

# TALENT DEVELOPMENT 2025 REPORT

JAXUSA engages stakeholders in the region's talent ecosystem through Earn Up, a strategic initiative that delivers a three-pronged program of talent attraction, development, and connection in the Jacksonville region. The ecosystem is a partnership of education, business, and community leaders focused on a shared framework to optimize the workforce, support economic growth, and generate a fulfilling quality of life in Northeast Florida.

Earn Up facilitates increased cooperation among all stakeholders to align our learning ecosystem, share best practices, and engage in projects that strategically support talent advancement initiatives. Ultimately, **JAXUSA serves as a liaison between all stakeholders to create meaningful connections that deepen the awareness of Career Pathways and expand relationships between educators and the business community in several ways.**

- **The Talent Advancement Network (TAN)**

leverages the knowledge and experience that industry professionals possess to help generate workforce change. By providing their insight and collaborating with talent pipeline providers, they create cohesive messaging and approaches to career pathing. The TAN includes human resources and operations professionals from the region's industry base, representatives from post-secondary institutions, CareerSource NEFL, and JAXUSA.

- **The Talent Advancement Partnership (TAP)**

allows increased communication among districts and educational institutions to better align the learning ecosystem and discuss educator needs and solutions. This collaboration includes career and technical education directors across the seven-county region, post-secondary decision makers, CareerSource NEFL, and the JAXUSA Talent Development Team.

- **The Earn Up Steering Committee**

is led by the JAXUSA Talent Development Team and is made up of representatives from the region's community-based organizations (CBOs), state colleges, universities, and post-secondary providers. In addition to sharing industry and workforce trends, the group is working to strategically and synergistically move the needle to achieve a goal of **60 %** of adults holding credentials of value by 2030. JAXUSA is committed to growing a robust talent ecosystem in Northeast Florida by aligning the needs of the region's business community with a talented and engaged workforce through the awareness of and education on Career Pathways in the area's target and support industries.

**The regional Talent work of JAXUSA Partnership would not be possible without the incredible commitment, expertise and abilities of all of our partners, including secondary and post-secondary representatives, industry leaders and community-based organizations. The talent goals set forth in the strategic plan represent these collective voices throughout Northeast Florida.**

## JAXUSA Strategic Talent Goals:

*Promote the development of accessible career pathways that create a robust talent pipeline reflective of employer needs.*

- Grow career exploration and training programs that expose youth and adults to job opportunities across Northeast Florida.
- Deepen partner engagement across workforce and talent development initiatives to ensure talent is retained in Northeast Florida.
- Prioritize the workforce support ecosystem through collaborative partnerships.
- Bolster talent attraction and marketing initiatives to grow a diverse pool of top-tier talent.



## Career Pathways Campaign

Earn Up's Career Pathways initiative educates the current and future talent on career opportunities in the Jacksonville region, focusing on the Northeast Florida's target industries – Advanced Manufacturing, Corporate Operations, Financial Services, Life Sciences, Technology Services, and Transportation & Logistics – along with key subsectors and support industries. This initiative connects education, training and hands-on experience to help high school and college students, adult learners and veterans understand career options, succeed individually and stay in the region's workforce. Career pathways content on EarnUp.org includes industry specific insights, workforce trends, links to employer partner websites, career-oriented blog posts, and spotlights on local professionals. An e-newsletter is also distributed to keep business, education and community leaders informed. Activities range from supporting high school and college fairs and sector specific functions to customized industry support to meet talent needs. **The JAXUSA Talent Development team attended 177 events/activities resulting in 9,296 touchpoints.** The number of Earn Up users **increased by 7.3%**, with **4.5% percent increase** in engagement (sessions), viewing 118,533 pages

