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NAWB AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCE TRANSIT VIRTUAL CAREER NETWORK
Transit VCN Helps Individuals Find Jobs in Growing Transit Industry

The National Association of Workforce Boards is part of a consortium of university, nonprofit, and technology partners, funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration, that just released the Transit Virtual Career Network (www.vcn.org/transit), a web site that helps individuals access careers in the transit industry.

Transit is a \$55 billion industry that directly employs more than 400,000 workers, and with nearly half of the public transportation workforce expected to retire over the next five to 10 years, opportunities for employment in this industry are great. In addition, many metro areas are expanding infrastructure and adding transit services to keep up with increased ridership demand and millennials' preference for public transportation options over car ownership. This adds to the job opportunities available from retirements alone.

"NAWB has been a partner in the Virtual Career Network effort since its beginning with healthcare careers," said NAWB President and CEO Ron Painter. "We are pleased to have been a partner on this new transit career unit. This unit opens up a whole new industry of high-paying jobs to American job seekers."

Many transit jobs do not require formal education beyond high school and offer on-the-job training. Some just require a skill certification, while others do require a two- or four-year degree. Transit jobs are particularly appealing, as they offer good salaries and benefits, as well as opportunities for advancement, for individuals who are not ready to pursue a four-year degree. And job security is high, since few transit positions can be sourced outside of the country and many transit companies are unionized.

Counselors in career centers can help clients pursue employment in the transit industry using the Transit Virtual Career Network. The site helps individuals explore more than 50 different frontline, transit-related occupations, learn what education and training is required for the positions, find sources for that education and training, and then locate available jobs.

The career exploration segment includes information on job growth and wages, physical/ medical/ health requirements, and legal requirements, as well as related skills, tools, and technology. Some of the occupations include interviews with current transit workers that really give potential workers a sense of what it would be like to enter a particular career.

Web site users can enter their zip code into the site so that all of the labor market information, such as job growth outlook and wages, is localized. They also can create a customized career management account that will allow them to save occupational preferences and other information. In addition, the site has information on sources of financial aid and on gaining academic credit for previous experience, such as military.

The consortium involved in the development of the site includes NAWB, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC); the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development and the Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT), both at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; the American Public Transportation Association (APTA); and XPAND Corporation.

NAWB was involved in the development of the original Virtual Career Network for healthcare careers (www.vcn.org/health-care) in 2012, along with AACC, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, XPAND Corporation, the American Council on Education, DirectEmployers Association, the U.S. Department of Defense, Jobs for the Future, the American Dental Education Association, Ed2Go, and iSeek Solutions. This open-source VCN platform was funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

The healthcare module, along with a green economy jobs module launched in 2013, are available for use at www.vcn.org.

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The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) represents 550+ Workforce Investment Boards and their 12,000 business members who oversee and coordinate the delivery of workforce services with education and economic development services within their local communities. Workforce Investment Boards ensure that workforce development and job training programs meet the needs of employers, creating a comprehensive system that provides America with a highly skilled workforce that can compete in the global economy. NAWB connects Workforce Investment Board members, workforce development professionals, and policy makers with the knowledge, training, and tools they need to make informed decisions about how to invest in workforce strategies that advance the economic health of their communities.