

2021 Team Kentucky Workforce WHERE Report



Moving Kentucky Forward Through
Workforce Training & Development

Kentucky
WORKFORCE
INNOVATION BOARD

Team Kentucky Workforce
WHERE our goal is better Wages, quality and
affordable Healthcare, excellent Education, well-
earned Retirement, and leading by Example

TEAM
KENTUCKY

EDUCATION AND
LABOR CABINET

In Program Year 2021 (PY2021), several of the Commonwealth of Kentucky's workforce development areas (WDA's) have seen unprecedented economic growth. Many lessons were learned during the last couple of years as we worked to be flexible and offer additional resources and services to employers as well as to those seeking employment via the Commonwealth's public workforce system. Increased collaboration across workforce partners, intentionality, and working with employers to align and blend state and local resources remain a compelling priority.

With the merger of the Education Workforce Development and Labor Cabinets into the Education and Labor Cabinet, efficiencies have been identified, communication and processes are under review for simplification and continuous improvement.

During PY2021, our workforce ecosystem intentionally worked to elevate best practices, identify barriers, and take steps to remove them. We strive to nurture effective pilot programs and make them sustainable while bringing additional partners to the table.

We remain resolute in our commitment to identifying and supporting the implementation of recommendations to develop a lifelong learning continuum of education, training, and preparation for the workforce. We are utilizing assets across the Commonwealth to provide resources to Kentuckians in achieving and sustaining economic self-sufficiency throughout their working lives and address employers' talent supply needs.

Since adoption in 2017, our vision continues to be "create a workforce development system that is value driven for employers, aligns education with industry demands, prepares Kentuckians for the future of work and drives economic development."

In our narrative, you will find examples of continued work across Kentucky that promotes systemic change, expand services and programs to employers and addresses diversity, equity, and access within the system. Also, work continues to identify and break down silos through partnership and transformation of processes.

Sincerely,
Beth Brinly
Deputy Secretary
Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet



Moving Businesses Forward Through Workforce Services

The Kentucky Career Center (KCC) system seeks to bring together workforce development professionals, businesses, training providers, career-seekers, and educators from around Kentucky to help spark innovative ways to hire, retain, and grow Kentucky's workforce. Any and all workforce development efforts to move a business forward can be found by connecting with the KCC. The KCC is the one-stop hub for all workforce initiatives.

KCC bridges career seekers with employers – building the capacity of the former and creating sustainable training models for the latter. Workforce services offered to career seekers include résumé critiques, mock interviews, information on local training courses and programs, and connections to registered apprenticeships. For employers, KCC acts as a dynamic extension of an organization's human resources department at no additional expense to the business, assisting with recruiting, skill development, and the pursuit of incentives designed to increase the proportion of underrepresented groups in the workforce. As the access point to the workforce ecosystem, employers can gain access to a variety of services tailored to their specific needs in the areas of workforce recruitment, training, and incentives.

From the experience gained in the pandemic and being in the heightened phase of a tight labor market, KCC has continued to serve. Employers often ask the KCC to help hire new employees, and with good reason: KCC connects skilled Kentuckians with rewarding careers. The local career center hosts community-wide job fairs where businesses and job seekers meet. These services have turned into novel uses of technology, including the implementation of social media platforms, virtual and drive-thru job fairs, and the presentation of spotlights on various employers. Partners in Kentucky's workforce development system have created a hybrid direct-service model today.

KCC provides a vital service by educating and enhancing Kentucky's workforce, believing creativity is the key to staying relevant. While many businesses claim success in imparting technical know-how to their staff, they

frequently fall short in fostering the “soft skills” that promote cohesive teams and clear lines of communication. KCC can meet this demand by collaborating with regional employers to provide a comprehensive training program that emphasizes developing skills such as effective communication, teamwork, collaboration, critical thinking, and professionalism in the workplace.



Kentucky is advancing business by collaborating on workforce services, which will create a more resilient and robust workforce. Our objectives are summarized by the acronym WHERE, which stands for wages, healthcare, education, retirement, and example. Our goals are for Kentucky residents to have higher wages, access to quality and affordable healthcare, a good education, and well-earned retirement. Furthermore, we can do all of this while setting a good example. These are the areas in which Governor Andy Beshear and our leadership are committed to making improvements, and business plays a critical role in that effort.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers Performance Indicators

To evaluate its effectiveness in serving businesses, Kentucky used the business penetration rate and the percentage of repeat business as its metrics of choice. Methods like this aim to meet businesses' demands for trained employees by fostering strong connections between employers and prospective employees. The business penetration rate indicates how many businesses in a state are using the KCC system of services as a share of all businesses in the state. Using this method, we can keep tabs on the share of the state's total business population that is making use of the program's foundational services. The penetration rate measures how well an area's foundational programs prepare its residents for work. Kentucky maintained a nationally high rate of serving employers with strategic workforce business engagement at the penetration rate of 36% in PY2021.

The second metric for Kentucky is the percentage of businesses that have used the same service within the past three years. This method keeps tabs on how often



service recipients return for repeat services from the KCC's foundational offerings, and how to track loyal customers aids in figuring out if businesses benefit from KCC's key programs and see enough value in those services to warrant returning for more. In PY2021, 82% of the Commonwealth's businesses were returning customers. Over 200 engaged business service experts with a wide range of experience and resources are available through the Kentucky business services network. Titles I, II, III, and IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet, the Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet, local economic development agencies, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) and its member schools, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Employment Programs, the Department of Corrections Re-Employment Programs, and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce all contribute to the business solutions offered. Through the collaborative approach, businesses return to the public workforce system and gain value from the wide range of expertise.

Community economic growth, educational opportunities, and government all benefit from the work of business solution teams. The state of Kentucky's business services has taken on a more proactive role as of late, helping companies retain and create jobs while also rising to the challenge of competitive threats and seizing opportunities. They network with companies, learn about, and diagnose the problems holding them back from expansion, and provide the tools and support needed for success.

Continuous Improvement on Customer Satisfaction

Kentucky will build a workforce investment assessment system that combines the results of independent review with the collection of common performance measures and then align those results with program improvements and innovations. Basic service delivery performance standards will be set to continuously improve. New comprehensive WIOA service delivery ideas and standards will be added

over time to help ensure that common measure and customer satisfaction results go up over time. Kentucky will add to this basic approach and develop broader continuous improvement activities across the workforce system. Kentucky will evaluate statewide cross-program common data elements and gain information on the job seeker and employer programs, services and processes on an ongoing basis. This will allow the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board, along with the core program and additional partners, to be committed to an aligned cohesive service delivery system with a shared understanding of policy and performance.

Reciprocal referral services with the Career Development Office and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation: CDO and OVR have established reciprocal referral services which allow for more efficient services to individuals with disabilities. OVR plans activities to improve services in the state for individuals with multiple impairments, including individuals with dual sensory loss. The Central Office administrative functions for these workforce programs are centrally located in Frankfort to assure collaboration among the workforce partners. Kentucky is committed to gathering the collective data required under section 116 of WIOA for all the core partners. WIOA Section 116 (b) (2) (A) and its implementing regulations 34 CFR 361.155 (a) (1) establish the six primary indicators of performance. Core programs and partners, including OVR, have access to a business customer relationship management system based on a Salesforce platform. This platform allows the tracking of business engagement and reporting for the aligned goal of furthering business services and is the tool that encompasses the Kentucky Integrated Business Engagement System (KIBES). This allows for tracking of the Employer measures. Kentucky assesses the overall effectiveness of the workforce investment system in relation to the strategic vision and goals of the KWIB and information from all the core programs. The ultimate goal is to increase the long-term employment outcomes for individuals seeking services, especially those with barriers to employment, to improve services to employers and demonstrate continuous improvement. Kentucky will also continue to assess the effectiveness and physical and programmatic accessibility of the

career centers -- in accordance with Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) -- and strives for continuous improvement of the career centers. Kentucky has a certification process in place to ensure that KCC offices are ready to serve all qualified persons in the regional and local areas as expected. The certification process is fundamental to ensuring the alignment of programs, policies and activities in the workforce system. Workforce agencies and partners are engaged in these assessments and making any needed improvements to ensure that all related activities are being coordinated in a way that allows partners to review relevant information and take action to improve the system. OVR, the KWIB, and the KWIB Collaborative work closely with the Inclusive Worker Network, the recently codified Employment First Council, and the Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky to ensure that our workforce ecosystem for differently abled Kentuckians provides connections to inclusive hiring practices, education on workplace interventions, and providing supports for employees with a short-term illness or injury transitioning back to the workforce. Our cross-agency development continues to focus on employer engagement, to create more opportunities for all Kentuckians.

Office of Adult Education (OAE)

The Office of Adult Education (OAE) assists Kentuckians improve the quality of their lives through education, training, and employment. Services and programs are governed by WIOA 2014, Section 203 and the delivery of services are addressed in Kentucky Senate Bill 1, 2000. Adult Education services are provided by a Local Provider Network (LPN) consisting of 26 local providers across all 120 counties.

Kentucky Adult Education is committed to being a valuable WIOA partner. It is embedded within the Kentucky WIOA partnership community and provides Title II services in support of and aligned with the efforts of Titles I, III, and IV partners and support agencies. The mitigation of barriers to education, training, and employment through co-enrollment across the WIOA partnership community is the focus of the Path Ahead for Adult Education in Kentucky. Integrated Education and Training (IET) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs are opportunities to address the needs of Kentuckians by leveraging

the efforts of all WIOA partners. In addition, OAE will continue to expand partnerships in support of justice-involved and recovery citizens throughout the Commonwealth.

OAE is located in Kentucky Career Centers and One-Stops as the Title II provider and is in the process of codifying a referral process to better serve the needs of Kentuckians also receiving services from other WIOA partners. The OAE is establishing processes and protocols to align the LPN services and programs with initiatives and activities. One example of this is the Putting Kentuckians First Initiative which sets the conditions for success for citizens transitioning out of a justice-involved situation.

