

West Virginians and Jobcase Work Together to Increase Employment

In 2018 and 2019, Jobcase Cares and its West Virginia partners hosted Charleston's largest job fair, launched a new online resource to increase employment, and supported new training opportunities to help residents access jobs in the growing WV tech economy.

The Challenge: Improve access to in-state opportunity for West Virginians

The workforce in West Virginia is committed, skilled, and reliable - succeeding in industries as varied as aerospace, manufacturing, mining, and software. However, over the years, the state has weathered contractions in a number of sectors, and witnessed job and population losses. Despite thousands of open jobs available in the state, many West Virginia job seekers still perceived a lack of opportunity in their local communities.

Collaborating to address the "matching gap"

To support these communities, Jobcase Cares connected with local nonprofits, Senator Joe Manchin's office, and universities and community colleges, to understand their challenges and explore cooperative ways to help. Partners agreed that growth in local industries and the job market had created a "matching gap" – a disconnect between residents' negative "perception of opportunity," and the actual, availability of jobs and training in West Virginia. Together, Jobcase Cares and partners agreed to provide job seekers and employers with 1) improved access to information on available jobs and talent, and 2) more opportunities to engage and match people to open positions, training, and new career paths.

“Jobcase has been such an important partner for this program – ensuring that as many people as possible can hear about this opportunity.

Natalie Roper
Executive Director,
Generation WV

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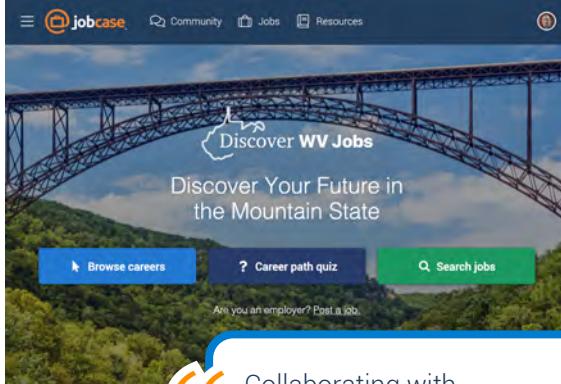
Key approaches to meet the challenge

1. Increasing access to tech training with NewForce

In 2018, Jobcase Cares supported the launch of "NewForce", a pilot coding training program organized by Generation West Virginia, Mount West Community College, and other partners. Focused on expanding West Virginia's pipeline for tech talent, NewForce offers a tuition-free, in-person, team-based intensive six-month coding curriculum. As of 2020, NewForce has graduated over 30 participants with in-demand software development skills, resulting in West Virginia based software jobs at companies including IBM, Core10, Mountain Leverage, Green Bank Observatory, and others.



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“Collaborating with Jobcase is a great fit for us, because they provide powerful resources, help us reach more people, and support and believe in the residents of this state.

Senator Joe Manchin
West Virginia



2. Expanding job seeker and employer matching with www.DiscoverWVJobs.com

Jobcase Cares, working with Senator Joe Manchin and the Discover the Real West Virginia Foundation, launched DiscoverWVJobs.com in 2019 - an online resource to provide workers and job seekers in West Virginia with improved access to local job search, career info, and direct matching to open positions. This public-private collaboration also highlights the thousands of available jobs in the state, to "help everyone connect the dots", said Senator Manchin.

The site provides jobseekers with:

- A comprehensive local job search with "instant-apply" tools
- A career browser – listing industries with local jobs, salary information, skills, advancement, and requirements to apply
- A brief, self-assessment quiz to custom-match jobseekers to new industries and careers
- Free-to-post job listings for all employers in West Virginia, and
- A dedicated online social media community, where jobseekers, employers, and supporters can all share questions, advice, and support to each other

3. Supporting The Largest Job Fair in Charleston, WV in Years

Working with Senator Joe Manchin and the City of Charleston, WV, Jobcase Cares supported the successful 2019 Kanawha County Job Fair. It was the region's largest job fair, with **nearly 3,000 participants - a 200+% increase in participation year over year** - and **over 300 employers**, including Facebook, N3, the WVU Medical Center, Aramark, Toyota Motor Manufacturing and others. Jobcase provided event outreach and promotion, online registration, updates and reminders to registrants, free photo headshots at the event, and more. Jobcase also provided an online community for the event, empowering registrants to connect in advance, learn about the jobs, requirements, tips on job fair success, and to ask and answer their own questions, all of which supported better preparation and increased success for jobseekers and employers alike.

“This job fair is a big part of the changing narrative about employment in West Virginia, and it would not have been so successful without Jobcase.

Senator Joe Manchin
West Virginia