### RESULTS

59,707  
USERS

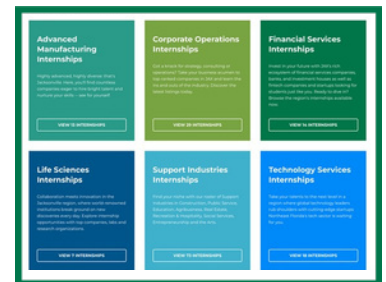
71,571  
SESSIONS

118,533  
PAGE VIEWS

## Employer Engagement

The JAXUSA Talent team serves as the voice of business providing data, research and employer connections to education and CBOs encouraging alignment between our region's growth and the jobs of the future. The Connect to Companies "Connect Now" campaign creates a direct link between the region's employers and the talent that will drive their success now and in the future. JAXUSA facilitates employer engagement through an online form to participate in workforce initiatives such as work-based learning, classroom presentations, high school and college program advisory boards, career fairs, job shadowing and internships, helping them connect talent with meaningful career experiences. **These Employer Engagement events resulted in 154 events/activities impacting 3,187 people.**

The EarnUp.org internship board and supporting blogs and resources specifically highlight regional opportunities and showcase partner organizations offering internships. For the internship board, employers post through Indeed and JAXUSA staff review submissions weekly to ensure content is relevant and local before being placed on the platform. **In 2025, there were 14,061 internship content views and 40,017 events** (such as clicks, downloads, video plays).



## Social Media Campaign

Earn Up amplified its social media presence with its annual campaign, reaching high school students, parents, adult learners, and veterans with content designed to guide key career milestones and celebrate our targeted industries. Using Facebook and Instagram, the campaign highlighted Career Pathways, Connect to Companies, FAFSA, Industry insights, job opportunities, and resources for veterans and their families. A pivotal project in 2025 was the addition of Career Pathway Spotlight Videos. Young professionals working in Northeast Florida from Johnson & Johnson, Crowley, Vystar Credit Union, Suddath and Mosai discuss their career journeys. This campaign resulted in a **7.7% increase** in clicks from the prior year.



### RESULTS

63,549  
CLICKS

900,478  
REACH

## Secondary Partnerships

The Northeast Florida Region is home to many of the top performing districts and schools in the state with over **300+** Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs and Academies focused on building the workforce of tomorrow to align with our growing targeted industries. JAXUSA Partnership supports the Talent Advancement Partnership (TAP) in a variety of ways including promoting Earn Up pathways at events, facilitating professional development and training, and planning student centered activities such as job fairs and classroom lessons. Also imperative to success of our Secondary partners is meaningful data to justify the creation of CTE programs. JAXUSA Partnership provides both quantitative and qualitative data to assist in critical decisions. Districts also rely on data and support letters provided by JAXUSA Partnership to justify in-demand careers, which in turn, helps districts request and receive funds. This ongoing collaboration has resulted in the award of Capitalization Incentive grants of **\$24,649,506** to develop and expand CTE. This new funding, coupled with the ongoing Perkin's Grant funding of over **\$4 million**, has brought unprecedented amounts of funding to the region to support CTE.



## Level Up Bootcamp

JAXUSA's Talent Team hosted an inaugural "Level Up Bootcamp" in July along with host Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ), where high school juniors and seniors spent two weeks learning about the region's target industries and how to build a successful career in the Jacksonville region. Based on a DeLuca grant from the Florida College Access Network (FCAN), the program was designed to deliver college and career readiness instruction, hands-on activities, and industry visits. Partners from CareerSource Northeast Florida, University of North Florida SOAR, Future Finders, and St. Johns River State College shared valuable information at the camp while VyStar, Amazon and Guidewell also provided tours and interaction with executives and interns at their locations. Graduates received a Level Up digital literacy badge, FSCJ Center for Civic Engagement hours, incentive gifts and certificates. Ongoing support continues throughout this school year to encourage FAFSA completion and postsecondary planning.



