

# ALABAMA Work-Based Learning Handbook



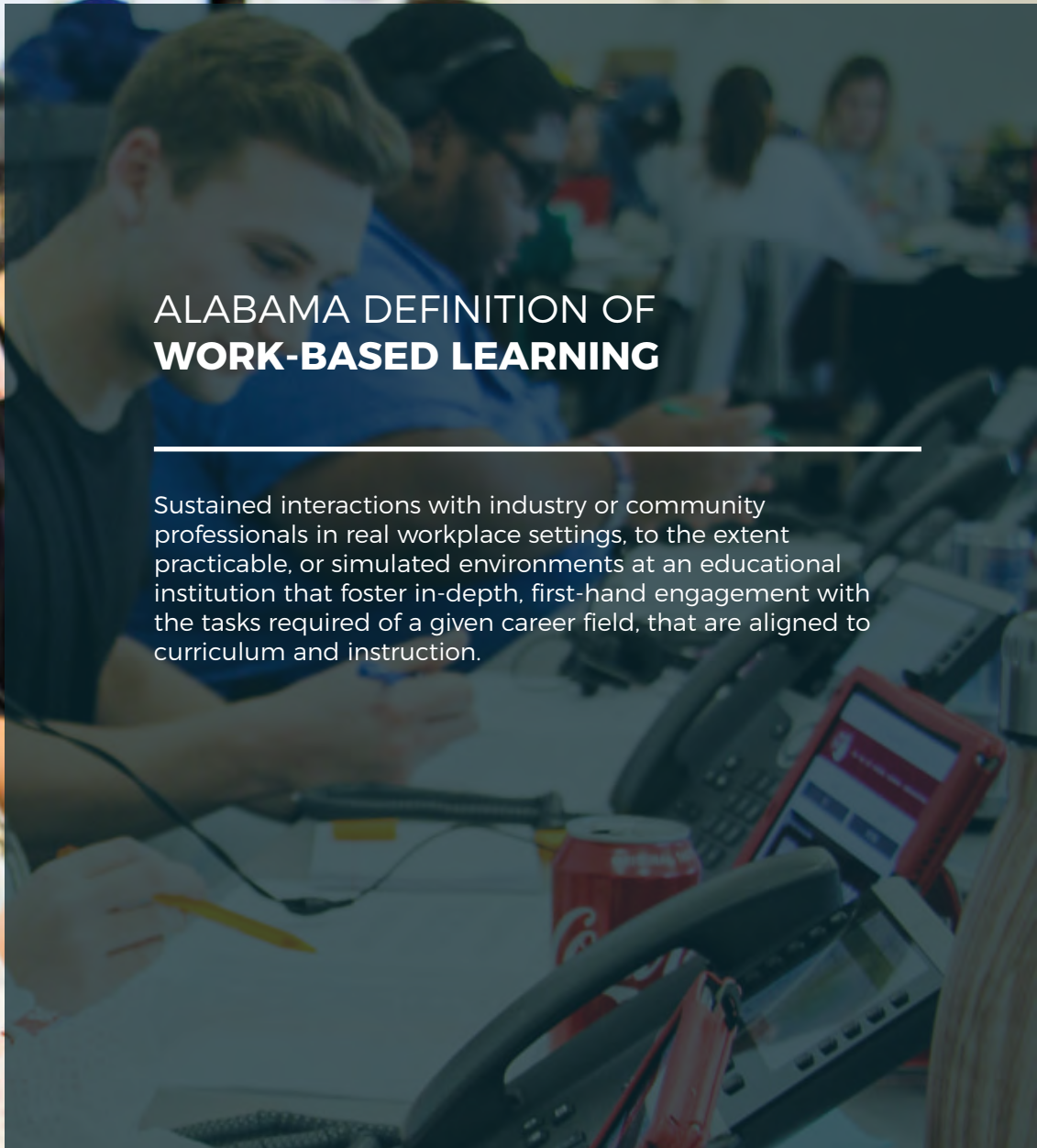




## ALABAMA DEFINITION OF **WORK-BASED LEARNING**

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Sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, first-hand engagement with the tasks required of a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction.



# What is WBL?

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Under the leadership of Governor Ivey, multiple state agencies responsible for workforce development have adopted a uniform definition of work-based learning (WBL). This was an essential first step in the process of increasing the common understanding of work-based learning and expanding its use. This effort has been facilitated by a grant from the National Governors Association and participation in a three-year Work-Based Learning Policy Academy. Through the NGA Policy Academy, the Alabama team has had the opportunity to engage with and learn from many other states and gain information from their best practices. Alabama was identified as a mentor state in the Policy Academy because of our state's vision to scale high-quality work-based learning opportunities for youth and young adults.

This handbook is the next step in that process. The purpose of this handbook is to help WBL practitioners, participants, and employers share a common language about the types and most common characteristics of work-based learning models. The use of common terminology improves communication between all stakeholders, which is necessary to continue growing the utilization of WBL as a key workforce development strategy that meets the needs of employers and learners.

Future activities related to this work include conducting comprehensive inventories of the WBL activities being implemented across the state, hosting WBL convenings, and recognizing scalable WBL best practices. These efforts will increase awareness of WBL as a tool and help continue to grow opportunities for engagement.

## WORK-BASED LEARNING

# Continuum

The continuum illustrates a non-linear path from career awareness to exploration to preparation, with a myriad of activity options. The various work-based learning activities do not fall into hard and fast, siloed buckets, and just like with any continuum, some of the activities straddle more than one category. Not all of the activities along the continuum fit the definition of work-based learning on their own, but they are all critical components that support the overarching goals.

### career awareness



## LEARNING ABOUT WORK

Awareness activities expand the possibilities that students consider as viable career options and prepare students for further exploration and preparation activities. These activities begin in the earliest stages of education and are an essential way for students to increase their awareness of personal interests and talents. Awareness activities are foundational to eventual success in WBL, but do not meet the definition of WBL on their own.