Career Development Office (CDO)

As the Career Development Office (CDO) navigated through the COVID-19 pandemic, learning opportunities were presented, especially as the Kentucky Career Centers



reopened in April 2021. The CDO approach to providing essential employment services became more robust with how to best serve Kentuckians statewide. This led CDO to begin providing flexible, virtual access to these services through Blackboard and other platforms as well as being able to pivot focus and effort more easily to meet the needs of both job seekers and businesses.

With the effects of pandemic diminishing, CDO now offers in-person services in addition to continuing virtual services. The hybrid experience has resulted in a greater capacity of customers being served. Providing quicker and more thorough front-end support as well as having a robust channel of communication to provide expedited assistance is changing the logistics of how the Career Development Office assists the customer. As CDO moves forward, these changes and flexibility are being adopted to continue conducting and safeguarding employment services.

Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services

The Kentucky Career Center system's Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services (OEAS) provides educational and informational services to help employers discover innovative approaches to hiring, retaining, and developing their workforce. The primary goal of the

OEAS is to coordinate, promote, market, and provide businesses with access to workforce partners through resources and services.

Kentucky continually works to build an innovative and business-inclusive workforce system envisioned in WIOA. KCCs recognize businesses as equally important customers as job seekers and focus on a demand-driven approach to assisting businesses with recruiting talent, training new and existing employees, and developing workforce strategies. The business services strategy is built around the primary organizations that provide resources and services to businesses, including:

- Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB)
- Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development (CED)
- The Kentucky Chamber’s Workforce Center
- Kentucky Community & Technical College System
- Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board
- Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet

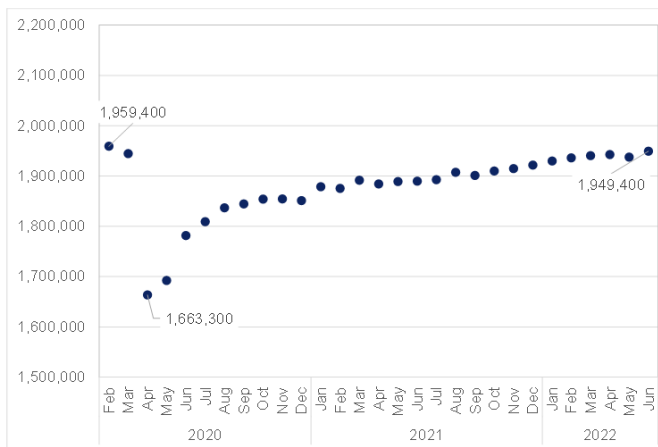
Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)

Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS) serves at the center of the Commonwealth’s workforce data.

In PY 2021, Kentucky’s labor market continued to recover from the lasting impacts of COVID-19. According to data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program, nonfarm employment reached an all-time peak in February 2020 at 1,959,400 jobs. However, in March 2020, widespread COVID lockdowns began, and by April 2020 total nonfarm employment had dropped 15 percent, losing 296,100 jobs.

The labor market began to rebound almost immediately,

Total Nonfarm Employment in Kentucky, February 2020 through June 2022

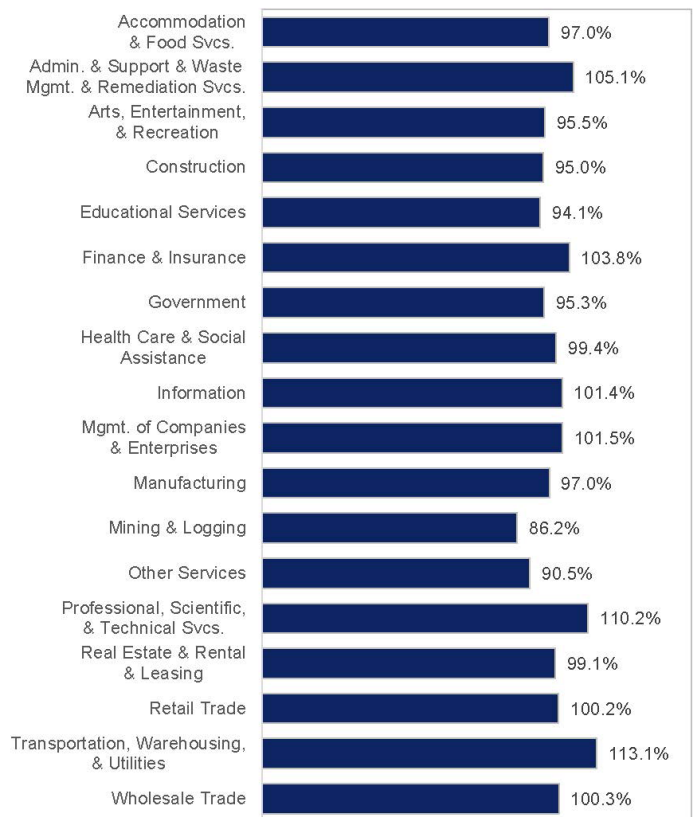


Note: Seasonally adjusted
Source: BLS, Current Employment Statistics (data extracted October 2022)

adding 28,800 jobs in May 2020, and another 89,600 in June. The pace of recovery slowed in subsequent months, but job gains continued in both PY 2020 and PY 2021. By the end of PY 2020 (June 2021) Kentucky’s nonfarm employment had risen to 1,889,700. In PY 2021, Kentucky added another 59,700 jobs back into the state’s economy. As of June 2022, nonfarm employment stood at 1,949,400, only 10,000 jobs shy (or 0.5 percent) of the February 2020 pre-pandemic peak.

Although every major industry in Kentucky experienced declining employment from February to April 2020, nearly two thirds of the jobs lost during this time were in four industries: Accommodation and Food Services (75,500 jobs lost), Health Care and Social Assistance (36,600 lost), Manufacturing (45,100 jobs lost), and Retail Trade (29,700 lost). In February 2020, these four industries accounted for 901,700 jobs, 46 percent of total nonfarm employment. Their combined employment fell nearly 21 percent by April. In other words, one in five jobs in February 2020 in these four industries were lost by April.

Employment Recovered by Industry, February 2020 to June 2022



Note: Seasonally adjusted
Source: BLS, Current Employment Statistics (data extracted October 2022)

By June 2022, total nonfarm employment was 99.5 percent of the February 2020 total. There were eight industries with higher employment in June 2022 than in February 2020:

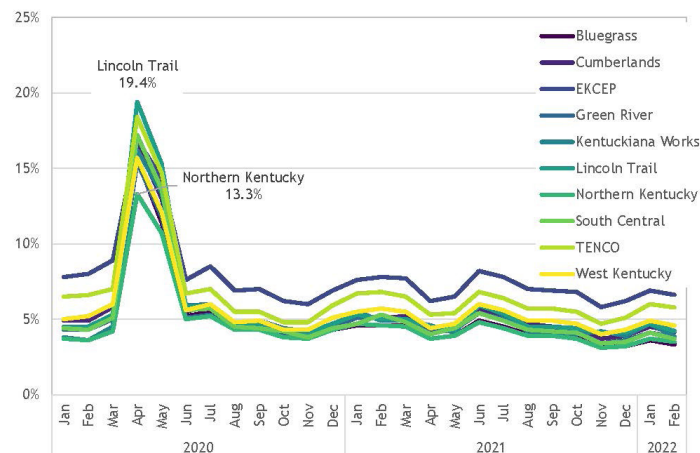
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
- Finance and Insurance
- Information
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Retail Trade
- Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities
- Wholesale Trade

Two of these sectors in particular played a strong role in the recovery adding nearly 24,000 jobs. In June 2022, the Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities sector had 15,800 more jobs than it did in February 2020. Employment in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector had increased by 8,000 over this same time period.

Three of the four industries hardest hit by the pandemic had yet to fully recover by the end of PY 2021. As of June 2022, employment in both Accommodation and Food Services and in Manufacturing was 97.0 percent of February 2020 levels. Health Care and Social Assistance stood at 99.4 percent of pre-pandemic levels.

Data from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program were used to determine if employment in the LWAs has recovered to pre-pandemic levels. The LAUS data are not seasonally adjusted. Due to the

Unemployment Rate by LWA, January 2020 to February 2022

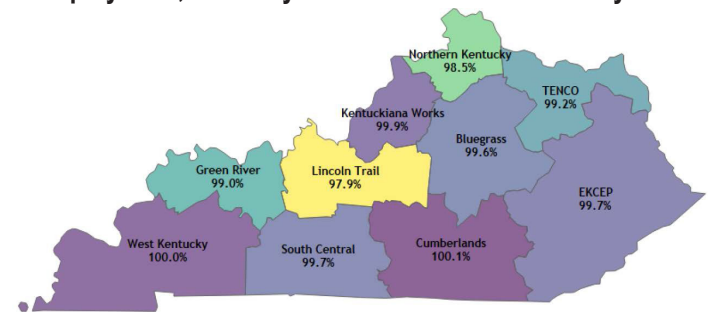


Source: LAUS, not seasonally adjusted (data extracted April 2022)

seasonality of work, it is best to compare the same months over time. The following analysis looks at changes in employment in the LWAs from February 2020 to February 2022.

Similar to the employment estimates by industry, LAUS estimates also exhibited the most significant pandemic-related impacts in April 2020. All of Kentucky's LWAs experienced a spike in unemployment rates at this time, with the highest rate in Lincoln Trail at 19.4 percent and the lowest in Northern Kentucky at 13.3 percent. The path of recovery was similar among LWAs as well, with unemployment rates dropping through 2020, increasing slightly in early 2021 and then dropping again. By February 2022, unemployment rates had dipped below pre-pandemic levels for all but one of the LWAs, Kentuckiana Works which at 3.9 percent was still 0.3 percentage points higher than the 3.6 percent recorded in February 2020.

