



State Workforce Development Board 2025 Strategic Goals

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State Workforce Development Board Goals

Adopted: November 18, 2025

Policy Goals:

1. **Increase supply of workers in key sectors:** Develop recruiting targets for the workforce in Vermont's five sectors with greatest workforce need and develop sector-specific strategies to increase the supply of workers, in collaboration with employers, ACCD and other stakeholders.
2. **Support adults to re-engage and advance in the Vermont workforce:** Support adult Vermonters – including those seeking to grow their skills, change careers, and/or rejoin the workforce – in attaining meaningful employment by expanding access to coordinated, clearly defined, and stackable education and training pathways that lead to credentials of value and align with Vermont's current and emerging workforce needs.
3. **Support business expansion and relocation:** Support ACCD's business growth and recruitment strategy by aligning workforce development resources with economic development targets. Work in coordination with ACCD, VDOL, and regional partners to identify workforce barriers and solutions for Vermont-based companies poised to expand, and target out-of-state companies with potential for relocation.
4. **Increase postsecondary graduate retention:** By 2027, increase the number of college and university graduates who remain in Vermont to work and live after graduation.

Operational Goals:

1. Update and redesign Office of Workforce Strategy and Development website to serve as the clearinghouse web site for job seekers, state and external workforce partners and employers and create the statewide connection for workforce development. The Board will provide direction and oversight to the efforts so that the new site delivers on the promises of Act 146 and Act 65.

State Workforce Development Board Goal Detail

Goal 1: Increase supply of workers in key sectors

Develop recruiting targets for the workforce in Vermont's **five sectors with greatest workforce need** and develop sector-specific strategies to increase the supply of workers, in collaboration with employers, ACCD and other stakeholders.

Proposal

1. **Construction & Trades:** 1 out of every 20 jobs in Vermont is in construction. In addition to businesses registered with the Department of Labor, over a quarter of all carpenters are self-employed. Ten percent of all plumbers are self-employed. This means that in addition to being an industry with lots of job opportunities, there is also tremendous opportunity for entrepreneurship. Many construction jobs require less than a four-year degree and benefit from Registered Apprenticeships.
 - a. **Policy/Priority Alignment:** Imperative to consensus Executive & Legislative branch policy objectives in housing, infrastructure, and climate resiliency
 - i. Housing Goal: By 2030, for Vermont to address its demographic challenge it needs to add 41,000 new rental and owner-occupied residences. That's translates to 8,200 housing units per year for the next five years; By 2050, the projected need is 172,000 new homes. That translates to an average of 7,000 new homes annually over the next 25 years. ([New Regional Housing Targets and Housing Data Dashboard Help Set Roadmap for Addressing Vermont's Housing Shortage | Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#)) ++weatherization
 - ii. Climate Resiliency Goals: Recovering from historic flooding in 2023 & 2024, there is much work to be done to improve our community's infrastructure and climate resiliency. The July 2025 Resilience Implementation Strategy ([Vision for a Resilient Vermont | Climate Change in Vermont](#)) includes impacts of climate change on Vermont's roads, bridges, wastewater treatment facilities, power lines, and communications services, and recommends actions to protect, repair, or relocate these critical assets, which will required a skilled-trades workforce. *See *more under additional justification*
 - iii. USCA's Governors' Climate-Ready Workforce sets a goal of training 1 million new registered apprentices by 2035. <https://usclimatealliance.org/press-releases/building-a-climate-ready-workforce-sep-2024/>
 - b. **GDP:** Contributes over \$1.7B to state gross domestic product (GDP)
 - c. **7-Year Labor Market Demand:**
 - i. Annually, construction & trades is projected to have 1,600 openings until 2032. This estimate does not include self-employed opportunities which may be significant in this sector.

