



United Way of
Southwest Virginia

The Issue:

- 1- According to the Virginia Department of Education, less than ½ of high school graduates in Southwest Virginia go on to technical training, two-year/four-year higher education or the military.
- 2- Based on local employer feedback, Southwest Virginia is experiencing a workforce shortage and cannot fill open positions.
- 3- According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, in 2015, 12% of all youth between the ages of 16 and 24 weren't in school or working. In Southwest Virginia, that means approximately 3,840 young people.

United Way of Southwest Virginia's Work:

Unparalleled programs and services across the region from cradle to career

- 1- Smart Beginnings brings together community partners dedicated to creating a quality early childhood system of care that improves the access to, the quality of, and the coordination of services for young children and their families.
- 2- Virginia Quality leads the way for high quality early education for our youngest Virginians by setting standards for quality and providing a path for continuous quality improvement at child care centers, preschools and family child care homes across the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- 3- Ignite sparks students' interest in career opportunities by connecting schools and students with employers and employees through career guidance, shadowing, mentoring, and work-based learning.

The Event:

Title: *Careers Expo for Youth*

Description: Bridging the worlds of learning and work

Hosts:

- United Way of Southwest Virginia
- Ignite
- United Way Volunteer Center

Participants:

7th grade students from across SWVA, representatives from SWVA employers, teachers from across SWVA, volunteers

Goals:

- Introduce middle school students to career choices in SWVA
- Connect schools and students to employers and employees

Event structure:

- Two-day hand-on learning expo in September 2017, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Washington County Fairgrounds
- Students participate in activities provided by local employers
- Employers set up experiential work activities for students at booths For example, students will be able to:
 - Climb utility pole
 - Try on SWAT gear
 - Practice CPR and giving shots
 - Chemistry experiment
 - Use a 3-D printer to create a 3-D object

Impact measures:

- Pre and post student survey
- Pre and post employer survey