### ACTIVITIES MIGHT INCLUDE

Job Shadowing

Career Expo/  
Career Day

Industry Tours



## career preparation



### LEARNING THROUGH WORK

When students have identified a specific career of interest, they should have long-term and firsthand engagements working in the career fields of their interest. These experiences are designed primarily to give students extensive practice in applying fundamental, practical, and technical knowledge and skills in the career of their choice. Career preparation experiences take place over a longer period of time and involve more responsibilities.

#### ACTIVITIES MIGHT INCLUDE

Clinical/Practicum  
Field Experience

Internship  
(tied to a field of study)

On-the-Job  
Learning

Pre-Apprenticeship

Registered  
Apprenticeship

## career exploration



### LEARNING FOR WORK

As students begin to focus on careers of interest, they should be provided opportunities to get involved directly with people actively working in those careers. Career exploration experiences encourage students to develop personal career interests, a better understanding of various career pathways, and the workplace readiness skills needed to begin making informed decisions about secondary and postsecondary education and training.

#### ACTIVITIES MIGHT INCLUDE:

Employability  
Skill Training

Simulated  
Workplace

Internship

Externship

Cooperative  
Education

# Job Shadowing

- Very short term (usually one to a few days)
- On-site, workplace visits
- Used to expose students to the world of work and possibly to make them aware of jobs they didn't know existed
- Traditionally one-on-one or perhaps up to three guests visiting a person or company

Job shadowing is an effective tool for increasing awareness and exposure to careers. Individuals can use the information gained from a job shadowing experience to determine if a general career field is of interest to them.

Job shadowing provides students with more exposure to both careers and workplaces as they interact with and observe one or more employees. They can learn about the nature of the job and the work environment, as well as the required education and training. Students can participate in more than one job shadowing opportunity, allowing them to compare careers of interest.

## Examples

Ride along with HVAC service tech  
Construction site visit  
Classroom observation day  
Take your child to work day



# Job Shadowing Best Practices

## Best Practice Region 1

Non-School Based  
Franklin County Chamber of Commerce  
Cassie Medley  
(256) 332-1760  
director@franklincountychamber.org

The Franklin County Chamber of Commerce selects tenth graders from two school districts to participate in their Junior Leadership Program. Students select three careers of interest and are then assigned a job from one of those three choices to shadow during an assigned school day. Students shadow on-site and usually one-on-one. After the experience, students complete a reflective questionnaire.

## Best Practice Region 5

K-12  
Auburn High School  
Audrey Marshall  
(334) 887-0058  
amarshall@auburnschools.org

Each year the career coach connects with the Auburn Chamber of Commerce and the WBL Coordinator to identify 10-20 shadowing opportunities for students, based upon student interest. Summer shadowing opportunities are managed through the WBL program coordinator. The career coach and WBL coordinator provide prompts for students to use as they interview employers.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation



# Career Expo/Career Fair

- Single day event where groups of employers from various clusters will present information about careers in their field
- Familiarizes students with the breadth of occupations and careers available
- Often organized by grade level to allow for age-appropriate activity planning
- Sometimes coupled with, but not to be confused with a "Job Fair," where companies interview and hire for open positions

Most effective implementations of career expos include preparation activities to guide learning, as well as follow-up discussions to answer questions that were generated and extend learning.

Each Regional Workforce Council hosts Career Expos for 8th Graders, (WOW-Worlds of Work, WOO-Worlds of Opportunity, Career Discovery, etc.)

Some other very good career fairs are hosted by the high school CTE programs for younger students, which gives the older students an opportunity to serve as ambassadors to the younger students and share with them why they might want to explore careers in this pathway.

## Examples

Career Day/Week in Elementary School  
WOW Varsity for 11th/12th graders  
College Skills Chapters





# Career Expo/Career Fair Best Practices

## Best Practice Region 5

K-12  
Elmore County Technical Center-Elmore County Schools  
Lindsay Jordan, Career Coach  
(334) 567-1218  
Lindsayjordan@elmoreco.com

The ECTC hosts an Employer Showcase event each spring on its campus. The goal is to connect employers to students in a forum where real conversations about careers can take place. Each classroom hosts a company, often one related to that CTE program of study. Students select at least two sessions and have the opportunity to meet for at least twenty minutes with employers for in-depth, one-on-one or small group discussions. Some students have even conducted preliminary interviews or completed job applications during their sessions.

## Best Practice Region 1

University  
The University of Alabama in Huntsville/Office of Career Services  
Candace Phillips  
(256) 824-6741  
Cfp0001@uah.edu

Industry days are a series of events that invite employers from various industries to share information about career opportunities in their field. The series is designed to rotate through various industries, including Intelligence Day, Automotive Day, Space Day, and Health Careers Day. The goal is to introduce students to a variety of occupations in a wide range of industries. Rather than targeting these events at certain majors, the series seeks to show students the flexibility and adaptability of their degree programs and classroom experiences to a certain industry.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation

# Employability Skill Training

- Provides participants with the foundational skills that are common and essential across all industry sectors and allow for effective performance in any level job
- Some specific programs exist for this (i.e. Ready to Work), but these skill trainings may also be built into other types of training.

Employability skills are basic skills that are necessary for success in the labor market at all employment levels and in all sectors. These skills have many names— soft skills, workforce readiness skills, career readiness skills—but they all include the same set of core skills that employers want. Employability skills are an essential component of college and career readiness.

Alabama has an industry-developed, state-recognized employability skill program called Ready to Work. RTW is offered as pre-employment training through AIDT, many high schools, and community colleges. For more information, visit [alabamareadytowork.org](http://alabamareadytowork.org).

Sometimes formal employability skill training is finite, but every successful WBL program has a strong focus on continued learning of employability skills. Many educators or workforce training professionals already teach essential employability skills in their academic or technical skill classes, not just in an independent stand-alone activity.

Most common skills listed by employers are: Showing up to work every day and on time, keeping cell phones put away at all times, getting along with other employees, and being able to pass a drug test.

