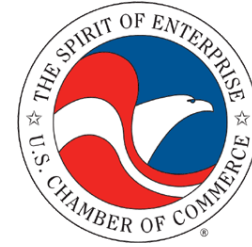


January 13, 2017



Regardless of the time of year or current legislative hurdle, we are constantly hearing from our state and local chambers about their one ever-present challenge: the workforce skills gap.

Today there are 5.6 million jobs sitting vacant because employers can't find workers with the skills to fill them. In fact, nearly half of all U.S. employers are struggling with talent shortages.

And while the skills gap and youth unemployment are national challenges, we know that they will only be solved at the local level by business leaders and civic organizations working together. **That's why the U.S. Chamber is pleased to tell you about a new partnership -- one we hope you'll consider for your community -- with the Boy Scouts of America's affiliate program, Exploring.**

Exploring is built around the idea that preparing students for the future shouldn't just take place in the classroom, but in the offices, studios, and labs where the work is done. The Exploring program focuses on hands-on experience and mentorship -- building character, teaching life skills, and instilling the value of hard work -- the kinds of attributes that will help young people succeed in any career they choose.

For businesses, participating in Exploring is a chance to do good in their communities by investing in young people's lives, helping create jobs, and strengthening the local economy. Plus, many companies and organizations that participate in Exploring end up building a talent pipeline that feeds into their workforce.

We trust that you will find Exploring to be of value in your community and we encourage you to contact Susan Fitzhugh at the National Exploring office at exploring@lflmail.org and visit www.exploring.org to learn more about efforts to identify, train, and recruit young talent.

Thank you,

Rob Engstrom
SVP
U.S. Chamber of Commerce