Employment, February 2022 as a Share of February 2020



Source: LAUS, not seasonally adjusted (data extracted April 2022)

This discrepancy between Kentuckiana Works and other LWAs may reflect more unemployed workers in this area remaining in the labor force and actively looking for work throughout the pandemic. The civilian labor force of the Kentuckiana Works LWA dropped to a low of 493,676 people in June 2020. A year later, the civilian labor force was greater than pre-COVID levels in five of the nine months between June 2021 and February 2022.

LAUS employment estimates also showed a rebound to near pre-pandemic levels. The map below shows February 2022 employment as a share of February 2020 employment in the LWAs to determine how much employment has recovered from the pandemic employment losses. Rates range from a low of 97.9 percent in Lincoln Trail to 100.1 percent in Cumberlandands indicating that employment in the Cumberlandands LWA in February 2022 exceeded employment in February 2020.

More than two years after the COVID pandemic began, employment levels have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels throughout Kentucky and its industries though, some segments of the economy have recovered faster than others.

Looking toward the future, many companies have chosen Kentucky as a location of future operations or expansion. During PY 2021, there were 263 active projects that received approval from CED and were being monitored for compliance. These projects had a combined estimated investment of \$6.7 billion. Collectively, these projects may bring an estimated 13,359 jobs to the state, with four LWAs slated to grow their workforce by more than 1,000 jobs each when the projects are complete: Bluegrass, Kentuckiana Works, Northern Kentucky, and South Central.

Note that not all expansions or locations receive state tax incentives.

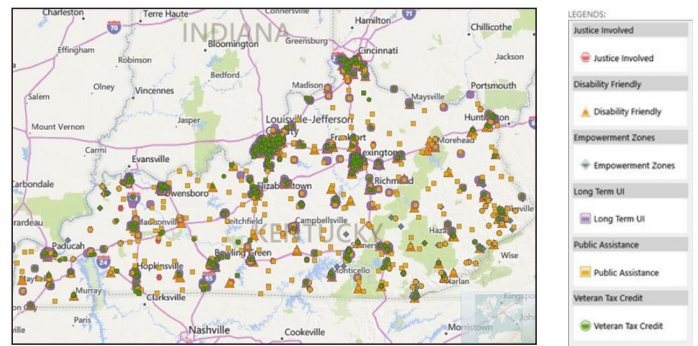
Local Workforce Area	Total Project Count	Total Project Investment	Estimated New Jobs
Bluegrass	61	\$412,854,818	2,052
Cumberlands	12	\$118,572,213	650
EKCEP	1	\$1,237,000	75
Green River	12	\$773,925,119	756
Kentuckiana Works	63	\$714,682,760	3,209
Lincoln Trail	24	\$823,220,903	899
Northern Kentucky	36	\$2,474,280,642	2,689
South Central	18	\$769,392,692	1,680
TENCO	11	\$87,899,384	459
West Kentucky	25	\$532,998,921	890
State Total	263	\$6,709,064,452	13,359

Note: Includes active projects that received approval during PY 2021
Source: Cabinet for Economic Development (data extracted October 2022)

KCC Tax Credit Incentive Programs

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from certain targeted groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment, including qualified veterans, ex-felons, long-term unemployment recipients, individuals who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, and individuals who have received rehabilitative services for a disability. KY WOTC staff has issued 38,138 certifications for these targeted groups for the PY2021. Kentucky employers saved from \$1,200 - \$9,600 per qualified hire. Utilizing the WOTC, employers can have an incentive to diversify their talent pool by access untapped talent pools, such as individuals with justice-involvement. In PY2021, there are 2,911 certificates issued for the Ex-Felon category. Such strives to increase and diversify the workforce involvement provides businesses previously overlooked talent, while providing opportunity to Kentuckians.

Kentucky Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Company Utilization by Eligible WOTC Categories



Source – Dun & Bradstreet, 2022

Kentucky Unemployment Tax Credit (UTC) provides employers a credit of \$100 per eligible hire against Kentucky income taxes owed when they hire residents who have been unemployed for 60 days and remain on the payroll for at least 180 days.

Another great program that complements WOTC and UTC is the Federal Bonding Program which was rebranded in Kentucky in PY2021 to be called the KY Fair Chance Bond program. The Fair Chance bond can provide employers a no-cost, no-deductible insurance program ranging from \$5,000-\$25,000 in protection to help minimize risk for employers and offer opportunity to job seekers. In PY2021 employers ranging from automotive retail, manufacturing, hospitality, logistics, equine, and others have utilized the program to help hire individuals with justice involvement. Specific to Kentucky's unique industries, the equine sector of the economy has seen a great need to access new talent pools as the pandemic impacted traditional hiring. With the use of the KY Fair Chance Bonding program, individuals with justice-involvement that have gone through specific equine training during their incarceration are provided opportunities to enter careers in the equine industry.

Kentucky Registered Apprenticeship

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) in Kentucky fulfills a strategic data-driven solution for employers' workforce development needs.

RAPs are a part of achieving the vision of Kentucky being a national leader in workforce development.

A RAP combines on-the-job training, learning from doing the job, and the theoretical knowledge of the particular occupation. Through this joint approach, the apprentice becomes a subject matter expert and can fill the most in-demand and hard-to-fill positions on the market today.

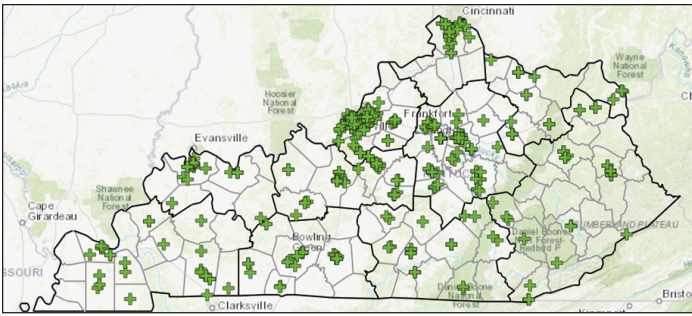


Image Source: KYSTATS

<https://kcews.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=59cb628b62894c0d9c60f73c7b370008>

Kentucky's RAP is a model program in preparing individuals to enter and advance in the workforce successfully. Even in a global pandemic, these programs have provided career pathways for those just entering the workforce, and a means to broaden opportunities for those looking to expand their careers.

In PY2021, Kentucky showed its resiliency coming out of the pandemic and supporting heightened hiring and training needs by adding new programs, occupations, employers and apprentices throughout the year. The Commonwealth continued its initiatives to expand outreach, including utilizing a dedicated email to apprenticeships, virtual weekly open office hours, multiple monthly and weekly collaborations focused specifically on registered apprenticeships, and presentations across conferences for exposure and promotion of RAP. In PY2021, Kentucky registered 29 new programs and added 53 occupations to the roster of more than 300 sponsors and over 4,500 apprentices.

Today's registered apprenticeships go beyond traditional skilled trades to encompass careers such as aerospace engineer, physical therapy aide, office manager, and even a whiskey specialist.

Over 1,400 occupations are recognized for apprenticeship programs. These innovative programs offer an alternative path to postsecondary education and is the original four-year degree. In PY2021, new occupations includes the innovative Early Childhood Administrator/Director which is a direct result of an executive wide initiative to meet the high demand in the childcare industry. Through the direct partnership with the Kentucky Governor's Office for Early Childhood Education, an approach to close the workforce recruitment and training gap is taken place through registered apprenticeships. Additionally, Kentucky has grown its IT and healthcare occupations as more businesses see the benefit of the structured model of apprenticeships. Registered Apprenticeship is one of the

best programs to drive innovation, increase retention and create a pipeline of incoming talent. In fact, Kentucky Registered Apprenticeship programs produce a retention rate of 87%!

Partners & Assessment Tools

National Career Readiness Certificate

PY2021 saw a continued need for the Kentucky Work Readiness credentials. The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and the Kentucky Career Readiness Certificate (KCRC) by WIN measure those foundational skills that employers need. In FY2021, there were 1,249 Work Ready NCRCs earned by job seekers, fueled by KCC and the public workforce system.

WIN Career Readiness System trains and measures skills attainment using the KCRC and the Kentucky Essential Skills Certificate (KESC). Together these two assessments fulfill 16 of the 17 top items on the Manufacturing Institute's Skills Gap.

KESC is an evidence-based soft-skills credential measures teamwork, communication skills, problem-solving ability and professionalism. In PY2021, WIN Career Readiness launched a new training module designed to target digital literacy. The Digital Literacy courseware comprises of computer basics, internet basics, digital communication basics, digital documents basics, and digital security; together, the courseware provided learners an ability to test for the Digital Literacy Credential. Kentucky sees these skills as the fundamental to growth and overcoming barriers for many individuals that are looking to access the new economy that heavily relies on digital literacy.

Further, the WIN Career Readiness System has been targeted as one of the pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship tools to either prepare or supplement individuals throughout the related instructions portion of their program. In addition to working with the Department of Corrections' adult institutions and probation and parole offices on the use the KESC.

Kentucky Integrated Business Engagement System (KIBES)

Kentucky tracks business services and engagement through the Kentucky Integrated Business Engagement System (KIBES), a statewide customer relationship management system. The implementation of OEAS Workforce Development Consultants has increased

statewide staff business engagement and focused on returning value to business customers. Through KIBES, the close to 200 BST members and workforce partners representing 10 workforce regions can communicate and track the progress of company contacts, ongoing relationships, programs and activities utilized, and the overall status of company engagement. Having BST members on one platform makes more collaboration possible as an existing company record owner could introduce their colleague to the BST with a unique program or opportunity for the business customer.

Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Market Insight System

OEAS and the workforce partners use the Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Market Insight System to align business needs to core partner services. This innovative, proactive approach uses data to identify which companies are in a growth pattern, a stable state, or experiencing a potential downturn and need early intervention for layoff aversion strategies. D&B applies the following two leading indicators of a business's financial growth outlook: Financial Stress Score provides predictive insights into the most likely businesses to fail within the next 12-18 months. Conversely, it enables strategic targeting of financially solid conditions and candidates for expansion. While, Material Change/ Opportunity Segment follows real-time business activity and operating signals to determine what businesses demonstrate in-the-moment growth characteristics or show signs of contraction or declining business activity.

