

## Grant awarded to examine employment gaps in region's healthcare industry

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By Press Release, Associated Black Charities of Maryland

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### Associated Black Charities to Convene Employer-Driven Workforce Planning Effort

Associated Black Charities of Maryland (ABC-MD) announced its award of a planning grant by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) under the EARN Maryland Program to convene healthcare corporations, administrators and providers in drafting a comprehensive and "employer-led" healthcare workforce development plan for Prince George's and Charles Counties.

The planning effort is being spearheaded by the Healthcare Partnership of Prince George's and Charles Counties (The Partnership), a collaborative that currently includes Agape Health Group, Arc Prince George's County, Associated Black Charities, Charles County Economic Development Council, Charles County Department of Health Core Service Agency, Dimensions in Health, Forestville Health and Rehabilitation, Fort Washington Health and Rehabilitation, Fort Medical Center, FutureCare Health, itWorks Learning Center, MedChi of Maryland, Mid-Atlantic Health Care, Patuxent River Health & Rehabilitation Center, Prince George's Community College, Prince George's County Department of Family Services, ROC Consultants and The Training Source. "There is a growing demand for skilled workers in health care. This strategic alliance will serve as a valuable resource, by training individuals for specialized careers in the healthcare field," said Verna S. Meacham, President and Chief Executive Officer of Nexus Health, the parent company of Fort Washington Medical Center.

An aggressive outreach campaign is in progress aimed at expanding this group to reflect even broader geographic, social and experiential diversity. "We are excited about working with Associated Black Charities on what I'm sure will be another, successful program aimed at addressing real world healthcare workforce issues." Morton Lapidés, President of itWorks Learning Center, stated.

The group will explore and examine a broad range of issues related to the demand for skilled and trained healthcare workers in Prince George's and Charles Counties. This region is projected to see a significant and steady growth in such demand over the next six years (2014-2020) which represents viable career opportunities for qualified area residents. Both employers and consumers are greatly affected by the worker shortage as it impacts the quality and level of access to care available in the region's marketplace.

A series of facilitated planning sessions will be conducted over the next several weeks to obtain practical insights and relevant feedback to shape a workforce training plan to address the current critical shortage of skilled health workers and to craft cost-effective solutions. "In bringing this cross-section of healthcare employers and professionals together, we hope to provide a roadmap for guiding thousands of people to an on-ramp for gainful employment in an industry that offers viable opportunity for the foreseeable future. Our collective efforts is aimed at supporting economic stability for families and contributing to the overall economic health of Prince George's and Charles Counties", said Associated Black Charities CEO, Diane Bell McKoy.

The Partnership is seeking input and active participation from companies, institutions, groups and individuals with backgrounds in healthcare delivery, policy or workforce training to offer their expertise to this effort. The group hopes to conclude its work by March this year and will submit its recommendations to DLLR in the form of a work plan to implement its strategy. Those interested in participating in or contributing to this process are asked to contact Eric Clay at ABC-MD (443-524-7727 or [Eclay@abc-md.org](mailto:Eclay@abc-md.org)) for a full schedule of the planning sessions or additional information.