APPLICATION COVER SHEET

DUE JUNE 1, 2018

To:	Arkansas Department of Higher Education
Requesting Institution:	University of Arkansas (Fayetteville)
Title of Project:	IT Readiness Program
Project Partners:	1. Walmart 16. Tata Consultancy Services 2. RevUnit 17. iberia Bank 3. JB Hunt 18. Esoterix Software 4. VML 19. NWA Council 5. Acxiom 20. Northwest Arkansas 6. Harvest Group Community College 7. Lofty Labs 21. Northwest Technical 8. Startup Junkie Consulting Institute 9. Saatchi & Saatchi X 22. Bentonville Public Schools 10. Field Agent 23. Springdale High School 11. Supply Pike 24. Rogers Public Schools 12. WhyteSpyder 25. Lincoln High School 13. i2i Labs 14. TekSystems 15. DataScout
Requested Budget:	$923,842.76 (excluding cost share)
Date Submitted:	05/21/2018
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Authorized Signatures for Institution

University of Arkansas
Lead Institution

Authorized Official   JET

5/23/18

Act 1131 of 2015
Regional Workforce Continuation Grant Application

*Please complete each section of this application and submit to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by **June 1, 2018**. Applications should be emailed to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu. Please note that only projects that were awarded an implementation grant are eligible to apply for a continuation grant.*

SECTION 1 – PROGRAM NEED   20 Points

Proposals will include a thorough description of the labor needs, as determined by the Local Workforce Development Board, and specifically identify the skills gap employers face in the selected region and will continue to face in the future. Entities seeking grant funds must outline the proposed program and/or equipment needed and how continuation of the program and/or acquisition of equipment will address those labor needs.

Essential Components:

- Regional data demonstrating the need for action - provide empirical data that illustrates needs of the local workforce, with a particular emphasis on anticipated or future needs.
- Clear linkages between grant activities and local needs- clearly illustrate how the proposed grant project is directly linked to addressing the workforce needs and deficits of the region. Successful applications will provide a thorough description of the region's high-demand and high-skill industrial occupations and identify how the proposed activity will address job candidate deficits in those areas. **Applicants must also submit letters of support from at least two area employers for the proposal, citing need and outlining benefits for local industry.**

- Alignment with Arkansas economic and workforce goals- describe how the proposed project will increase overall higher education attainment in the region and provide clear linkages between a postsecondary credential and the needs of employers.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Program Need (20 Pts)	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11-14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Section 1 – Program Need

Northwest Arkansas is one of the fastest growing regions in the United States. It is a vibrant and thriving community defined by a diverse economy and population.   The need for a workforce equipped to meet the needs of local business and industry in such a dynamic region is substantial. The need for advanced computer skills in 2018 continues to be a common theme for businesses in Northwest Arkansas, from local startups to international corporations ranked as high as number one in the 2018 Fortune 500 list. The University of Arkansas Global Campus seeks to support the region's workforce needs by continuing an IT Readiness program that teaches the necessary technical and workplace skills that ignite, accelerate, and advance careers in technology.

During the implementation cycle of the grant, 38 students completed at least one entry-level certificate in the IT Readiness program. Four of those students returned to earn additional certificates, bring the total number of certificates earned to 42. So far, 13 students have been hired as full-time developers, four have obtained IT-related positions or internships, and six others have confirmed an advancement in their current positions because of the skills they learned from IT Readiness.

Over the next ten years, the demand for software developers and programmers in Northwest Arkansas is expected to double and exceed current positions by an estimated 2,284 new positions. Online postings in the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers metro area for the 180-day period ending 3/18/2018 feature both software developers and web developers in the top five with a total of 632 and 220 postings respectively. Additionally, coding was listed as the second most in-demand skill for Northwest Arkansas.

The rising demand for coders, developers, and highly skilled individuals in the IT sector demonstrates the continued need for the IT Readiness program. By providing an accelerated pathway to a career in high demand, the IT Readiness program offers a competitive edge for those seeking careers in technology.

Program Outline

The IT Readiness program established a group of local industry and educational partners in 2015 that included Acxiom, Collective Bias, Field Agent, JB Hunt, Rockfish Digital (VML), Saatchi & Saatchi X, Tata Consultancy Services, Walmart, Startup Junkie Consulting, Metova, RevUnit, the University of Arkansas Sam M. Walton College of Business, Northwest Technical Institute, Northwest Arkansas Community College, Bentonville Public Schools, and Springdale Public Schools. Since that time, the IT Readiness program has continued to grow partnerships among both local industry experts and educational institutions. New program partners include CaseStack, DataScout, Harvest Group, iberia Bank, Lofty Labs, Rogers Public Schools, and WhyteSpyder. These partnerships provide the foundation to develop plans for meeting the local workforce needs as identified by the Northwest Arkansas Council and other economic development organizations. The IT sector continues to be a high-wage field with careers that are in high demand. <u>Twenty-six letters of support from industry and educational partners can be found at the end of this grant application.</u>

In conjunction with the network of industry and educational partners in Northwest Arkansas, the Global Campus has identified skills gaps in the IT sector. One specific area of need is in web development. Web development is a term that refers to the process of building and developing a web site.

The foundation of the IT Readiness program is based on four specific areas of web development (Appendix 1 displays an extensive overview of the topics and objectives to be covered in each certificate program):

- Front-End Development
- Back-End Development
- Java Development
- Mobile Development

These four areas provide intense training that prepares individuals for entry-level careers in web development. During the grant cycle of the implementation grant, there were three rounds of the entry-level certificate courses. The first round featured Front-End, Back-End, and Mobile Development. The second round featured Front-End, Back-End, Mobile, and Java Development. The third round featured Front-End, Back-End, and Java Development. These four specific areas of web development will continue to be the foundation of the IT Readiness program. There will be flexibility to rotate and add new foundational classes based on demand.

The IT Readiness program is designed to be accessible for any individual interested in pursuing a career in technology. The application process to the IT Readiness Program will continue to include components that emphasize logic, critical thinking, and problem solving. Part of the application process includes an interview, which allows Global Campus staff to meet applicants and assess their strengths and weaknesses. The interview also allows the Assistant Director and Academic Advisor to provide an overview of the program and answer questions. The overview may include information about topics and skills that are covered in each certificate, and which career or educational pathways are available. The interview concludes with a logic quiz and coding activity that each participant is required to complete. Applicants are notified within 2-3 days if they have been admitted to the program. Once accepted, students determine which certificate to pursue by working with an advisor to better understand the potential career pathways of each certificate track. Meeting before entering a certificate program ensures that students fully understand the learning objectives and outcomes of each certificate.

The program structure is comprised of 3.5-hour evening sessions twice each week and a 6-hour course twice per month. For example, students meet on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 5:30 PM – 9:00 pm then two Saturdays per month from 8:30 am – 2:30 pm. The schedules were modified from 4-hour sessions twice each week and one 8-hour session twice each month. This modification allows for students to allot time for attending career sessions and networking opportunities, both of which are typically held during evening hours. The modified schedule also allows students extra time to work on the development of their final projects. Additionally, schedules are flexible to allow for changes based on instructor availability, holidays, and inclement weather. Each certificate includes approximately 288 hours of in-class instruction time, as any missed hours or changes to schedules are made up with extra class sessions. The IT Readiness model improves the transition from certificate program to real-world application drastically and eliminates the need for employers to re-train individuals once they are hired.

From these certificate programs, educational and career pathways have been established with business and educational partners. Students completing the IT Readiness Program will be able to choose between credit towards 2- or 4-year degrees, job market entry, or industry certifications.

The IT Readiness Program was designed to sustain activities beyond the grant funding period. The University of Arkansas Global Campus is committed to making this resource available to our region for years to come. The Global Campus will continue to work with partners to revise and update curriculum or identify new programming as needed. Data shows that IT-sector jobs are continually available and opportunities in this industry continue to increase. Through continuous evaluation and partnership, the IT Readiness Program is on a path towards becoming a strong, long-term resource for education.

In addition to the four areas of web development skills, the Global Campus has utilized the network of IT Readiness partners to identify areas of need for upskill (advanced) training. These workshops were created to serve IT professionals who sought advanced training to accelerate their careers.

Expanding on the foundation of the four entry-level certificate programs, the following areas have been identified for advanced training needs.

- User Experience (UX) Certification Training - The Global Campus partnered with Nielsen Norman Group to bring User Experience (UX) training to Northwest Arkansas in Fall 2017 and again in Spring 2018. UX encompasses the interactions that an end user experiences with a company or organization's website or application. UX combines the services of multiple components including design, marketing, and development with the goal of creating a meaningful experience for the end-user. Professionals typically must travel to conferences for this type of training. Bringing this training to Northwest Arkansas provided a great value to the community, specifically UX professionals who gained the opportunity to advance their careers and learn new tech skills to enhance user experience for websites and applications.
- Tech Leadership - A training need that was identified by our partners was leadership training for IT managers. In collaboration with local professionals in IT management positions, the Global Campus held the 'Tech Expert to Tech Leader' workshop in Fall 2017 and will again in early Summer 2018. The workshops, led by local business leaders including company founders, directors, and presidents from across the region, were targeted at individuals seeking the managerial knowledge necessary for advanced IT positions and provided a foundation for IT professionals transitioning into management.
- Amazon Web Services (AWS) Certification Training – Another training need recently identified by IT Readiness partners is Amazon Web Services (AWS) Certification Training. Partners indicate that AWS certification is a highly sought credential for professionals who work with AWS services. AWS is a cloud computing platform used by over 1M customers. The technology offers users computing power, database storage, and content delivery all in one platform. It is designed to help businesses scale and grow. Certification in AWS validates technical skills and expertise for IT professionals seeking to advance their career. Training provides the pathway to certification. The AWS Certification Training program is scheduled for July 17 – 20, 2018, at the Global Campus.
- React JS/React Native – During the March 2018 IT Readiness partners meeting, a workforce need was identified for React Native and React.js developers. React Native and React.js are frameworks used for creating website and mobile applications. Both encompass JavaScript technology and are ideal for building complex user interface (UI) or native mobile apps. The benefit of learning React Native and React.js is a simplified approach to building user

interfaces. Partners in attendance for the March 2018 indicated that there is currently a shortage of React Native and React.js developers in Northwest Arkansas. The Global Campus is in the process of developing a new class that teaches the skills to address this specific workforce need and aims to deliver this training in Fall 2018.

Going forward, the Global Campus will continue to work with industry partner to identify new areas of need and deliver programming based on those needs. The following areas have been identified for potential programming to offer during the continuation cycle:

- Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning – AI/machine learning is a rapidly growing area of technology. It is defined as the ability of computer systems to perform tasks that are typically performed by humans. The concept of AI/machine learning is that computers can receive inputs from the environment, analyze those inputs, and exhibit behavior that mimics human intelligence. Examples of technologies that employ AI/machine learning include self-driving cars, speech recognition software, Netflix, Google, Google maps, and Amazon. These technologies utilize the predictive power of AI/machine learning to develop algorithms that will revolutionize industry. As tech companies grow, training will be critical to understanding and harnessing this powerful technology. IT Readiness partners have expressed interest in working with the Global Campus to develop AI/machine learning training. Programming for this topic is planned for the continuation cycle.
- Cybersecurity – Cybersecurity is the protection of computer systems, networks, and programs against malicious attacks. Training is needed to help companies learn how to defend against these cyber-attacks and how to respond when one occurs. The Global Campus receives numerous requests for cybersecurity training and plans to collaborate with partners to develop and deliver programming for this topic during the continuation cycle.

Program and Equipment Needs

The Global Campus created three computer labs to be used for the IT Readiness program, two equipped with MacBook Pro machines and one equipped with PC machines. The implementation grant provided the technology and equipment necessary to deliver an excellent classroom experience for students and instructors.

The Global Campus will continue to utilize all three labs for IT Readiness classes. The current set-up involving keyboards, mice, monitors, and laptop stands is highly efficient for individuals who are using their computers and laptops for many hours each day. It was communicated to Global Campus staff that the seating arrangements should be updated to provide an optimal ergonomic classroom experience.

Based on the criteria for updating the classroom seating arrangement, the following equipment need has been identified (based on the need identified in all three computer lab classrooms):

- Student Chairs: Steelcase Series 1 Office Chair x $409.00 x 42 = $17,178.00
- Instructor Chairs: Steelcase Series 1 Office Chair x $510.00 x 3 = $1,530.00

While the IT Readiness Program will continue to invest in equipment, all coursework is completed using free, open-source software. By saving costs associated with software, the IT Readiness Program will have more resources to invest in high-quality equipment to give students the best resources available.

In addition to the labs, a plan has been developed to install a testing center in the facility. This testing center will provide proper space and technology that allows for students and other professional certification seekers to test for credentials and certifications upon completion of IT classes or training.

The testing center would provide access to hundreds of technology-related certifications. Some examples of industry-recognized certifications that the testing center may provide access to include the following areas:

- Android
- Apple
- C++
- Cybersecurity
- Dell
- IBM
- IOS
- Linux
- McAfee
- NetApp
- Oracle
- Python
- Symantec
- Teradata
- XML

The testing center will be fully equipped to meet the criteria necessary to be classified as a certified testing center recognized by nationally accredited computer-based testing agencies such as Pearson, Kryterion, ACT, and Prometric. Equipment will include authentication and proctoring software that allows our staff to authenticate test-takers and moderate exams via cameras that will be installed in the testing room. Lockers and security wands will also be purchased and utilized to prevent cheating. The security wand ensures that all personal and prohibited items have been removed beforehand. Personal items of test-takers are stored in separate lockers during exams. The testing center will be managed by current Global Campus staff, who will be trained to administer and proctor exams.

Based on the criteria set forth above, the following equipment needs have been identified:

- OFM Rize 1x1 Privacy Station with 3' Desk x $687.00 x 6 = $4,122.00
- HON Basyx Ergonomic Desk Chair x $134.65 x 6 = $807.90
- Hikvision DS-2CD2112F Network Camera x $145.63 x 6 = $873.78
- Dell OptiPlex Testing PC x $719.92 x 6 = $4,319.52
- Dell 22" Monitor x $179.39 x 6 = $1,076.34
- Blue Iris Camera Monitoring Software x $60.00 x 1 = $60.00

An additional benefit of the testing center will be proximity for test-takers in Northwest Arkansas. The closest facility is currently 80 miles from the rapidly growing area of Northwest Arkansas. Providing a local option for certification-seeking professionals to take exams will serve the workforce.

Regional Data Demonstrating the Continued Need for IT Readiness

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, computer and information technology occupations are expected to grow 13 percent from 2016 to 2026. This growth exceeds the average of all other occupations. As one of the fastest growing regions in the United States, Northwest Arkansas is experiencing growing workforce demands for computer and information technology skills. The Northwest Arkansas Council ranked IT related careers as one of the top five most in-demand careers in Northwest Arkansas over the past five years. This trend is expected to continue over the next ten years. For example, according to the NWA Council, there are currently 2,270 software developers and programmers in Northwest Arkansas. Over the next ten years, the demand for software developers and programmers is expected to double and exceed current positions by an estimated 2,284 new positions.

In Northwest Arkansas and the rest of the state, officials continue to recognize the need for more high-quality computer science education. In 2015, Governor Asa Hutchison championed and eventually passed into law a bill that now requires public high schools to offer computer science and coding classes to any student who wants to study in this area. The state government's concern and action focused on computer science emphasizes the importance of providing the relevant skills and education for a generation defined by technology and innovation. In 2018, on a Computer Science Tour of Arkansas, Governor Hutchinson maintained a strong message to high school students, emphasizing the importance of taking computer science classes and learning how to code.

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services once again identified IT-related careers on the 2017-2018 Hot 45 Demand Occupations List. High-skill computer programmers and computer systems analysts are listed among the most in-demand careers in the state of Arkansas. Additionally, their 2017-2018 Projected Employment Opportunities list published by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services identified 'software developer' as a high demand occupation for Northwest Arkansas. Specific areas mentioned within software development were artificial intelligence, information science, information technology, computer programming, computer science, computer engineering, computer software engineering, and computer software technology.

The Global Campus recognizes the need for highly skilled individuals in the IT sector. The IT Readiness program will continue to provide an accelerated pathway to an IT career. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education Regional Workforce Grant has kept costs low for students while providing great value to the local workforce. With the continuation of the grant, the IT Readiness program will continue to make a positive impact on the Northwest Arkansas community.

Linkages Between Grant Activities and Local Needs

Identification of local workforce needs is critical to grant activities. The IT Readiness program will continue to be guided by these needs while adapting and responding to the current labor needs and skills gaps. Ongoing communication with the network of partners indicates a continued need for industry specific skills in software development. The following four entry-level certificate programs that were created during the implementation grant will remain the foundation of the IT Readiness program because they encompass the most relevant set of skills required to become a junior level developer.

- Front-End Development
- Back-End Development

- Java Development
- Mobile Development

Soft skills also continue to be identified as a priority for local workforce needs, therefore the IT Readiness program will continue to implement the following topics into the entry-level certificate programs:

- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- Business communication
- Professionalism
- Project and time management
- Independent learning

Concurrent soft skills training in the entry-level programs ensures that IT Readiness graduates are fully prepared to meet the needs and requirements of full-time positions in the workforce.

As the program moves forward, the Global Campus will adapt if or when other skills and technologies become more relevant. When industry partners indicate a potential need for current employees or new employees to learn new frameworks, the Global Campus will provide programing that responds to those needs.