OEAS gathers this real-time monthly data from D&B, filtered by the local workforce development area, and distributes accordingly to provide targeted information for all the local partners to evaluate and initiate business engagement processes.

Kentucky Rapid Response

Kentucky's Rapid Response efforts are coordinated through the Education and Labor Cabinet's team at OEAS in partnership with local providers in each Local Workforce Development Area. Rapid Response from the Kentucky Career Center is a layoff aversion strategy and a business transition service provided on-site to deliver a smooth transition to new employment for all affected employees.

Rapid Response partners with state agencies, local workforce development boards, education stakeholders, and local non-profit groups to assist employers in finding, training and keeping the best talent and helping Kentuckians find, obtain and maintain the best jobs. As a confidential outplacement service that assists employers and employees in transition, the Rapid Response Team works closely with the Local Workforce Development teams to customize services to each layoff and each company's needs and expectations at no cost.

Reaching out to the Rapid Response Team can reduce the cost of layoffs for the business and employees. The team provides the following services: assistance with transition planning; information about alternatives that could lessen the impact of a layoff; pre-layoff services to help workers shorten their transition time; information on Kentucky Career Center and unemployment insurance; assistance in maintaining worker morale and productivity during the transition; help in preparing affected workers to find new employment; and information about the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notice Act (WARN) and plant closing laws.

Appendix

Activities Provided by State Funds Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board

The Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) serves the 17 counties of the Bluegrass region. In the past program year, Bluegrass enrolled 411 adults, dislocated workers and trade participants, and 129 youth participants. In business services, of the 151 employers who signed master agreements for on-the-job training (OJT), internships and work experience, 124 agreed to hire individuals with barriers such as criminal backgrounds and in recovery.

During PY 2021, Bluegrass partnered with Taylor Made Farm to provide apprenticeship and internship opportunities to individuals in recovery. The horse industry is a staple for the economy of Kentucky and there is a great need for individuals who can work on horse farms. Horses also are known for their therapeutic ability, so the development of the Equestrian Initiative was a great opportunity for the Transitions 2 Transformation (T2T) program. This initiative began as a conversation between The Fletcher Group, a local recovery center; the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass; and Taylor Made Farm. T2T clients are trained in the horse industry in jobs from day-to-day care, grooming, veterinarian assistance, jockeying, training the horses and barn management. After the first year, many of the participants are traveling the United States with Ready Made Racing grooming and training the million-dollar horses as they prepare for races.

Bluegrass continued to focus on its priority of services populations, including ensuring veterans are connected to as many services as possible. Veterans seeking employment have unique needs and specific training as they transition from military to civilian life. In 2021, the Bluegrass Local Workforce Development Area hired a talent development specialist dedicated to partnering with other veteran-specific community organizations to promote and provide veterans services. Examples of the services include:

- monthly employability workshops at the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass office in Lexington for veterans to meet employers, provide resumes, conduct interviews and get job-search assistance.
- one-on-one case management to address specific needs, whether it is employability services, assistance

getting documents or referral to another community organization.

- hosting special events such as job fairs and Veteran's Day celebrations with other veteran-focused community partners.
- allowing a representative from the volunteer organization, Disabled American Veterans, to use the Career Center each week to meet and assist veterans with their needs and benefits.

During the pandemic, Bluegrass recognized that one of the biggest issues in the rural counties is the lack of clothing stores and free clothing for individuals starting employment. The new larger Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass in Lexington features a clothing closet for clients who may need necessities such as clothing, shoes, shampoo and deodorant to start a new job. The closet is currently supplied by donations from a direct service provider and board support staff, as well as clothes from a closed "Dress for Success" program. Bluegrass wants to develop partnerships with local businesses for additional donations to keep this much needed program going.

Through the National Dislocated Worker Grant, the Bluegrass continued to assist individuals affected by COVID by hiring a resource navigator (RN) to find needed resources such as social services, food, transportation and clothing. In addition, we provided employees to employers to assist with COVID needs such as screenings and temperature checks. Bluegrass partnered with the local community college to provide a healthy-at-work training for employers on how to correctly respond and incorporate COVID protocols into their work environment. In addition, Bluegrass supplied personal protective equipment (PPE) to employers and schools in the area to help them continue to thrive safely and remain open during the pandemic.

In an effort to connect to the counties that do not have a physical Kentucky Career Center, Bluegrass installed Career Center kiosks in libraries across our region. Based on the positive response to the initial two kiosks, Bluegrass was awarded a statewide reserve grant to purchase kiosks and televisions for the remaining libraries. Each library has been given a tablet with our online referral form, our website, Career Edge and Focus Career loaded on the home screen to assist them with employment. Upon completion of the referral form, the career center staff will contact the individual within 24

hours. Above each kiosk is a television that has updated job postings, hiring events and informational videos.

In addition, Bluegrass has been working to certify the libraries as access points and the one-stop operator has been training staff. Career center staff have scheduled hours at least one time per month in libraries in each of our 17 counties, greatly benefiting participants who have transportation barriers.

The Bluegrass WIB also is partnering with the Cumberlands, South Central and Northern Kentucky boards on the Commonwealth Coders Program. The Bluegrass has 10 slots for qualified individuals to train as website and mobile application developers. The training lasts 16 weeks and culminates in a final project that showcases the skills they have learned.

In an effort to continue to provide trained individuals to the information technology industry, the Bluegrass WIB reached out to META, formerly Facebook, regarding a partnership for job seekers who would like to pursue a career in social media marketing. This partnership provides free virtual training for job seekers and pairs them with small businesses in the area that need to increase their social media marketing. The first year WIOA paired 22 job seekers with 22 businesses and organizations for a paid internship after completing their training. META has requested to continue this program for an additional year.

The Bluegrass WIB also continued to focus on the healthcare sector as we joined with Kenney Orthopedics and the Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) to train individuals to select, design and fabricate orthopedic and prosthetic devices. WIOA-qualified participants attend classes at BCTC one night a week in addition to 160 hours of job training at Kenney Orthopedics.

We also are partnering with the University of Kentucky (UK) and the BCTC to provide ophthalmology technician internships for individuals who were accepted into the ophthalmic medical technician program. Students attend class one day a week while participating in a 480-hour internship at UK. The participants will be hired by UK or another eye care facility.

With the ongoing success of the regular internet shows that began during the pandemic (Workforce Wednesday, Community Resource Minute, Business Minute and the Bluegrass Business & Economic Update), the Bluegrass continues to increase their use

of technology and social media for outreach and to educate the citizens of the Bluegrass on workforce and community resource issues. In the summer of 2021, the staff entered the world of podcasts as they began recording a bi-weekly workforce-related program called Workforce Adventures.

To connect with more customers, in January 2021, the Bluegrass, under the direction of the Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board (BGWIB) and their strategic plan, also hired a dedicated outreach coordinator to focus on in-person and online outreach to the community.

Cumberlands Workforce Development Area

Mission of the Cumberlands Workforce Development Board

- We partner to serve employers and employees to develop a skilled workforce for the prosperity of our communities.

Lake Cumberland Area Development District (LCADD) serves as the fiscal agent, one-stop operator and direct service provider for the Cumberlands Workforce Development Board. These contracts require serving the individuals in a regional area of 13 counties to provide qualified workers that fit the needs of existing employers and economic development activities.

Supporting Business - Area Career and Job Events

LCADD has three business services staff members who connect local businesses to workforce solutions. The Business Service Team (BST) has worked with many employers to hold hiring events and job fairs throughout the region.

The BST assists employers with on-the-job training programs that allow employees to train while working and the business to be reimbursed for 50% of an employee's wages up to \$2,000 for new hires. During the year, employers received \$97,623 through the program.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are designed for customers that are unemployed, making low wages or unskilled to find a self-sufficient paying job. During this program year, the Cumberlands served 156 adults through ITAs using WIOA formula funds with expenditures of \$413,178. A total of \$1,271,193 was expended through all adult programs.

The Dislocated Workers (DW) program provides services to eligible workers that lose their jobs due to a business or plant closing or a major layoff. During this program year, the Cumberland WIOA served DW participants through the National Dislocated Worker Grant monies. For the program year ending June 2022, we enrolled 77 participants and spent \$203,855. A total of \$565,789 was expended through all dislocated worker programs.

Training providers must be qualified through a request for information process that is now maintained by the state, to create an Eligible Training Provider List for adult and dislocated workers.

National Dislocated Worker Grant Programs

The National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) program provides services to eligible workers that lose their job or a reduction of hours due to COVID. During this program year, the Cumberland enrolled 116 NDWG participants with expenditures of \$504,171 for ITAs and work experience services. Additionally, since the beginning of the COVID grant funds, we have served a total of 255 participants and spent \$920,255.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Program

On July 1, 2005, the Cumberland WIOA became responsible for the training portion of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program (TAA) that helps trade-affected workers who have lost their jobs as a result of increased imports or shifts in production out of the United States. TAA services and benefits help eligible workers get back to work through the One Stop Career Centers. Our workforce area had no trade eligible plant closings during the past year.

Youth Programs

Under WIOA, the law requires 75% of the funds to be expended for out-of-school youth. The LCADD works with most of the local high schools to offer services to in-school youth. Many in-school youth were identified as candidates for the out-of-school program upon graduation for both occupational training and work experience. WIOA requires 20% of youth funds be spent for work experience. At the end of June, 276 youth have been put into the work experience component with \$1,294,969 being spent on work-based learning wages and salaries for career managers. Other youth were placed in OJT contracts with expenditures of \$8,000. Many continue working into the new program year and others are still being enrolled and entered into work. The

CWDB also set funds for out-of-school youth ITAs that would allow them to continue occupational or technical training after graduation. During the program year, \$234,848 was expended on 91 youth for ITAs. At the end of June, 338 out-of-school youth had been enrolled.