## Educator Externship

To foster a deeper understanding of the Transportation & Logistics industry, the JAXUSA Partnership Talent team, in collaboration with local industry leaders from throughout the region, hosted an Educator externship in June. The purpose of the externship was to strengthen the connection between education and industry to ensure classroom learning reflects current and future workforce needs. Industry visits included CSX, Jacksonville Aviation Authority, Amazon, University of North Florida, Suddath, Jacksonville Port Authority, Jacksonville Transportation Authority and Southeast Toyota Distributors with panelists also from Suddath, Corporate Traffic Logistics, TOTE Maritime, Crowley, Trailer Bridge, and Anderson Trucking Service. Activities included facility tours, panel and roundtable discussions, presentations and career pathway overviews. Teachers were immersed in a variety of industry subsectors, engaged in conversation and reflection to consider what they learned and how to share and apply it within their districts.

As part of JAXUSA's ongoing commitment to workforce development, throughout the year, educators are also provided career research and preparation resources on EarnUp.org including ready made lesson plans that can be customized thus extending our reach. **In 2025, there were 297 content views of Educator resources and 958 events** ( such as clicks, downloads, video plays).



## Post-secondary Partnerships

JAXUSA supports Colleges and Universities as Strategic Partners to grow educational opportunities and economic mobility for all citizens. JAXUSA, through research, advocacy and support of funding efforts, equips our Colleges and Universities with the tools to align their educational programming with the needs of Business and Industry. Throughout the year, the JAXUSA Talent Development Team participated in career fairs and advisory boards at our regional colleges and universities – University of North Florida, Jacksonville University, Florida State College at Jacksonville, St. Johns River State College, Edward Waters University, Flagler College, First Coast Technical College and Keiser University – and across the state of Florida at the University of Florida and Florida State University. Participating in career fairs is an important component of the Earn Up initiative because it helps students understand the wealth of career pathways in the region and learn about the superior quality of life Northeast Florida has to offer.

In September, JAXUSA hosted its third annual Beyond120 event for a group of **35 students** from the University of Florida's College of Arts & Sciences who traveled to Jacksonville from Gainesville to hear from corporate operations leaders, share resumes and explore new opportunities to grow and differentiate themselves as they get ready to enter the workforce. Students learned from host companies Vystar and Haskell as well as listened to panel discussions, recruiters, and took tours.

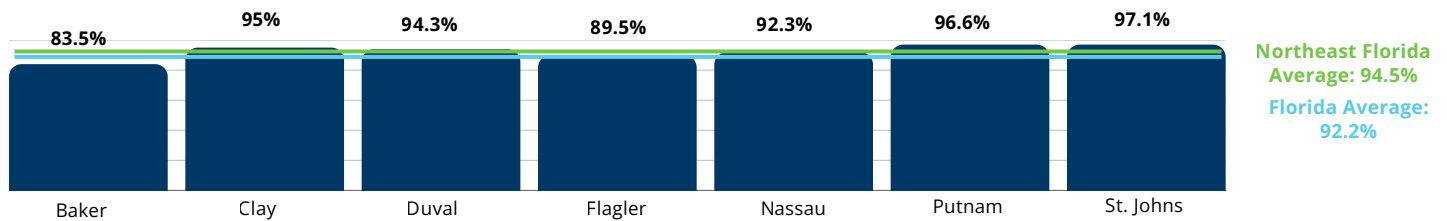


# Credentials of Value

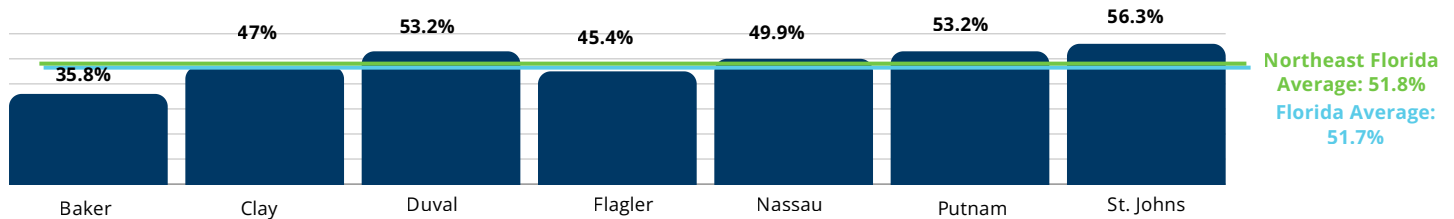
The fastest growing jobs in Florida are those requiring education beyond high school, according to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. By 2030, the Florida Chamber Foundation projects the state to have 26 million people with more than 100 new residents moving to Northeast Florida every day based on the U.S. Census Bureau data. Less than 80% of the current workforce has essential employability skills and less than 60% of Floridians aged 25 - 64 have a credential of value (2030 Blueprint), reinforcing the need for expanding access, reducing barriers, and creating paths to prosperity through training and education.