Other examples of changing needs and the response by the Global Campus include the implementation of the advanced skills workshops. These workshops address immediate needs for training in the Northwest Arkansas area, as identified by the network of partners. The Global Campus will continue to communicate with the partners to update and add new advanced skills workshops, as the workforce needs dictate. The ongoing communication will also ensure that linkages remain between the entry-level certificate curriculum and workforce needs.

Alignment with Arkansas Economic and Workforce Goals

The University of Arkansas Global Campus delivers the training that supports the workforce needs of Northwest Arkansas. Our goal as a unit is to provide high quality instruction to individuals seeking to launch or advance their careers. The IT Readiness program aligns with Arkansas economic and workforce goals by providing pathways for students to continue their education or pursue industry recognized credentials. The goal of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services is to serve the local economy by developing initiatives that enhance the local workforce. The IT Readiness program strives to provide training that aligns with these initiatives and equips individuals with the skills necessary to find employment.

Educational Pathways

The Global Campus is partnered with Northwest Arkansas Community College and the University of Arkansas to create educational pathways for students who compete an entry-level certificate and wish to pursue additional education or a degree. The Global Campus has also created a pathway for prior IT Readiness graduates to re-enter the program to earn additional certificates or advanced skills training.

University of Arkansas Global Campus

Any student who successfully completes a certificate in the IT Readiness program is eligible to return and pursue a second certificate. As an ITR graduate, they are granted admission back into the program and approved to bypass the online pre-requisite course and online soft-skills training that are required for first time students. Students who complete dual certificates in the IT Readiness Program are fully prepared to pursue a 'full stack developer' industry credential. A full-stack developer is skilled in multiple layers or technologies of web development. A developer with this credential can perform multiple roles in a development project from the design phase to the launch phase of an application or website.

Students who complete at least one certificate in the IT Readiness Program are also eligible to pursue advanced skills training in the IT Readiness advanced workshops. These workshops require up to one year or more of IT experience and knowledge. Completion of these workshops can lead to additional industry certification and provide a competitive edge to students seeking advancement opportunities in their profession.

Northwest Arkansas Community College

NWACC agrees that students entering their programs after completing the IT Readiness Program will be ready to start taking classes towards the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree. NWACC will identify how credits are issued depending on the degree track they choose to pursue. For example, if a student chooses to pursue the A.A.S. Computer Information Systems – Web Development degree track at NWACC, they will start that track with at least six credit hours already earned from the completing one of the IT Readiness entry-level certificates. This arrangement was established so that students have access to higher education upon completion of the IT Readiness program. Students will have the opportunity to meet with an advisor from NWACC to discuss which A.A.S. degree track presents the best option for them with regards to transfer credits and long-term career goals. The IT Readiness program will eliminate any financial barriers by covering transfer application costs that would normally be incurred by the student. NWACC has recognized this arrangement with full support by providing a commitment letter for this grant application.

University of Arkansas

One of the needs identified by our IT Partners was soft skills training; therefore, concurrent training was implemented into the program curriculum that teaches the skills necessary to be successful as a professional in the workforce. For each entry-level certificate course, there is an online component that focuses solely on soft skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, professionalism, business communications, time management, conflict resolution, and negotiation. Students are required to take the online course, Workplace Competencies, while enrolled and must complete this course to meet the requirements for earning their IT Readiness certificate. This course identifies and creates opportunities for the development of the skills most often valued in the workplace, including working in a team structure; goal setting; decision making and problem solving; planning, organizing and prioritizing work; power, persuasion and oral communication; obtaining and processing relevant data; technical skills evaluation; written communications skills; workplace image and attitude; corporate values and workplace ethics; and influencing others at a new job. The University of Arkansas has agreed to allow a credit-by-exam option for students in IT Readiness programs who successfully complete Workplace Competencies. This credit-by-exam option allows students to demonstrate proficiency in soft-skills training. If a student chooses this educational pathway, and is admitted to the

University of Arkansas, they will be able to test and gain three credit hours towards WCOB 2063, Workplace Competencies. This option will continue to be available for IT Readiness students as an educational pathway for those who want to pursue a four-year degree. Students who successfully complete the A.A.S. degree at NWACC also have the option to pursue a four-year degree at the University of Arkansas. The University of Arkansas will honor any credit gained at NWACC through the IT Readiness Program, making this course work fully transferable along this educational pathway.

Career Pathways

The IT partner companies identified several entry-level paths that IT Readiness graduates are prepared for and can pursue as a career. These career pathways which were identified during the implementation cycle continue to be attainable for program graduates illustrate a wide variety of options within each entry-level certificate track. Links have been provided to highlight salary information and local job descriptions.

Java Development Certificate Program

- Java Developer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern
- Java Engineer

Java Developer Salaries
The average salary for a java developer is estimated at $70,172/year.
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Junior-Java-Developer-Salaries

Java Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/q-java-developer-l-Bentonville,-AR-jobs.html

Front-End Web Development Certificate Program

- Web Developer
- Web Engineer
- Front-End Engineer
- Front-End Developer
- UI Developer
- UI Engineer
- JavaScript Developer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern
- Digital Client Specialist

Front-End Developer Salaries in Northwest Arkansas
The average salary for a front-end developer in Northwest Arkansas is estimated at $73,671/year.
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Front-End-Developer-Salaries,-Bentonville-AR

Front-End Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/q-front-end-developer-l-Bentonville,-AR-jobs.html

Back-End Web Development Certificate Program

- NodeJS Developer
- NodeJS Engineer
- Web Developer
- Web Engineer
- Software Engineer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern

Back-End Developer Salaries

The average salary for a back-end developer is estimated at $118,007/year.
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Back-End-Developer-Salaries

Back-End Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=back-end+developer&l=Bentonville,+AR

Mobile Development Certificate Program

- Mobile Developer
- Mobile Engineer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern

Mobile Developer Salaries in Arkansas
The average salary for a mobile developer in Arkansas is $73,447/year
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Mobile-Developer-Salaries,-Arkansas

Mobile Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=mobile+developer&l=Bentonville,+AR&ts=1524597916238&rq=1

Additional Pathways

In addition to continuing their education through additional IT Readiness courses and higher education pathways, students will be prepared to test for industry-recognized certifications in the following areas of technology:

- Android Certified Application Developer
- HTML Certification
- HTML5 Certification

- CSS Certification
- Java Certification
- JavaScript Certification
- jQuery Certification
- Bootstrap Certification
- Oracle Certified Expert, Java EE 6 Web Series Developer
- Oracle Certified Expert, Java EE 6 Enterprise JavaBeans Developer
- MongoDB Professional Certification
- StrongLoop Node.js Certification

SECTION 2 – PROGRAM PLAN **25 Points**

Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program as well as the following Essential Components:

- Detailed project timeline and overview- provide a month-by-month overview of the critical convenings, activities, and actions that will comprise the project.

- Measurable objectives for each phase of the project- detail the metrics utilized throughout the project to track how credentialed job candidates possessing the skills needed by employers will be provided.

- Project governance and accountability plan- clearly describe the plan for governance, meetings, and decision-making structure; identify a project director; and identify members of a project steering committee that will maintain oversight throughout the project period.

- Pathways articulation and support- clearly describe the educational pathway(s) and support services that will be developed, or existing pathways that will be enhanced, to meet the identified workforce needs. Pathways should incorporate all appropriate student outcomes from short-term industry-recognized credentials through the highest certificate or degree programs appropriate to the identified career goals and include career step-out points at the completion of each credential.

- Role of equipment request- required only for those proposals seeking equipment purchases. Outline how equipment purchase will specifically address local labor market needs; provide detailed description of equipment, educational value of equipment in preparing workforce, and justification for purchase.

- Performance assessment- clearly define measurable outcomes to be achieved through continuation of the plan and strategies to measure and report achievement of those outcomes. Priority will be given to programs which prepare candidates for high wage jobs or which create capacity to move candidates from unemployment to employment.

- Program plans must be designed to meet the goals and core requirements of the Regional Workforce Grants program. At a minimum, the plan must include a detailed project timeline and overview, measurable objectives for each phase of the project, a project governance and accountability plan, pathways articulation and support, the role of any equipment requested, and a performance assessment.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Program Plan (25 Pts)	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Section 2 – Program Plan

In 2015, the University of Arkansas Global Campus created a plan to build a sustainable program to serve the local workforce. This plan was put into action as the IT Readiness program after receiving the ADHE regional workforce initiative implementation grant. Over the past two years, the IT Readiness program has delivered high-quality instruction to students looking to launch a career in the IT sector. IT professionals looking to advance their careers have also benefited from the IT Readiness program through the advanced/upskill workshops that were implemented. The Global Campus intends to continue to deliver high-quality IT instruction and workforce training for the Northwest Arkansas region.

One of the driving forces of IT Readiness is our ability to listen, adjust, and adapt to what industry needs. As we progressed thorough the implementation cycle, we listened to what our industry partners had to say when it came to training needs in Northwest Arkansas. When we held the quarterly meetings, we encouraged feedback and guidance to help determine what training provided the most significant benefit to the workforce. In this process we discovered a strong need for User Experience (UX) training and certification. Our partners advised that UX certification was a highly sought-after credential, typically only achieved by attending a conference. Bringing the UX training to Northwest Arkansas made an immediate impact on the workforce by creating the opportunity for more IT professionals to attend and become certified. The UX workshop was the first program intended for working IT professionals to upskill and advance their careers. These advanced workshops will continue to be a major component of the IT Readiness program because they can be rapidly built in collaboration with our partners and delivered immediately. The availability of local training for advanced skills also increases the number of attendees.

The following section provides a detailed view of the ways the Global Campus intends to continue and expand the IT Readiness program through both entry-level certificate programs and advanced/upskill courses and workshops.

Project Timeline and Overview

Each certificate in the IT Readiness program adhered to the project timeline as set forth in the implementation grant. This timeline included the ongoing marketing and promotion of the program, tracking students' progress during the course and outcomes after the course, and quarterly partners meetings held at the Global Campus to provide course updates. In addition to these project milestones, the timeline included advanced/upskill courses under the advisory of program partners. The following graphic shows the project timeline for the continuation grant:
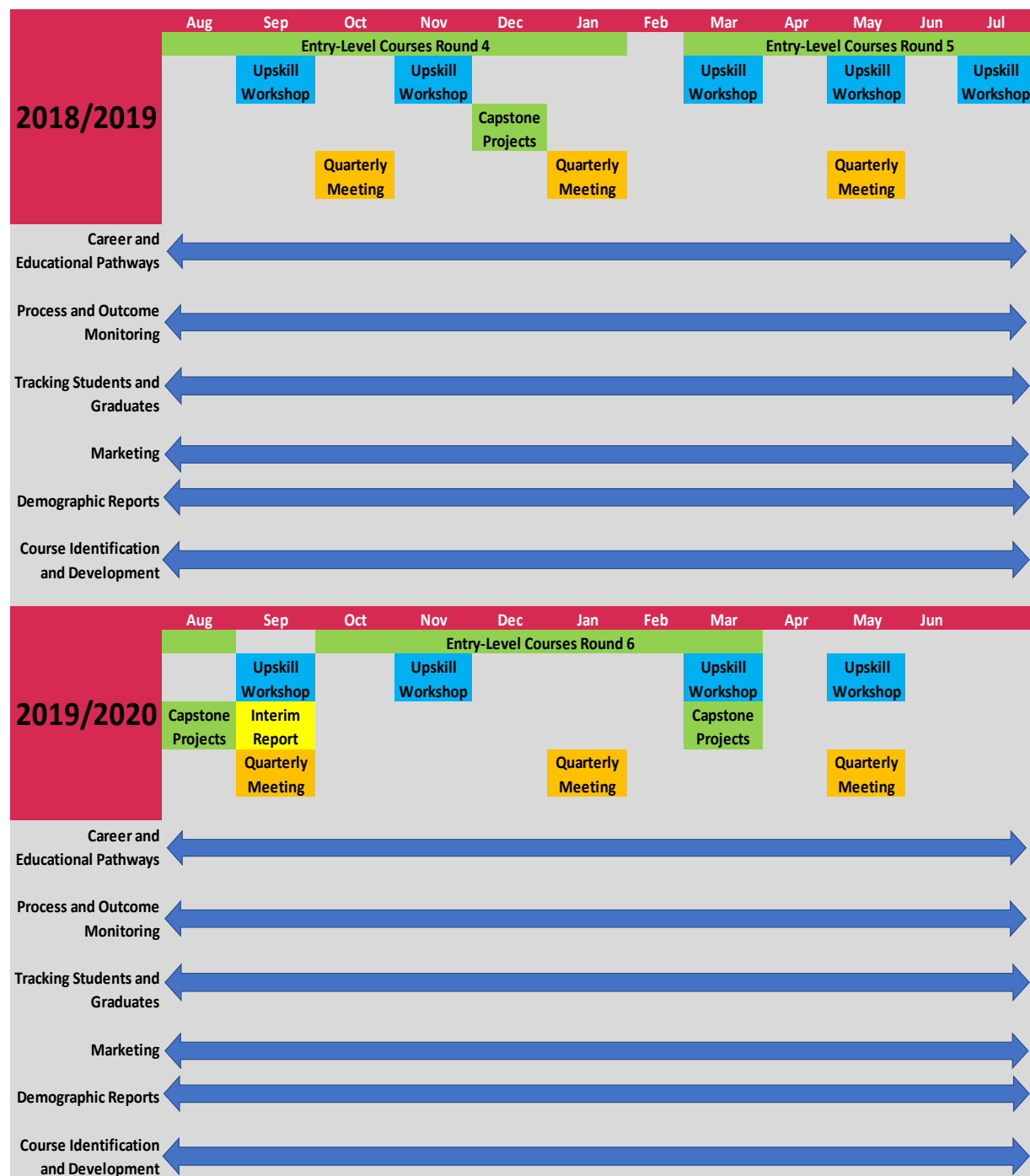
Objectives and Performance Assessment

This section will include reporting on objectives and outcomes from the implementation grant. It will assess goals that were set forth and provide and objectives going forward. The Global Campus provided accurate progress and interim reports throughout the grant cycle and will continue to assess and report on program goals. The objectives and performance assessments set forth for the implementation cycle will remain in place going forward to ensure that students continue to receive high quality training and are prepared to enter the workforce or advance in their careers. The following section summarizes the outcomes of students during the implementation cycle and restates the objectives and performance assessments going into the continuation cycle.

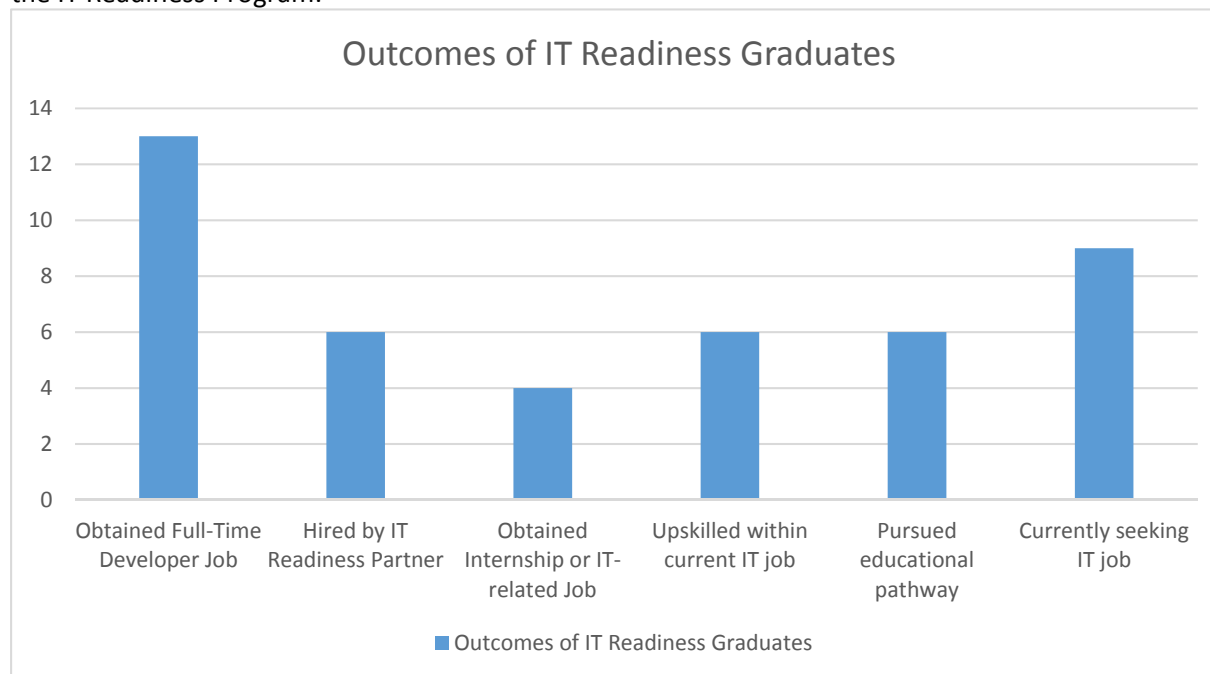*Career & Educational Pathways (from Implementation Grant Cycle)*

Goal: To place students who have completed at least 1 certificate in the IT Readiness Program in the job market, at an institute of higher learning of their choice, or on a path to industry-recognized credentials.
Objective: To teach admitted students skills that prepare them to move on to employment in the workplace, higher education, or testing for industry credentials.
Outcome: Upon completion of each certificate program, 80% of students will seek higher education, industry credentials, or IT jobs.
Reporting: Data on higher education, industry credentials, and jobs obtained will be identified on an ongoing basis through post-program communication.

The following chart illustrates the outcomes of all students who completed at least one certificate in the IT Readiness Program:

These outcomes were determined through ongoing data collection both during and after the program. The outcomes indicate that students who have completed at least one certificate in the IT Readiness Program have entered the job market, pursued additional education or industry credentials, or are currently seeking employment in the IT sector.

