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Virginia Selected as One of Ten States for Apprenticeship America Cohort - Leading the National Apprenticeship Movement

*The Commonwealth Helps Lead the National Effort to Reach
1 Million Active Registered Apprentices.*

RICHMOND, VA — Virginia has been selected as one of ten states chosen to lead a high-impact cohort committed to transforming the American workforce through the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship.

The announcement made Friday during a national launch event hosted by CareerWise, positions Virginia at the forefront of a national movement to strengthen youth career pathways and support the U.S. Department of Labor's goal of reaching **one million active apprentices**.

The selection comes at a pivotal moment. Known as the Launchpad Decade, the period from high school to early adulthood for many young people has become increasingly difficult to navigate. Recent graduates are entering a rapidly evolving labor market, where emerging technologies like artificial intelligence are creating new skill needs and reshaping entry-level career opportunities across every major industry.

Selected through a competitive process, Virginia joins Alabama, Arizona, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, and Utah whose collective goals aim to:

- **Create real, affordable pathways** into high skill careers
- **Help employers build the talent pipelines** needed to fill critical skilled roles
- **Open doors of economic mobility** for the next generation

“Virginia is honored to be recognized among the nation’s leaders in expanding apprenticeship opportunities both here in the Commonwealth and across the country,” said **Virginia Works Commissioner, Nicole Overley**. “This cohort strengthens our commitment to building clear, affordable pathways that connect young people to the high-skill careers that provide stability for Virginia families and drive our economy. Through new partnerships and by working closely with national experts, we are ensuring Virginia remains a top destination for talent, innovation, and long-term growth.”

The national launch event on May 1 marked the official kickoff of “**Apprenticeship America,**” a bold movement to take apprenticeship to scale across the United States. For Virginia, this recognition represents a significant milestone in advancing high-quality youth workforce pathways and strengthening the Commonwealth’s position as a leader in modern apprenticeship.

As a member of the inaugural Apprenticeship America cohort, Virginia will collaborate with national experts from the Future Ready Apprenticeship Center, CareerWise, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, New America, Jobs for the Future, Urban Institute, AIR, Upskill America, and others to focus on building the early career infrastructure needed to ensure young people play a meaningful role in meeting the nation’s target of one million active Registered Apprentices.

For more information about Virginia Works’ Registered Apprenticeship (RA) program, or to contact a RA Consultant near you, visit: <https://virginiaworks.gov/explore-registered-apprenticeship/>.

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Virginia Works, the Commonwealth’s Department of Workforce Development and Advancement, is dedicated to serving job seekers and employers with a wide range of workforce services and talent pipeline strategies. Virginia Works is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. VRC/TDD VA Relay 711.

CareerWise is a national nonprofit organization leading the movement to connect young people to meaningful careers through education-to-career pathways. Moving beyond the limitations of a one-size-fits-all college model, CareerWise architects and advances real solutions that connect education with meaningful careers through career accelerator infrastructure, including its gold standard youth apprenticeship programs. Drawing on nearly a decade of hands-on experience, the organization directly implements programs supporting 2,500+ high school aged apprentices, touching hundreds of communities and school districts across the country. Careerwise also supports 80+ intermediaries across 35 states and partners with businesses of all sizes, from innovative startups to Fortune 500 companies. CareerWise is not just envisioning a new system, it's actively building it, giving more young people a path to economic success while ensuring new talent for the most critical sectors.

The Future Ready Apprenticeship Center is a national hub dedicated to expanding registered apprenticeship opportunities for youth. Powered by CareerWise and supported by a cooperative agreement between the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and the U.S. Department of Labor, the Center provides funding, technical expertise, and strategic frameworks to states across the country. The Center also benefits from the expertise of the following contracted partners: Jobs for the Future (JFF), Urban Institute, New America, American Institutes for Research (AIR), and Upskill America (an initiative of the Aspen Institute). The Future Ready Apprenticeship Center (The Center) is 100% funded by \$12.5 million of federal funds via the US Department of Labor. Of those funds, \$8.8 million is sub-awarded to CareerWise, state grantees, and partners.