Partner Efforts Commonwealth Coders

Commonwealth Coders was originally conceived to prove that individuals from rural Kentucky could not only learn to code but thrive in the career field. Since 2021, this web development training program has produced dozens of graduates who have found success with technology firms across the United States. Rural relevance is a core aspect of their mission.

Commonwealth Coders is an intensive front-end web development training program comprised of four curriculum components: HTML, CSS, JavaScript and Python. The curriculum is delivered over a 16-week period through virtual live instruction. The training program prepares students with the knowledge and the tools to enter the workforce as junior front-end web developers.

Throughout the course, students learn and practice strings, Booleans, create variables, control flow, functions, arrays, and much more. Upon completion, graduates are able to build a basic website. The curriculum is updated annually through consultation with leading industry experts to ensure the students are learning market-relevant skills.

The course prepares students to work in a web-development environment and affiliated career fields. Students complete their individual assignments and participate in team projects throughout the class and are introduced to closely affiliated careers in design, data management and service engineering.

In addition to technical training, the curriculum includes professional development modules. Students complete



resumes, establish LinkedIn accounts, and hear from a wide array of industry experts. The staff works diligently to help each student find an internship or industry occupation upon completion of the training. Commonwealth Coders will launch its fourth training class beginning Fall 2022.

The training, valued at around \$15,000 total, is offered at little or no cost to those who are eligible. There have been many graduates that have described the course as “life-changing.”

This type of program is unique and helps promote tech jobs in rural areas of the state. Its goal is to skill up the communities and let them know that it’s possible for rural Kentucky to train as many innovators as there are coming out of other parts of the country. It is an opportunity for many individuals that may believe that they could never have a career in web development. This class has shown that it is not only possible, but it can and has changed peoples’ lives.

Re-entry

The Re-entry Division of the Cumberland Workforce Development Board has seen great success in the 2021-2022 program year. Undeterred from the collateral effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, our division has expanded programmatically as well as in staffing with Jana Shell serving as the re-entry navigator for the region.



Local, regional and state partners have continued to expand allowing the Re-entry Division to serve more individuals. The Re-entry Division expanded its partnership with the Pulaski County Detention Center and Somerset Community College by offering three welders certificate training cohorts to incarcerated individuals. In addition, the division is offering a work-release program for the inmates who graduated with the credential to begin working full time while still incarcerated.

The Re-entry Division served and interacted with over 600 justice-involved individuals by offering quick-assistance referrals, dedicated case management, and educational workshops throughout the region.

The Re-entry Division was also selected by KWIB to pilot our Re-entry Efforts with the creation of a replicable programming tool kit called Putting Kentuckians First in

Russell County, Kentucky. This program offers in-person assistance at the district court level, with in-person and virtual referral systems from the county attorney and judicial system. With a “task force” approach, Putting Kentuckians First offers the participants wrap around support. These efforts combine and focus workforce, behavioral health, adult education and recovery resources for a comprehensive barrier reduction/elimination approach.

The director of re-entry programming, Aaron Poynter has also spoken at various community and statewide events including, The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Workforce Summit to promote best practices in re-entry. These events and best practices have been shared and replicated across the commonwealth in various applications. Poynter is a graduate of the Leadership Kentucky BRIGHT Class of 2019, Leadership Kentucky Elevate 2021 and was also named a 40 Under 40 Award Recipient for the Lake Cumberland Region in November 2021. Poynter was recently selected as a fellow to represent Kentucky in the Appalachian Leadership Institute class of 2022-2023.

Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP)

Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) in PY 2021 maintained a high level of service to employers and job seekers in its 23-county service area located within rural Appalachia. During PY 2021, EKCEP served a total of 3,017 people, including 1,105 adults, 358 dislocated workers and 1,134 youth.

EKCEP focused its work, in part, to help close gaps for workers in the healthcare industry; utilize quality, short-term skills training to fast-track dislocated workers and adults into new jobs; and serve individuals who remain active in their recovery from substance use issues and youth who have barriers to entering the workforce.

EKCEP maintained a partnership with Appalachian Regional Healthcare and Galen College of Nursing in Hazard to provide tuition assistance to eligible students. To date, the partnership has provided nearly 250 nursing students with \$7,000 scholarships to attend the school and work toward nursing careers, representing an investment of more than \$1.7 million of EKCEP’s WIOA formula funds. More than 80 students have graduated and moved on to healthcare careers.

EKCEP also began a new partnership with Pikeville

Medical Center, Galen College of Nursing in Pikeville, and Big Sandy Community and Technical College (BSCTC) on the new Healthcare Pathway Partnership Program (H3P) designed to put people into nursing career pathways and provide tuition assistance and career navigation to help ensure success. Funded by a U.S. Department of Labor H-1B Rural Healthcare Grant, H3P's first partnership resulted in recruitment for multiple certification and degree programs for employment along the nursing career pathway, including medical technicians, licensed practical nurses and registered nurses. The partnership was recognized during an event with Gov. Andy Beshear attending, and as of October 2022 is serving 160 participants with an additional 24 determined eligible for enrollment in the next quarter.

EKCEP focused on increasing workforce participation among youth ages 18-24 with its Opportunity Youth program, and in 2021 also joined a consortium to form Prosper Appalachia to address some of the most pressing issues facing the region today, namely economic transition and workforce participation for 16-24-year-old Appalachians. Prosper Appalachia currently serves 10 counties in Eastern Kentucky, and during its inaugural summer provided 94 internships on 21 partner employer host sites. Prosper Appalachia ended PY 2021 by kicking off its second round of summer internships, providing 202 Eastern Kentuckians with internships on more than 60 employer host sites.

In PY 2021, EKCEP launched the One Up internship program as an effort to actively engage employers to develop real-world learning opportunities on the job site that could transition to full-time employment. One Up pairs qualified employers with current college students or recent graduates in credential- or certificate-based training in high-impact business sectors. One Up internships may place clients with host employers in the private for profit, non-profit or public sectors for 90-480 hours of work at \$10 per hour. One Up employer hosts can represent various industry sectors that align with EKWB supported industries such as healthcare, business services, information technology, manufacturing, energy production and transmission, and skilled trades. To date, the program has 24 One Up employer hosts with a total of 20 intern placements, with five leading to employment.

EKCEP's Teleworks USA initiative continued to embrace a virtual service model that was first implemented

during the initial COVID-19 restrictions in March 2020. While EKCEP's 23-county region in Eastern Kentucky remains at the center of the program's efforts in connecting workers to remote opportunities, the transition to a virtual service model presented several opportunities for sustainable growth as Teleworks USA embedded in 96 of Kentucky's 120 counties. The Governor's Statewide Reserve Fund project covered expenses for 500 virtual service vouchers that each of the state's Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) could claim on a first-come, first-served basis. The LWDAs that participated included Bluegrass, Cumberlands, Green River, Lincoln Trail, Northern Kentucky, South Central and TENCO. The first-ever, one-year expansion effort has resulted in 337 job placements to date.

Other in-state Teleworks USA expansion projects include ongoing partnerships with Kentucky Association for Health Plans (KAHP) in its purchase of vouchers to assist those affected by the December 2021 tornadoes in Western Kentucky, as well as the recurring purchase of vouchers by Goodwill Industries of Kentucky to assist their current staff in upskilling into higher-wage jobs and those wishing to start a career working from home. Since its launch in 2015, Teleworks USA has helped place more than 4,100 job seekers with national and global employers, including well-known companies such as KellyConnect, Wayfair, Concentrix and Amazon. The companies offer average starting wages of \$14-16 an hour, with many providing employee benefits and the required equipment.

EKCEP's partnership with the East Kentucky Advanced Manufacturing Institute (eKAMI) in Johnson County assisted 203 people to date with tuition and supportive services as they learned skills such as CNC machine operations and robotics as they qualified for new careers. Nearly 100% of these graduates have obtained jobs.

Green River Local Workforce Development Area

The Green River Workforce Development Board supports the workforce by providing the tools necessary to meet the needs of employers and drive economic development by aligning industry demands with lifelong learning. The mission of the Board is to



develop today's workforce and tomorrow's economy by engaging employers, job seekers and partners.

Rapid Response Local Activity

The Green River Local Workforce Development Area (WDA) delivers local Rapid Response activities to respond immediately following an announcement of a permanent closure, mass layoff, natural disaster or other disaster which results in mass job loss.

The WDA is prepared to provide services enabling dislocated workers to transition to new employment without delay. The following Rapid Response events occurred to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, or responding to layoffs and dislocations, and preventing or minimizing their impacts on workers, businesses, and communities.

Company	County	Affected	Attended
Big Rivers	Ohio & Webster	50	26
Century Aluminum	Hancock	628	261
US Bank	Daviess	45	8

Trade Case Management

The Green River WDA served 15 trade customers in Program Year 2021. Case Management services provide comprehensive services for each customer. The WDA assist workers who have lost their jobs due to foreign trade by delivering activities to help them quickly rejoin the workforce. In addition, WDA provide customers the means to attain competitive and marketable skills for today's competitive work environment. An array of case management services are offered including comprehensive and specialized assessments, individual employment plans, training provider and program material, financial aid information, short-term pre-vocational services, training services, labor market data and supportive services information.