Career & Educational Pathways (for Continuation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To place students who have completed at least one certificate in the IT Readiness Program in the job market or on a path towards continued education or industry-recognized credentials.

Objective: To teach admitted students skills that prepare them to move on to employment in the workplace, higher education or continued education, or testing for industry credentials.

Outcome: Upon completion of each certificate program, 80% of students will seek higher education, additional education in the IT Readiness Program, industry recognized credentials, or IT jobs or internships.

Reporting: Data on higher education, industry credentials, and jobs/internships obtained will be identified on an ongoing basis through post-program communication.

Underemployment/Unemployment/Career Changers/Diversity/High School Graduates (from Implementation Grant Cycle)
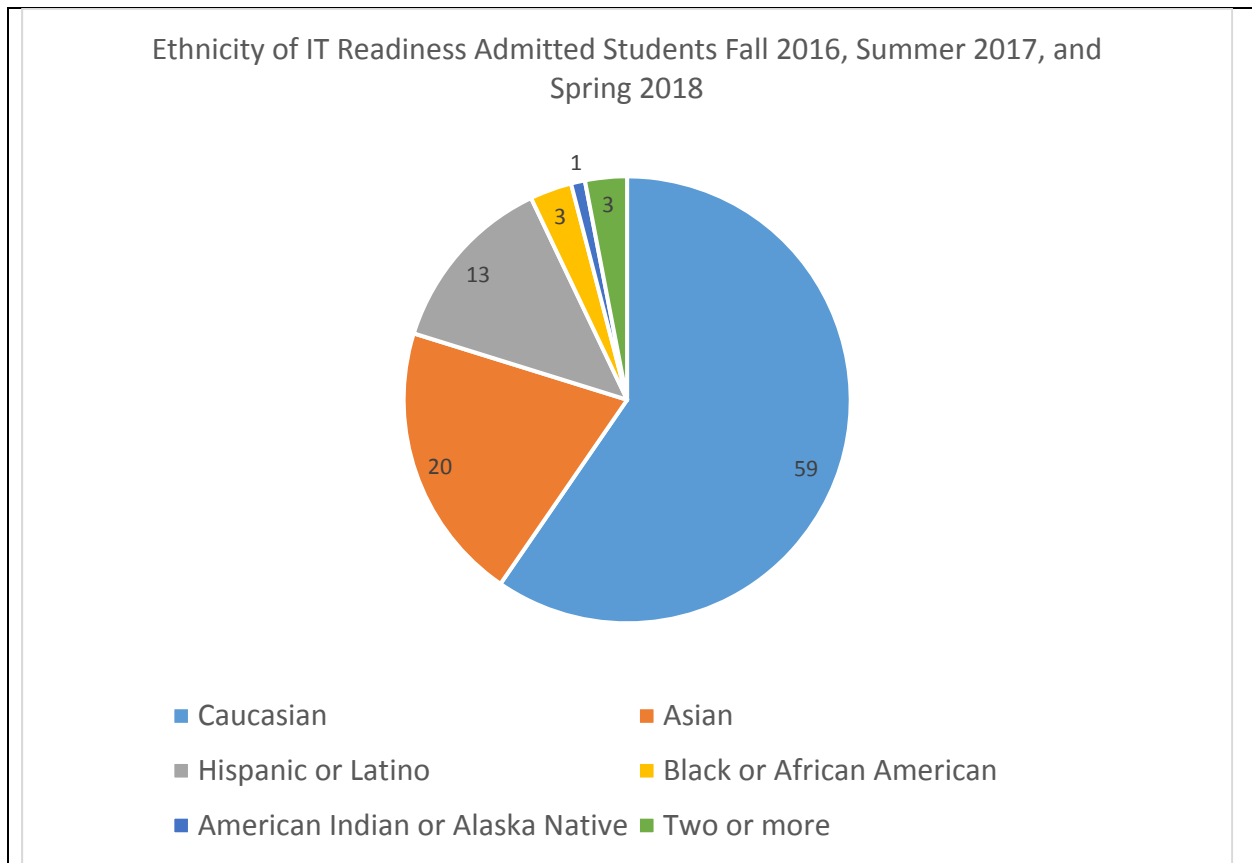
Goal: To serve students who come from diverse backgrounds, who have recently graduated from high school, are unemployed or underemployed, are interested in making a career change, or are looking to advance their job skills and career.

Objective: To enroll students in the IT Readiness Program who come from diverse backgrounds, who have recently graduated from high school, are unemployed or underemployed, are interested in making a career change or are looking to advance their job skills and career.

Outcome: 80% of students during the application process will self-identify as unemployed, underemployed, career changers, recent high school graduates, or from a variety of racial or ethnic groups.

Reporting: Data on demographic information, educational background, employment status, and career history will be collected during the application process and analyzed at the completion of each certificate program.

The following charts illustrate the demographic information of all students who were admitted to the IT Readiness Program, including the students admitted to the current Spring 2018 cohort, which will be completed in July 2018:

Ethnicity of IT Readiness Admitted Students Fall 2016, Summer 2017, and Spring 2018

- Caucasian
- Asian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Two or more

Education and Employment Background of Admitted IT Readiness Students Fall 2016, Summer 2017, and Spring 2018

- Unemployed or Underemployed
- Seeking Career Change
- Seeking to Upskill or Advance Career in IT
- Recent High School Graduate
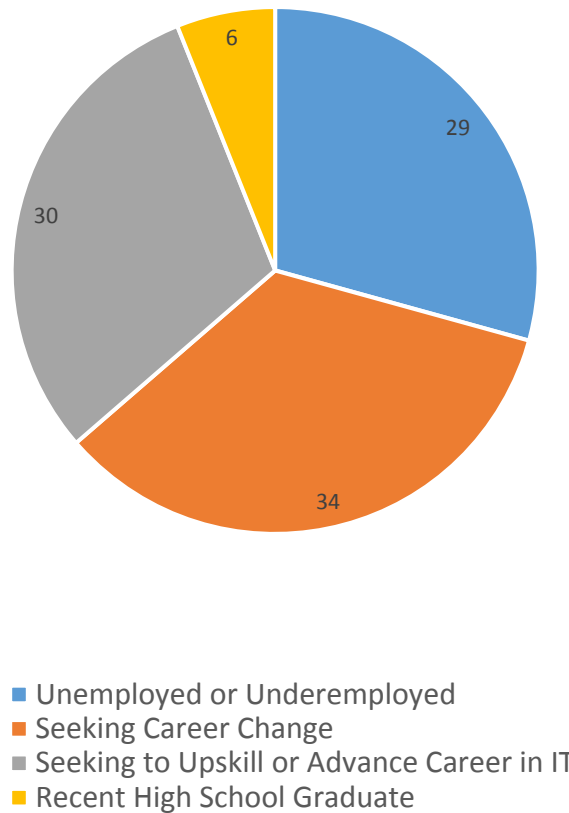
The demographic information collected during the implementation grant cycle demonstrates that the IT Readiness program is meeting the goal of serving students who come from diverse backgrounds and are recent high school graduates, unemployed or underemployed, career changers, or professionals seeking to advance their careers in IT.

Underemployment/Unemployment/Career Changers/Diversity/High School Graduates (for Continuation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To serve students who come from diverse backgrounds, who have recently graduated from high school, are unemployed or underemployed, are interested in making a career change, or are looking to advance their job skills and career.
Objective: To enroll students in the IT Readiness Program who come from diverse backgrounds, who have recently graduated from high school, are unemployed or underemployed, are interested in making a career change, or are looking to advance their job skills and career.
Outcome: 80% of students during the application process will self-identify as unemployed, underemployed, career changers, recent high school graduates, or from a variety of racial or ethnic groups.
Reporting: Data on demographic information, educational background, employment status, and career history will be collected during the application process and analyzed at the completion of each certificate program.

Partners (from Implementation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To create high-caliber IT certificate programs that are valuable and address workforce needs for IT partners and the local workforce.
Objective: To work with IT industry experts to develop curriculum based on current, local IT needs.
Outcome: Upon hiring IT Readiness Program graduates, partners in the workforce show a "satisfactory" or above rating for new hires.
Report: Ongoing reporting will be conducted by surveying IT partners and organizations that hire IT Readiness graduates.

Information was collected from IT Readiness program partners and other organizations who hired graduates of the IT Readiness Program. Surveys were distributed that asked supervisors to rate the performance of the individual they hired from the IT Readiness Program. Responses indicated that program graduates demonstrate technical proficiency and potential for advancement. Soft skills proficiency and problem-solving abilities were also rated high in these surveys.
Surveys were also distributed to attendees of advanced skills workshops to assess their ratings of the workshops and to help determine future training. The following survey questions and series of charts illustrate data collected from partners and organizations who attended advanced skills training UX workshops during the grant cycle (These workshops were created to serve IT professionals who sought advanced training to accelerate their careers):
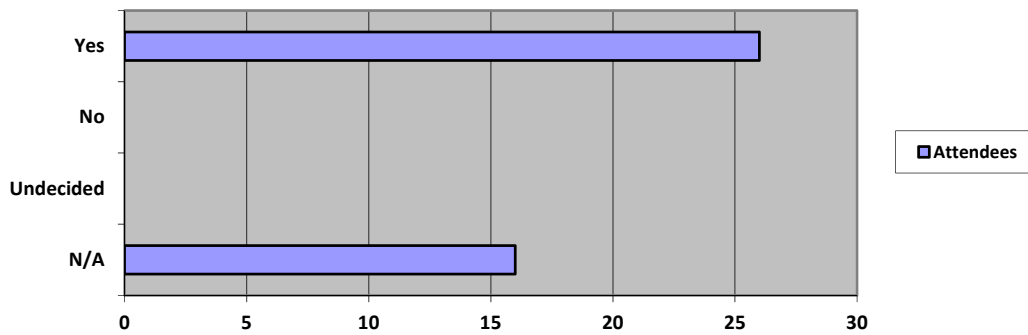
1.) A goal of the grant is to create high-caliber IT certificate programs that are valuable and address workforce needs for IT partners and the local workforce. If you are attending this course as an employee of a local employer, is the training a value-add for your organization?
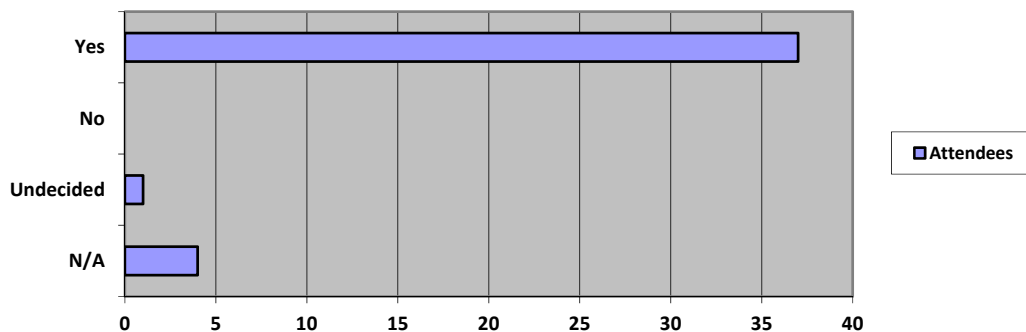

2.) A goal of the grant is to prepare students for workplace competencies including problem solving and critical thinking. Do you feel this course challenged your problem solving, critical thinking, or other workplace competencies?
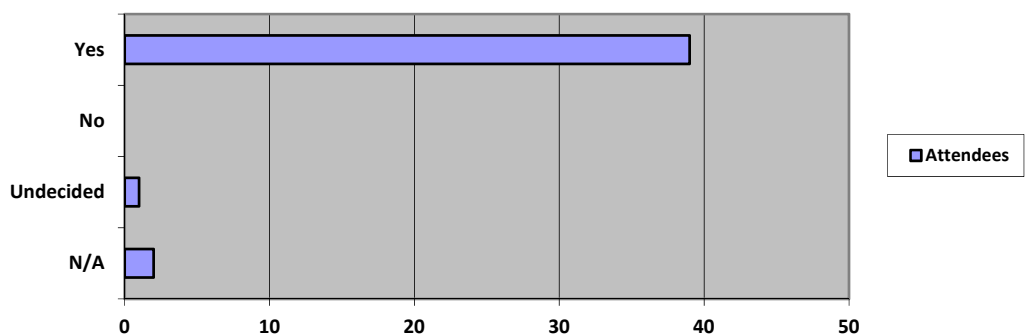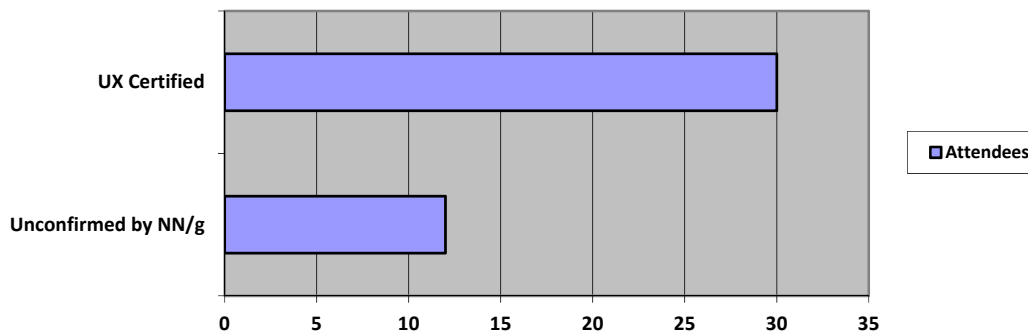
3.) A goal of the grant is to provide students with support services in any area that students may need support. If you needed support with this program, do you feel your needs were met?
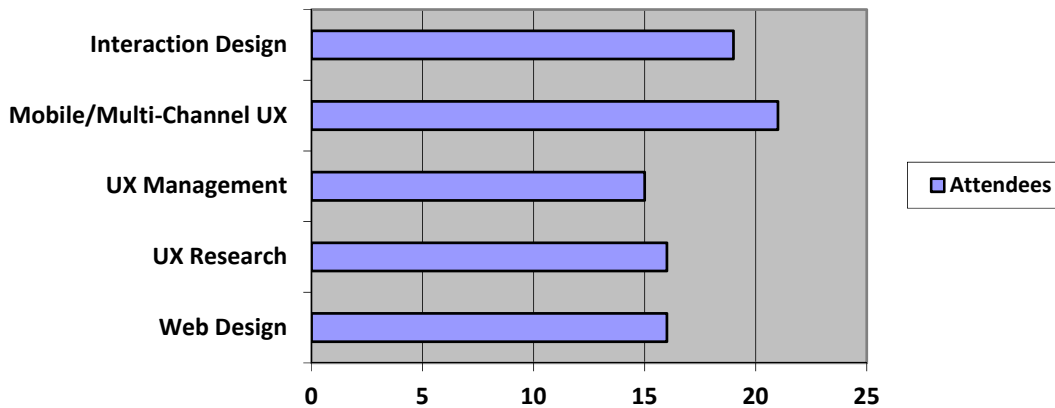

4.) A goal of this grant is to provide students with real world IT (UX) experience and examples. Do you feel this course met this goal?
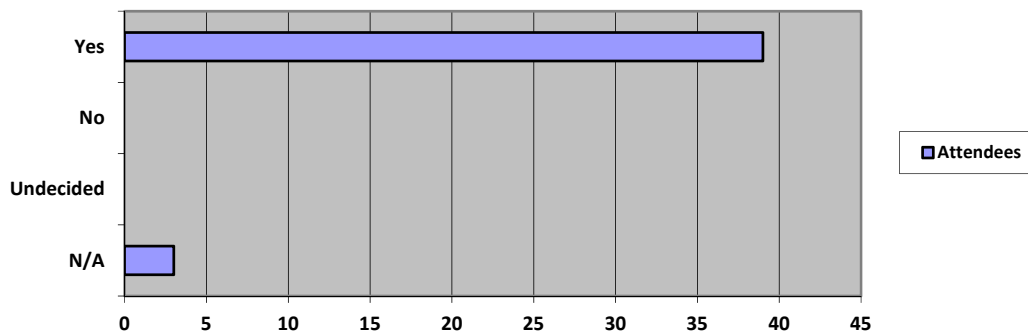
5.) Number of UX certifications achieved as of 12/1/2017

6.) Which area are you most interested in for the next 5 courses?

Partners (for Continuation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To create high-caliber IT certificate programs that are valuable and address workforce needs for IT partners and the local workforce.
Objective: To work with IT industry experts to develop curriculum based on current, local IT needs.
Outcome: Upon hiring IT Readiness Program graduates, partners in the workforce show a "satisfactory" or above rating for new hires.
Report: Ongoing reporting will be conducted by surveying IT partners and organizations that hire IT Readiness graduates.

Soft Skills (from Implementation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To prepare students for workplace competencies including problem solving and critical thinking.
Objective: To teach admitted students soft skills (critical thinking, problem solving, professionalism, etc.) that prepare them to move on to higher education, into the workforce, or on to gaining industry credentials.
Outcome: Upon completion of the Workplace Competencies course, 80% of students will have proficiency in soft skills, as evidenced by a passing score on the final exam.
University of Arkansas
Reporting: Upon completion of the Workplace Competencies course, data will be collected regarding final exam scores.

Successfully passing the workplace competencies course is required to earn a certificate. Workplace competencies is graded on a pass/fail basis. During the implementation cycle, 49/56 students earned passing scores. Students who passed the course remained in the program to continue working towards a certificate.

