Lewis County
Reskilling and Upskilling in the Post-COVID-19 Economy

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a deep recession in Washington with a sharp rise in unemployment. A significant percentage of jobs lost may never return. African American and Latinx workers, young adults, and those without postsecondary education are being hit hardest by the Covid-19 recession. Many Lewis County workers will need to reskill for jobs in new industries and focus on those with growth potential and opportunities to upskill for career advancement. The availability of seamless, well-coordinated credential pathways is critical to helping them successfully navigate this transition.

RESKILLING:
Learning a new set of skills or obtaining a credential in a separate field, with the goal of transitioning to a new job or different industry.

UPSKILLING:
Acquiring additional skills or new credentials for advancing to a more responsible position and higher wages in the same general line of work.

| EXAMPLES OF CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS IN THE LEWIS COUNTY AREA FOR LIVING-WAGE, HIGH-DEMAND JOBS |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| **Occupational Fields** | **RESKILLING** | **UPSKILLING** | **Entry-Level Position** | **Additional credentials for Career Advancement** | **Next-Step Occupations** |
| Computer & Information Tech | Short-Term Certificate (Two Quarters) Computer Support 1 South Puget Sound Community College (SPSCC) | Computer Support Specialist (Median Hourly wage- $27.52) | Associate Degree: -Applications Development -Information Technology (Centralia College) | Bachelor’s Degree (BAS) Information Technology (Centralia College) | Web Developer (Median Hourly Wage- $48.95) Software Developer (Median Hourly Wage- $55.14) |
| Engineering | Associate Degree in Engineering - Mechanical or - Electrical - Civil - Chemical (Centralia College) | Engineering Technician (Median Hourly wage- $20.19) | Bachelor’s Degree in Engineering (Saint Martin’s University) | Mechanical Engineer (Median Hourly Wage- $40.41) Civil Engineer (Median Hourly Wage- $38.81) Electrical Engineer (Median Hourly Wage- $43.79) |
| Nursing | Short-Term Certificate (1 Quarter) Nursing Assistant Certified (Centralia College) | Certified Nursing Assistant (Median Hourly wage- $15.61) | Associate in Nursing (Centralia College) | Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) UW-Tacoma | Licensed Practical Nurse (Median Hourly wage- $25.50) Registered Nurse (Median Hourly wage- $39.10) |

Strategies to Support Reskilling and Upskilling for a Sustained and Equitable Recovery

Short-Term:
- Increase awareness of short-term, non-degree programs that provide qualifications for living-wage jobs.
- Ensure broad access to online courses that offer flexibility and alternatives to in-person classes.
- Provide support services to students who face barriers to attending and persisting in postsecondary programs.
- Expand the use of Academic Credit for Prior Learning for certificate and degree programs.

Long-Term:
- Continue to develop short-term certificate programs and credential pathways that are stackable toward degrees.

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1 The living Wage for a family of 2 adults (1 working) and 1 child in Lewis County is $25.84 (Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator, accessed Oct. 2020, https://livingwage.mit.edu/). In-demand jobs and wage data were determined using labor market analytics from Economic Modeling Specialists International (Emsi) and Burning Glass Technologies.