at \$11,000, but with the grant, I didn't pay anything," he said. "The only thing I paid for was my boots and my belt."

The Workforce Credential Grant Program is now in its second year. Right now, grants are available to support 146 training courses offered at 23 community colleges in the commonwealth. At SVCC, the grant can cover the following programs for eligible students: Welding, Power Line Worker Training, Truck Driver Training, Nurse Aide, Massage Therapy, Phlebotomy, Medication Aide and Precision Machining.

See class offerings and register at [southside.augusoft.net](http://southside.augusoft.net)