- ii. The renewable energy industry, which this intersects with, also has a significant demand, which can be viewed, here: [Vermont's Clean Energy Jobs Potential Through 2030](#).
- d. **Wages:** The average wage for a job in construction in Vermont was \$70,362. This is 9.1% higher than the statewide average for all jobs. This equates to nearly \$6k more per employee per year in wages. Many of these jobs require less than a four-year degree and benefit from Registered Apprenticeships.
- e. **Sector Partners:** AGC, Homebuilders, ABC, RESOURCE, Vermont Works for Women, VTSU, VYCC, Vermont Construction Academy, Occupational Licensing Boards, VDOL as Registered Apprenticeship Agency, DPS-Division of Fire Safety, EVT, SerVermont, VLCT, AOT, VCBB,
 - i. **SWDB Members:** Dick Martens/Brothers Builders; Michael Hulbert/HP Cummings; Rhoni Basden/Vermont Works for Women; Aron Tomilson/Hartford CTE; Phil Kolling/SerVermont

2. Manufacturing: Supports a diverse range of industries, including aerospace, wood products, precision machining, specialty foods, and renewable energy. Vermont manufacturers often focus on high-quality, value-added products, which helps the state compete in both national and global markets. Additionally, manufacturing bolsters rural economies by providing stable employment and supporting small businesses throughout the supply chain. Manufacturing careers can also be achieved via registered apprenticeships. Vermont has 1,100 manufacturing employers with 27,000 people on their payrolls; that is 1 out of every 11 jobs – which is a higher concentration than the US economy overall.

- a. **Policy/Priority Alignment:** Related to 252 strategy: Manufacturing plants historically are often located outside urban cores. By making rural industrial sites available and ready, the state can bring manufacturing jobs and investment into rural Vermont — which aligns with goals of regional revitalization and making opportunities statewide.
 - i. *“We’re talking about bright, clean, high-tech environments. On the shop floor, workers are using computer-controlled machines, robots, digital design tools and 3D printing to produce everything from precision components for rockets that are bringing people and things to space, to the microchips in our devices and the outdoor gear that keeps us warm.” – Jay Ramsey, VDOL Workforce Development Director, October 2025 Manufacturing Month Press Conference*
- b. **GDP:** Contributes \$3B to Vermont’s GDP
- c. **7-year Labor Market Demand:** Annually, this sector is projected to have 3,000 openings until 2032
- d. **Wages:** The average wage for a job in manufacturing in Vermont was \$71,831. This is 11.4% higher than the statewide average for all jobs. This equates to over \$7k more per employee per year in wages.
- e. **Sector Partners:** VMEC, VTSU, AIV, RDCs/Chambers, VDOL, VSJF

- i. **SWDB Members:** Mark Dessureau/Dessureau Machines; Jay Bellows/Kore Power; Tiffany Walker/VSC
- 3. **Health Care & Social Services:** Health care and social services is arguably the most important and fastest-growing sector in Vermont due to the state's rapidly aging population. As one of the oldest states by median age, Vermont faces increasing demand for medical care, long-term care, mental health support, and home-based services. This demographic shift not only places pressure on existing systems but also creates significant opportunities for growth and innovation in health care delivery, elder care, and support services. Investing in this sector is essential to ensuring the well-being of Vermonters while also fueling job creation and economic stability across the state. Health care occupations can also be pursued via registered apprenticeships.
 - a. **Policy/Priority Alignment:** Imperative to state policy objectives re: cost, access, and quality of health care and a robust social services safety net. Potential upcoming intersection with strategic planning goals/alignment for the Healthcare Workforce Advisory Committee:
 - i. Cultivate a supportive and engaging work environment that prioritizes employee retention, satisfaction, and overall well-being, thereby driving operational success and sustainability;
 - ii. Increase both the quantity and quality of Vermont's health care workforce by prioritizing education, pathways, rural needs, current infrastructure and long-term vision while mitigating need; and
 - iii. Advance the systemic collection and analysis of data across the continuum of care to improve decision-making and operational effectiveness by further developing the HCWD's projected centralized source of current, actionable employer/facility informed data regarding workforce supply and demand.
 - b. **GDP:** Contributes \$4.9 billion in 2024 GDP, or 12.8% of the total GDP in Vermont
 - c. **7-Year Labor Market Demand:** Annually, this sector is projected to have 6,600 openings until 2032
 - d. **Wages:** The average wage for a job in Health Care and Social Assistance in Vermont was \$64,536 in 2024. This equals the statewide average for all jobs. This average industry wage is comprised of a wide variety of occupations ranging from Janitors to Surgeons. The most common occupations are Home Health & Personal Care Aides (average wage of \$36,870 per year on full-time basis) and Registered Nurses (average wage of \$92,710 per year on full-time basis). These two occupations account for over one-quarter of all jobs in this sector.
 - e. **Sector Partners:** AHS, State Chief Prevention Officer, GMCB, VAHHS, VNAs of Vermont, Vermont Talent Pipeline, UVM Health Network/UVM College, VSC (VTSU & CCV), Designated Agencies; Community Action Agencies, Howard Center, VAMHAR, Vermont Care Partners, Spectrum, SASH, AARP, Vermont Medical Society

