

Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear awards Work Ready Communities certification to Kentucky counties

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 18, 2012) – Governor Steve Beshear announced May 17 that Henderson County has been certified as a Work Ready Community and Madison and Montgomery counties have achieved Work Ready Community in Progress status. The 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 Henderson County for becoming a Work Ready Community in Kentucky. This designation shows employers that a county has completed rigorous requirements and is a cut above 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.”

Kentucky is the third state to begin certifying counties as Work Ready Communities based on the quality of their labor force. Daviess, Warren and Woodford counties were the first be certified. To become certified, communities must gather local support and commitment and apply for the Work Ready Community designation. 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.

“Henderson County joins Daviess, Warren and Woodford counties as a role model 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 Henderson County as a Work Ready Community and Madison and Montgomery counties as Work Ready in Progress. We look forward to certifying many others at both levels in the future. This designation 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.

Madison and Montgomery counties were designated as a Work Ready Community in Progress because they are close to meeting the criteria to be certified. 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>.