

# 50 Graduate from Innovative Workforce Employment Program

*State's partnership with Generation USA Youth Employment Program prepares young First Staters to succeed in new economy*

**New Castle, DE** – Governor Markell today joined hundreds of friends and family members who celebrated the graduation of 50 Delawareans who have recently completed the Generation USA Youth Employment Program, a partnership with the McKinsey Social initiative, and are on the path to securing employment in a variety of in-demand fields.

This evening's ceremony in the Clarion Hotel's Belle Golden Ballroom recognized individuals who have completed training through the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program and the new customer service program, which prepares participants for a range of customer-facing roles, including in hospitality and retail companies. Additionally, the CNA program is currently holding classes and Generation is recruiting 50 students to begin the customer service training program in May.

"We're working hard to give every Delawarean the opportunity to succeed by acquiring the skills to compete in today's knowledge-based economy," Markell said. "The graduates who have completed Generation employment programs have embraced the opportunity to earn meaningful employment and proven that when they're given encouragement and the tools to succeed, they have the ability to meet that challenge. I am grateful for the commitment that McKinsey Social Initiative and Generation have made to Delaware and am proud to support our growing partnership."

In his 2015 State of the State address, Markell announced the launch of the initiative as part of a multi-pronged effort to ensure all Delawareans have access to the education and job

training necessary to thrive in today's fast-changing economy. With the state's backing, Wilmington was selected as a pilot city for Generation, a workforce employment program of McKinsey Social Initiative that targets young workers, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, who are either unemployed or underemployed, offering career-building training in fast-growing professions. In August, 15 graduates completed the first program, which offered accelerated CNA training. Seven more nursing students and 43 customer service graduates were honored tonight.

"Generation's graduates inspire us through their success. We offer our warmest congratulations to the latest Wilmington graduates, and we are thrilled to have them join the growing numbers of program alumni in the region," said Dr. Mona Mourshed, Executive Director of Generation. "Generation's success would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our students and graduates, as well as the strong partnerships we've forged over the past year with Governor Markell and the many wonderful local organizations who continue to help us deliver and expand the program."

Students are selected through a competitive application process, receive 6-8 weeks of intensive training, pass necessary industry certifications, and receive individual assistance from instructional and support staff to secure interviews and employment. Generation works in Delaware with a range of local partners, including nearly a dozen employers who make a commitment to hiring program graduates. The Delaware Department of Labor has provided grants to help support these efforts.

Generation Wilmington classes have been offered in conjunction with the Wilmington campuses of Delaware Technical and Community College and Springfield College.

"Prior to joining the Generation program, I saw no way to earn a better education or jump start my career," said customer

service program graduate Ronné Robinson. “Generation made me see that I was capable of doing class work at the college level and could achieve even more in life through my consistent efforts and hard-work.”

“I had lost my job and had tried for months to find employment on my own. I found myself frustrated, stressed, and on the verge of losing hope,” said Shyla Rosa, who also just completed the customer service course. “Generation showed us that none of us are above growth and putting our best foot forward is necessary if we want success for ourselves and family. Today I hold a mid-level position with the opportunity to join a management training program.”

The Generation program integrates technical training in the classroom and at job sites, along with behavioral and mindset skills, which helps students prepare to overcome both workplace and personal challenges. Social support and mentorship is available to all students throughout the full-time course to enable even the most vulnerable young people to be successful, and students receive stipends to cover basic transportation and other costs. Generation ensures that graduates continue to have access to support and regular follow-up contact for the first six months of their employment.

### **McKinsey Social Initiative**

Founded by McKinsey & Company in 2014, McKinsey Social Initiative applies problem solving expertise to develop innovative approaches to complex social challenges. McKinsey Social Initiative implements individual programs, each of which focuses on a single issue and brings together partners from the private, public, and social sectors to create solutions. It is an independent 501(c)(3). Generation is McKinsey Social Initiative’s first program.

Interested young people or employers can contact [generationwilmington@mckinseysocialinitiative.org](mailto:generationwilmington@mckinseysocialinitiative.org) or visit the

Generation website at [www.generationinitiative.org](http://www.generationinitiative.org) to learn more about its training program.