## Employability Skills Best Practices

### Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 4

Non-School Based  
Manufacture Good  
Lawrence Sheffield  
(205) 383-5043  
[lawrence@manufacturegood.org](mailto:lawrence@manufacturegood.org)

Manufacture Good is a social enterprise that provides unemployed men with woodworking and metalworking job and life skill training. They work with employers in their area to provide meaningful work experience for their participants that focuses on teaching the value of work and building character. Each year, the faith-based nonprofit provides four cohorts of six-month trainings through which participants learn carpentry skills while making a range of wooden products that are sold to help support the initiative. The range of products they make and sell— which are manufactured in their wood and metal shops on a 32,000 square foot campus in the heart of downtown Birmingham— contributes to their vision of creating common goods for the common good.

### Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 7

Non-School Based  
Goodwill Gulf Coast  
Ginny Turner  
(251) 471-1581  
[gturner@goodwillgc.org](mailto:gturner@goodwillgc.org)

Goodwill Gulf Coast incorporates intensive, effective employability skill training across a range of programs and services offered to at-risk youth or transitioning with disabilities into the workforce; young and older adults seeking to increase skills for a pathway to higher wages and a promising career; and people striving to overcome barriers to success such as public benefit participation or justice involvement. They serve participants with workforce offerings and educational supports, including employment preparation, job placement, career pathway training, digital skills classes, job retention supports, and paid and unpaid work experiences, many of which include the opportunity to attain credentials, such as Forklift Operation, Microsoft Office Specialist, CNA, and CDL.



# Governor's Seal of Excellence Winner

## Region 5 - Hope Inspired Ministries

John Bowman  
(334) 850-7912  
jbowman@hopeinspiredministries.org

Hope Inspired Ministries (HIM) helps chronically unemployed adults to obtain, maintain, and excel at employment, as well as to gain confidence as they transition to become contributing members of the community.

HIM began in Montgomery in 2012 and has grown steadily to offer training in Montgomery, Birmingham, Lowndes County, and the Department of Youth Services at Mt. Meigs. HIM also teaches on Saturdays at The Foundry in Bessemer. The HIM program is built on an exhaustive 9-week job training schedule that teaches soft skills, financial management, character development, critical thinking, anger management, health and wellness. The process is rigorous, repeats six times per year, and includes a heavy dose of social work.

Due to strict structure and accountability, approximately 45% of the students that enroll complete the course. However, 85-90% of HIM graduates find employment and/or pursue higher education. The recidivism rate of arrests among HIM graduates is less than 5%, compared to the 40% rate of Alabama inmates.

Students must desire to work and must be unemployed or have a history of inability to hold a job. A student may enter the program with a positive drug test but must be clean to graduate. HIM students must have a place to live, and HIM partners with other non-profits to find housing as needed.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation



# Industry Tours

- Visits to local businesses
- Typically half-day or full-day
- Can be visits to several businesses in one industry
- Can be visits to several different industries

Industry tours broaden awareness about local career opportunities and increase knowledge about the many jobs available within a business or geographic area, beyond those jobs that might typically come to mind. They also can help dispel misperceptions about certain kinds of jobs that might have traditionally been thought of as "dirty".

Industry tours with students typically occur with middle and high school students. They are also very effective with groups of educators, providing some of the most impactful professional development available.

Industry tours are often coordinated by local Economic Development Authorities, Regional Workforce Councils, and Chambers of Commerce.



# Industry Tours Best Practices

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 5

K-12  
Opelika City Schools  
Katie Murray  
(334) 745-9700  
Katherine.murray@opelikacityschools.org

This is Ready to Work done right! Opelika City Schools embeds RTW in their Workforce Essentials Class that meets every other day all year. The key to this successful RTW program is connecting students with local industry partners through industry tours. Through the industry tours, the students learn about the varied career opportunities in their region, as well as potential benefits like tuition reimbursement. The tours serve as opportunities for students to network and connect with HR managers. In a sense, each tour is a chance for the students to "interview" the company to see if the employer will be a good fit for the student.

## Best Practice Region 1

Non-School Based  
Cullman Economic Development  
Susan Ellar  
(256) 739-1891  
susane@cullmaneda.org

Educators in Industry Day was created in January of 2015 to show teachers what kind of jobs are available in Cullman and what kind of skills are necessary for those jobs by carrying teachers into the workplace. Teachers normally go from high school to college and back to the classroom and are not exposed to work opportunities outside the education arena. They take 350 educators on tours of 16 local manufacturers and industries, the hospital, and Wallace State Community College technical programs. The educators from each school are sent to different tours so that each school is exposed to a multitude of jobs. Many participating teachers have openly admitted that some of their classroom focus will change based on their new understanding of skills needed in the workplace.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation



# Simulated Workplace

- Classes are structured like companies
- Students apply for entry
- Major focus on employability skills and preparation for entering the workforce at the entry level
- Employer advisory committees help schools build realistic simulated environments

The Alabama Simulated Workplace model transforms CTE classrooms into a company setting that introduces students to business processes using distinct workplace components. By incorporating realistic workplace content like interviews, applications, employee manuals, and promotions for skill gains, simulated workplaces transform the classroom into an experience to prepare students with more than just content knowledge.

In any high-quality simulated workplace, there will be active employer advisory committees that help determine what the lab setup should be and how to make the simulation look like the real world. Initial and continuous employer input is essential so that programs are as much like the real work environment as possible.

## Objectives of Alabama Simulated Workplace

- Place business and industry processes directly into CTE programs
- Incorporate foundational academic and career-ready skill sets
- Provide students an understanding of all aspects of an industry or business and how their individual success leads to company success
- Provide each student with an understanding and knowledge of how workplace processes and behaviors are integral skills to successful employment





# Simulated Workplace Best Practices

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 1

Dekalb County Technology Center  
Jonathan Phillips  
(256) 638-4421  
jcphillips@dekalbk12.org

The TAMIE project (Theater and Medicine in Education) helps healthcare students practice empathy as they work with theater students who play the roles of individuals with different health conditions and complications. This is implemented in a simulated workplace where students wear uniforms, clock in and out, receive sample paychecks, and much more!

