

# SkillUp Coalition Partners with SOAR to Advance Training and High-Growth Careers in Eastern Kentucky



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*Partnership aims to increase 33% labor participation rate across distressed counties, connecting the workforce to regional training programs and good-wage jobs*

PIKEVILLE, Ky., Nov. 1, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- SkillUp Coalition, a national collaboration of nonprofits, training providers, and employers, today announced a new partnership with **Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR)**, a regional nonpartisan nonprofit that champions economic advancement for 54 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) mandated counties throughout Eastern Kentucky heavily impacted by the decline of the coal industry. Through deep labor market analysis, viable job identification, and training provider recommendations, this partnership provides a centralized location where jobseekers can work backward from available jobs to understand the credentialing and training they need, focusing on careers where the time and financial commitments are reasonable.

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**Both SOAR and SkillUp strongly believe in providing affordable resources and training to further upskill workers into high-paying careers."**

- Colby Hall, Executive Director,  
SOAR



**SKILLUP / SOAR**



SkillUp has developed the Eastern Kentucky training catalog, connecting job seekers to nearly 50 short-term national and local training programs, many offered at no or low cost. The new platform helps workers select and prepare for career paths that align with local sectors that are expected to grow significantly in the coming years and offer good-paying jobs, such as healthcare, logistics, agritech, and remote work.

Specifically, SkillUp has developed the **Eastern Kentucky training catalog**, connecting job seekers to nearly 50 short-term national and local training programs, many offered at no or low cost. The new platform helps workers select and prepare for career paths that align with local sectors that are expected to grow significantly in the coming years and offer good-paying jobs, such as healthcare, logistics, agritech, and remote work. Local training providers include Pikeville Medical Center, Big Sandy Community & Technical College, Maysville Community & Technical College, Galen College of Nursing, Hazard Community & Technical College, Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College, and more. Additional platform features allow users to filter and sort programs based on time to train, location, program costs, industry, and average wages, providing transparency to a once cumbersome process.



"At this time of significant promise in the region, Eastern Kentuckians can be confident that the training catalog is their first step toward an economically mobile career," says Elissa Salas, Vice President of Partnerships and Operations, SkillUp. "All programs have been vetted for quality, support services, and industry-recognized credentials, empowering workers and learners to make informed choices about their next career."

This partnership is more important than ever as Eastern Kentucky job growth is expected to increase by nearly 10,000 jobs over the next five years, with thousands of available roles, specifically those in the medical fields, already lacking qualified applicants. In addition to connecting high-growth, high-demand industries, this partnership aims to help Eastern Kentucky improve its labor force participation rate, especially in its most economically distressed counties.

"It's been a real pleasure working with SkillUp on the development of the Eastern Kentucky Training Catalog. Both SOAR and SkillUp strongly believe in providing affordable resources and training to further upskill workers into high-paying careers", says Colby Hall, Executive Director. "As SOAR works to bring about long-term economic revitalization in the Eastern Kentucky coalfields, we have no higher priority than bringing more high-paying jobs to more Eastern Kentuckians."

Workers and job-seekers across Eastern Kentucky can access career and training resources [here](#). If you are a training provider, employer, technology & service provider, or nonprofit interested in joining SkillUp, please visit [www.skillup.org/partners/](http://www.skillup.org/partners/).

## **About SkillUp Coalition**

Founded in July 2020, SkillUp Coalition is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that connects workers with the right tools, resources, and support so they can make confident career shifts, find quality living-wage jobs, and position themselves for promising career growth. Since its founding, SkillUp has connected 1 Million workers to career and training support throughout the country.

The coalition brings together over 90 leading organizations including training and education providers, technology developers, policymakers, employers, and philanthropies. In addition to its national reach, SkillUp operates local partnerships in the Bay Area, Los Angeles, Florida, Louisiana, Northern Nevada, Philadelphia, New York City, Ohio, and now Eastern Kentucky.

SkillUp proudly advocates for an affordable, equitable, upskilling ecosystem that ensures every worker has high-opportunity employment. For more information, please visit [www.skillup.org](http://www.skillup.org) or follow on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

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