i. **SWDB Members:** Rebecca Kepsalis/UVM; Betsy Hassan/UVM

4. **Professional & Business Services (IT/Tech):** Vermont is a bit of a sleeper when it comes to IT/Tech, but we are part of the semiconductor aerospace corridors. Norwich is the home to the country's Center for Cybersecurity and Forensic Education and NuHarbor and other companies lead IT and technology protection services. These are cutting-edge careers with good wages for Vermonters. Additionally, AI will change the way Vermonters work across many industries. As a state, we must ensure that they are prepared with the skills and information to successfully adapt to new ways of doing business.

- a. Vermont was designated one of the U.S. Tech Hubs in 2023 under the CHIPS & Science Act. The Burlington area / UVM / GlobalFoundries / state consortium is leading work on Gallium Nitride (GaN) semiconductors (Vermont Gallium Nitride (VGN) Tech Hub). The hub has secured ~\$23.7 million in federal funding and has plans to train over 500 new employees and engage thousands of K12 students in STEM over the next few years. Additionally, the hub recently secured a different \$3.4 million of funding from the Northeast Microelectronics Coalition (NEMC) for a cutting-edge microelectronics testing laboratory to bolster innovation and economic development in the Vermont and the Northeast.
- b. **GDP:** Contributes \$5.1B to Vermont's GDP
- c. **7-Year Labor Market Demand:** Annually, this sector is projected to have 1,900 openings until 2032. This estimate does not include self-employed opportunities which may be significant in this sector.
- d. **Wages:** The average wage for a job in Professional, Scientific & Technical Services in Vermont was \$97,547 in 2024. This is 51.3% higher than the statewide average for all jobs.
- e. Training initiatives aligned with the [National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education \(NICE\) Framework](#)
- f. **Sector Partners:** Vermont Tech Alliance, UVM, Norwich, AiVT, ADS, CyberTech Awareness Program at Champlain; River Bend CTE; VT National Guard
 - i. **Identify SWDB member**

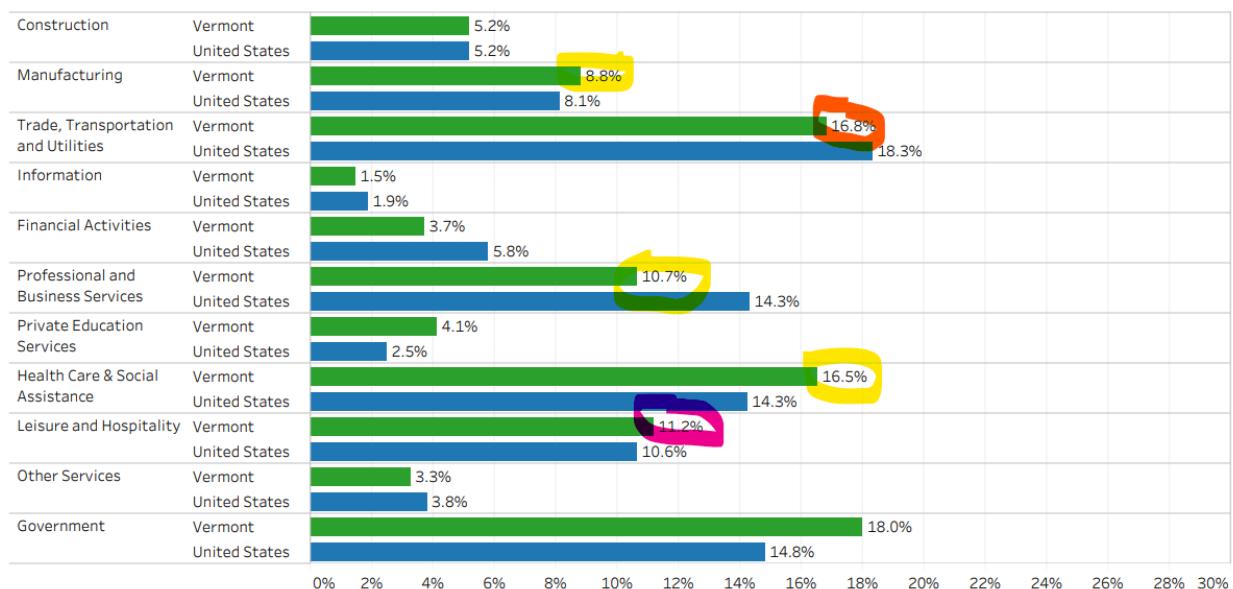
5. **Leisure & Hospitality:** The leisure, tourism, and hospitality sector is vital to Vermont's economy and cultural identity. Vermont attracts millions of visitors each year. This sector supports thousands of jobs across lodging, dining, outdoor recreation, and entertainment, providing critical income for both rural and urban communities. Tourism helps sustain local businesses, promotes Vermont's unique heritage and artisanal products, and fuels investments in infrastructure and conservation. As a major driver of seasonal and year-round economic activity, the leisure and hospitality industry plays a central role in Vermont's economy.