Soft Skills (for Continuation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To prepare students for workplace competencies including problem solving and critical thinking.
Objective: To teach admitted students soft skills (critical thinking, problem solving, professionalism, etc.) that prepare them to move on to higher education, into the workforce, or on to gaining industry credentials.
Outcome: Upon completion of the Workplace Competencies course, 80% of students will have proficiency in soft skills, as evidenced by a passing score on the final exam.

University of Arkansas
Reporting: Upon completion of the Workplace Competencies course, data will be collected regarding final exam scores.

Capstone (from Implementation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To provide students with real-world IT programming project experience.
Objective: To provide students with a capstone project which places them in a real-world situation, working in tandem with local IT experts.
Outcome: Students will create a viable solution that demonstrates relevant IT skills and receives a passing score, as determined by industry experts.
Reporting: Upon completion of each capstone project, data will be collected regarding capstone project scores.

Successfully passing the capstone project is required to earn a certificate. The capstone project is graded on a pass/fail basis. During the implementation cycle, 42/46 submitted projects earned passing scores. Students who completed projects with a passing score went on to receive certificates.

Capstone (for Continuation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To provide students with real-world IT programming project experience.
Objective: To provide students with a capstone project which places them in a real-world situation, working in tandem with local IT experts.
Outcome: Students will create a viable solution that demonstrates relevant IT skills and receives a passing score, as determined by industry experts.
Reporting: Upon completion of each capstone project, data will be collected regarding capstone project scores.

Upskill/Advanced Training (for Continuation Grant Cycle)

Goal: To provide working IT professionals with advanced and accelerated IT workshops.
Objective: To equip working IT professionals with the skills necessary to climb higher in their careers with targeted knowledge gained during accelerated workshops.
Outcome: Qualified IT professionals will learn from experienced experts and earn a competitive edge in the job market. Additional outcomes could include high-level professional credentials and certifications.
Reporting: Reporting will be conducted by distributing surveys and evaluations during each workshop.

Project Governance and Accountability Plan

The IT Readiness program is comprised of many components that bring education and industry together to deliver high-quality training. The governing body throughout the implementation cycle has carried out the plan to provide an efficient decision-making structure, accountability, and program oversight. This plan will continue and develop as the program expands. The following section outlines this plan for the continuation cycle.

Governance

Throughout the implementation cycle, the Global Campus has maintained a governance and advisory structure that has provided program oversight and guidance. This structure will continue going forward into the continuation cycle. It will continue to provide clear programming goals and objectives while providing opportunities to our network of partners to be involved in a variety of roles and at different levels from content input to providing highly-skilled instructors. The Global Campus and educational partners will contribute educational expertise and collaborate to deliver high-quality programming.
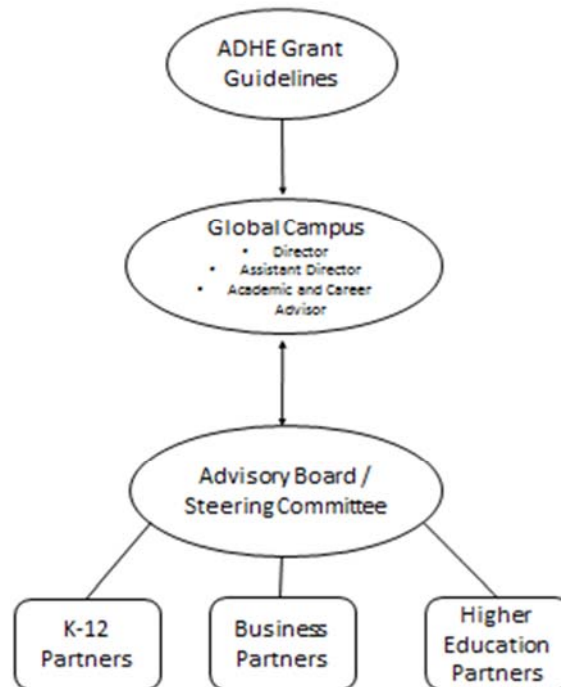
Decision-Making Structure

The decision-making structure that was established during the implementation cycle allowed industry partners to advise on IT needs in the local workforce. Ongoing communication via email and meetings continues with partners to expand program awareness and ensure that courses remain relevant. Content and curriculum decisions have been made transparently under the guidance of the partners' network and all involved parties.

From an operational standpoint, the Global Campus maintains the day-to-day management of the program. Budget matters, staff, timelines, schedules, and all other operational procedures will continue to be directed by the Global Campus. Final decision-making authority remains with the Global Campus while the IT partners provide the strategic direction of the program. Communication during the decision-making process ensures that programming aligns with the most current and relevant IT needs.

Responsible Institution/Project Director

The Global Campus is responsible for the direct supervision and management of the regional workforce grant and will continue to maintain clear programming identity, direction, and recognizable

credentials. The Global Campus serves as the responsible institution for collecting input and evaluating feedback from all project partners and advisors (educational partners, industry experts, and workforce councils). The Project Director oversees the strategic plan while the Assistant Director manages the day-to-day operations of the program and develops partnerships. Additionally, the Career and Academic Advisor works to support students before, during, and after program completion. The Advisor exists because students require information and assistance with academic, career, financial, and personal issues. The Advisor assists in their career planning and development and ensures that students have a resource for discussing personal and academic issues. The Advisor interacts with students on a frequent basis and monitors progress, reinforces relationships between the IT Program and career and educational pathways, interprets student policies and procedures, and consults with the Assistant Director and instructors to identify any challenges a student may be experiencing.

The University of Arkansas has a long-standing history of receiving and maintaining grants through the Research and Sponsored Programs department. This department is a secondary source of oversight on the grant, outside of the Global Campus.

Project Steering Committee

The IT Readiness partners network constitutes the project steering committee. This committee was initially comprised of representatives from educational and business partners. The committee has expanded to include representatives from new educational and business partners that have been added during the implementation grant cycle. The steering committee provides the input and guidance for IT programming before and during the decision-making process. In a strategic capacity, the committee can measure the feasibility of potential programs and therefore influence the project outcomes. The committee can also measure risks associated with new program development and advise on how to navigate those risks. Collectively, the members of the committee can identify current or upcoming needs in the IT industry and analyze the benefits or risks associated with new program development.

The project steering committee currently consists of the following contacts among IT Readiness partners. These committee members provide a broad base of local resources and provide strategic direction that supports the initiatives of the IT Readiness program. Members share the common goal of supporting the IT workforce needs of Northwest Arkansas. (New members of the committee have been added as new partnerships have been formed during the implementation cycle):

- *Global Campus, Project Lead – Tara Dryer, Director of Training, Corporate Development and Academic Outreach*
- *Global Campus – Mark Berkowick, Assistant Director of Workforce Readiness*
- *Acxiom – Amy Elrod, Training and Development Specialist*
- *DataScout (new partner) – Cory Scott, Chief Operations Officer*
- *Esoterix Software (new partner) – Chad Kieffer, Lead Developer*
- *Field Agent – Rick West, Chief Executive Officer, Co-Founder*
- *Harvest Group (new partner) – Steve Blair, Director of People and Culture*
- *i2i Labs (new partner) – Bryce Paden, Co-Founder*
- *iberia Bank (new partner) – Keaton Smith, Vice President*
- *JB Hunt – Monty Morton, Director of Training and Development*
- *Lincoln High School (new partner) – Courtney Jones, Principal*
- *Lofty Labs (new partner) – Casey Kinsey, Chief Executive Officer*

- *RevUnit – Michael Paladino, Chief Technology Officer*
- *Saatchi & Saatchi X – Jessica Hill, Talent Director*
- *Startup Junkie – Jeff Amerine, Founding Principal*
- *Tata Consultancy Services – Ram Ramasubramanian, Head, Strategic Accounts*
- *TekSystems (new partner) – Linda Gault, Network Infrastructure Recruiter*
- *Walmart – Rida Moustafa, Enterprise Decision Scientist*
- *Bentonville Public Schools – Teresa Hudson, Ignite Program Director*
- *Springdale Public Schools – Kelley Williamson, IT Academy Lead*
- *Northwest Arkansas Community College – Christine Davis, Dean, Business and Computer Information Systems*
- *Northwest Arkansas Council – Mike Harvey, Chief Operating Officer*
- *Northwest Technical Institute – Stephanie Trolinger, Secondary Center Director*
- *Rogers Public Schools (new partner) – Andy Mayes, Director of Technology*
- *Supply Pike (new partner) – Kyle Rogers, Director of Engineering*
- *VML (formerly Rockfish) – Blake Hannan, Associate Director, Talent Acquisition*
- WhyteSpyder (new partner) – Roger Dickey, Director of Development

Meetings

Meeting are held on a quarterly basis and attended by the Steering Committee members, including all educational partners, industry partners, and the University of Arkansas. Guests or speakers may be permitted and often encouraged to attend based on the meeting agenda.

The dates and locations of the meetings are organized by the Assistant Director who manages email communications with program partners. Staff and attendees are notified at least one month in advance of upcoming meetings and provided with a preview of the agenda.

All committee members are required to attend the quarterly meetings. It is recognized that it may be difficult for all members to attend every meeting, so it is suggested that if a committee member cannot attend, they send representatives from their organizations.

The meetings provide ongoing discussion of IT programming and training with the opportunity to identify current needs to move programming forward, collaborate on projects, update committee members on the status of programming, and any other determined needs.

Meetings also include a report of the previous quarter's performance, potential risks, any changes that have occurred in the program, and a forecast of anticipated deliverables and outcomes. The Global Campus provides an update on career and educational placement. Meetings will also be a time for partners to address questions and provide feedback in a setting where all members of the committee and their guests can contribute to the conversation.

Accountability

The University of Arkansas Global Campus will continue to be accountable to the ADHE grant guidelines and outcomes identified. The Global Campus is also accountable to IT partners, employers, institutions of higher education, K12 schools, the local workforce board, students, staff and instructors. The Global Campus already has systems in place for internal and ongoing oversight of any program. By tracking students from start to finish and establishing a reporting structure, the Global Campus will be able to identify progress and areas for improvement. This document will provide

general rules, guidelines, and policies for how programs will be continued during the continuation grant cycle.

Pathways Articulation and Support

The IT Readiness Program offers both career and educational pathways through completion of an entry-level certificate. These pathways allow students to have flexibility since program participants have varying levels of experience and education. The program has aimed to target various demographics and will continue to pursue a diverse group of individuals.

Career Pathways

The IT partner companies identified several entry-level paths that IT Readiness graduates are prepared for and can pursue as a career. These career pathways, which were identified during the implementation cycle continue to be attainable for program graduates, illustrate a wide variety of options within each entry-level certificate track. Links have been provided to highlight salary information and local job descriptions.

Java Development Certificate Program

- Java Developer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern
- Java Engineer

Java Developer Salaries
The average salary for a java developer is estimated at $70,172/year.
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Junior-Java-Developer-Salaries

Java Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/q-java-developer-l-Bentonville,-AR-jobs.html

Front-End Web Development Certificate Program

- Web Developer
- Web Engineer
- Front-End Engineer
- Front-End Developer
- UI Developer
- UI Engineer
- JavaScript Developer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern
- Digital Client Specialist

Front-End Developer Salaries in Northwest Arkansas
The average salary for a front-end developer in Northwest Arkansas is estimated at $73,671/year.
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Front-End-Developer-Salaries,-Bentonville-AR

Front-End Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/q-front-end-developer-l-Bentonville,-AR-jobs.html

Back-End Web Development Certificate Program

- NodeJS Developer
- NodeJS Engineer
- Web Developer
- Web Engineer
- Software Engineer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern

Back-End Developer Salaries
The average salary for a back-end developer is estimated at $118,007/year.
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Back-End-Developer-Salaries

Back-End Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=back-end+developer&l=Bentonville,+AR

Mobile Development Certificate Program

- Mobile Developer
- Mobile Engineer
- Software Developer
- Developer
- Developer Apprentice
- Developer Intern

Mobile Developer Salaries in Arkansas
The average salary for a mobile developer in Arkansas is $73,447/year
https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Mobile-Developer-Salaries,-Arkansas

Mobile Developer Jobs in Northwest Arkansas
https://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=mobile+developer&l=Bentonville,+AR&ts=1524597916238&rq=1

Educational Pathways

The IT Readiness program presents an option for students who are pursuing academic opportunities beyond high school. The Global Campus sought partnerships with local high schools to develop an introductory version of the IT Readiness entry-level certificate programs. The Global Campus formed a three-way partnership with Lincoln High School and Rockfish Digital (VML) to implement technology education into the computer science curriculum at Lincoln High School to provide an educational

pathway to the IT Readiness Program. Students who complete the technology education class are fully prepared to enroll in one of the IT Readiness entry-level web development courses.

Local high schools and technical schools have assisted in referring students from their programs to the IT Readiness Program. Representatives from the Global Campus have attended classes and recruiting events at Springdale High School and Northwest Technical Institute (NTI) in Springdale to provide information to students seeking careers in technology.

Targeted Demographics

The targeted demographics for the IT Readiness program will be comprised of a diverse set. From high school graduates to full-time professionals, the program is designed to reach individuals from many backgrounds who share the common goal of working in technology. The Global Campus will continue to target a wide range of individuals and remain focused on specific subsets including graduating high school students, unemployed or underemployed job-seekers, and career changers.

High schools in the Northwest Arkansas area have recently become heavily invested in IT programs and courses so that students who want to focus on a specific IT career path can be better prepared for the workforce or higher education. The IGNITE program at Bentonville High School, for example, offers high school juniors and seniors interested in technology the opportunity to learn first-hand about various IT sectors. It is a program comprised of students who are highly interested in IT careers and well-prepared to enter a program like IT Readiness. The Global Campus attends IGNITE advisory meetings to continue build awareness of the IT Readiness program as an option for IGNITE IT graduates. Springdale High School and Rogers Public Schools also have programs and curriculum that serve their students who are interested in IT Careers. The Global Campus will continue to work with these institutions to build awareness of IT Readiness for graduating high school students.

The established partnership with Northwest Technical Institute (NTI) in Springdale, AR opens the door for identifying students from their programs who have completed adult education programs. Students in the NTI adult education programs come from a variety of backgrounds: 21% of participants are unemployed job-seekers upon entering the program, while 14% are not in the labor force; 83% of NTI's students do not hold a high school diploma and are therefore likely to be looking for a credential that will help them advance in the job market. The majority of NTI adult education participants (60%) falls within the age range of 25-44. The Global Campus will continue to work with NTI to promote IT Readiness as a viable option for graduates from their adult education program.

The unemployed and underemployed populations of Northwest Arkansas are a major focus of the Global Campus for recruiting individuals into the IT Readiness program. From the entry-level certificates to advanced skills workshops, these demographics will benefit from a program like IT Readiness because it offers intense, in-demand training that can quickly ignite one's career or propel it to a higher level.

Efforts will continue to be focused on the same targeted demographics with emphasis on growing overall program enrollment. An application process is currently underway for the IT Readiness Program to be included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) published by the Local Workforce Development Board. Inclusion on the list would allow the Global Campus to reach more individuals among the targeted demographics, specifically unemployed job seekers without a degree. Those individuals can access the ETPL and gain information about programs like IT Readiness that offer training for in-demand careers.

The Global Campus has also employed a marketing budget within the existing communications department. This budget has allowed for the production and distribution of promotional materials, conference and trade show attendance, advertising, print media, and website development. The marketing efforts have created and established opportunities for IT Readiness to reach the targeted demographics and will continue to be critical for the future success of the program. These efforts will continue to operate in the same manner so that IT Readiness can be sustained beyond the grant cycle. Professional development opportunities for IT Readiness staff will also continue to be essential for sustaining and growing the program and will remain funded by the marketing and travel budget. Below are examples of the marketing materials created by the Global Campus communications team.

IT Readiness Certificate Programs

CERTIFICATES OFFERED

> Back-End Development

> Front-End Development

> Java Development

> Mobile Development

LEARN MORE
training.uark.edu/it-readiness

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS | Global Campus

IT Readiness Certificate Programs

ABOUT IT READINESS

Learn real job skills in an intense, accelerated environment. We have partnered with local businesses and schools to create a curriculum that prepares students for IT jobs. From application to completion, we are here to advise our students every step of the way and make them aware of both educational and career pathways.

> Part-time, six-month program
> 2 nights per week, and every other Saturday
> 14 students per certificate cohort

Upon the completion of any IT Readiness certificate program, students will be prepared for:
> Entry into the workforce
> Exams for industry certification
> Continued education at NWACC or U of A

LOCATION
Global Campus Rogers
3300 Market St, Suite 402
Rogers, AR 72758

CONTACT
Mark Berkowick
mcberkow@uark.edu
479-464-5024

09/2017

LEARN MORE
training.uark.edu/it-readiness

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS | Global Campus

User Experience (UX) Workshop

Advance your career by learning tech skills to enhance user experience for websites and applications. This five-day workshop delivers immersive training that you can apply immediately to improve the end-user's experience.

Earn UX Certification from the Nielsen Norman Group by completing all five days of the workshop. Nielsen Norman Group will send emails to completers with links to access certification exams online at a discounted rate (total $250, a savings of $150). Earning a UX certificate validates your expertise to colleagues, clients, managers and job interviewers.

October 26, 27
November 8, 9 & 10, 2017

Workshop Location
Global Campus Rogers

Arkansas residents	Out-of-state residents
$1,599	$2,099

Offered in partnership with

N N/g
Nielsen Norman Group

BENEFITS & OUTCOMES

* Access to industry-leading resources and UX professionals
* Help your company build better, user-centric products that impact the bottom-line
* Earn NN/g UX certification by completing all five courses and passing an exam for each course
* Career pathways - foundation for transitioning into UX as a career within your organization or with another company
* Educational pathways - the five courses from this UX workshop will count towards the 15-course requirement for the UX Master Certification (UXMC).

