



FAIRFIELD COUNTY WORKFORCE CENTER
4465 COONPATH RD. NW, CARROLL, OHIO 43112

December 21, 2023

FAIRFIELD 33 ALLIANCE'S CAREER READINESS PROGRAM RECEIVES LARGE GRANT FROM STATE

[LANCASTER, OH] – The Fairfield 33 Development Alliance is being awarded funding from Ohio Lt. Governor Jon Husted, Director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, through the Industry Sector Partnership (ISP) Grant. The program supports collaborations that help bring Ohioans into the workforce pipeline while meeting the needs of job creators and the local economy.

The grant will award the Fairfield 33 Development Alliance \$120,000 to be used toward funding the Career Readiness Program. This program includes career navigators that work with high school students to develop core job skills and gain employment, summer Career Exploration Camps for junior high students, and pre-apprenticeship training to provide skills needed for careers in manufacturing, healthcare, and skilled trades. Addressing local workforce development is a priority for local businesses, elected officials, students, parents and community members as Fairfield County faces inevitable growth. Fairfield County has made it a priority to help local employers connect with work-ready students to build a pipeline of skilled workers.

"The Career Readiness Program targets students who have yet to decide what path they are choosing after high school," said Fairfield County Economic Director Rick Szabrak. "This program helps connect them to local jobs, changing their trajectory to career success and becoming productive members of the community. Because institutions of higher education are cornerstone partners in this programming, degree-based pathways towards gainful local employment also remain available to all participating students. This program has been successful in redefining the typical career pathway for young adults without categorically restricting their available choices."

The Workforce Center and Career Readiness programs now serve all eight school districts in the county. Commissioner Dave Levacy said offering a path to employment for high school students is a solution to many of the challenges facing a growing county.

"With 60 percent of high school graduates in Fairfield County not completing a post-secondary degree, it is imperative to offer certificate-based programs to provide skills to meet employers' needs," Levacy said. "Further, most manufacturers and businesses exploring future locations are more enticed by a readied workforce than by incentives."

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For media inquiries, contact Temple Montanez at temple@krilecommunications.com

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