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 2

Lincoln High Building Construction Program  
Kim Knight  
(256) 368-2601  
kimknight@tcboe.org

North Talladega County Construction (NTCC) program combines project-based learning and simulated workplace in their Tiny House-Big Impact project. Students complete job applications to apply for different jobs in the program, including leadership and supervisory positions. The students clock in daily, and they begin each day with Safety Toolbox Talks.

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 3

Pickens County College and Career Center  
Shawn McDaniel  
(205) 367-1230  
mcdaniels@pickens.k12.al.us

P4C students follow dress code expectations including an identification badge, use a clock-in system, and can apply for leadership jobs. "Program Supervisors" meet weekly with administration to provide P4C updates, monthly agendas, and give student feedback. For employability skill training, the "company" assembles monthly to attend "Professional Growth and Learning" led by industry guest speakers.

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 4

Shelby County CTEC  
Robert Irwin and Mark McCary  
(205) 746-4158, (205) 294-0753  
rirwin@shelbyed.org, mmccary@shelbyed.org

Shelby County CTEC's automotive and collision repair students clock in and out daily, wear uniforms, practice customer service, draft repair orders, and assign jobs. The students use employee handbooks that were developed with input from industry.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation

# Externship

- Goal is to send a proficient employee outside the existing job (and even potentially outside the industry) to broaden awareness and gain content knowledge
- Usually done for a defined period with a plan for returning to the initial employer
- The employee may be paid by their primary employer or through outside sources for the time they spend at the externship placement.

The Alabama Workforce Council has recommended externship placements as a way for career coaches and counselors to expand their own knowledge of career fields available to their students. Individuals providing guidance to students on selecting career paths are better prepared with first-hand knowledge and in-depth experience when discussing options with students. Externships can be arranged by school systems, individual employers, or employer associations.



# Externship Examples

Non-School Based  
Alabama STEM Council  
Lee Meadows  
(205) 907-8371  
Lee.Meadows@commerce.alabama.gov

The Alabama STEM council conducts teacher externships for secondary teachers of science and mathematics. The goal of the externships is to provide these core subject area teachers with experiences and connections that show them how their content is applied in the world of work. The teachers do a three-day rotation, spending one day at each of three different employers. Teachers earn a stipend for participation which covers their time and expenses. They engage in learning activities and conversations with company employees, and they are given in-depth insight into the work going on there. The connections made there are taken back to the classroom to help teachers bring relevance to their instruction.

Alabama Community College System  
Barry May  
(334) 293-4707  
Barry.may@accs.edu

The Alabama Community College System coordinates externships for post-secondary technical instructors. These externships last for 5 days and are designed to give the instructors hands-on experience in the technical work related to their field of teaching. During these five days, the instructors work as employees of the company where they are placed. The instructors receive a stipend for their time and have assigned pre-work, as well as a required deliverable demonstrating how they will use the content to develop specific lessons for their program.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation



# Internship

- May be paid or unpaid work experience
- Length of the placement is often pre-determined
- Familiarizes potential candidates with the specific industry and/or the specific employer who is hosting the intern
- Involves students working in professional settings under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals
- Completion of an internship organized by an educational institution may be associated with earning secondary or post-secondary course credit
- Typically one-time work or service experiences related to the student's major or career goal

Internships are widely used across industry sectors as a way to let participants get a taste of what it's like to work in a given industry or specific occupation. The depth of involvement of interns can vary greatly from one placement to another. Some interns are closely mentored while working with a person in a very specific occupation, while others are provided a broader opportunity to explore various roles within an organization. Internships arranged through academic institutions may be associated with academic credit while other internships are directly established by employers as a recruitment tool for new talent. Teacher preparation programs often use student teaching internships as the capstone to degree programs. Teacher interns are provided opportunities to demonstrate the content knowledge they have gained in methods courses under the supervision and guidance of a mentor teacher. When employers establish internship programs themselves, the program may have no connection with academic credit. Some companies use summer intern programs as evaluation periods prior to making job offers to new talent.

## Internship Best Practices

### Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 4

Non-School Based  
United Ability  
Katie Dumais  
(205) 944-3979  
kdumais@unitedability.org

The Summer JETS (Job Exploration Training Services) Program provides summer work opportunities for students with disabilities. Students are paid for the work they do in the program and are working side-by-side with staff members at the worksites learning true jobs in which they have the potential to later be hired full time. United Ability provides two on-site job coaches for the duration of the program to "dig deep" with students and help them not only with the physical components of their jobs, but also with the employability skills needed for someone to maintain a job.

### Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 7

Non-School Based  
Riviera Utilities  
Dr. Sharon Cureton  
(251) 970-4147  
scureton@rivierautilities.com

Riviera Utilities has a Summer Intern Program for rising high school seniors. The program encompasses nine different entry-level occupations within their utility: field operator, gas operator, cashier, groundworker, plant operator, engineering technician (water, gas, and electric), and warehouse worker. The goals of the summer paid internship program are providing high school students with valuable work experience while learning basic industry-specific skills, identifying and developing a talent pipeline for future employment and educational opportunities, and exposing local high school students to technical and administrative careers, specifically within a public utility.



