



## Northern Virginia Community College and the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce Launch Workforce Index

Annandale, Va. – Today, Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) and the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce released their first annual [Northern Virginia Workforce Index](#). The index combines survey responses from 91 local business leaders with real-time labor market data to provide detailed analysis on employer sentiment and workforce practices in the Northern Virginia region. Coming at a critical point of inflection in the national and regional economy, the Workforce Index indicates that most employers (72%) are optimistic about near-term economic and business prospects, but many businesses are now facing meaningful challenges finding and hiring talent due to labor shortages.

During today’s virtual launch event, NOVA President Dr. Anne M. Kress discussed key findings from the Workforce Index and touched on opportunities for businesses looking to diversify and expand their talent pools.

“Through the Workforce Index, we found that many Northern Virginia businesses continue to face talent recruitment challenges,” said Dr. Kress. “Now is the perfect time for employers to tap into a broader, more diverse pool of job seekers through apprenticeship programs and other alternate methods. As the largest supplier of talent in the region, NOVA is proud to partner with the Chamber to provide data to help employers develop new strategies and partner with those looking to build innovative programs.”

“The Chamber’s role in the region – well-positioned at the nexus of business, nonprofit organizations, and academia – allowed us to bring together well-respected champions for opportunity,” said Julie Coons, president and CEO of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. “By consistently tracking these trends, our collective goal is that the Workforce Index will be an ongoing key resource for economic and workforce development decision-making in the region.”

The event also included a panel discussion featuring top local business leaders: **Deb Gandy, managing director, Chevy Chase Trust; Ethan Gill, president, Helios HR; Chris Gros, vice president, talent, NT Concepts; and Paul Misener, vice president, global innovation policy and**

**communications, Amazon.** The panel was moderated by Steve Partridge, vice president for strategy, research and workforce innovation at NOVA.

The panelists agreed that the Northern Virginia region weathered the pandemic better than many other regions but recognized the challenges businesses are now facing as they try to find and hire talent. They poignantly offered perspectives on recent and anticipated employment changes; trends and practices in hiring and retention; how businesses in the region could diversify their talent pool; as well as typical requirements and offerings in terms of education, training, and professional development.

“It doesn’t make sense for individuals or employers to say that college is a necessary component of everyone’s skill set to work somewhere,” said Misener. “It’s great if you want to get a four-year degree – and NOVA has a program like ADVANCE that gets you to there – but it’s not necessary. The good news is that employers are getting away from that. College remains an option and should be an option, but it shouldn’t be a necessary factor of everyone’s career and life.”

[The executive summary and the full Workforce Index can be found here.](#) For further questions regarding the research and data for the workforce index, please contact Tucker Plumlee, research manager for NOVA at [tplumlee@nvcc.edu](mailto:tplumlee@nvcc.edu). For media questions regarding NOVA, please contact Hoang Nguyen, public information officer at [hdnguyen@nvcc.edu](mailto:hdnguyen@nvcc.edu). For media questions for the Chamber, please contact Clayton Medford, vice president of government relations at [cmedford@novachamber.org](mailto:cmedford@novachamber.org).

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*About the Northern Virginia Community College:*

*Northern Virginia Community College is the largest public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia and one of America's largest community colleges. NOVA enrolls more than 75,000 students at its six campuses in Alexandria, Annandale, Loudoun, Manassas, Springfield and Woodbridge, and through NOVA Online. For more information about NOVA and its programs or services, call 703-323-3000 or visit the College's Web site, [www.nvcc.edu](http://www.nvcc.edu)*

*About the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce:*

*Originally founded in 1925 as a Fairfax county-focused business advocacy organization, the Northern Virginia Chamber has grown into the region's largest Chamber of Commerce, drawing members and impacting policy across the Greater Washington D.C. Metropolitan Region. Today, representing close to 500,000 employees, the diversity of our community is one of our greatest assets, offering opportunities to learn from one another and form personal connections that help guide lasting business growth. NOVA’s goal is to be considered not only a business partner but also an agent of change for our members. We do this through our work in government advocacy, education through events and programs, networking, promotion of member businesses, and recognition through awards. We are proud to have worked together over these many years to build a meaningful association that enriches our community and look forward to continuing that good work. For more information, visit [www.novachamber.org](http://www.novachamber.org).*