- a. **Policy/Priority Alignment:** In addition to having a thriving tourist market, this sector could also be an important partner in converting more tourists to permanent residents and further expanding our labor force.

- b. **GDP:** In CY2023, Vermont received \$342.8M in state and local tax revenue associated with visitor spending. Visitor spending totaled \$4B in 2023 or 9.3% of state GDP ([New Data Shows Tourism is \\$4B Industry in Vermont | Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#))
- c. **7-Year Labor Market Demand:** Annually, this sector is projected to have 7,000 openings until 2032
- d. **Wage:** The average wage for a job in Leisure & Hospitality in Vermont was \$31,899 in 2024 – or 49.5% of the statewide average for all jobs. Many jobs in this sector are part-time, seasonal or both. In addition, many workers within this sector work multiple jobs over the course of a year. These employment opportunities offer atypical work schedules which benefit many workers.
- e. **Sector Partners:** Chambers (Vermont Chamber represents that National Restaurant Association and American Hotel and Lodging Association), Vermont Short Term Restaurant Alliance, VOREC, VOBA, ANR-FPR, ACCD-VDTM, SkiVermont, Attractions Association, Retail & Grocers Association, DLL, UVM/SOAR certificate, VAAFM (agritourism), Vermont Brewers Association, Distilled Spirits Council, Vermont Grape & Wine Council
 - i. **SWDB Members:** Valerie White Beaudet/Ladder 1; Rob Terry/Merck Forest & Farmland

Additional Data, Resources & Justifications

2024 Industry Share of Total Employment



Goal 2: Support adults to re-engage and advance in the Vermont workforce

Support adult Vermonters – including those seeking to grow their skills, change careers, or rejoin the workforce – in attaining meaningful employment by expanding access to coordinated, clearly defined, and stackable education and training pathways that lead to credentials of value and align with Vermont’s current and emerging workforce needs.

Goal Detail:

Strategy	Activities	Implementation Partners (in addition to SWDB)
2.1 Expand and Coordinate Adult Education and Training Opportunities (including Adult CTE and Adult Education and Literacy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct statewide gap analysis to identify regional workforce and skill development needs. Expand availability and consistency of adult training opportunities, including Adult CTE and Adult Education and Literacy (AEL), across all regions of the state. Pilot 1-3 new adult CTE programs/pathways aligned with in-demand sectors. Strengthen coordination among AEL providers, Adult CTE providers, workforce programs, and postsecondary institutions to streamline intake, assessment, and referrals, creating seamless on-ramps from foundational skills to credential-bearing programs. Develop centralized resources and regular communication mechanisms to support ongoing coordination among providers. Simplify navigation for adults seeking education, training, and employment opportunities, including coordinated marketing of adult learning options. Ensure training and education offerings are accessible and inclusive for all adult learners, including those with barriers to employment or education and those with language access needs. Ensure upcoming Workforce Pell program is integrated into adult ed and training system. 	AOE, VDOL, CTE providers, Adult Education and Literacy providers, CCV, HireAbility, RDCs, employers and industry associations
2.2 Establish and Promote Credentials of Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain a Vermont ‘Credentials of Value’ definition and framework identifying recognized, high-demand credentials to support job seekers in demonstrating skills to employers, 	VDOL, AOE, CCV, employers and industry associations,

