



Ministerial Statement

By:

The Hon. Jason P. Hayward, JP, MP

Minister of Economy and Labour

Workforce Development Updates

Friday, 26 September 2025

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to provide Honourable Members with an update on the work that the Ministry of Economy and Labour is undertaking to ensure Bermudians are equipped with the skills, opportunities, and support they need to thrive in the labour market. The Economic Development Strategy and the Youth Employment Strategy are the foundation of the Government's workforce development efforts.

Mr. Speaker

The Youth Employment Strategy continues to be one of the Government's most impactful initiatives. Between April and July 2025, more than 160 young Bermudians participated in employment programmes, training, and career development services.

- More than 150 youth engaged in the Summer Employment Programme (SEP) and Student Internship Programme (SIP), gaining valuable work experience in both the public and private sectors.
- Tailored work readiness workshops such as Mock Interviews, Resume Writing, Interview with Confidence, and Service Excellence supported over 120 participants in building the soft skills required to succeed in today's job market.
- Continued delivery of Wisdom Wednesday sessions provided mentorship, networking, and ongoing development support for student cohorts.

Mr. Speaker,

Behind these numbers are powerful stories. A young man preparing to transition out of the Independent Living Facility is now entering our Bridge to Work programme. Another young person secured an interview at the Bermuda Hospitals Board for an Addictions Counselor Assistant role. A 23-year-old was placed with a construction firm to pursue his goal of becoming a mason, and a young mother is overcoming childcare barriers while preparing to re-enter the workforce. These stories illustrate the transformative impact of the Youth Employment Strategy.

Mr. Speaker,

Beyond youth programming, the Department continues to strengthen Bermuda's training and apprenticeship ecosystem.

- Over 540 Bermudians have participated in employability training this year, with 78% of participants reporting improved skills in the months following training.

- There are currently 41 active apprentices across employers including BELCO, BAC, AirCare, Mid Atlantic Steel Supply, Brangman Electrical, and the Bermuda Hospitals Board.
- New apprenticeship opportunities are being developed in Power Engineering, Information Technology, and Motor Mechanics, with close collaboration with and between government departments and industry partners.
- The Department of Workforce Development has also advanced its partnership with the Gang Violence Reduction Team to provide structured training and employment pathways for vulnerable youth.

Mr. Speaker,

The Department of Workforce Development also continues to make progress under the National Certification and Apprenticeship Board Act to ensure Bermuda's trades meet international standards.

- 14 Landscape Gardeners and 7 Automotive Technicians were certified and gazetted this year.
- We are restructuring the Industry Advisory Panels and Occupational Advisory Committees to improve efficiency and compliance with legislation.
- International partnerships are being pursued to establish Bermuda-based certification in Power Engineering, Welding, and additional skilled trades.

Mr. Speaker

Scholarships remain a vital investment in Bermuda's future workforce.

In July 2025, seven new overseas undergraduate scholarships of \$10,000 each were awarded. In addition, a total of \$205,000 in continuance funding was distributed to 21 students already pursuing studies.

Mr. Speaker,

The work of the Department of Workforce Development is producing tangible results.

We are:

- equipping our youth with skills and opportunities;
- expanding apprenticeships and certification in critical sectors;
- supporting vulnerable populations with targeted interventions; and
- modernizing our systems to deliver effective, data-driven services.

These efforts are central to the People pillar of Bermuda's Economic Development Strategy, ensuring that our workforce is prepared, resilient, and positioned to seize opportunities in both traditional industries and the emerging economy.

Mr. Speaker,

I commend the staff of the Department of Workforce Development, led by Director Malika Cartwright, for their persistent dedication and commitment to the people of Bermuda. With their efforts, and the support of this Honourable House, we will continue to empower Bermudians to rise, lead, and thrive in the workforce of tomorrow.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.**