Tara Dryer, Director of Training, Corporate Development & Academic Outreach
tdryer@uark.edu, 479-464-5024

Mark Berkowick, Assistant Director of Workforce Readiness
mcberkow@uark.edu, 479-464-5024

AGENDA

October 26
UX Basic Training

October 27
User Interface Principles Every Designer Must Know

November 8
Generating Big Ideas with Design Thinking

November 9
Usability Testing

November 10
Lean UX & Agile

09/2017

OTHER ADVANCED WORKSHOPS

From Tech Expert to Tech Leader
December 5 & 6

Cyber Security
Feb 19-23

LEARN MORE
training.uark.edu/it-readiness

UNIVERSITY OF **ARKANSAS** | Global Campus

Role of Equipment Request

The implementation grant provided the technology and equipment necessary to deliver an excellent classroom experience for students and instructors. The Global Campus will continue to utilize all three labs for IT Readiness classes. In addition to the current set-up involving keyboards, mice, monitors, and laptop stands, it was communicated to Global Campus staff that the seating arrangements should be upgraded to provide an optimal ergonomic classroom experience that simulates a workplace setting typical for IT professionals.

Based on the criteria for updating the classroom seating arrangement, the following equipment need has been identified (based on the need identified in all three computer lab classrooms):

- Student Chairs: Steelcase Series 1 Office Chair x $409.00 x 42 = $17,178.00
- Instructor Chairs: Steelcase Series 1 Office Chair x $510.00 x 3 = $1,530.00

In addition to upgrading the classroom seating, a plan has been developed to install a testing center in the facility. This testing center will provide proper space and technology that allows for students and other professional certification seekers to test for credentials and certifications upon completion of classes or training. It will have the capacity to serve students in the IT Readiness program seeking technology related certifications to supplement their classroom education. It will also serve the local workforce by providing a local resource to acquire professional certifications that are required for employment or encourage for career advancement.

The testing center would provide access to hundreds of technology-related certifications. Some examples of industry-recognized certifications that the testing center would provide access to include the following areas:

- Android
- Apple
- C++
- Cybersecurity
- Dell
- IBM
- IOS
- Linux
- McAfee
- NetApp
- Oracle
- Python
- Symantec
- Teradata
- XML

The testing center will be fully equipped to meet the criteria necessary to be classified as a certified testing center recognized by nationally accredited computer-based testing agencies such as Pearson, Kryterion, ACT, and Prometric. Equipment will include authentication and proctoring software that allows our staff to authenticate test-takers and moderate exams via cameras that will be installed in the testing room. Lockers and security wands will also be purchased and utilized to prevent cheating.

The security wand ensures that all personal and prohibited items have been removed beforehand. Personal items of test-takers are stored in separate lockers during exams.

Based on the criteria set forth above, the following equipment needs have been identified:

- OFM Rize 1x1 Privacy Station with 3' Desk x $687.00 x 6 = $4,122.00
- HON Basyx Ergonomic Desk Chair x $134.65 x 6 = $807.90
- Hikvision DS-2CD2112F Network Camera x $145.63 x 6 = $873.78
- Dell OptiPlex Testing PC x $719.92 x 6 = $4,319.52
- Dell 22" Monitor x $179.39 x 6 = $1,076.34
- Blue Iris Camera Monitoring Software x $60.00 x 1 = $60.00

SECTION 3 – STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP **20 Points**

Proposals are required to address how the program plan incorporates each of the mandatory partners, as identified above, in a meaningful role.

Essential Components:

- Detailed description of role of each partner in continuation of the project- describe how each partner will continue to carry out components of the grant project; provide a description of assigned tasks for each of the mandatory partners; identify specific personnel and the roles they will play throughout the project; describe the integration of each role into the overall project; and describe the process for implementing fully articulated pathways from K-12 through a baccalaureate degree, as appropriate.

- Capabilities of each partner in ensuring project success- discuss the unique strengths of each partner in continuing the implemented project; describe how each partner is qualified to continue to participate in the project and how each partner strengthens the overall partnership.

- Consideration of all potential partners in the region – describe the process for identifying each selected partner, including the consideration of regional community colleges, universities, public schools, education service cooperatives, businesses and industries, career and technical education programs, multidistrict vocational centers, and private partnerships.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Strength of Partnership (20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Section 3 – Strength of Partnership

The IT Readiness partners play a vital role in the success of the program. Educational institutions and industry experts comprise a group that serves in both an advisory and advocacy role. The Global Campus aims to facilitate strategic partnerships in a manner that emphasizes a collaborative effort to provide quality training that meets industry standards and needs. Program partners provide the subject matter expertise that allows the global campus to deliver this training through the IT Readiness program.

Commitment letters from IT Readiness Program partners, the Northwest Arkansas Council, and the Local Workforce Development Board are included at the end of this grant application. New program partners that that joined the IT Readiness program during the implementation cycle have also provided commitment letters.

Business/Industry Partners JB Hunt, Walmart, Saatchi & Saatchi X, Rockfish (VML), Field Agent, Acxiom, Tata Consultancy Services, RevUnit, and Startup Junkie

New Business/Industry Partners DataScout, Esoterix Software, Harvest Group, iberia Bank, i2i Labs, Lofty Labs, Supply Pike, TekSystems, and WhyteSpyder.

Tasks assigned for the implementation cycle and how they will continue during the continuation cycle (new tasks have been added and are included below):

- Identify IT need
- Identify curriculum
- Facilitate instruction
- Assist with promotion of program
- Assist with identification of students
- Provide capstone projects
- Attend Demo Day when capstone projects are presented
- Assist with job placement
- Serve in an advisory capacity
- Identify immediate training needs (new task)
- Identify advanced training needs (new task)
- Identify new program partners (new task)
- Provide internship program (new task)
- Provide job info session during classes (new task)

The primary role of business partners will be identifying skills gaps and labor needs in Northwest Arkansas and contribution of course content and curriculum. Their valuable feedback and input continue to contribute to the success of the program as it has throughout the implementation cycle.

Personnel and roles:

- IT Subject Matter Experts - Identify training, content, and curriculum needed in various career paths, from entry-level skills for starting a career to advanced skills for career advancement.

- Human Resource and Recruitment Personnel - Help identify career pathways for IT Readiness certificate holders within their company or organization.

Articulated pathway: IT Readiness → Job placement or career advancement

After the User Experience (UX) Certification Training program concluded in the Fall of 2017, one of the IT Readiness partners reached out to share a success story about one of his colleagues who attended the class. The following is an excerpt from the email he shared (referring to his colleague):

"He was struggling to figure out how to break into the UX field when I met him. I encouraged him to take the Nielsen Norman Group class as a first step. Through that class, he made connections with folks at JB Hunt, and between those connections and his NNG certification, he was offered a job there! So, he's happily accepting the position. This to me is one of the purest forms of IT Readiness doing its thing...offering a career-changer the opportunity to make a move while helping to fill IT workforce gaps."

This story provides a great example of how IT Readiness created a pathway for an individual who sought job placement and career advancement. It demonstrates that the IT Readiness partners strongly support our efforts and are committed to the program.

Capabilities of Business partners to ensure project success

The business and industry partners for the IT readiness grant were initially chosen based on the following three main factors:

- A prior relationship with them was already formed.
- They have expertise in some form of IT.
- They have a need to hire trained individuals in IT.

These will continue to be the defining characteristics we look for in companies when seeking new partnerships. Each of the original partners has contributed a diverse set of IT skills and perspectives to the program. From large multi-national corporations to local companies that started up in Northwest Arkansas, this group will continue to grow and will continue to act as IT content area experts. Listed below are some of the IT strengths of each partner, including the strengths that each new business partner brings to the program:

- JB Hunt: programming, data analytics
- Walmart: cloud, cyber security, programming, data analytics
- Saatchi & Saatchi X: graphic design, web development
- Rockfish (VML): mobile app development, cloud, social media, analytics, web development and design, data visualization, big data, Agile
- Field Agent: mobile app development, big data, mobile research
- Acxiom: big data, cloud, server, mainframe, network, security
- Tata Consultancy Services: digital enterprise, IT infrastructure, mobile application development, management, security services, end user computing, big data, analytics, social media, cloud
- RevUnit: mobile and web development, user interface, user testing
- Startup Junkie: innovation, IT entrepreneurship, social media
- WhyteSpyder (new partner): eCommerce

- Harvest Group (new partner): data analytics
- i2i Labs (new partner): industry innovation
- Lofty Labs (new partner): software product development, cloud, web development, AWS consulting, DevOps
- iberia Bank (new partner): finance, security
- DataScout (new partner): data analytics
- Supply Pike (new partner): supply chain analytics
- TekSystems (new partner): IT staffing, management, and services
- Esoterix Software (new partner): IT services

Business and industry partners that have attended or helped facilitate upskill (advanced) training workshops:

- Harvest Group
- JB Hunt
- RevUnit
- Rockfish (VML)
- Walmart
- WhyteSpyder

Business and industry partners whose employees have led instruction for the entry-level certificate courses:

- JB Hunt
- RevUnit
- Rockfish (VML)
- Walmart
- Esoterix

Business and industry partners that have hired IT Readiness graduates as full-time developers:

- JB Hunt
- Walmart (via third party contracting firm)
- Metova
- RevUnit
- WhyteSpyder

The IT Readiness graduate who was hired at RevUnit was featured in a news release that ran in August 2017. This former student provides a great example of the career changer, someone who joined IT Readiness to pursue a new career, and his case, his passion. Here is his story:

NEWS

Thursday, May 03, 2018

IT Readiness Enables Lawyer to Switch Careers, Find Joy in Creating Software

Aug. 21, 2017

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – For the first time in many years, Stephen Robideaux looks forward to going to work every day.

Robideaux had grown weary as a contract lawyer, spending his workdays defending or dismantling legal documents, he said. He wanted to build something creative that would help others, and this desire drove him to his new career.

Robideaux is now a junior developer at RevUnit, thanks in part to the skills gained and connections made while enrolled in the IT Readiness Certificate Program offered by the U of A Global Campus in Rogers.

Photo by Kay Murphy

Stephen Robideaux is content to start his new career as a junior software developer at RevUnit in Bentonville.

The IT Readiness program helped him turn his technology hobby into a new career. Robideaux was one of the first 20 people to earn certificates from the program, which launched in Fall 2016.

"I expected more than a night class, and this certainly delivered a lot more," Robideaux said. "It's not just challenging; it's transformative. If you are analytical and have the time to put into it … you will be job-ready."

RevUnit in Bentonville develops innovative digital products for mobile, web and social platforms. Robideaux and his teammates create enterprise-grade software applications that help others work smarter.

The IT Readiness program, funded by a state grant, offers classes at night and on weekends to teach entry-level coding skills that are in demand by employers in Northwest Arkansas. The six-month program teaches back-end, front-end, Java and mobile development. Seating is limited to 14 people per path.

RevUnit is one of more than a dozen industry and educational partners working with the Global Campus to identify industry technology needs, establish course curriculum to meet those needs, and help supply skilled professionals to teach classes.

"We participate in a number of educational activities," said Michael Paladino, co-founder and chief technology officer at RevUnit. "We see the workforce gap in technology."

Brenna Blackwell and Blake Johnson, RevUnit software developers, taught Robideaux's classes in the IT Readiness program.

"We noticed [Robideaux] was very motivated and determined," Blackwell said. "We recommended him for an interview."

Then it was up to Robideaux to prove to others during the interview process that he was competent and shared the same workplace culture and values. Just before Robideaux completed the IT Readiness program, RevUnit hired him.

"He's doing a great job," Paladino said. "He was just about as prepared as anyone. As an employer, I've been really pleased to have an employee step into the company and be immediately impactful."

New students are now enrolled in the Fall 2017 session of the IT Readiness program. Those who want to enroll for Spring 2018 can apply online.

"From what I have seen from the IT Readiness Program, it has been highly responsive to the industry," Paladino said. "I know the curriculum. I know the type of learning [students] are getting. I know the quality of the instructors. These are all professionals in the industry."

The in-state cost – $799 per Arkansas participant – is subsidized through an $851,062 Regional Implementation Grant from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Out-of-state participants pay $1,299.

"It was really an investment I felt comfortable in making," Robideaux said. "I made a great decision."

IT Readiness partners include Acxiom, Bentonville Public Schools, CaseStack, Collective Bias, Field Agent, J.B. Hunt, Metova Inc., NorthWest Arkansas Community College, Northwest Arkansas Council, Northwest Technical Institute, RevUnit, Rockfish Digital, Saatchi & Saatchi X, Springdale Public Schools, Startup Junkie Consulting, Tata Consultancy Services and Walmart Stores Inc.

This program is one of many professional and workforce development programs offered by the Global Campus in Rogers to provide people in the region with the workforce skills and certifications needed to enter the workforce or to change or advance their careers.

The entire group of industry partners will continue to come together to form a dynamic group with IT expertise from all backgrounds. Bringing this group together has created the environment to deliver exciting and high-quality programming for the area. The environment is inclusive and attracts additional partners who want to be part of a community that supports the workforce of a dynamic region like Northwest Arkansas.

Educational Partners University of Arkansas Global Campus, Northwest Arkansas Community College, Northwest Technical Institute, Bentonville Public Schools, and Springdale High School.

New Educational Partners Rogers Public Schools and Lincoln High School.

University Partner – University of Arkansas Global Campus

Tasks assigned and how they will be implemented (carried out) in project:

- Finds partners and strategic alliances
- Develops and grows certificate programs
- Manages finances
- Hires instructors and grant positions
- Provides promotional materials and publicity
- Communicates internally and externally
- Recruits students
- Establishes policies and procedures
- Advises students
- Provides facilities for programming
- Provides IT support
- Provides office and administrative support
- Determines pricing
- Manages overall grant functions
- Assists with placing of students in educational and career pathways
- Identifies needed memberships and affiliations
- Reports collected data
- Establishes criteria for prospective students
- Oversees contracted services
- Distributes certificates
- Oversees day-to-day operations
- Provides essential support and advising services to students

The University of Arkansas will continue to oversee the overall management of the IT Readiness program. Within the University, the School of Continuing Education and Academic Outreach, also known as the Global Campus, is recognized as a leader in non-credit program development. The IT Readiness Program utilizes the experience of the Global Campus to expand course offerings and offer additional workforce training. Furthermore, the university is backed by a legacy of research and scholarship and provides another avenue of pathways to baccalaureate and graduate degrees.

Personnel and roles:

- Director of Training, Corporate Development and Academic Outreach - General oversight of grant functions. Ensures alignment of grant activities with ADHE guidelines.
- Assistant Director - Oversees management of grant activities and tasks listed above.
- Academic and Career Advisor - Provides essential support services which link to resources that assist students in progressing along the identified pathways, including advising on academic, employment, financial, and personal issues. Assists Director and Assistant Director with grant-related tasks on an as-needed basis.
- IT Department - Provides essential IT support, troubleshooting, and maintenance.

- Accounting/HR Department - Oversees grant financials and hiring processes
- Communications Department - Oversees marketing and promotion of the IT Readiness Program.
- Support Staff - Assist with administrative tasks and day-to-day activities.

Integration of university role in project:

The University of Arkansas will maintain sight and scope of the overall project and manage all aspects of programming. The university is also an educational pathway to credit programs within the University of Arkansas. Upon completion of a certificate program, students will have the opportunity to apply to the University of Arkansas. Students that meet admissions requirements will receive credit for passing the Workplace Competencies course (WCOB 2063) with a score of 80% or higher on the final exam.

Articulated Pathway: IT Readiness → Bachelor's Degree

K-12 School Partners – Bentonville Public Schools, Rogers Public Schools, Springdale High School, and Lincoln High School

Tasks assigned and how they will be implemented throughout project:

- Educate high school students on IT Readiness option after graduation
- Assist with program planning and career and educational pathways
- Provide foundational IT knowledge in Computer Science and technology classes
- Invite IT Readiness staff to events and technology classes to speak to students
- Serve in an advisory capacity
- Identify potential students

K-12 School Partners will be an advocate for students looking for alternative educational or career options in technology after high school graduation.

Personnel and roles:

- Counselors – Assist students with post-secondary career and educational direction, including IT Readiness as an option for career and educational pathways
- Computer Science and Business Teachers – Identify potential students, provide foundational knowledge of IT related subjects, and explain post-secondary educational and career options, including IT Readiness.

Integration of K-12 role in project:

Overall, high schools will provide a base of knowledge for students seeking higher education or employment upon graduation. Bentonville High School has established a career pathway program called IGNITE (formerly the CAPS program). This program is designed to give students professional skills and soft skills that combine to provide real, relevant learning experiences that will help them advance in career paths. The IT component of IGNITE gives juniors and seniors the opportunity to learn basic IT skills and focus on specific areas of interests, such as coding. Students then participate in an unpaid IT internship in the local community. This program will direct students to the IT Readiness Program.

Springdale High School has an Information Technology (IT) Academy that prepares students for business and information technology careers. Like the Ignite Program, students can focus on specific areas of interest, such as web development, and learn skills that provide a foundation for entering the IT Readiness program.

The Global Campus formed a three-way partnership with Lincoln High School and IT Readiness partner VML (formerly Rockfish) to create and deliver a technology education program for students enrolled in computer science classes. The technology education program was designed as an introductory version of the IT Readiness Program that provides students with the unique experience of learning from IT industry experts. The Lincoln High School technology education program was featured was featured in a news release that ran in August 2017.

