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O'Malley aims to boost Maryland's 'middle-skill' work force

Baltimore Business Journal - by [Gary Haber](#) Staff

Gov. Martin O'Malley unveiled a new initiative Tuesday to better prepare workers for jobs that require more than a high school diploma but less education than a 4-year college degree.

Maryland will be the 15th state to participate in Skills2Compete, a national effort to prepare workers for so-called "middle-skill" jobs that include information technology, health care, nursing and law enforcement.

"In this economy, we must do everything we can to build the middle-skill and high-skill work force that is so critical to economic recovery and long-term economic success," O'Malley said in a press release announcing the program. "Economic recovery takes more than just attracting businesses and creating jobs, it also means equipping those businesses and filling those jobs with a world-class Maryland workforce."

The aim of the Skills2Compete program is to make sure that every working Maryland resident has access to at least two years of post-high school training by 2012.

O'Malley has designated Lt. Gov. Anthony G. Brown to lead the effort, including coordinating with the Governor's Workforce Investment Board.

Middle-skill jobs are a fast-growing part of the economy. By 2016, there will be more than 434,000 job openings in Maryland requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a 4-year college degree, according to a new study by the National Skills Coalition. That will account for about 40 percent of all projected job openings in the state, the study said.

O'Malley also announced Tuesday that the state will work with Complete College America, a nonprofit organization to boost the number of Marylanders who obtain a 4-year college degree.



Gov. Martin O'Malley.

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