# Governor's Seal of Excellence Winner

## Region 3 - University of West Alabama Department of Communication

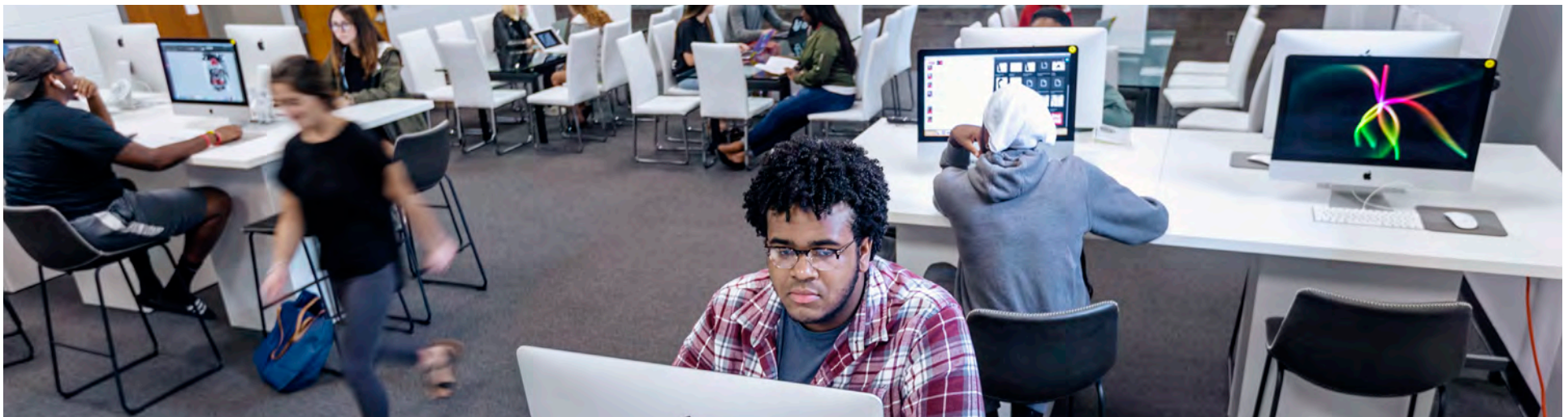
Dr. Amy Jones  
(205) 652-3558  
ajones@uwa.edu

The University of West Alabama's Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) program requires all students to complete at least one internship during their senior year. Thirty-five percent of those students are employed full-time by their internship host site after graduation. Since 2014, the IMC program has coordinated more than 332 internships, and 73% of those interns worked for Alabama companies. More than one third of these internship opportunities are paid. On average, only 21% of college students participate in internships.

IMC students increased skills in the areas of graphic design, social media, marketing, photography, event planning, fund raising, podcasting, hospitality, and many more. The interns were placed in a variety of industries, including Advertising/PR agencies, non-profits, traditional journalism, broadcasting, sports leagues, real estate, and more.

Internship requirements include completion of 135 hours of IMC-related work experience, three IMC-related portfolio-quality work samples, and a written reflection of the internship experience. Most undergraduate internships are completed during the summer prior to senior year. Students secure their own internship opportunities, with assistance from IMC faculty, IMC employer partners, and IMC Alumni.

Flexibility has been key to student success in the IMC internships. UWA coordinated virtual internships during COVID. IP grades were assigned to students needing extensions. In addition, two internships may be combined to complete work requirements.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation

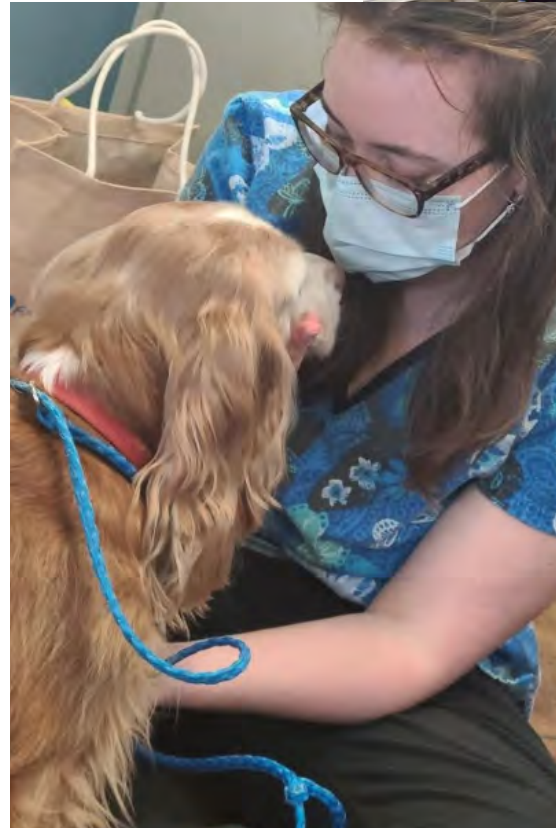
# Clinical/Practicum Field Experience



- Work experience that is typically unpaid
- Length of the placement is often pre-determined
- Most often used to describe placements in healthcare training programs
- Clinical or practicum course credit may be earned when organized and completed through a secondary or post-secondary educational institution

One of the most common uses of clinicals and practicum experiences is within the medical field. Clinical experience gives health science students an opportunity to integrate knowledge gained in the classroom with clinical practice. During clinicals, students are placed in a variety of healthcare settings and spend time observing patients at different stages of medical practice. This provides students with a better understanding of the scope of the healthcare profession. Health and medical science teachers supervise clinical experiences.

Some clinical and practicum field experiences are paid, while some are specifically prohibited from being paid placement. This determination is normally made by an accrediting body when there is a licensure requirement involved in the occupation.





# Clinical/Practicum Best Practices

## Best Practice Region 1

K-12  
Hartselle High School  
Lynne Shelton  
(256) 309-9822  
lynne.shelton@hartselletigers.org

Clinical/Practicum field experience is the culmination of advanced coursework within the Hartselle High School Medical Academy. Clinical field experience allows their students to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in a real work environment. The scope of experiences helps validate student career decisions while exposing them to other available career options. Through the unpaid work experiences, clinical students can establish themselves as potential healthcare workers available for future employment.

## Best Practice Region 5

ACCS  
Chattahoochee Valley Community College  
Dr. Bridgett Jackson  
(334) 291-4972  
Bridgett.jackson@cv.edu

The Associate of Applied Science in Nursing – Direct Entry Program at Chattahoochee Valley Community College (CVCC) is a seamless 5-semester curriculum with clinical experience and stackable credentials, leading to an Associate of Applied Science in Nursing. Stackable credentials include a nursing assistant certificate of completion, a practical nursing certificate, and an Associate of Applied Science in Nursing.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation

# Cooperative Education (CoOp)

- Paid employment at a work site
- Focus is on gaining work experience
- Sometimes transitions to a long-term employment situation
- Job is not necessarily tied to the specific field of training the student is participating in
- Often just called “work-based learning” or WBL by K-12 teachers and administrators
- Participation is associated with earning secondary or post-secondary course credit
- Training agreement between employer and educational institution

Cooperative Education represents a cooperative agreement between an employer and an educational institution. Students participating in CoOp gain employability skills and industry experience. Cooperative Education is one of the most widely used forms of work-based learning and has seen a major resurgence in popularity in recent years. This form of training is commonly used in both secondary and postsecondary programs.