Articulated Pathways: Graduated from High School → IT Readiness Program → Higher Education/Industry Certification/Enter workforce

Community College (Northwest Arkansas Community College)

Tasks assigned and how they will be implemented throughout project:

- Identifies educational pathways for students completing the IT Readiness Program
- Awards credit hours towards A. A. S. Degree in Computer Information Systems at NWACC

Personnel and roles:

- Dean, Business and Computer Information Systems - Identifies educational pathways for students completing the IT Readiness Program and articulates agreement with Global Campus.
- Academic Advisor/Internship Coordinator, Business and Computer Information Systems – Assist students with NWACC application and transfer process upon completion of IT Readiness certificate.

Articulated pathway: IT Readiness → Associate of Applied Science degree in Computer Information Systems

Technical Institute (Northwest Technical Institute)

Tasks assigned and how they will be implemented throughout project:

- Identifies potential adult education students for IT Readiness Program
- Creates an educational pathway from adult education programs to the IT Readiness Program

Personnel and roles:

- Director of Adult Education – Identifies potential adult education students for IT Readiness Program and articulates agreement with Global Campus.
- Secondary Career Center Director – Assists in identifying potential adult education students for IT Readiness Program.

Articulated Pathways: NTI Adult Education Programs → IT Readiness Program → Higher education, Industry-recognized credentials, or placement in workforce

Capabilities of educational partners to ensure project success

Northwest Arkansas Community College: creates educational pathways from the IT Readiness Program to Certificates of Proficiency, Technical Certificates, or A.A.S. degree

Northwest Technical Institute: creates educational pathways from NTI Adult Education Programs to the IT Readiness Program

University of Arkansas: creates educational pathways from the IT Readiness Program to Bachelor's degrees

K-12 Public Schools: Create educational pathways from high school graduation to the IT Readiness Program

Partnerships with educational institutions create the opportunities to present the IT Readiness Program as a viable option for students at various levels of education. Educational partners interact with students at different points in their educational careers, which provides the IT Readiness Program with a diverse student body made up of individuals from a wide variety of educational backgrounds. By completing one certificate program, students will have multiple options to receive credit towards other pathways in higher education.

Identification of partners:

The IT Readiness Program is designed to serve students in various stages of their professional and academic careers. While initial partners were identified based on industry expertise and previously established working relationships, the Global Campus will continue to grow partnerships among various companies, organizations, universities, colleges, career and technical programs, and other members of the Northwest Arkansas community with vested interest in the local economy and workforce. It is the goal of the IT Readiness Program to create a brand in the Northwest Arkansas region by meeting IT workforce needs. The IT Readiness Program seeks partnership and input from many diverse organizations and will continue to create new partnerships throughout the duration of the program.

SECTION 4 – BUDGET PLAN   **15 Points**

Proposals will include a detailed financial plan that maximizes efficient use of existing resources and a completed budget template.

Essential Components:

- Clear alignment between funding request and grant activities- detailed discussion of how each component of the grant budget supports the goals and stated outcomes of the program.
- Institutions may request up to $1 million over two years that will provide resources to continue approved Phase 2 projects.
- Local match of at least 10% of the total request, with a maximum cap of $50,000- all proposals will include a plan for local funding to match 10% of the total grant proposal. For example, a grant requesting $400,000 in funding would be required to provide $40,000 in matching funds. However, the local match is capped at $50,000, meaning grants in excess of $500,000 will have the same match as a $500,000 project.

Note: With a submitted written commitment and payment guarantee from an industry partner, internship wages paid during the initial twenty-four (24) months of this program may be used to offset the local match amount on a dollar-to-dollar basis. Additionally, wages paid to incumbent workers of the employer while enrolled in academic training may be deducted from the match as well. Any entity wishing to utilize this method of funding the match must include the appropriate documentation with their proposal and, if selected for funding, will be monitored to ensure compliance.

Keep the following rubric in mind when completing this section:

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Budget Plan (15 Pts)	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13-15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10-12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7-9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)

Section 4.1 – Budget Plan Detail
Please provide your detailed financial plan in the box below.

Section 4 – Budget Plan

The budget plan for the continuation grant cycle of the IT Readiness Program has been developed to maintain efficiency for each component of the program. Each staff member, activity, and all equipment that the continuation budget provides for will ensure that students in the IT Readiness Program leave fully prepared to pursue their chosen pathway.

Alignment between funding request and grant activities

Personnel/Salaries

During the implementation phase of the IT Readiness Program, an Assistant Director of IT Readiness Programs was hired to fulfill responsibilities for delivery of the program obligations, under the direction of the current Director of Training, Corporate Development and Academic Outreach.

Responsibilities of the Assistant Director during the implementation cycle and going forward into the continuation cycle include:

- Plan the delivery of the overall program and its activities in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the grant proposal and governing body.
- Develop initiatives supporting the strategic direction of the IT Readiness Program proposal.
- Develop a program evaluation framework to assess the strengths of the program and identify areas needing improvement.
- Engage program partners and activities for ensuring fulfillment of program success
- Send reports to ADHE.
- Screen students for admittance.

The Assistant Director of IT Readiness Programs will be paid $52,658 per year. The University's cost-of-living adjustment is based on an average of 2% per year, meaning the employee would be paid $53,711 in their second year of employment. The University of Arkansas' institutional rate for benefits is 28.73%, bringing the two-year total budget for this position to $136,929.

The Academic and Career Advisor was hired during the implementation cycle and will continue to support the Assistant Director and advise students on academic, employment, financial, and personal issues. They will also continue to support students with their applications and admittance to the program and continue to support other needs of the Assistant Director. The Academic and Career Advisor will be paid $35,788 per year. The University's cost-of-living adjustment is based on an average of 2% per year, meaning the employee would be paid $36,503 in their second year of employment The University of Arkansas' institutional rate for benefits is 28.73%, bringing the 2-year total budget for this position to $93,060.

In addition to the main staff of the IT Readiness Program, an hourly position was created during the implementation cycle to assist with general needs of the program. The main responsibility of this person is to be present at the Global Campus facility on nights and weekends when the program is running. This is currently outside of the scope of Global Campus hours, so additional support beyond current Global Campus staff will continue to be necessary. This person will be paid $10,000 per year,

or $20,000 over two years. The fringe rate for hourly employees is 5.97%, or $1,194 over the course of two years, bringing the total cost for this position to $21,194.

The IT Readiness Program will continue to pay instructors $100 per hour, which is a standard IT consultant fee and the same pay rate for instructors during the implementation cycle. Each certificate program includes approximately 288 hours of instruction, bringing instruction fees to $28,800 per certificate. In total, to run 12 certificate programs in this grant cycle, instruction costs will be $345,600. The 5.97% fringe rate also applies to hourly instructors, which brings the total instructional cost with fringes to $366,232.

Travel

The travel budget during the implementation cycle supported a variety of program functions. It will continue to cover a wide variety of costs associated with program functions during the continuation cycle. These include employee costs associated with meeting expenses and mileage reimbursements. This budget will also continue to be used to cover employee travel to other coding schools and academies that are both for-profit and not-for-profit. Travel includes airfare, hotel, transportation, parking fees, and meals. Travel may also include professional development opportunities such as conferences or conventions, training events, or workshops relating to non-credit or IT programming. The travel budget may be used to cover expenses for any personnel related to the IT Readiness Program, or to cover costs for guest lecturers or speakers who may be invited to the IT Readiness Program. To cover these expenses, the IT Readiness Program will allot $20,000 over the course of two years.

Equipment

The Global Campus will continue to utilize all three labs for IT Readiness classes. The current set-up involving keyboards, mice, monitors, and laptop stands is highly efficient for individuals who are using their computers and laptops for many hours each day. It was communicated to Global Campus staff that the seating arrangements should be updated to provide an optimal ergonomic classroom experience.

Based on the criteria for updating the classroom seating arrangement, the following equipment need has been identified (based on the need identified in all three computer lab classrooms):

- Student Chairs: Steelcase Series 1 Office Chair x $409.00 x 42 = $17,178.00
- Instructor Chairs: Steelcase Series 1 Office Chair x $510.00 x 3 = $1,530.00

While the IT Readiness Program will invest in equipment, all course-work can be completed using free, open-source software. By saving costs associated with software, the IT Readiness Program will continue to redirect funds to invest in high-quality equipment that provides students with the best resources available.

In addition to the existing labs, a plan has been developed to install a testing center in the facility. This testing center will provide proper space and technology that allows for students and other professional certification seekers to test for credentials and certifications upon completion of IT classes or training.

The testing center will be fully equipped to meet the criteria necessary to be classified as a certified testing center recognized by nationally accredited computer-based testing agencies such as Pearson, Kryterion, ACT, and Prometric. Equipment will include authentication and proctoring software that allows our staff to authenticate test-takers and moderate exams via cameras that will be installed in the testing room. Lockers and security wands will also be purchased and utilized to prevent cheating. The security wand ensures that all personal and prohibited items have been removed beforehand. Personal items of test-takers are stored in separate lockers during exams.

Based on the criteria set forth above, the following equipment needs have been identified:

- OFM Rize 1x1 Privacy Station with 3' Desk x $687.00 x 6 = $4,122.00
- HON Basyx Ergonomic Desk Chair x $134.65 x 6 = $807.90
- Hikvision DS-2CD2112F Network Camera x $145.63 x 6 = $873.78
- Dell OptiPlex Testing PC x $719.92 x 6 = $4,319.52
- Dell 22" Monitor x $179.39 x 6 = $1,076.34
- Blue Iris Camera Monitoring Software x $60.00 x 1 = $60.00

Consulting Fees

The IT Readiness Program will continue to work with industry experts to ensure that curriculum remains current and local workforce needs are met. Consultants will maintain and update existing curriculum as needed. They will also help identify opportunities for new certificate programs within the IT sector. Course development may include anything involved with course design, development, and delivery. For these services, the IT Readiness Program will allot $50,000 over the course of two years.

Upskill/Advanced Training
The Global Campus has utilized the network of IT Readiness partners to identify areas of need for upskill (advanced) training. These workshops were created to serve IT professionals who seek advanced training to accelerate their careers. Costs associated with providing these workshops include professional consultation with content experts and instructors and bringing them to the Global Campus to conduct on-site training. These workshops address immediate needs for training in the Northwest Arkansas area, as identified by the network of partners, and provide a major benefit to the local workforce. The Global Campus will continue to communicate with the partners to update and add new advanced skills workshops, as the workforce needs dictate. To continue running these workshops, the IT Readiness Program will allot $150,000 over the course of two years.

Marketing

The marketing budget will continue to be used for purchasing of advertising, both in print (brochures, fliers, postcards, postage fees) and online (social media ads), booth fees at trade shows, conventions, conferences, and career fairs, and to host open houses or informational sessions where potential students can learn more about the IT Readiness Program. Other efforts include traditional radio advertisements and targeted internet marketing. To continue producing high-quality marketing that reaches as many potential students as possible, the IT Readiness Program will budget $30,000 over the course of two years.

Other

Students who elect to proceed with an educational pathway to the University of Arkansas will be required to take a credit-by-exam test to gain credit for Workplace Competencies (WCOB 2063). Since students will continue to have various career or educational pathways to choose from, an estimated 10 students will take this exam. Each exam costs $50, making the exam fee budget $500. Students applying to the University of Arkansas are required to pay an application fee of $40. Based on 10 students applying to the University of Arkansas, the budget for application fees will be $400. The Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) application fee is $20. It is estimated that approximately 20 students will continue from the IT Readiness Program to NWACC. There are also other fees such as placement testing fees and transcript fees where applicable. Therefore, the total budget for fees associated with application to NWACC will be $1,000. The availability of these funds for students to use will lower the barriers that students encounter when applying to college. Covering the costs of these fees for students who have completed the IT Readiness Program will continue to provide incentive for them to take advantage of available educational pathways.

Each student that is admitted to the IT Readiness Program is required to take the online pre-requisite course, Introduction to CSS3 and HTML5. This course prepares students for the entry-level certificate programs by teaching a foundational set of skills in coding. Access to the pre-req requires an enrollment fee of $115 per student. The estimated overall cost for enrollment fees is $13,800.

Each student in the IT Readiness Program will continue to be required to take the non-credit Workplace Competencies class online, which focuses on soft skills training. Access to this class requires a fee of $40 per student. For 144 students, the cost will be $5,760.

The IT Readiness Program conducts recurring meetings and special events throughout the year. These include quarterly partners meetings, demo day, student orientation, and open house events with the associated costs of catering and supplies. The IT Readiness Program will allot $5,000 over the course of two years for these meetings and events.

Local match

The University of Arkansas will continue to take responsibility for the 10% or $50,000 which constitutes the local match. The Global Campus will exceed the $50,000 requirement by continuing to provide the following at no cost to the ADHE Workforce Grant:

- Director of Training, Corporate Development and Academic Outreach (Tara Dryer, Ed.D.) time spent on grant functions: approximately 5% of salary over two years, or $7,875.
- Fringe at the University of Arkansas institutional rate of 28.73%, or $2,260 over two years.
- Space rental: The Global Campus currently rents out space in their facility for a standard rate of $225 per room per day. The rest of the local match amount, or $39,865 will be met by using this space.

The following supporting document details room rental fees at the Global Campus:

Rental Space	Occupancy	Rate
Computer Lab 405	Max 14	$599/day
Computer Lab 410	Max 14	$599/day
Classroom 418	Max 30	$75/hour or $225/day
Classroom 419	Max 36	$75/hour or $225/day
Classroom 418/419	Max 75	$133/hour or $399/day
Classroom 421	Max 16	$599/day
Classroom 423	Max 24	$75/hour or $225/day

*Customers will incur a $40/hour 'after hours fee' for events before 8:00am or after 5:00pm

*Additional $20 fee for theater seating of chairs only or conference phone

Section 4.2 – Budget Plan Template

Please complete the budget template below. Totals will calculate automatically based on your input. Institutions may request up to $1 million in grant funding for Phase 3 Projects.

Requesting Institution:	University of Arkansas (Fayetteville)
Title of Project:	IT Readiness Program

A. PROGRAM LEADERSHIP SUPPORT COSTS

1. Personnel/Stipend	$617,415.22
2. Travel	$20,000.00
3. Other (Explain Below)	$0.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
TOTAL PARTNER PARTICIPANT COSTS	$637,415.22

B. OTHER DIRECT COSTS

1. Equipment	$29,967.54
2. Materials and Supplies	$0.00
3. Publication Costs/Documentation/Dissemination	$0.00
4. Consultant Services and Upskills/Advanced Training	$200,000.00
5. Other (Explain Below)	$56,460.00
Briefly Explain Other Costs	
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS	$286,427.54

C. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (A & B) — $923,842.76

D. COST SHARING (Minimum 10% of C; up to $50,000) — $50,000.00

Total Continuation Grant Budget — $973,842.76

Other Notes

Other direct costs include the following:

$30,000 Marketing budget

$500 for credit-by-exam to cover fees for students wishing to gain credit for the Workplace Competencies class should they so choose to attend the University of Arkansas

$400 to cover application fees to the University of Arkansas

$13,800 to cover enrollment fees for the online pre-requisite course

$1,000 to cover fees associated with applying to and transferring credit to Northwest Arkansas Community College

$5,760 to cover the fees for access to the Workplace Competencies soft skills class

$5,000 to cover fees associated with meetings and special events

SECTION 5 - SUSTAINABILITY   **20 Points**

Proposals will include a commitment and detailed plan for sustaining grant activities beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation period. Equipment requests will clearly specify how purchased equipment will continue to be linked to addressing labor and workforce needs beyond the grant period.

Essential Components:

- Detailed plan for sustaining the program beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation grant funding period- describe how the work supported by this grant will continue beyond the grant period; outline the roles and funding sources of each partner after the grant period.

- Detailed plan for maintaining communication and sharing resources among all the program partners beyond the twenty-four (24) month funding period;

- Identify availability of long-term resources to maintain and/or repair any equipment requested.

- Describe plan for redistribution of equipment to meet additional workforce needs once the employer needs addressed by the proposal have been satisfied.

	Exemplary	**Superior**	**Adequate**	**Needs Improvement**
Sustainability (20 Pts)	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (15-17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant funding period. (11-14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0-10 Pts)

Please enter your answer in the box provided below. Feel free to include any necessary charts, graphs or tables.

Section 5 – Sustainability

The Global Campus will continue the IT Readiness Program beyond the continuation grant cycle by following through on a long-term plan. This plan is driven by the ability of the program to adapt to current workforce needs. With that considered, the Global Campus has structured the program and partnerships in a way that allows flexibility with program content. The long-term success of the program is the primary consideration in our decision-making process.

Detailed plan for sustaining the program beyond the twenty-four (24) month continuation grant funding period:

Throughout the implementation grant cycle, the Global Campus has maintained relationships and developed new partnerships with a diverse network of companies and organizations. Ongoing communication with partners will continue throughout the continuation cycle and beyond as the program expands and evolves. The long-term vision for IT readiness will involve additional training and programs that continue to address workforce needs. The growth of the IT Readiness partners network demonstrates that the Northwest Arkansas community is committed to the program initiatives and future opportunities.

As the program moves from the implementation cycle to the continuation cycle, a sustainability plan is critical to ensure proper allocation and reallocation of resources, in-demand training, and effective partnerships. The program equipment, which includes two Mac Labs and one PC Lab, is fully utilized by all four entry-level certificate programs throughout the year. Since these programs are scheduled during evening hours, the labs can be accessed during the day to ensure optimal usage for upskill courses. Additionally, the Labs have been used by the Bentonville High School IGNITE program for technology classes and other partners for various educational uses.

