



Johnson College and partners launch RISE, a workforce development program

by Dylan Fearon

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SCRANTON (WOLF) — "There was a crisis. There was a workforce and skills gap before the pandemic. It's even worse now," Dr. Katie Leonard, president and CEO of Johnson College said Tuesday.

Leonard and Johnson College partners are on mission to get as many people back to work as possible. According to Leonard, that mission starts with launching the RISE program. Readiness In Skilled Employment. It's a workforce development program, designed to give people the proper education and technical training- so they can have successful careers in the workforce.

"It's our responsibility as the only technical college in the region to reach out to our partners and say 'we have to do something,'" Leonard said.

United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA, The Institute of Public Policy & Economic Development and the William G. McGowan Charitable Fund unveiled RISE with Johnson College on campus Tuesday.

If chosen for the program- RISE members would enter a nine-month crash course on the technical field they want to pursue. It's an intense program that Leonard says is like a working 40-hour work weeks.

But you don't have to be a college student. The program is for everyone in Luzerne and Lackawanna counties- and will surely help employers which have had hiring issues for two years. Leonard said they are mainly seeking working adults looking to sharpen skills.

"We saw it coming," Teri Ooms said. "This actually started happening before the pandemic, where we saw employers complaining they couldn't find enough workers at a variety of skill levels."

People in the program would sharpen skills and be trained and educated in their field of choice. Then they would head into the workforce with sharpened skills.

Leonard says the first class of RISE members will be between 20-30 people.

To apply and learn more- [click here](#) or call 570-346-6203.