Successful CoOp implementations are built on flexible scheduling models established between the employer and the school. These arrangements are mutually beneficial, allowing for the student to continue academic study while providing value to the employer. Students are able to earn money while employers are able to fill entry-level jobs.

A key distinction from some other types of WBL is that not every CoOp placement is tied to the field of study for the student.

## CoOp Best Practices

### Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 1

Non-School Based  
North Alabama Homebuilding Academy (NAHA)  
Dr. Tommy Davis  
(256) 345-9656  
Tommy.davis@nahacad.org

The main goal of the North Alabama Homebuilding Academy's eight-week training is workforce development and providing participants a clear pathway for starting a career within the residential construction workforce. The program specifically targets low income, unskilled, and under-employed individuals seeking to invest in their future. NAHA also serves transitioning military, high school graduates, and career shifters. Students select electrical, HVAC, plumbing, or carpentry and are taught by local business owners who are considered experts in their fields. This provides students with job experience, a real look into their selected trade, and opportunities to learn from a local master.

### Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 3

Non-School Based  
Mercedes Benz U.S. International  
Inc. Steve Colburn  
(205) 246-8792  
Steve.colburn@daimler.com

Mercedes Benz U.S. International Inc. has CoOp programs implemented in collaboration with four Alabama community colleges and five Alabama universities. Over 140 students who participated in the Mercedes Tech Program have been hired into full-time positions at Mercedes Benz U.S. International Inc. Thirty-eight of them have been promoted to leadership positions, including one who is a supervisor. MBUSI seeks to develop their CoOp students into their future leaders, and MBUSI shows its commitment to training, mentoring, evaluating, and hiring these students into Alabama's workforce, with many of these students having come from out of state to in-state institutions and subsequently remaining in-state.



# Governor's Seal of Excellence Winner

## Region 2 - Gadsden City Schools/Beautiful Rainbow Café

Chip Rowan  
(256) 390-1999  
crowan@gadsdencityschools.org

Beautiful Rainbow Café is a collaboration between Gadsden City Schools and the City of Gadsden. It is a restaurant in the Gadsden Public Library that is open to the public and completely staffed and operated by students with significant cognitive disabilities and autism spectrum disorder. The mission of Beautiful Rainbow Café is to use the operation of a café and onsite garden as a vehicle to teach young adults and adolescents the skills they will need to obtain community-based employment.

Students at the café are taught using ALSDE's Transition Standards, using best practices that have been developed at the café. Ranging in ages from 16-21, students are taught on-the-job all of the skills necessary to operate the restaurant, including growing organic food in the garden, preparing food for an upscale garden-to-table menu, serving customers, operating a point of sale system, controlling inventory, dishwashing and janitorial skills, and food safety and hygiene practices.

Students also receive employability skill training, which includes topics such as teamwork, independent work, following directions, grooming, punctuality, dependability, courteous customer service, telephone etiquette, workplace conflict-resolution, and more. Through a partnership with Exchange Bank of Gadsden, students are taught financial literacy skills and open bank accounts.

The ultimate goal of this program is helping students obtain and maintain community-based employment. With a grant from the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama, Mr. Rowan and his team have developed a virtual transition curriculum with free transition training videos that educators can use free of charge throughout Alabama. This curriculum can be viewed at <https://beautifulrainbowtraining.com>.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation



## On the Job Learning (OJL)



- Paid work experience
- Tasks learned on the job are directly linked to technical instruction the student is receiving
- Must be through structured, supervised work experience
- Often results in long-term employment with the company

The critical defining characteristic of on the job learning (OJL) is the connection between academic study and real-world learning experience. This connection sets OJL apart as a more specifically career focused activity than a more general CoOp placement. Participants in OJL are not only seeking work experience and employability skills, but they are also learning the technical skills necessary for the career they are pursuing.

The connection of OJL to training for a specific occupation is one of the factors considered that sometimes makes WIOA funding available to support employers with program implementation.

### Examples

- A participant in a manufacturing program of study may have an OJL placement working in a manufacturing job. Not only are they learning employability skills and gaining work experience, they are also learning how to do the specific manufacturing work related to their academic program.
- A participant in a manufacturing program of study working at a flower shop in a CoOp placement is learning employability skills and gaining work experience. This would not be an OJL placement because the technical skills don't match the instruction.



# OJL Best Practices

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 6

ACCS

Lurleen B. Wallace Community College RISE Program

Dr. Brock Kelley

(334) 222-6591

bkelley@lbwcc.edu

The Alabama RISE program is a work-based learning opportunity dedicated to answering the workforce shortage in Alabama by creating career pathways for individuals with disabilities. The purpose of this program is to connect individuals with disabilities who have the desire, aptitude, and interest to enter the workforce with employers who are having difficulty finding and retaining entry-level workers. Participants attend classes at LBWCC and earn credentials while they rotate to different occupations within the same company and industry. The company then can hire the individuals, extend the training, or hire them contingent on completion of additional training.

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 5

University

Auburn University College of Engineering

Edie Irvin

(334) 844-2250

edie.irvin@auburn.edu

The Auburn University Cooperative Education Program currently enrolls 378 students participating at 113 companies located mainly in Alabama and throughout the Southeast United States. Employers must provide a planned, paid, and progressive work experience that is relevant to the student's degree program. CoOp students work full-time with their CoOp employer for 3 alternating semesters during their degree program. While working, they are enrolled as full-time students but do not take a full load of classes. CoOp students, who are 4-year degree seeking students, graduate with up to 1 year of experience, making them highly competitive for full-time positions after graduation.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation

# Pre-Apprenticeship



- Training must be connected to a registered apprenticeship.
- Participants are completing on-the-job learning and/or related technical instruction which will be counted toward completion of a registered apprenticeship IF the pre-apprentice ever actually becomes an apprentice.
- May be certified by the AOA as an indicator of quality.
- Participants may be youth or adults.

