



TRAILBLAZERS BLOG

There is more to say about Trailblazers' topics than will fit in our newsletter, so we're writing a blog now. Take a look: <http://ctetrailblazers.blogspot.com>

NONTRADITIONAL BEST PRACTICE

We would like to talk to teachers and administrators working with programs that have high nontraditional completion rates to see if they have recommendations that can help others. We will be contacting people soon based on our evaluation of last year's graduation rates. If you think your program is an example worth studying or if you have advice to offer others, please get in touch with us.

COMPLETER FOLLOW-UP

The 2011 Follow-up of 2010 CTE completers will be starting in March. We will be sending out information and instructions later this month. The system will run very much the same way it did last year, though with luck, even more smoothly. Please get in touch if you have any questions. CTEcompleters@virginia.edu

EMPLOYMENT NEEDS DATA

New occupational employment projections are available for Virginia's LWIAs from the Virginia Employment Commission. Administrators can use these data to prepare new courses, complete local plans, and prepare plans of study. Excel files are available on the [Trailblazers website](#).

We can help you use the projections for program planning. Call or email us. Trailblazers@virginia.edu 434-982-5582

WORKPLACE READINESS SKILLS

CTE has a new list of 21 workplace readiness skills that must be taught in every course. The resources you need to implement this change in the curriculum are online at [Virginia's CTE Resource Center](#) website. To view these, click on Verso, then a program area, then a specific course. You will see the skills list and instructional resources for each skill.

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Virginia Business Leaders Praise CTE's Workplace Readiness Skills Initiative

On Friday January 7th, Trailblazers' staff, Meredith Gunter and Achsah Carrier, had the pleasure of giving a presentation on workplace readiness skills to the Virginia Workforce Council. The Council is a business-led board that acts as the principal advisor to the Governor. It provides strategic leadership to the state regarding the workforce development system and its efforts to create a strong workforce aligned with employer needs. Council members in attendance included Hon. Robert P. Leber, Senior Advisor to the Governor for Workforce; Brett Vassey, President and CEO Virginia Manufacturers Association; Barry Duval, President Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and many others who are influential in the economic life of the Commonwealth.

The [presentation](#) described our research on workplace readiness skills, the importance of teaching these skills in schools, and the steps that CTE has taken to implement instruction on these skills into the curriculum. Council members were very interested in what we had to say because they are convinced that workplace readiness skills are important. Following the meeting, the Council passed a resolution that all agencies of the Commonwealth "should encourage the immediate approval and timely implementation of the revised Virginia Workplace Readiness Skills."

Workforce development is now recognized across the state as absolutely essential to our economic success and future well being. Virginia's career and technical educators should take great pride in the work they are doing for the Commonwealth, and in the growing recognition that their work is receiving from employers and senior members of government.

Metro Area Occupational Employment and Wage Data

It is valuable for CTE professionals to keep up with occupational trends in their instructional area. This makes it possible to help students and parents understand employment opportunities their area and make good choices about CTE courses, further education, and where in Virginia to search for new jobs. The Virginia Employment Commission creates occupational employment projections for all of Virginia's Workforce Investment Areas, which are available on the [Trailblazers website](#) and on the VEC's [Virginia Workforce Connection](#) site.

The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics also produces detailed information about occupations, including current [occupational employment and wage](#) estimates for 11 metropolitan areas and four nonmetropolitan areas in Virginia (though note that they don't have information about every occupation for every region).

- [Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford, VA](#)
- [Charlottesville, VA](#)
- [Danville, VA](#)
- [Harrisonburg, VA](#)
- [Kingsport-Bristol-Bristol, TN-VA](#)