The implementation of the testing center will be another resource that provides the opportunity to by utilized beyond the continuation grant cycle. The testing center will allow students and other professional certification seekers to test for credentials and certifications upon completion of classes or training. It will also provide access to hundreds of technology-related certifications. The testing center will provide the long-term stability for programs by offering required certifications for working professionals or certifications that are in high demand.

During the implementation cycle, the Global Campus Communications Department and University of Arkansas media relations have led the marketing efforts for the IT Readiness program and will continue to lead and support these efforts going forward. The measures taken have included media updates, informational materials, promotional materials, digital marketing, advertising, social media marketing, and special events. The strategy going forward will continue to focus on increasing the visibility of the program.

The University of Arkansas Global Campus will continue to support and develop the IT Readiness Program to address workforce training needs, while addressing any transformational needs that arise. The program was designed to be flexible and to support innovation. This will continue to

allow the Global Campus to adapt to changing workforce needs by updating programs to include relevant topics and information.

The grant funding from the implementation grant allowed equipment to be purchased that will continue to provide an invaluable, long-term resource for the program. The associated program fees for program participants (tuition) provide the continuous income for future program needs, such as equipment upkeep, maintenance, and replacement.

The University of Arkansas has a strong track record of successful implementation of grant-funded community and economic programs. The Global Campus has an established network of partners and will continue efforts to develop new partnerships and create new programming options. While sponsor donations may be accepted, the anticipated income from the IT Readiness Program and support from the Global Campus and the University of Arkansas will provide the resources necessary to sustain the program in the case that grant funding has been exhausted.

The primary roles of partners are to identify skills gaps in the workforce and determine relevant content for IT Readiness Certificate Programs. After the grant funding has expired, it is anticipated that their roles will continue in an advisory capacity to include identifying curriculum and determining which programs help address the continuously evolving IT workforce needs. Bentonville Public Schools, one of the educational program partners, will continue their IGNITE program, which provides learning experiences for K-12 students interested in pursuing IT careers. The IGNITE program will serve as an entryway to the IT Readiness Program. Once completed, the IT Readiness program provides an educational or career pathway. Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) will award academic credit to individuals who successfully complete the program(s) and provide pathways to advanced certification or two-year college degrees.

Detailed plan for maintaining communication and sharing resources among all the program partners beyond the twenty-four (24) month funding period:

Throughout the implementation grant cycle, communication efforts with partners included quarterly meetings to provide updates and discuss curriculum, email updates to provide additional news and announcements, networking events to develop new partnerships and create connections for current IT Readiness students, and one-on-one meetings to discuss new partnerships and potential training needs. This communication structure will continue in the same manner during and after the continuation grant cycle. As the IT Readiness Program becomes integrated into the community, it will also present the opportunity to be part of a larger network within the University of Arkansas, as institutionalized services and resources available on a continual basis to the region. By continuing to offer these services and resources, current partnerships will be maintained, and new partnerships will be formed. Furthermore, the growing network of partners will have continuous, reliable access to professional development opportunities for their employees.

Availability of long-term resources:

As data from the NWA Council demonstrates, IT related careers have been ranked as one of the top five most in-demand careers in NWA over the past five years. This trend is expected to continue over the next ten years. The data also shows that IT jobs will pay an above-average salary compared to other jobs in the area. Receipt of the implementation grant allowed the Global Campus to create high-quality programming at a low cost for students and the workforce. Receipt of the continuation grant will allow the Global Campus to continue making a positive impact on NWA community.

The Global Campus staff provides a long-term resource for overseeing the management and coordination of the IT Readiness Program. Under the direction of the Project Director, the Assistant Director and Academic Advisor will maintain and develop the IT Readiness program with activities linked to local workforce needs. The staff provides the knowledge and experience of managing and developing workforce training programs like IT Readiness with no reduction in services at the end of the grant funding period.

The Global Campus was established to provide educational and enrichment opportunities to the Northwest Arkansas area in various forms including development opportunities or computer and technology training, certification programs and certification prep courses, and customized training. These objectives align with the goals of the IT Readiness program and will provide the long-term stability for guiding future training and initiatives of the IT Readiness Program.

The University of Arkansas Global Campus IT Department and the University of Arkansas Central IT Department will continue to provide a long-term resource for program equipment repair and maintenance. Both departments are fully equipped to provide any trouble-shooting, updates, and/or repair services that may be needed during the life of the equipment.

Finally, the Global Campus, also called the School of Continuing Education and Academic Outreach, continues to fully support the IT Readiness Program. The University of Arkansas Global Campus employees are dedicated to professional development and education initiatives within Northwest Arkansas and aim to serve the local workforce. Computer Training Network (CTN) courses are already offered by the Global Campus. Computer training is a long-established workforce need and the CTN has provided superior training in software application for many years, making IT Readiness and the Global Campus an excellent fit for building and sustaining an enhanced IT training program.

Plan for redistribution of equipment:

During the implementation grant cycle, all computer hardware and equipment has been updated and maintained as needed to allow for maximum usage for the IT Readiness program. These efforts will continue in the long-term, and if it becomes necessary in the future, the equipment could be repurposed for use in other workforce and computer training programs offered through the Global Campus. Once the equipment has depreciated and is no longer adequate for use, it will be disposed of in accordance with the University of Arkansas Surplus Policy (http://procurement.uark.edu/policy/surplus-policy.php).

SUBMIT BY JUNE 1, 2018

Email to ADHE.Workforce.Grant@adhe.edu

Applications will only be accepted for projects that were awarded an implementation grant.

CONTINUATION GRANT SCORING RUBRIC

Critical Elements	Exemplary	Superior	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Value
Program Need	Significantly addresses a top 3 workforce need in the region. (18–20 Pts)	Addresses in a more limited way a top 3 workforce need in the region. (15–17 Pts)	Addresses in a limited way a less critical workforce need in the region. (11-14 Pts)	Identified labor need is too narrow or not in a critical area. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Program Plan	Plan addresses all goals and core requirements and properly connects all activities to measurable outcomes that address workforce needs. (22–25 Pts)	Plan addresses most goals and requirements and substantially connects activities to measurable outcomes. (18–21 Pts)	Plan addresses many goals and requirements and connects some activities to measurable outcomes. (14–17 Pts)	Plan lacks significant requirements or connections of activities to measurable outcomes are not clear. (0–13 Pts)	25 Pts
Strength of Partnership	Plan includes broad representation and each partner has a defined role with identified critical contributions. (18–20 Pts)	Plan includes broad representation but partner roles are not clearly defined. (15–17 Pts)	Plan lacks one or two important partners or not all partners are critical to success of the plan. (11–14 Pts)	Partner participation is too narrow or some partners do not contribute meaningfully. (0–10 Pts)	20 Pts
Budget Plan	Plan identifies efficiencies that take full advantage of existing human and physical resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (13-15 Pts)	Plan includes significant efficiencies from existing resources and all requested resources clearly support the goals of the plan. (10-12 Pts)	Plan includes limited efficiencies from existing resources or includes some questionable resource requests. (7-9 Pts)	Budget includes limited or no existing resources from partners or includes requests deemed unnecessary. (0–6 Pts)	15 Pts
Sustainability	Identifies existing resources to continue the program with no reduction in services at the end of grant funding. period (18–20 Pts)	Identifies significant resources to continue the program with limited reduction in services at the end of grant funding. period (15-17 Pts)	Identifies limited resources to continue the program or proposes significant reduction in services at the end of grant. funding period (11-14 Pts)	New funding sources must be identified for continuation of program at the end of grant funding. (0-10 Pts)	20 Pts
				Total Points Possible	**100 Pts**

APPENDIX 1

Certificate Title
Java Development

Description
Students will learn how to program in the Java language. They will also learn object-oriented programming concepts that are applicable across languages. Finally, they will learn how to implement interfaces into their programs via the console or web services.

Goal
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to utilize an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) to create Java applications. These applications could use a console interface or web service interface. Students will also understand the role that developers play on an overall product team to prepare students for a transition into a work environment.

Objectives

Topic	Objective	Assessment Type
	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:	
Getting started		
Understanding Java stack	Describe the various elements of the Java stack.	M/C Quiz
IDE/Machine setup		
Machine configuration	Configure computer for Java development.	Visual verification
Overview of IDE options	Describe the pros and cons of the various Java IDEs.	M/C Quiz
Installation of Eclipse	Install Eclipse IDE.	Visual verification
Object-oriented programming		
Classes	Describe the role of a class in object-oriented programming.	M/C Quiz
Instances	Define "instance" as it relates to object-oriented programming.	M/C Quiz

Inheritance	Describe "inheritance" as it relates to object-oriented programming.	M/C Quiz
Programming fundamentals		
Variables / Loops / Functions	Use variables, loops, and functions to create basic output on the screen.	Visual verification
Java syntax	Apply appropriate syntax to programming statements.	Visual verification
Console interaction	Use the console to run a Java app.	Visual verification
Practicing the language	Create multiple functions that work together to build a basic calculator.	Submit project
Re-visiting the Java stack	Describe in further detail the various elements of the Java stack.	M/C Quiz
Why web services?		
Web applications	Describe the role of web services in web application stacks.	M/C Quiz
Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)	Describe the benefits of SOA in an enterprise environment.	M/C Quiz
Web architecture		
HTTP protocol	Describe how HTTP protocols work, including basic HTTP response codes.	M/C Quiz
Manual testing web services (Postman, curl, etc.)	Use Postman to test a basic web service.	Visual verification
Containers		
Comparison of containers	Identify various Java containers and their uses.	M/C Quiz
Servlets	Describe the use of servlets.	M/C Quiz

Enterprise JavaBeans (EJBs)	Describe the role of EJBs in a Java app.	M/C Quiz
Tomcat installation	Install Tomcat.	Visual verification
Spring	Describe the role of Spring in a Java app.	M/C Quiz
Java runtime and managing dependencies	Describe the Java runtime and how the importance of understanding dependencies.	M/C Quiz
Service Endpoints	Use Java to create a web service endpoint.	Visual verification
Databases		
Database management	Describe the various aspects of creating, maintaining, and querying databases.	M/C Quiz
Relational vs. Non-relational	Identify when a relational database vs. non-relational database might make sense.	M/C Quiz
MongoDB	Describe basics of MongoDB. Use MongoDB to create a basic table and query.	M/C Quiz Visual Verification
Security		
Overview	Describe basics of web security, including various attacks.	M/C Quiz
SSL and KeyTool	Describe the value of SSL certificates and the basics of installing.	M/C Quiz
Additional Development Concepts		
Build tools	Describe the most commonly used build tools used for front-end development.	M/C Quiz
Test-Drive Development	Describe the benefits of test-driven development.	M/C Quiz
Team Dynamics		

Product teams	Identify the primary roles within a typical product team.	M/C Quiz
Agile and Scrum	Describe the primary tenants of Agile and Scrum.	M/C Quiz
Team communication	Describe the importance of team communications as it relates to productivity, job satisfaction, and product delivery.	M/C Quiz
Finalize capstone project	Compile skills learned into final project.	Submit project

Certificate Title
Mobile Application Development

Description
This course will walk students through mobile app development. The course will teach a number of technologies including Ionic, AngularJS, and Cordova. It will also provide context on how mobile applications interact with APIs and other back-end technologies.

Goal
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to create a mobile app and deploy it to a device. They will also understand the role that developers play on an overall product team to prepare students for a transition into a work environment.

Topic	Objective	Assessment Type
	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:	
Mobile App Architecture		
How the pieces work together	Describe how mobile applications interact with back-end technologies.	M/C Quiz
The Tools		
IDEs vs. text editor	Identify situations that would be a good fit for an IDE and, conversely, those situations that would be a good fit for a text editor.	Visual verification
Command line	Describe scenarios where the command line should be used.	Visual verification
Source control	Describe why source control is important and explain the basics of using Git.	M/C Quiz
Programming fundamentals		
Variables / Loops / Functions	Use variables, loops, and functions to create basic output on the screen.	Visual verification
JavaScript syntax	Apply appropriate syntax to programming statements.	Visual verification

Unit testing	Use unit test to test a JavaScript function.	Visual verification
Practicing the language	Create multiple functions that work together to build a basic calculator.	Submit project
Basic HTML / CSS	Use HTML and CSS elements to create a basic web page.	Visual verification
Ionic		
Overview	Describe the components of the Ionic Framework.	M/C Quiz
UI components	List and describe the Ionic Framework UI components.	M/C Quiz
Command line	Describe the various uses of the Ionic CLI.	M/C Quiz
Ionic Platform	Discuss the various services offered by the Ionic Platform.	M/C Quiz
AngularJS	Use AngularJS to build a basic web app.	M/C Quiz
Cordova	Describe Cordova's role in a hybrid mobile app.	M/C Quiz
Native Mobile Development		
iOS	Create a sample iOS app using XCode.	Visual verification
Android	Create a sample Android app.	Visual verification
Team Dynamics		
Product teams	Identify the primary roles within a typical product team.	M/C Quiz
Agile and Scrum	Describe the primary tenants of Agile and Scrum.	M/C Quiz
Team communication	Describe the importance of team communications as it relates to productivity, job satisfaction, and product delivery.	M/C Quiz
Finalize capstone project	Compile skills learned into final project.	Submit project

Certificate Title
Front-End Web Development

Description
This course will walk students through front-end web application development. The course will teach a number of technologies, including HTML, CSS, and JavaScript frameworks. It will also provide context on how front-end applications interact with APIs and other back-end technologies.

Goal
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to create an interactive website and deploy it to a cloud-based hosting provider. They will be able to apply their front-end skills to a variety of off-the-shelf or SAAS (Software as a Service) solutions, such as WordPress, Shopify, SquareSpace, etc. They will also understand the role that developers play on an overall product team to prepare students for a transition into a work environment.

Topic	Objective	Assessment Type
	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:	
The Modern Web		
How the pieces work together	Describe how front-end web or mobile applications interact with back-end technologies.	M/C Quiz
The Tools		
IDEs vs text editor	Identify situations that would be a good fit for an IDE and, conversely, those situations that would be a good fit for a text editor.	M/C Quiz
Text Editor	Install and configure text editor.	Visual verification
Command line	Describe scenarios where the command line should be used.	Visual verification
Source control	Describe why source control is important and explain the basics of using Git.	M/C Quiz
Programming fundamentals		
Variables / Loops / Functions	Use variables, loops and functions to create basic output on the screen.	Visual verification

JavaScript syntax	Apply appropriate syntax to programming statements.	Visual verification
Unit testing	Use unit test to test a JavaScript function.	Visual verification
Practicing the language	Create multiple functions that work together to build a basic calculator.	Submit project
Basic HTML / CSS	Use HTML and CSS elements to create a basic web page.	Visual verification
Cloud deployment	Deploy previously written app to cloud-based service.	Submit project
DOM manipulation / events	Use JavaScript to modify elements on a web page.	Visual verification
AJAX / HTTP Requests / Restful API	Describe why AJAX requests add value to a web page.	M/C Quiz
JavaScript frameworks		
Framework options	Identify various JavaScript frameworks and when they might be utilized.	M/C Quiz
AngularJS	Use AngularJS to build a basic web app.	Visual verification
Model-View-Controller (MVC) pattern	Describe MVC pattern.	M/C Quiz
Responsive Design		
Overview	Describe the basic concept of responsive design.	M/C Quiz
CSS framework options	Identify the 3 different CSS frameworks and their pros and cons.	M/C Quiz
Animations	Describe the different approaches to animations within web pages.	M/C Quiz
Pre-compilation		
Node.js	Describe the role of Node.js in front-end development.	M/C Quiz
Build tools	Describe the most commonly used build tools for front-	M/C Quiz

	end development.	
SAAS / SCSS / LESS	Describe the various CSS syntaxes and their uses.	M/C Quiz
Cross-browser testing	Describe why cross-browser testing is important and discuss options for testing.	M/C Quiz
Chrome Developer Tools	Use Chrome Developer Tools to inspect elements of web page.	Visual verification
Additional Development Concepts		
DevOps	Describe the role of DevOps in front-end development.	M/C Quiz
Test-Drive Development	Define test-driven development and describe the benefits.	M/C Quiz
Performance optimization	Describe the elements of a web page that impact performance and how to optimize each.	M/C Quiz
Databases	Describe the role of databases in web applications.	M/C Quiz
Team Dynamics		
Product teams	Identify the primary roles within a typical product team.	M/C Quiz
Agile and Scrum	Describe the primary tenants of Agile and Scrum.	M/C Quiz
Team communication	Describe the importance of team communications as it relates to productivity, job satisfaction, and product delivery.	M/C Quiz
Finalize capstone project	Compile skills learned into final project.	Submit project

Certificate Title
Back-End Web Development

Description
This course will walk students through back-end web application development using Node.js and MongoDB. JavaScript will be used throughout the course to teach how to create APIs. Discussions will also hit on how front-end web applications will utilize APIs in production scenarios.

Goal
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to create a web API from scratch and deploy it to a cloud-based hosting provider. They will understand web architecture including databases and how web or mobile applications will interact with that API. They will also understand the role that developers play on an overall product team to prepare students for a transition into a work environment.