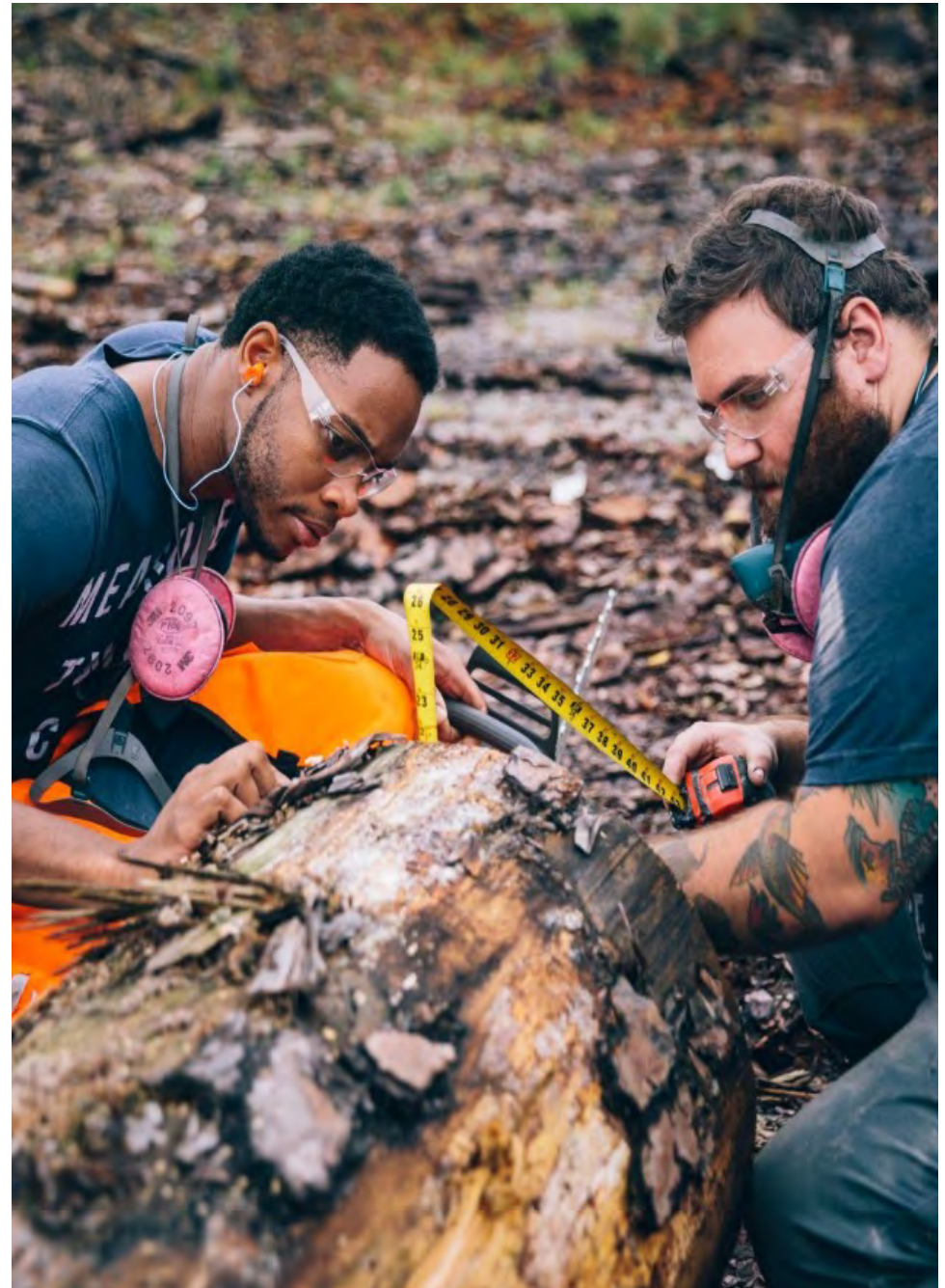
Pre-apprenticeships are designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship and ultimately a career.

Pre-apprenticeship programs offer participants structured training opportunities to prepare them for entry into a Registered Apprenticeship Program. They can provide a set of services that participants need to progress into an apprenticeship, such as work-readiness skills and wraparound supports for transportation and childcare.

The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) has developed a certification process based on national models and best practices. The AOA certification designates quality pre-apprenticeship programs that incorporate all of the following elements:

- Documented partnership with at least one Registered Apprenticeship Program
- Alignment of approved training and curriculum with industry standards and the Registered Apprenticeship Program
- Opportunity to earn an industry-recognized credential
- Hands-on learning with a career focus
- Access to support services and career counseling

Learn more and apply for certification at [www.alapprentice.org](http://www.alapprentice.org)





# Pre-Apprenticeship Best Practices

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 3

Non-School Based  
Skilled Trades of West Alabama Jump Start Program  
Johnnie Aycock  
(205) 765-9332  
jaycock@westalabamatrades.com

Jump Start is an AOA Certified Pre-Apprenticeship Program and a feeder for the Skilled Trades of West Alabama Registered Apprenticeship Program. The program provides any adult with a 12-week comprehensive class in employability skills and all aspects of the construction trades, and related instruction credit for the work completed is awarded to any participants who are accepted into the apprenticeship. The curriculum is built on the recognized standards of NCCER, and there is no cost to attend. Once students successfully complete the class, they attend a hiring fair with participating apprenticeship contractors.

## Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 4

Non-School Based  
Innovate Birmingham  
Katherine Zachara  
(733) 655-8800  
katherine@innovatebham.com

Innovate Birmingham provides non-traditional paths to employment at no cost to participants through fast-track boot camps. Their program takes a holistic approach, incorporating technical skills training, apprenticeships and internships, professional development, and supportive services, all in an effort to reduce barriers and prepare people for high-quality, in-demand jobs. In just 14 weeks, participants can complete the AOA Certified Pre-Apprenticeship IT training with Innovate Birmingham and enter the tech workforce as apprentices.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation

# Registered Apprenticeship



Five components of all Registered Apprenticeships:

- Business driven
- On the job learning (OJL)
- Related technical instruction (RTI)
- Rewards for skills gains
- Nationally recognized credential

Registered Apprenticeship is a business-driven model that provides an effective way for employers to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers. Registered Apprenticeship is a proven model of job preparation that combines paid on-the-job learning with related instruction to progressively increase workers' skill levels and wages. In addition, apprenticeships allow employers to develop and apply industry standards to high-quality, structured training programs, therefore increasing productivity and the quality of the workforce.

