

Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear awards Work Ready Community in Progress designation to Kentucky counties

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 6, 2012) – Governor Steve Beshear announced Sept. 6 that Adair, Hopkins and Union counties have been certified as a Work Ready Community in Progress and are working toward the Work Ready Community status.

The Work Ready Community certification program from the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet assures employers that a local workforce has the talent and skills necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require.

“Congratulations to Adair, Hopkins and Union counties for achieving the Work Ready Community in Progress status in Kentucky. This designation shows employers that a county is diligently working toward the rigorous requirements to become a Work Ready Community and to set itself apart from other communities nationally when it comes to a skilled labor force,” said Gov. Steve Beshear. “I encourage all Kentucky communities to strive for the Work Ready Community designation.”

To be designated a Work Ready Community, a county must gather local support and commitment and apply for the certification. Counties have to meet criteria in six areas including high school graduation rate, National Career Readiness Certificate holders, demonstrated community commitment, educational attainment, soft-skills development and digital literacy. Daviess, Warren, Woodford and Henderson counties have been certified as Work Ready Communities.

“Adair, Hopkins and Union counties serve as role models for other communities that want to demonstrate a commitment to reaching education, workforce and economic development goals that make their communities a desirable place for businesses,” said

Joseph U. Meyer, secretary of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

“We are excited to designate Adair, Hopkins and Union counties as Work Ready Communities in Progress. We look forward to certifying many others in the future. Achieving this designation and working toward the Work Ready Community status gives communities an economic advantage when companies are looking for a place to locate and it shows established Kentucky businesses that they will continue to have a strong pipeline of skilled workers in the future,” said Crystal Gibson, chair of the Kentucky Work Ready Communities Review Panel and vice president of Communications and Public Affairs at Citigroup.

Adair, Hopkins and Union counties were designated as Work Ready Communities in Progress because they are close to meeting the Work Ready Community criteria. To achieve this level, a county must present a viable plan to meet all of the criteria within three years. The designation shows that a community is making strides and working with its business, education, workforce and economic development leaders to set and meet common goals that will give the county an economic edge.

Applications for the certification were reviewed by a panel appointed by the KWIB. The panel recommended certification by the board for the counties that met the criteria. The panel will meet three times a year to review applications, which can be submitted at any time.

For more information about the Work Ready Communities program, go to <http://kwib.ky.gov/workreadycommunity.htm>.