Strategy	Activities	Implementation Partners (in addition to SWDB)
	<p>enhance employer confidence in hiring and promotion decisions, and supply decision makers with information to inform decisions around funding and investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with employers and business associations to validate, update, and promote list of priority credentials. • Promote public awareness of credential opportunities among adults, employers, and educators. 	Advance Vermont, RDCs/regional workforce partners, AHS/DOC, HireAbility
2.3 Engage Employers and Regional Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage employers in identifying skill gaps, promoting and coordinating credential programs, and work-based learning. • Identify training solutions for employers (i.e. registered apprenticeships, VEGI, Vermont Training Program, etc.) • Strengthen regional workforce partnerships to align adult education and training offerings with local economic priorities and needs. 	VDOL, ACCD, RDCs, employers and industry associations, chambers, education and training providers
2.4 Enhance Outreach and Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with state, regional, and community partners to reach unemployed, underemployed, and disengaged adults with information about education and training programs available in the state. • Equip workforce and education partners with unified messaging and shared outreach materials on adult education opportunities. • Develop marketing plan (including funding needed) for widespread promotion. 	VDOL, AOE, RDCs, chambers, community based organizations and social service agencies, education and training providers

Desired Outcomes:

- Increased adult participation in the workforce
 - More adult Vermonters (ages 25-64) re-enter and remain in the workforce.
 - Expanded participation in adult CTE, Adult Education and Literacy (AEL), and other workforce training programs.
- Expanded access to credentials of value
 - Increased attainment of industry-recognized, stackable credentials that align with Vermont's priority and high-demand sectors.
- New CTE opportunities for adults
 - One to three new adult CTE programs/pathways piloted in the next 1-2 school years.

- Improved coordination and pathways
 - Stronger connections among and between employers, education partners, and workforce partners to provide clear, accessible pathways for adults to move from education and training into employment.
 - Development of common definitions and shared understanding of terminology related to education and training programming.

Goal 3: Support business expansion and relocation

Support ACCD's business growth and recruitment strategy by aligning workforce development resources with economic development targets. A subcommittee will work in coordination with ACCD, VDOL, and regional partners to identify workforce barriers and solutions for Vermont-based companies poised to expand, and target out-of-state companies with potential for relocation. The SWDB will help design workforce readiness packages, including training pipelines, in coordination with relocation support available through ongoing regional efforts, and local talent matching.

Goal Detail:

Strategy	Activities	Implementation Partners (in addition to SWDB)
3.1 Strengthen Alignment Between Workforce and Economic Development Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish/strengthen coordinated communication and referral processes between SWDB, VDOL, ACCD, and regional development partners.Map priority industry clusters and align workforce investments accordingly.Convene partners to assess employer needs and adjust strategy.	VDOL, ACCD, Regional Development Corporations (RDCs), Education Providers, employers/industry associations
3.2 Support Vermont-Based Business Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify Vermont companies with strong growth potential.Conduct workforce needs assessments to inform customized training, apprenticeship, and credentialing solutions.Explore methods for dissemination of workforce resources to employers (i.e. Pilot a "Workforce Concierge Service" to guide employers through workforce resources; more seamlessly integrate workforce data and resources into Think Vermont, etc.).	ACCD, VDOL, RDCs, employers/industry associations, Education & Training Providers
3.3 Support Business Relocation to Vermont	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop "Workforce Readiness Packages" highlighting Vermont's labor force and training assets.Integrate workforce data and talent profiles into business recruitment materials.Collaborate with RDCs on relocation events and employer outreach.	ACCD, VDOL, RDCs, Chambers of Commerce, business/industry associations, employers
3.4 Enhance Data, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support the sharing of relevant workforce and economic development data among partners.Use employer feedback and outcome data to refine strategies.	VDOL, ACCD, Agency of Digital Services.