Topic	Objective	Assessment Type
	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:	
The Modern Web		
How the pieces work together	Describe how front-end web or mobile applications interact with back-end technologies.	M/C Quiz
The Tools		
IDEs vs text editor	Identify situations that would be a good fit for an IDE and, conversely, those situations that would be a good fit for a text editor.	M/C Quiz
Text Editor	Install and configure text editor.	Visual verification
Command line	Describe scenarios where the command line should be used.	Visual verification
Source control	Describe why source control is important and explain the basics of using Git.	M/C Quiz
Programming fundamentals		
Variables / Loops / Functions	Use variables, loops and functions to create basic output	Visual

	on the screen.	verification
JavaScript syntax	Apply appropriate syntax to programming statements.	Visual verification
Unit testing	Use unit test to test a JavaScript function.	Visual verification
Practicing the language	Create multiple functions that work together to build a basic calculator.	Submit project
Why web services?		
Web applications	Describe how front-end web applications use web services.	M/C Quiz
Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)	Describe the benefits of SOA.	M/C Quiz
Web architecture		
HTTP protocol	Describe how HTTP protocols work, including basic HTTP response codes.	M/C Quiz
Manual testing web services (Postman, curl, etc.)	Use Postman to test a basic web service.	Visual verification
Node.js	Describe use cases for Node.js and basics of the runtime.	M/C Quiz
NPM	Use NPM to install a package.	Visual verification
Express.js		
Overview of middleware	Describe why middleware, and specifically Express.js, exist.	M/C Quiz
Model-View-Controller pattern (MVC)	Describe the MVC pattern and how the various components work together.	M/C Quiz
Databases		

Relational vs. Non-relational	Identify when a relational database vs. non-relational database might make sense.	M/C Quiz
Comparison of databases	Identify various scenarios that might make sense for the various databases discussed.	M/C Quiz
MongoDB	Describe basics of MongoDB. Use MongoDB to create a basic table and query.	M/C Quiz Visual verification
Mongoose	Use Mongoose to interact with MongoDB.	Visual verification
Security		
Overview	Describe basics of web security, including various attacks.	M/C Quiz
SSL and KeyTool	Describe the value of SSL certificates and the basics of installing.	M/C Quiz
DevOps		
Cloud deployment	Deploy previously written app to cloud-based service.	Submit project
Continuous integration	Configure continuous integration for source control commits and deployments.	Visual verification
Additional Development Concepts		
Test-driven development	Describe the benefits of test-driven development.	M/C Quiz
Logging / Diagnostics	Describe the benefits of logging diagnostic info as it relates to debugging issues.	M/C Quiz
Team Dynamics		
Product teams	Identify the primary roles within a typical product team.	M/C Quiz
Agile and Scrum	Describe the primary tenants of Agile and Scrum.	M/C Quiz

Team communication	Describe the importance of team communications as it relates to productivity, job satisfaction, and product delivery.	M/C Quiz
Finalize capstone project	Compile skills learned into final project.	Submit project

Walmart >|<.

Walmart Headquarters 702 S.W. 8th St.
Bentonville, AR 72716

May 10, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Walmart is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Walmart's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Walmart is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. Throughout the first grant cycle, an employee of Walmart led the instruction for the IT Readiness Mobile Development and Back-End Development course. Walmart has recruited and hired graduates of the IT Readiness program and sent multiple employees to attend the User Experience (UX) training workshop in Fall 2017. We view these training opportunities as a great value to our company and the region. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

Walmart believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Walmart, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

James Stevinson
Walmart Stores, Inc

Letter of Support
University of Arkansas Global Campus IT Readiness
2018.04.29

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

RevUnit is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to RevUnit's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

RevUnit is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. Throughout the first grant cycle, employees of RevUnit led the instruction for the IT Readiness Back-End Development course. RevUnit also recruited and hired graduates of the IT Readiness web development courses. In the Fall of 2017, RevUnit sent multiple employees to attend the Tech Expert to Tech Leader workshop. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at RevUnit, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Michael Paladino
Co-founder and Chief Technology Officer
RevUnit

J.B. HUNT

J.B. HUNT TRANSPORT, INC.

Date: May 4, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

J. B. Hunt Transport, Inc. is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to J. B. Hunt's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

J. B. Hunt is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. Throughout the first grant cycle, J. B. Hunt has recruited and hired graduates of the IT Readiness Java Development course. J. B. Hunt sent multiple employees to attend the User Experience (UX) training workshop and Tech Expert to Tech Leader workshop, both in Fall 2017. We view these training opportunities as a great value to our company and the region. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at J. B. Hunt, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Cook
Senior Systems Analyst
Engineering & Technology
J. B. Hunt Transport, Inc.

⧓ VML | MEMO

May 11, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

VML is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to VML's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

VML is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. During the first grant cycle, an employee of VML (formerly Rockfish) led the instruction for the IT Readiness Front-End Development course. VML also joined the Global Campus in efforts to create and deliver a technology education program for students enrolled in computer science classes at Lincoln High School. The technology education program provides students with the unique experience of learning from IT industry experts and creates an educational pathway to the IT Readiness Program for graduating students. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

VML believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at VML, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Blake Hannan
Associate Director, Talent Acquisition

250 richards road
kansas city, missouri 64116
united states of america

May 7, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
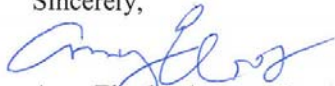432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Acxiom Corporation is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Acxiom's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Acxiom is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

Acxiom believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Acxiom, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Amy Elrod, Director of Talent Development
Acxiom Corporation

HARVEST GROUP

May 4, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Harvest Group is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Harvest Group's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Harvest Group is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Harvest Group and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Steve Blair
Director, People & Culture
Harvest Group

Lofty Labs
525 S School Avenue, Ste. 220
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 718-6160

May 7, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Lofty Labs is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Lofty's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Lofty is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

Lofty believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Lofty, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Ben Davis
Partner & COO
Lofty Labs

startup junkie

4/10/2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Startup Junkie is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Startup Junkie's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Startup Junkie is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

Startup Junkie believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Startup Junkie, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Brett Amerine
Brett Amerine
Chief Operating Officer, Startup Junkie
General Partner, Cadron Capital

SAATCHI & SAATCHI X

Monday, May 07, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Saatchi & Saatchi X is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Saatchi & Saatchi's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Saatchi & Saatchi X is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

Saatchi & Saatchi X believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Saatchi & Saatchi X, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Alison Nail-Malone, Sr. Talent Manager
Saatchi & Saatchi X

FiELD AGENT®

April 20, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Field Agent, Inc. is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Field Agent's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Field Agent is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

Field Agent believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Field Agent, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Justin Hill
Director of Development
Field Agent, Inc.

supplypike

3739 N Steele Blvd | Fayetteville, AR 72703

5-4-2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Supplypike is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Supplypike's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Supplypike is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Supplypike, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Kyle Rogers - Director of Engineering

supplypike

WHYTESPYDER

1023 E. Millsap Road | Fayetteville, AR 72703 | 479-287-4006

May 4th, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

WhyteSpyder is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to WhyteSpyder's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

WhyteSpyder is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at WhyteSpyder, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Roger W Dickey, Jr
Sr. Dir. of Development & Software
WhyteSpyder, Inc.

i2iLABS

114 S 1ˢᵗ St
Rogers, AR 72756
i2ilabs.co

4/12/18

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

i2i Labs is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to i2i Labs' long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

i2i Labs is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at i2i Labs, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Bryce Paden
i2i Labs, LLC

TEKsystems

Our people make IT possible.

May 8, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

TEKsystems is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to TEKsystems' long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

TEKsystems is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at TEKsystems, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Linda Gault

Linda Gault
TEKsystems

DataScout, LLC
Data.Delivered.

May 4, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

DataScout, LLC is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to DataScoutLLC's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

DataScout, LLC is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at DataScout, LLC, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Cory Scott
Chief Operations Officer
DataScout, LLC

07 May 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

TATA Consultancy Services Limited is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

TATA Consultancy Services Limited is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

TATA Consultancy Services Limited believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at [Company], and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,
For Tata Consultancy Services Limited

Mr. Ramasubramanian Ramasamy
Head, Strategic Accounts
Retail and CPG Industry Solution Unit

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

609 SW 8th St Suite 600 Bentonville AR 72712
Ph +1-479-286-1286 Fax +1-479-286-1101 website www.tcs.com
Registered Office: Bombay House, 24 Homi Mody Street, Mumbai 400 001, INDIA

iBERIABANK

3430 Wedington
Fayetteville, AR 72704
(479) 878-6440

www.iberiabank.com

4.25.18

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

IBERIABANK is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to IBERIABANK's long-term workforce development, employee training and community development goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

IBERIABANK is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

IBERIABANK believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at IBERIABANK because workforce development is one of our top priorities, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Keaton Smith
Vice President
IBERIABANK

PO Box 3172, Fayetteville, AR 72703-3172
Ph: 479-276-2600

April 29, 2017

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Esoterix Software is particularly pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Esoterix Software's long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Esoterix Software is committed to the grant and will assist with the planning, development, and initiatives of the program. We look forward to assisting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in carrying out the plan to run this program, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of existing IT professionals in Northwest Arkansas, but also help meet the demand for new IT professionals in the region.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Esoterix Software, and we believe that our company and the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Chad Kieffer
Lead Developer
Esoterix Software

April 17, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Northwest Arkansas Community College is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to the long-term IT workforce development initiatives in our region. We look forward to being involved in a program that will not only create career pathways but also educational pathways for students to complete a degree at NWACC.

Northwest Arkansas Community College is committed to the success of the grant. We look forward to assisting the Global Campus in carrying out the educational pathways in this program. Through coordination and collaboration with Global Campus and other companies, schools and industries in NWA, we will be able to assist with tracking students into higher education. Once students complete an IT certificate at the Global Campus, students will be able to obtain at least 6 hours of credit toward a degree at our community college and encourage students to obtain higher education.

We believe that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Northwest Arkansas Community College and we believe that the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Christine C. Davis, Ph.D.
Dean, Business and Computer Information Systems
Northwest Arkansas Community College
One College Drive
Bentonville, AR 72712
(479) 319-3156

NWTI
Northwest Technical Institute
rethink education

Springdale, AR 72765-2000
(479) 751-8824
Fax : (479) 756-0985

PO Box 2000 . 709 South Old Missouri Rd

April 16, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Northwest Technical Institute is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to our students' long-term workforce development and career goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Northwest Technical Institute is committed to the grant and will continue to provide valuable information and feedback for the IT Readiness program. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of our existing employees but also help us find new and talented employees to fill our IT positions.

Northwest Technical Institute believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Northwest Technical Institute, and we believe that the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Trolinger
Secondary Career Center Director
Northwest Technical Institute
709 South Old Missouri Road
Springdale, AR 72764
strolinger@nwti.edu

Arkansas Department of Career Education : An Equal Opportunity Employer : www.nwti.edu

Bentonville Schools

where excellence lives

May 3, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Bentonville Public Schools is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to Bentonville Public Schools long-term workforce development and employee training goals. We look forward to continuing our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Bentonville Public Schools is committed to the grant and will continue to assist with the planning and development of the IT Readiness program. IT Readiness serves the Bentonville Ignite Program by providing access to the Mac labs at the Global Campus facility and provides a pathway for our students to pursue careers in technology. We look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. We believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of IT professionals but also help to create new opportunities for students after high school.

Bentonville Public Schools believes that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Bentonville Public Schools, and we believe that the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Debbie Jones

Debbie Jones

email a bentonvillek12.org   (479) 254-5000

500 Tiger Boulevard Bentonville, AR 72712

bentonvillek12.org

BUSINESS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY
SPRINGDALE HIGH SCHOOL
101 S. Pleasant
Springdale, AR 72764
Mr. Peter Joenks, Principal

May 5, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
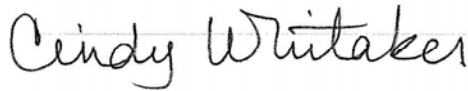LIttle Rock, AR 72201

Dear Regional Workforce Implementation Grant Committee:

The SHS Business & Information Technology Academy is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Regional Workforce Implementation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to our students' education, long-term workforce development, and employee training goals. We look forward to being involved in a program that will help Northwest Arkansas address existing labor needs and skill gaps.

The SHS Business & Information Technology Academy is committed to the grant and we look forward to providing valuable information and feedback on the program throughout the process. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools, and industries in NWA, we will be able to build extraordinary non-credit training programs in the area of Business and IT. We believe these programs will not only help our existing employees, but also help us fill our Business and IT jobs with new employees.

The Regional Workforce Implementation Grant is a priority for each of the stakeholders of the SHS Business & IT Academy, and we believe the Northwest Arkansas region as a whole will be well served by the programs and certificates provided in this program.

Sincerely,

Cindy Whitaker

Cindy Whitaker, Instructor
SHS Business & Information Technology Academy

Academy Instructors:
Shannon Green
Kathleen Johnson
Josefina Perez
Tracy Reed
Alexa Reynolds
Cindy Whitaker
Kellev Williamson

Rogers Public Schools

where all **belong**, all **learn**, and all **succeed**

500 West Walnut Street
Rogers, Arkansas 72756

Phone: 479-636-3910
Fax: 479-631-3504

Mr. Andy Mayes, Chief Information Officer

May 9, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

I am pleased to personally endorse the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. I see this grant as valuable to our students' long-term development and career goals. I look forward to continuing my partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

I am committed to the grant and will continue to provide valuable information and feedback for the IT Readiness program. I look forward to supporting the University of Arkansas Global Campus in future initiatives for IT Readiness, and in continually evaluating the needs of the Northwest Arkansas area to ensure this program stays relevant over the years. Through coordination and collaboration with the University and other companies, schools and organizations of NWA, we will be able to build, promote, and deliver extraordinary non-credit training programs in the rapidly evolving area of IT. I believe these programs will not only help advance the careers of IT professionals but also help to create new opportunities for students with career aspirations in the field of technology.

I personally believe that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for me in my work to promote IT Education throughout the state, and I believe that the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Andy Mayes
Chief Information Officer/High School IT Teacher
Rogers Public Schools

Lincoln High School

1392 E. Pridemore
Lincoln, Arkansas 72744
479-824-7450

Courtney Jones, Principal	Deon Birkes, Assistant Principal	Valerie Smith, Counselor
479-824-7452	479-824-7447	479-824-7454

May 10, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant Committee,

Lincoln High School is pleased to partner with the University of Arkansas Global Campus on the Workforce Initiative Act of 2015 Continuation Grant. We see this grant as valuable to the long-term IT workforce development initiatives in our region. We look forward to our partnership with a program that will help identify skills gaps in the Northwest Arkansas region and deliver high-quality training to the workforce.

Lincoln High School is committed to the success of the grant. The Global Campus and Lincoln High School formed a partnership with VML (formerly Rockfish) to create and deliver a technology education program for students enrolled in computer science classes at Lincoln. The technology education program provides students with the unique experience of learning from IT industry experts and creates an educational pathway to the IT Readiness Program for graduating students. We believe this program will not only help advance the careers of IT professionals but also help to create new opportunities for students with career aspirations in the field of technology.

We believe that the training provided by the IT Readiness program ensures a skilled and talented IT workforce. The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for us at Lincoln High School and we believe that the entire Northwest Arkansas region will be well served by the continuation of this grant.

Sincerely,

Courtney Jones
Lincoln High School
Principal

4100 Corporate Center Drive
Suite 205
Springdale, Arkansas 72762

May 4, 2018

Members of the ADHE Regional Workforce Grant Committee
c/o Tara Dryer, Ed.D., PMP
Director of Training, Corporate Development and Academic Outreach
3300 Market St. Ste. 402
Rogers, AR 72758

Members of the Committee:

On behalf of our Board of Directors, we write to you in support of the University of Arkansas' School of Continuing Education's efforts to provide Northwest Arkansas with a pipeline of workers for our rapidly growing Information Technology sector. Computer and Math Occupations have been the fastest growing high-wage sector ($34.60/hour) in the Northwest Arkansas metro area in the past 15 years. During that time, over 3,600 net new jobs were added in that sector – a 77% increase – a pace of growth that is expected to continue over the next ten years.

The Council and its Chamber Partners interview over 450 local companies each year, and many of the companies interviewed have indicated a need for Information Technology workers, at all levels and areas: Programming and Software Development, Web and Digital Communications, Network Systems, Information Support, and Information Services. The importance of delivering these workers cannot be stressed enough: our ability or inability to do so will determine whether or not Northwest Arkansas remains in the top tier of US Metro growth economies.

The Governor's coding initiative in K-12 is a fantastic way to give students the proper foundation for work in information technology careers, and we feel like a training program like this will complete the pathway needed for Northwest Arkansans to meet our employers' growing demand. Meeting our employer's workforce needs is priority one for the Council, and we applaud the University of Arkansas' School of Continuing Education's efforts to help us achieve our regional workforce goals.

We appreciate your consideration in regards to their grant application.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Harvey
Chief Operating Officer

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC.
NWAEDD PLAZA
818 Highway 62-65-412 North • P.O. Box 190
Harrison, Arkansas 72602-0190
(870) 741-5404

May 2, 2018

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
432 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Regional Workforce Continuation Grant Committee,

The Northwest Local Workforce Development Board supports the University of Arkansas Global Campus proposal on the Regional Workforce Continuation Grant. We see this IT Readiness grant as valuable to Northwest Arkansas regional development. We look forward to support a high demand career pathway that will help Northwest Arkansas address existing labor needs and skill gaps.

In support of the program, the Local Workforce Development Board will provide both job seekers and job providers' program information on the IT certificates and certifications in order to fill employment needs. In our One-Stop Career Centers, individuals will be able to gain employment information on IT careers, learn about the IT Readiness grant program and then connect with employers upon obtaining an IT certificate or certification. This will allow individuals to maximize their time and resources in order to gain employment.

The Regional Workforce Continuation Grant is a priority for the Local Workforce Development Board, and we believe the Northwest Arkansas region as a whole will be well served by the continuation of this IT grant proposal.

Sincerely,

Joe Willis
Executive Director
Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board