Hire 2 Operate (H2O) Project

The Green River Workforce Development Board received a Delta Regional Authority (DRA) Workforce Grant. The Hire to Operate (H2O) Project will utilize DRA funding to partner with the Kentucky Rural Water Association's Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) to train ten apprentices



in the DRA counties of Henderson, McLean, Union and Webster. The H2O project provides apprentices the opportunity to become certified Water/Wastewater (W/W) Systems Operation Specialists (SOS) for local utilities. All ten apprentices have completed the On-the-Job Training (OJT) and are continuing to work on Related Technical Instruction (RTI) to meet advancements in water treatment and supply. H2O will elevate the required skills to meet progressing technology as it has increased the skills/training required and create a talent pipeline to replenish the qualified pool of W/W operators. There is a growing population and increased demand for W/W treatment services. H2O will aid in the replacement of current SOS eligible to retire or will be eligible within the next two (2) to five (5) years. The W/W industry must address the need to train the next generation of skilled workers to protect and provide what is the most valuable resource that is essential to all life—clean water. H2O apprentices have been placed in the following counties:

County	Employed Apprentices
Henderson	2
McLean	2
Union	5
Webster	1

National Dislocated Worker Grant

The Green River Workforce Development Board received a National Dislocated Worker Grant to provide employment recovery and training for eligible dislocated workers affected by COVID-19. The grant enabled employers and job seekers to recover from the negative impact in the Green River Local Workforce Area serving the counties of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union and Webster. The employment and training opportunities were in the sectors of advanced manufacturing, business and information technology, construction and skilled trades, healthcare and transportation & logistics with a targeted population focusing on workers directly laid off because of COVID-19, unemployed individuals, long-term unemployed (including homeless individuals and offenders) and those who are underemployed (low-wage earners).

The Board in partnership with local employers, community agencies, the Kentucky Community and

Technical College System, the Kentucky Career Center – Green River, county jails and shelters collaborated to address training and workforce needs in the Green River. The grant funds paid wages for individuals placed in temporary employment, provided financial assistance for training (occupational and on-the-job training) and paid for case management services as well as activities related to administering the grant.

For temporary employment, 122 individuals were placed with a focus on humanitarian assistance; 29 individuals were placed in short-term training and eight (8) individuals participated in on-the-job training. The Board supported employers with practices that promoted healthy, productive and efficient workplaces; job seekers who, with additional training, would benefit from the opportunity to obtain employment in a high-demand sector; and temporary employment to those who have been laid off. Green River served individuals who were recently released from incarceration, disabled individuals, older workers and those with significant barriers to employment.

Countless successes were accomplished through the funding opportunity. An inspiring video created by Equus Workforce Solutions highlighted the many achievements of the grant. Customers and employers participating in the video shared the positive and uplifting impacts the grant provided.

Individual testimonies communicate the value of the opportunities afforded to them. Individual client testimonials are referenced in the appendix A

GO Females

The GO Females (Greater Owensboro Facilitating Equitable Manufacturing and Leadership Educational Solutions)



launched in October 2019 in collaboration with the Green River Workforce Development Board. The design of the project aimed to increase the number of females participating in manufacturing training programs and employment in advanced manufacturing, a high-demand sector identified by the Board and the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board. While the primary targeted population to be served was female incumbent workers; out of school youth, low-income adults and individuals with disabilities and those with barriers to employment also are supported. The project was built upon the innovative practices developed by

the Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (KY FAME) to address the needs of manufacturers to remain competitive by creating a pipeline of highly skilled workers through successful work and learn models. The project incorporates innovative partnerships, employer engagement, diverse instructional models, flexible nontraditional delivery strategies and comprehensive advising and support services.

In July 2021, the first cohort of fifteen students employed at UniFirst Corporation in Owensboro, Kentucky graduated. The students earned the following credentials:

- Industrial Maintenance Technology Associate in Applied Science Degree
- Industrial Maintenance Technician Diploma
- Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Level 1 Certificate
- Industrial Maintenance Electrical Maintenance Certificate

The second cohort began on October 19, 2021, with four female incumbent workers from UniFirst Corporation. As of June 2021, all four students had completed 25 colleges credit hours and were taking 11 credits for the summer. The students are on track and will earn an associate degree in May 2023.



Females represent an untapped resource for manufacturing employers. This project is a result of industry, economic development, workforce and education leaders working together to address the need for skilled workers in the Green River Local Workforce Area. The project attracts students with technical and critical thinking skills needed for manufacturing positions.

It is designed to allow full-time wages and benefits be paid to students while they attend classes and provide paid leave during a normal work shift to attend classes. This design produced sustainable results to upskill current and prospective employees. The project demonstrates that incumbent workers can advance into higher wage positions to increase support for their families.

GO Females successfully brought awareness by increasing participation of women in manufacturing, supporting talent-driven innovation and workforce diversity.

Employer Services

The Kentucky Career Center – Green River assists employers with hiring needs by coordinating job and employer fairs. This gives the employers an opportunity to publicize open positions and meet individuals who are seeking employment. Along with partners, assistance is convenient and free resources area available to support employers obtain highly qualified workers. Kentucky Career Center – Green River matches companies that need employees with workers who need jobs.

County	Hiring Events
Daviess	18
Hancock	2
Henderson	19
Ohio	8
Union	1

Hiring Event/Job Fairs

Tuesdays throughout the summer, the Kentucky Career Center – Green River hosted small hiring events.

Brian with Paramount Staffing said, "Paramount Staffing has benefited from the job fairs at the Kentucky Career Center – Green River on Tuesdays. We have found associates that we would not have been able to reach. When you go to a job fair you find people who are willing to work. These job fairs have been a huge success for Paramount Staffing and we appreciate Business Services Consultant Melissa's help with the job fairs and referring people to us."

Morgan with Lacosta said, "I have had success in finding a few employees. Melissa and Career Coach Marie refer people to Lacosta each time I attend the job fair, sending over people with experience and skills."

The Owensboro Business Advisory Council recognizes Business Services Consultants who has been instrumental in serving on the Owensboro Goodwill Business Advisory this year. Their dedication to engage and deliver workforce solutions to the Owensboro community has been greatly appreciated especially in helping deliver our first "Close the Gap" job fair. They took the initiative in obtaining the location, contacting the employers, finding advertising and organizing the overall flow of the job fair with communication and professionalism.



In these unprecedented times, it takes leaders to step up in developing workforce solutions. This year's job fair was a tremendous start towards building meaningful and long-lasting relationships with our partners in government, business and nonprofits. I cannot say enough about how appreciative I am to work alongside them and admire all they brings to our community!

--Thomas Donahue, Evansville Goodwill Industries Inc.)

On April 25, 2022, the Kentucky Career Center – Green River in partnership with the Ohio County Public Library hosted a Take Home Job Fair at the Ohio County Library. This was a statewide initiative with the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, hosted during Library Appreciation Week. Nine local Ohio County businesses provided information on their companies. Fifty take-home bags were made for members of the community with materials from all businesses that participated, Kentucky Career Center – Green River materials and Ohio County Library materials. Each bag was given out to job seekers in attendance.

Melanie, director of Ohio County Library, said "The Ohio County Public Library was thrilled to be able to host the Kentucky Career Center – Green River during the Statewide Job Fair 2022. We were excited to be able to offer much-needed services to members of our community and partnering with the Kentucky Career Center – Green River was so beneficial for this process. Combining resources from our library with resources from KET, local businesses and the career center made it possible for us to put crucial information into the hands of our patrons when they needed it most. Melissa was instrumental in organizing and gathering materials from local businesses. While we understand that this was for a special statewide event, we would love to partner with the Kentucky Career Center – Green River in the future to host similar events as our community always has individuals in need of these opportunities. Our library is willing and eager to assist however we can to provide the best possible services to our community. Thank you so much for this opportunity and we look forward to working with the Kentucky Career Center – Green River team again in the future!"

Job Seeker Services

Job Seekers receive assistance with finding employment at the Kentucky Career Center – Green River. Eligible individuals may



receive funding for occupational skills training in one of Green River’s targeted sectors (Business & Information Technology Services, Construction, Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing and Transportation & Logistics). Others receive individualized services such as resume writing, interviewing skills, etc.

Career Coaches are available to assist in resume preparation, career guidance, and specialized job search tailored to local labor market information. The Kentucky Career Center – Green River offers many tools to help job seekers on their path to a fulfilling career. Individuals were placed in jobs from the following counties:

County	Job Placements
Daviess	145
Hancock	14
Henderson	22
McLean	10
Ohio	21
Union	7
Webster	11
Out of Area	22

KentuckianaWorks

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding supports career service delivery throughout a seven-county region in and around Louisville. Services are provided in career centers as well as through a mobile team that meets customers in libraries or Adult Education program locations when there is no nearby career center. Both Bullitt and Shelby Counties provide free space for career services in county buildings, increasing our reach in those regions. In Program Year 2021, we began to see customers coming back to the centers or connecting virtually to seek re-entry into the workplace. Some 353 adult job seekers were placed into permanent employment with an average hourly wage of \$19.75. Customers attended 1,208 work readiness workshops in preparation for skills upgrades or a job search.

Success stories included:

- A rural client who connected with the mobile team to complete the WIN Virtual Customer Service training to earn a Kentucky Essential Skills Certificate. Our career coach referred her to several leading employers and she ultimately accepted a customer service representative job at Charter Communications for \$20.75 per hour.
- A Bullitt County customer who wanted to earn a CDL, but could not afford the training. Working with his career coach, he found a job as a bus driver at Jefferson County Public Schools, receiving the CDL training there and meeting his financial goals of earning \$20.50 per hour.
- Another customer in Louisville came to us with a high school diploma working as a forklift operator through a temp service. After meeting with his career coach, he decided to enroll in a welding program and earned his certificate in MIG welding. He was hired at a local manufacturing company, Wirecrafters, earning \$21.50 an hour.

WIOA also funds the Kentuckiana Builds pre-apprenticeship program in construction. KentuckianaWorks, in partnership with the Louisville Urban League (LUL), created the Kentuckiana Builds program in 2016 to respond to the need for a pipeline of trained construction employees and to increase the number of minorities and women going into the sector regionally. In program year 2021, 54 people were placed into construction trades employment with an average hourly wage of \$17.58. An innovation during PY2021 was the addition of in-person and hands-on training with the Indiana/Kentucky/Ohio Regional Council of Carpenters (IKORCC) at their state-of-the-art training facility in Louisville. Additionally, the program achieved increased access to union apprenticeships thanks to an Articulation Agreement between IKORCC and The Louisville Urban League. In addition, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) enabled a waiver for graduates to bypass their initial evaluation, moving more quickly towards their apprenticeship program.