2009 Regional Employment and Wages in Occupations Relevant to Some of CTE's Most Popular Programs				
	Employment (exc. self-employed)	Relative Standard Error	Mean Hourly Wage	Mean Annual Wage
Automotive service technicians				
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford	370	8%	\$14.37	\$29,900
Charlottesville	410	9.4%	\$20.88	\$43,430
Danville	240	18.2%	\$16.00	\$33,290
DC-Arlington-Alexandria	8,240	5.8%	\$22.44	\$46,670
Harrisonburg	280	13.4%	\$15.16	\$31,530
Lynchburg	580	12.8%	\$17.32	\$36,030
Richmond	3,280	6.2%	\$20.84	\$43,340
Roanoke	930	32.1%	\$15.63	\$32,510
Va Beach-Norfolk-Newport News	4,100	9.5%	\$18.55	\$38,590
Winchester-WV	300	21.6%	\$15.69	\$32,630
EMTs and paramedics				
DC-Arlington-Alexandria	3090	8.5%	\$23.03	\$47,910
Harrisonburg	**	**	\$22.32	\$46,430
Lynchburg	110	0%	\$14.36	\$29,880
Richmond	510	7.6%	\$15.71	\$32,670
Roanoke	570	34.8%	\$15.50	\$32,230
Va Beach-Norfolk-Newport News	880	6%	\$16.48	\$34,280
Industrial engineers				
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford	180	27%	\$34.19	\$71,120
Charlottesville	50	33%	\$40.90	\$85,080
Danville	50	11%	\$31.87	\$66,280
DC-Arlington-Alexandria	2,950	39.9%	\$43.49	\$90,470
Harrisonburg	40	13%	\$33.13	\$68,910
Lynchburg	330	14%	\$37.09	\$77,140
Richmond	680	14%	\$38.34	\$79,740
Roanoke	140	18%	\$29.92	\$62,230
Va Beach-Norfolk-Newport News	1,220	6%	\$37.16	\$77,290
Hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists				
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford	240	26.5%	\$13.64	\$28,370
Charlottesville	350	20.2%	\$14.13	\$29,390
DC-Arlington-Alexandria	6,070	8%	\$15.90	\$33,070
Harrisonburg	160	9.9%	\$10.41	\$21,660
Lynchburg	190	16.3%	\$13.83	\$28,770
Richmond	1,850	19.1%	\$14.79	\$30,760
Roanoke	460	26.0%	\$10.25	\$21,320
Va Beach-Norfolk-Newport News	2,340	14.9%	\$14.08	\$29,280
Winchester	80	44.6%	\$15.74	\$32,730
Police and sheriff's patrol officers				
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford	320	2.1%	\$18.97	\$39,450
Charlottesville	370	8.7%	\$20.99	\$43,650
DC-Arlington-Alexandria	12,840	2.5%	\$31.06	\$64,600
Harrisonburg	210	25.8%	\$21.06	\$43,810
Lynchburg	360	5.3%	\$19.77	\$41,120
Richmond	3,040	3%	\$23.55	\$48,990
Roanoke	700	14.4%	\$20.15	\$41,910
Va Beach-Norfolk-Newport News	4,350	15.2%	\$22.71	\$47,230
Winchester-WV	210	42.4%	\$23.20	\$48,250

- Lynchburg, VA
- Richmond, VA
- Roanoke, VA
- Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC
- Washington-Arlington-Alexandria
- Winchester, VA-WV
- Southwestern Virginia nonmetropolitan area
- Southside Virginia nonmetropolitan area
- Northeastern Virginia nonmetropolitan area
- Northwestern Virginia nonmetropolitan area

The BLS groups occupations into 22 categories. These aren't identical to career clusters, but they are useful categories and make it easy to find information about occupations relevant to the courses students study in CTE.

The accompanying table shows estimated employment and wages in five occupations that students prepare for in these widely taught CTE programs: Automotive Service Technology, Emergency Medical Technology, Pre-Engineering (PLTW), Cosmetology, and Criminal Justice.

Looking at this table, several points are clear right away. The DC-Arlington-Alexandria, Richmond, and Virginia Beach metro areas have the most employment in all five occupations. And in every case, DC-Arlington-Alexandria employs two or three times more workers than the next region. Likewise, this region generally pays the highest wages. Automotive service technicians average almost \$46,000 there, but only about \$30,000 in the lower wage Blacksburg area.

Average wages for automotive service technicians, and EMT/ paramedics are similar across the state, in the \$30-45,000 range. Police officers earn about the same average wage in most regions of the state (somewhere between \$40,000 to \$50,000). But they average dramatically more in DC-Arlington-Alexandria, almost as much as Industrial Engineers earn in some other parts of the state. Cosmetologists have low wages everywhere. Even in northern Virginia, they average only a little more than \$30,000. The cost of living is much higher in this region than anywhere else in the state, and this wage is barely enough to support a single person, let alone a family.