Strategy	Activities	Implementation Partners (in addition to SWDB)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate best practices and inform statewide policy. 	

Desired Outcomes:

- **Seamlessly aligned economic and workforce systems:**
 - Strong, statewide coordination between workforce and economic development partners.
 - Increased employer satisfaction and reduced duplication of services.
- **Thriving Vermont businesses supported by a responsive workforce system:**
 - Vermont employers receive customized, timely workforce resources and solutions that enable expansion.
 - Positive employer feedback on responsiveness of workforce system.
- **Vermont is a destination for skilled talent and business growth:**
 - Increased availability and use of training, apprenticeship, and credential programs aligned with identified key sectors.
 - Increased number of companies engaged and relocated.
- **Robust, shared data systems inform strategic decision making among partners:**
 - Data and feedback from employers support ongoing refinement of strategies.

Goal 4: Increase postsecondary graduate retention

By 2027, increase the number of college and university graduates who remain in Vermont to live and work after graduation.

Goal Detail:

Strategy	Activities	Implementation Partners (in addition to SWDB)
4.1 Strengthen Employer Connections and Job Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with Vermont employers, chambers of commerce, and industry associations to expand internship, apprenticeship, and entry-level job opportunities for graduating students.• Investigate ways to better connect Vermont graduates with local employers seeking talent.• Coordinate with regional development corporations to identify high-demand fields and align student career pathways.	VDOL, ACCD, RDCs, employers and business/industry associations, Chambers of Commerce, higher education institutions
4.2 Identify and Address Barriers to Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct research to identify primary barriers to graduate retention (e.g. housing, affordability, limited professional networks, negative messaging around availability of jobs and low wages, etc.)• Collaborate with partners to develop strategies and programs to address barriers to retention and support recent graduates to remain in Vermont.• Assess effectiveness of current programs geared at retention (scholarships, student loan repayment, etc.), including surveying participants.	ACCD, VDOL, VSAC, higher ed institutions, municipalities, RDCs, employers, community organizations
4.3 Promote Community Integration and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with local chambers of commerce, community organizations, and volunteer groups to promote existing and create new programs that help graduates connect socially and civically.• Explore opportunities for initiatives around mentorship, networking, service, and cultural opportunities for recent graduates.	Chambers of commerce, United Ways of Vermont, VCF, Vermont Young Professionals Network, Vermont Professionals of Color Network, SerVermont, municipal community engagement offices, higher ed alumni offices, community organizations

Strategy	Activities	Implementation Partners (in addition to SWDB)
4.4 Align Higher Education and Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with Vermont higher education institutions, VSAC, and workforce partners to ensure academic programs align with state workforce needs. Implement career readiness programs, resume workshops, and employer engagement events to prepare students for Vermont's labor market. 	VDOL, VSAC, higher ed institutions, employers
4.5 Develop Shared Messaging to Promote Graduate Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop consistent, data driven messaging across government, education, employers, and community partners that addresses common perceptions and barriers to staying in Vermont post-graduation. Embed messaging into higher education settings. Share data and stories demonstrating successful graduate retention and career pathway outcomes. Explore the development of a cross-sector communications working group (education, employers, state agencies) to align messaging and share resources. 	Higher education institutions, ACCD, Department of Tourism and Marketing, VDOL, VSAC, VT Young Professionals, VT POC Network, Chambers of Commerce, employers

Desired Outcomes:

- Higher graduate retention and employment:** significant increase in the percentage of Vermont postsecondary graduates living and working in Vermont within one year of graduation.
- Stronger connections between employers and education partners:** deepened partnerships among higher education institutions, employers, and workforce organizations that expand career pathways and align programs with Vermont's workforce needs.
- Reduced barriers to staying in Vermont:** coordinated action to address key challenges (such as housing, affordability, community connection) through targeted supports and effective programs.
- Greater graduate connection and belonging:** stronger social, professional, and civic ties that foster a real sense of community and encourage young professionals to build their lives in Vermont.
- Unified messaging and shared vision:** consistent, collaborative communication among state agencies, higher ed institutions, community partners, and employers

promotes Vermont as a place where graduates can build meaningful careers, lives, and futures.