KentuckianaWorks concluded work funded by a U. S. Department of Labor National Dislocated Worker Grant to place recently incarcerated customers on supervised

work teams at the Dare to Care foodbank. The project solved a critical workforce need during the pandemic since many of the agency's longtime volunteers had health risks and couldn't work at the food bank. Some 79 returning citizens completed the program, with 38 receiving permanent job placements by the close of this program year, either at Dare to Care or at another company. KentuckianaWorks leveraged the success of the program to secure an American Rescue Program (ARP) grant through Louisville Metro Government so that the program will be continued for the next two years.

Through a Governor's Discretionary grant, the Commonwealth invested in a new program for software coding, operated by KentuckianaWorks. Code Kentucky is based on the successful Code Louisville program that has trained and placed more than 750 people in software development jobs. Focusing on northern and eastern Kentucky, Code Kentucky enrolled more than 100 participants in its first year.

WIOA Youth

A new service provider, Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, won the contract to deliver the urban and rural WIOA Youth programs, bringing new energy to the programs. Braiding funding from other city and federal grants, we served more than 500 young adults to receive career guidance and support, helping nearly 250 of them land new jobs. We renamed the program "The Spot: Young Adult Opportunity Campus" to better market the program to the target age group.

With additional WIOA funding at the end of the program year, we piloted a program called "Explore Trades" with Jefferson Community & Technical College. The program took career exploration to a higher, more hands-on level, with a cohort of 19 WIOA youth able to attend classes in Welding, Plumbing, Automotive, HVAC, IT, Computerized Manufacturing and Machining, Allied Health, and Culinary. Several students decided to enroll in programs following the pilot and are now pursuing certificates in Welding and Automotive.

Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board

The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board (LTWDB) released its three-year strategic plan on September 29, 2021. The plan represents the hard work of the LTWDB and many of its regional stakeholders and was based upon a recent analysis of the regional labor market. This document provided

an overview of the planning process, findings from stakeholder engagement and market analysis, as well as goals, objectives and recommendations for implementation.

The plan was developed by Strategy Matters, a consulting company with whom the LTWDB has been working since 2017. Over the last four years, the LTWDB has developed and updated a strategic plan for the region; launched the Workforce Crisis Taskforce; hosted four annual Workforce Summits and continued to grow relationships between businesses, the workforce and educational institutions.

State of the Workforce Summit

More than 100 people attended the LTWDB's fifth annual State of the Workforce Summit on June 22, 2022, to discuss the exciting economic development opportunities and challenges in the Lincoln Trail region and the impact on the current and future workforce. This event was an opportunity to both reflect on the work of the past years and to gather input from the Workforce Crisis Task Force (WCTF) and the broader community to share updates on workforce participation rates and learn some of the barriers in the areas of housing, transportation, childcare, and expungement. The Summit included inviting the community into conversations focused on solutions. The goals of the Summit were to convene the Lincoln Trail community to: 1) Come to a shared and deep understanding of the workforce challenges facing the region, 2) Work toward sharing best practices for addressing this crisis, and 3) Co-create new approaches for ensuring a skilled and available workforce for regional employers.

Data for the Summit and the State of the Workforce report was gathered from census and state data to generate a snapshot of workforce participation in 2021 as well as what the future of the region might look like in the next 5 to 10 years. A detailed overview of KY Stats findings was presented during the Summit. Though the area has experienced some growth between last year (2021) and the first half of 2021, much still needs to be done. The Summit also provided an opportunity for community partners and stakeholders to become involved in the LTWDB and WCTF's future efforts.

High School Graduates initiative

For many graduating seniors, a college education seems either out of reach or unappealing. Some students want to pursue postsecondary education, but view the prospect of paying tuition as unattainable. For other students, stepping directly into the workforce through an apprenticeship after graduation seems more appealing than the college pathway. The Kentucky Career Center – Lincoln Trail (KCC-LT) implemented the “High School Graduates Initiative” in PY 2021 to help these students achieve their respective goals.

The One Stop Director led the initiative with presentations to all but one of the high schools in the region to encourage graduating seniors who may not have future career or employment plans to come to the KCC-LT. Several of the visits coincided with college and career day events. KCC-LT representatives engaged with high school seniors to make them aware of the career and educational opportunities available through the Career Center. Based on the success of the initiative, this approach will continue and possibly expand to include participation in job fairs in the youth’s respective communities.

Nursing Assistant Extern Apprenticeship Program

For many, figuring out where to start to enter the healthcare industry can be difficult. To help remove this obstacle locally, a new initiative known as the Nursing Assistant Extern program was established in April 2022. The program is a collaboration between Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC)- Workforce Solutions, Baptist Health Hardin (BHH), the KCC-LT and the Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board (LTWDB).

Through the program, participants can receive a CNA-State Exam Certification, take college courses, receive on-the-job training and mentorship, become acquainted with allied health career pathways and more. Students in the program will take a total of four classes, which are “stackable,” meaning they can be built upon if students go on to further their education. Through the program’s apprenticeship opportunities, students have the ability to both learn and earn while receiving quality mentorship.

Participants in the program will take on the role of a nursing assistant extern and will be paired with a

nursing assistant at BHH. Some responsibilities of the position include assisting patients with personal hygiene, transporting patients as assigned, recording vital signs accurately within an established time frame and assisting registered nurses and patients with exams and treatments as directed.

A key tenet of this program is flexibility for students. The program is designed to provide anyone looking to take that first step into healthcare with the tools to do so. Whether someone wants to take classes full time and work part time or vice versa, the program will be tailored to an individual’s availability. They will have the flexibility to set a pace that is comfortable to them. Plus, students can join the program at any time and are not restricted to ECTC’s semester scheduling.

The program not only will help students earn hands-on experience in the healthcare field, but will also be an asset to BHH and healthcare in the region. As nursing assistant externs work with nursing assistants, it will lead to more face-to-face time with patients and individualized care at BHH. In addition to training, the program is about retention. Hopefully, for many participants, this program is the catalyst for a burgeoning career in healthcare.

This partnership showcases the best example of organizations working together to build a career pathway for those interested in the high-wage, high-demand healthcare sector.

Blue Oval/SK Project

Since the announcement of the Blue Oval/SK battery plant in September of 2021, the Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board (LTWDB) and Kentucky Career Center-Lincoln Trail (KCC-LT) have been involved in a variety of ways to ensure the region is prepared to meet the company’s vast workforce needs.

The local Workforce Director reached out immediately to other local Workforce Areas within close proximity to the region to discuss the potential impact/implications for the Career Centers to work together to ensure the workforce system is a major player in assisting with recruitment, referrals and assessments for the project. In addition, the Workforce Director has served on the Blue Oval Core and Governance Teams, which include state and local representatives as well as Ford staff, working to ensure there is coordination on all levels among partners.

The One Stop Operator for the Lincoln Trail region began convening a monthly Blue Oval Task Force meeting in April of 2022 to ensure that all the local partners who will be involved in talent development and recruitment for the construction and operation of the battery plant were communicating with each other. An early goal of this group was to be better connected and aligned at the ground level. The Ford workforce team also have joined the meetings. The One Stop Director continued to work closely with Barton Malow, the construction company for the project, to assist with planning a job fair to fill the over 800 skilled trade positions that will be needed in the near future.

Northern KY Workforce Investment Board



GROW Northern Kentucky

Effective February 2022, the Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (NKWIB) assumed responsibility for serving as the interim backbone organization of Northern Kentucky’s (NKY) collective impact strategy – GROW (Growing Regional Outcomes through Workforce) NKY. Launched in 2018, GROW is a collaboration of 70-plus community stakeholders, including workforce and economic development agencies, nonprofits, educational institutions, elected officials and employers. The NKY Chamber of Commerce served as the initial GROW backbone entity. GROW is responsible for collective efforts positively impacting the region’s current and future workforce by leveraging the region’s assets to grow, attract and retain a globally competitive workforce.

As part of GROW, the NKWIB led efforts to implement SWAT (Strategic Workforce Action Team) meetings to effectively and efficiently serve NKY employers.

A SWAT Meeting:

- Provides resources and programming to companies in the region.
- Makes the vital connections between organizations and initiatives needed to develop a strong workforce.
- Ensures that business owners are knowledgeable about industry trends.

- Shares a unique approach to workforce solutions across the state and nationally.
- Assists employers with attracting, retaining and advancing their workforce.

Partnerships and Access Points

In Program Year 21 (PY21), the NKY Career Center network welcomed two new partners – Life Learning Center and EC LEARN – bringing the total number of partner organizations in NKY to 16. Life Learning Center focuses on connecting justice-involved individuals to gainful employment opportunities. As an early childhood referral and resource organization, EC Learn works with early childcare providers to improve the quality of early childcare education and increased access to working parents.

Additionally, NKY added new Library Access Points. Kenton County Public Library (Erlanger Branch), Owen County Public Library and Pendleton County Public Library were certified as Career Center Access Points, increasing accessibility to workforce services in Northern Kentucky’s rural communities. The Kenton County Library Access Point hosted 427 Workforce Development Programs with 4,967 attendees and facilitated three Employer Assistance Services with 44 participants.

National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG)

The National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) is a specialized grant awarded to Kentucky through the Dept of Labor and subsequently awarded to individual Workforce Investment Boards. The purpose was to assist dislocated workers who were displaced due to COVID-19 by subsidizing their employment through nonprofits to help the community recover. In Northern Kentucky, 26 individuals participated in the program.

Code Kentucky

In partnership with KentuckianaWorks and EKCEP, and with funding support from the Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet, the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD)/Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (NKWIB) supports Code Kentucky in the region.

