



Lancaster Chamber

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Lancaster Chamber Foundation Receives 600K Grant for Talent for Tomorrow Initiative Aimed to Improve Direct Care Workforce

Lancaster, PA – This past May, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) announced the investment of more than \$4.8 million in Direct Care Worker Job Quality grants that would be used for programming to improve job quality and workplaces for direct care workers in Pennsylvania.

The Lancaster Chamber Foundation was honored to be awarded \$600,000 in grant funds for the Talent for Tomorrow Initiative which will utilize the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Talent Pipeline Management© model to address direct care worker vacancies through strategic recruitment, hiring, and skills advancement in collaboration with postsecondary institutions and community organizations.

Heather Valudes, President & CEO of the Lancaster Chamber commented, "We are honored to be selected by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry to launch our employer-driven initiative, Talent for Tomorrow, through the Direct Care Worker Job Quality grant. Talent for Tomorrow presents us with a transformative opportunity to expand our vision for the Chamber's collaborative efforts to address workforce challenges throughout Lancaster County."

Pennsylvania faces a significant shortage of direct care workers, particularly in the healthcare sector, with projections indicating a growing gap between labor demand and workforce growth. Lancaster County, the 6th most populous county in Pennsylvania, experiences pronounced challenges due to its aging population and robust healthcare sector. The direct care worker shortage affects service delivery, workforce stability, and community access to essential healthcare services.

Talent for Tomorrow, a strategic initiative aimed at addressing direct care worker vacancies by leveraging the U.S. Good Jobs Principles of Recruitment and Hiring and Skills and Career Advancement, will employ the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Talent Pipeline Management© (TPM©) model to identify job demand, strengthen talent pipelines, and align partnerships with postsecondary institutions. Led by the Foundation of the Lancaster Chamber, Talent for Tomorrow will create an employer collaborative, supported by postsecondary partners and community organizations, to implement hiring, recruitment, training, and advancement strategies and strengthen the direct care workforce pipeline.

In addition to Lancaster County's community members benefiting from improved access to quality services, Lancaster County's extensive direct care workforce will benefit from Talent for Tomorrow's job quality

initiatives by improving access to meaningful employment opportunities that align with individuals' values and aspirations, developing sustainable employment pipelines for healthcare facilities through the cultivation of a skilled workforce with access to professional development and career advancement, and addressing disparities in access to healthcare services and employment opportunities among marginalized communities.

"We look forward to working with our healthcare partners, educational institutions, and community organizations to develop a strong pipeline for in-demand healthcare occupations. We are excited for the opportunity to demonstrate a model that healthcare employers in Lancaster County - and across Pennsylvania - can engage with as challenges arise with finding, hiring, training, and upskilling workers for critical roles.", notes Ashley Glensor, Programs & Workforce Strategies Manager at the Lancaster Chamber.

The Lancaster Chamber will engage Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health, Lancaster Area Senior Services (LASS), and Lancaster's broader healthcare systems and community-based healthcare services as key stakeholders leading the Talent for Tomorrow initiative. The Chamber's partnership with St. Joseph's University in Lancaster, Harrisburg Area Community College, and other educational institutions throughout Lancaster County will support this implementation of this work. Talent for Tomorrow is supported by the Lancaster County Workforce Alliance, which is led by the Lancaster Chamber, Economic Development Company of Lancaster County, the Community Action Partnership of Lancaster County, and the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board.

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At the Lancaster Chamber, our mission is to create the environment, facilitate partnerships, and lead on issues that elevate business success. Established in 1872, the Chamber celebrated its 150th Anniversary, commemorating 150 years of impact, support, engagement, and leadership for the Lancaster County business community. The Chamber continues to leverage the collective strength of the business community. By advancing a pro-business agenda, supporting community-focused initiatives, including Workforce, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and being committed to providing resources for all business professionals – the Chamber strives to build Lancaster into a thriving community for all.