Earn Up serves as the Local College Access Network (LCAN) under the umbrella of the Florida College Access Network (FCAN). Efforts continue to focus on credentials of value and the goal of our region achieving a postsecondary attainment rate of **60** percent. Northeast Florida is at **44.9** percent, per the most recent Census data of 2023 which is up from 38.5% when this work initiated in 2015. This begins with the attainment of industry certifications which are embedded in the High School CTE programs. In the most recent data published by Florida Department of Education (2023-2024), **37,362** students in NEFL received a variety of industry certifications aligned to the region’s growing industries. This is a **71%** Industry Certification pass rate for the region; **21% increase** from the prior year.

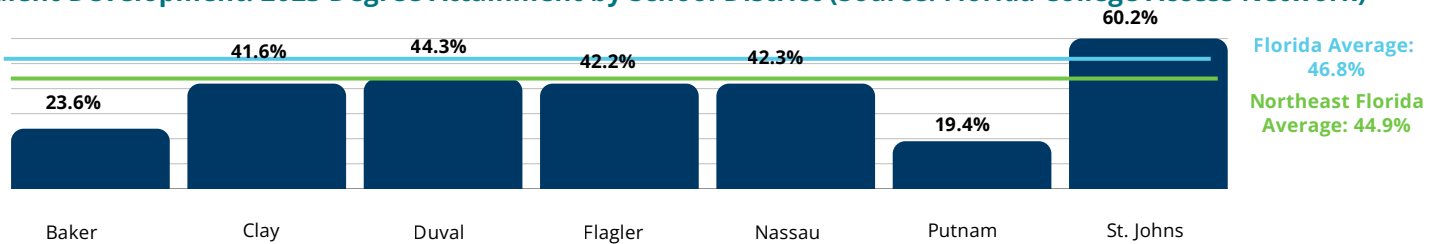
## Access: 2024-2025 High School Completion Rate (Source: Florida Department of Education)



## Access: FAFSA Completion through 8/29/2025 by School District (Source: Florida College Access Network)



## Talent Development: 2023 Degree Attainment by School District (Source: Florida College Access Network)



**Earn Up** is powered by **JAXUSA Partnership**, the private, nonprofit division of JAX Chamber that is Jacksonville’s regional economic development initiative overseeing the efforts of the seven counties of Northeast Florida. Earn Up also works closely with CareerSource Northeast Florida to ensure that employers have the best assistance or any pertinent workforce needs. For more information, please contact:

### JAXUSA TALENT DEVELOPMENT

- Dr. Anna Lebesch**, Senior Vice President  
(904) 366-6651 or [alebesch@jaxusa.org](mailto:alebesch@jaxusa.org)
- Melissa Vasseur**, Senior Director  
(904) 366-6637 or [Mvasseur@jaxusa.org](mailto:Mvasseur@jaxusa.org)
- Kaci Kelley**, Senior Coordinator of Talent & Marketing  
(904) 366-6615 or [kkelley@jaxusa.org](mailto:kkelley@jaxusa.org)
- Kathryn Luce**, Talent & Marketing Coordinator  
(904) 366-6612 or [kluce@jaxusa.org](mailto:kluce@jaxusa.org)