Apprenticeships are esteemed opportunities. Apprenticeships afford participants a chance to earn money while they learn in a non-traditional classroom setting. The earn-and-learn model provides apprentices an opportunity to see a direct relation between their increasing skills and increasing wages. Apprenticeship programs are one of the most effective ways to reach our labor force participation and attainment goals and to ensure that Alabamians are on career pathways leading to economic mobility and self sufficiency.

Benefits of registering an apprenticeship program

- Very high retention rate
- Technical assistance
- Eligibility for a variety of funding supports

Registered apprenticeships are unlike regular training models developed by education and delivered to employers. Instead, they are developed by employers and supported by education providers.

## Registered Apprenticeship Practices

### Best Practice Region 3

Demopolis Fire Rescue  
James Bailey  
(334) 289-1212  
James.Bailey@demopolisal.gov

Demopolis Fire Rescue established the first Firefighter/EMT Registered Apprenticeship program in Alabama. The program takes a proactive approach to the extensive training and planning required for providing top quality emergency preparedness and response services. Through the program, apprentices gain hands-on experience with on-the-job learning and earn stackable credentials to become our next generation of highly-skilled Firefighters. Demopolis Fire Rescue operates to ensure the safety of their team, the citizens they serve, and the general public.

### Statewide Best Practice Contender Region 7

Coastal Alabama Community College and AM/NS Calvert  
Dr. Josh Duplantis and Dani Pendleton  
(251) 990-0426, (251) 944-7189  
Joshua.duplantis@coastalalabama.edu, danielle.pendleton@arcelormittal.com

Coastal is a group apprenticeship sponsor that also provides the related instruction for their programs. In the role of sponsor, Coastal handles the program management, including tracking and reporting. Employers in their community are able to join their consortium and hire apprentices to build their pipeline of highly-skilled workers. Apprentices earn credentials, long and/or short certificates, and sometimes an associate degree. AM/NS Calvert, participates in the industrial maintenance apprenticeship which follows a competency-based model that allows apprentices to progress through the program as they master skills. Apprentices receive an associate degree and become highly-trained maintenance mechanics. Coastal also sponsors apprenticeships in construction, healthcare, information technology, and finance.

# Governor's Seal of Excellence Winner

## Region 1 - Northwest Shoals Community College POWER 5

Leslie Tomlinson  
(256) 331-8040  
ltomlinson@nwsccl.edu

POWER 5, the first competency-based HVAC apprenticeship program in Alabama, was designed to address the industry's immediate need for highly-skilled, professionally trained HVAC technicians. In the first year, the program experienced tremendous growth. NWSCC's HVAC program's enrollment increased by 72% in one year.

The flexibility of the program gives students previously disconnected from post-secondary education an opportunity to start or continue their education while earning a livable wage. POWER 5 participating employers compensate apprentices according to the wage progression schedule that rewards students for demonstrating mastery of skills and competencies. Apprentices range from 18 to 60 years old.

During the transition to remote work and learning due to the COVID 19 pandemic, no POWER 5 apprentice lost any work opportunities. When one sponsoring business closed permanently, other businesses offered to hire the affected apprentices. The NWSCC instructor utilized FaceTime, video chat platforms, and messaging applications to observe students in the field and provide instant feedback while students completed installation and repair calls.

The POWER 5 program also collaborates with NWSCC's Adult Education and Youth Success programs to educate and train potential candidates for the apprenticeship. The program recruits students who dual enroll in HVAC and MSSC classes. Five students have entered the apprenticeship through this pathway.



Awareness



Exploration



Preparation

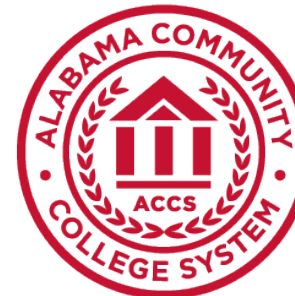


## AT A GLANCE WBL INVENTORY

WBL Type	Is the workplace activity aligned with the job specific coursework?	What is the typical duration?	Is there a paid option?	Is there an opportunity to earn credit?	Type of activity	Does my organization or program offer this?
Job Shadowing	NO	1 Day	NO	NO	A	
Career Fair/Expo	NO	1 Day	NO	NO	A	
Employability Skill Training	Sometimes	Varies	NO	YES	A/E	
Industry Tours	NO	1 Day	NO	NO	A	
Simulated Workplace	YES	1-2 Semesters	NO	YES	A/E	
Externship	NO	1-2 Weeks	Maybe	NO	A/E	
Internship	Sometimes	Varies	Maybe	Maybe	A/E/P	
Clinical/Practicum Field Experience	YES	1-2 Semesters	Maybe	YES	E/P	
Cooperative Education	NO	Varies	YES	YES	E/P	
On-the-Job Learning	YES	Varies	YES	Maybe	P	
Pre-Apprenticeship	YES	Varies	Maybe	YES	A/E/P	
Registered Apprenticeship	YES	1-4 Years	YES	YES	P	

A - Awareness E - Exploration P - Preparation

Governor Ivey would like to extend her appreciation to all of the state agencies who have committed a great deal of time and energy to this project. The success of work-based learning is a team effort, requiring collaboration among many stakeholders including employers, education institutions, and diverse state agencies. These partners' dedication to expanding work-based learning is a key to success in strengthening our talent pipelines and ensuring that Alabama citizens are on paths to good jobs and promising careers. Integrating work and education increases the value and authenticity of training programs, providing employers with the skilled workers they need to keep Alabama's economy moving forward.





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