Program Summary

- Free program for adults to learn the basics of software development with the goal of preparing them to obtain an entry-level job as a programmer or related tech employment

- Current learning tracks include Web Development, Data Analytics, Software Development with special topics offered as available
- Participants complete an online course as well as attend weekly evening classes in which they :
 - Develop a portfolio of projects
 - Participate in job readiness activities such as resume review and mock interviews
 - Receive wrap-around support services including coaching for readiness and employment search assistance for graduates as well as access to alumni services
- This program is delivered in a virtual environment

Commonwealth Coders

Commonwealth Coders prepares participants for Junior Web Developer careers in a 16-week course. The program is a collaboration between South Central, Cumberlands, Bluegrass and Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Boards. The training, valued at around \$15,000, was offered at little or no cost to eligible participants, including unemployed individuals due to COVID. Commonwealth Coders is an intensive front-end web development training program comprised of four curriculum components: HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and React. Students learn and practice strings, Booleans, creating variables, control flow, functions, arrays, objects, document object models and more. Upon successful completion, participants can enter the workforce with the potential of earning an average starting salary of \$60,000. In NKY, a partnership with United Way of Greater Cincinnati further supports qualifying candidates with financial stipends. Additionally, another grant will allow each student to use a new MacBook Pro laptop for course study.

Lift Up

The Lift Up Grant is a substance use disorder recovery grant to meet clients' needs holistically, physically, mentally, and emotionally all the way through self-sufficient employment. St. Elizabeth Healthcare and St. Elizabeth Physicians Journey Recovery Center, NKY's largest healthcare employer, is the lead and recipient of this nearly \$2.4 million grant funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). One of the goals of the grant is to connect people with substance use disorders to career-building resources in Northern Kentucky.

The Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (NKWIB) convenes partners and employers, leveraging resources and technical assistance to meet employers' needs while supporting the dignity of the clients. The NKWIB staff offered 275 transformational employment services to local NKY businesses, while the Lift Up Grant served 268 clients. The development of businesses willing to hire clients in recovery benefits the community, the employer, and the recovery clients.

Teleworks

Teleworks, USA, a division of the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP), in collaboration with the Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (NKWIB) and the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKWIB), identifies and develops legitimate remote-work job opportunities with multiple national and global companies. In the past year, this collaboration has served 77 people in the Northern Kentucky area, connecting those in rural and urban areas without access to transportation or other barriers to work-from-home opportunities.

Employment Connections (Kentucky Works)

Employment Connections serves two target groups, Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. The TANF program has experienced reduced numbers in the past year due to the state lifting the mandated work/volunteer requirements due to COVID.

The program aims to assist those receiving public cash benefits in gaining the skills and experience to attain self-sufficient employment. Even with the reduced numbers, we assisted 38 individuals in increasing their work readiness skills. SNAP has the same goal, to assist individuals in achieving self-sufficiency. SNAP is a voluntary program where clients receiving nutritional assistance can take advantage of the many services offered through our Kentucky Career Center and unique SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program to increase their skills. For both programs, we offer job search assistance and follow-up services to assist in attaining and maintaining employment. Through our SNAP program, we have served 146 people.

Enzweiler Building Institute - New Location

Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (NKWIB) staff provided technical assistance to the Business Industry Association of Northern Kentucky

Enzweiler Building Institute. Through staff assistance, the Institute was able to secure funds to establish a new program/training location in Latonia, Kentucky. The new site is within the urban core and near a bus line creating new training opportunities for urban residents. After successfully completing the program, participants will be able to find sustainable career opportunities in the construction and trades sectors.

MACC Tech Credential

Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (NKWIB) partnered with regional employers, post-secondary institutions, other regional stakeholders and the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board to facilitate getting the MACC (Mining, Asphalt, Concrete and Construction Technology)Tech credential recognized and approved to be taught in the secondary (K-12) system to better prepare high school students for career pathways in the construction and trades industry sector. This is an example of the NKWIB's work pertaining to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) system.

South Central Workforce Development Board

The South Central Workforce Development Board (SCWDB) is comprised of ten counties (suburban and rural), with 16 independent school districts and two major post-secondary institutions, Western Kentucky University (WKU) and Southcentral Community and Technical College (SKYCTC). Our largest industry sectors are manufacturing, healthcare, tourism, transportation and construction. To support our vibrant and fast-growing economy, SCWDB pursues [four workforce development goals](#):

Goal #1. Actively engage employers & stakeholders to drive innovative workforce solutions. *Over 500 business engagements through recruitment efforts, consultative visits and hiring events in PY21.*

Hiring Events are the number one form of support requested by employers. We offered a wide array of options to meet the needs of our employers and job seekers.

- "Talent Tuesday" is a monthly hiring event that rotates to each county in our region throughout the year; it is a great vehicle to provide direct support to rural employers and job seekers.
- We coordinated on-campus hiring events at

various SKYCTC campuses—bringing local industries to the campuses and into the building where the respective industry training occurs.

- Employers participated in Career Exploration and Hiring events on-campus at area high schools in efforts to showcase employment opportunities to underclassmen and hire upper classmen and graduates.
- Our Business Services Reps coordinated events that took place at our KY Career Centers and/or assisted employers with their onsite hiring events.

Goal #2. Align and integrate P-12, adult education, and post-secondary education to provide career pathways and life-long learning opportunities for youth and adult job seekers. *Over 2,000 high school students and 200 college students engaged, and an additional 4,000 students and parents surveyed.*

- Heavy Equipment Committee & Pathway: starting in mid-2021 and culminating with the award of a KY statewide reserve grant in early 2022, we partnered with employers, economic development and education entities to launch a [Heavy Equipment Sciences career pathway](#) for K-12 and adult students in our region to meet the employment needs of our regional Construction industry.
- Engaging Students on Campus: in partnership with Western Kentucky University and SKYCTC, we provided dedicated personnel to reach students on campus and connect them with local job opportunities, career services and mentorship.

Goal #3. Increase regional workforce participation by creating opportunities, incenting workforce participation and removing barriers to employment. *Over 15,000 individuals engaged through the Kentucky Career Center system, to include 845 transitioning military service members, 340 New Americans and over 300 Reentry/Recovery individuals. Major initiatives included:*

- Workforce Participation Work Group: SCWDB led a workgroup comprised of local Superintendents, collegiate leadership, economic development leaders, tourism, and county and city leaders to develop strategies to increase regional workforce

participation. Three initiatives materialized through this workgroup to expand our ability to recruit talent to our region: 1) the addition of a full-time, dedicated “navigator” based at Ft. Campbell who recruits transitioning military members and their families to work in our region; 2) a [website](#) funded by local government to connect out-of-region and unemployed individuals with employment opportunities and assistance; 3) the creation of a Workforce Participation Lead full-time position funded by WKU and local government and supervised by our Board who will provide dedicated analysis, convene county-level and issue-specific workgroups, and inform our regional workforce recruitment practices and strategies to increase our regional workforce participation rate.

- Justice-Involved / Reentry Programming: we pursued a holistic, partnership approach to reach and employ justice-involved / reentering individuals. The linkage between judicial, community-based and workforce providers as well as individualized, local-level triage provided by Workforce Board staff (who were positioned to offer employment assistance, referrals to community and recovery resources and who then tracked the individual’s completion of court-mandated activities) created opportunity and reduced recidivism for over 300 individuals.
- New American Employment Navigation: our sizable immigrant and refugee population has been a population that we’ve been challenged to serve until this year. In Spring 2022, we received funding to hire a New American Navigator, and the initial results of dedicating a staff member to this endeavor has surpassed our expectations with over 300 individuals engaged and connected to local job opportunities, workforce preparation, training and/or supportive resources.

Goal #4. Maintain viability of the SCWDB’s financial growth, quality delivery system, and return on investment (ROI) for job seekers and employers. *SCWDB delivered excellent programmatic and financial results during state and external audits throughout the year.*

- Financial Growth: SCWDB augmented our Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth funding with a \$112K grant to support our Reentry/Recovery programming. SCWDB also generated \$85K

in donations and/or revenue through its 501.c.3. foundation.

- Quality Delivery Systems. Our largest (and perhaps quietest) effort throughout PY21 was to revamp our customer service model inside the Kentucky Career Center system. Between the pandemic-related building closures, staff turnover and a hyper-focus on Unemployment Insurance, we slipped into poor, inefficient customer service practices. SCWDB led an effort to rework how our customers flow through the Career Center and plans to provide ongoing staff training opportunities, ensuring we collect information and enforce delivery of quality Wagner-Peyser and WIOA services.
- ROI. SCWDB meets annually with each LEO and their respective community leaders to report on local workforce investment activities, a summary of WIOA-funded programming and to plan for future support. In PY21, SCWDB and WIOA staff conducted nearly 600 county engagements, totaling over 900 hours in staff time across our 10-county region.

TENCO Workforce Development Area

As the TENCO Workforce Development Board (WDB) continues to provide holistic services to adults, dislocated workers, youth, and businesses in the area, one aspect that makes it possible is the collaboration and partnership with agencies in and outside of the career center. The TENCO WDB also sets high standards for staff and center partners by establishing a continuous learning goal in their strategic plan. The following examples include efforts made by the TENCO WDB to support partnership, collaboration, and learning opportunities.

Partner Retreat: Each year, the One-Stop Operator along with partner agencies and staff identify trainings that would be of interest for all partners. The One-Stop Operator then selects topics, presenters, secures a location, and facilitates the training. All agencies, regardless of their WIOA involvement, are invited to partake in a day-long workforce sessions, networking activities, and skill building. Workforce issues are discussed, solutions presented, and tools made available to staff that they immediately can start using. Topics throughout the last few years have included: Social Media and the Job Search; Career and Job

Coaching; Customer Service; Workforce Partner Agency Roundtable Discussion on Services and Partnership Opportunities; Working with Reentry/Recovery Individuals; Human Resource Managers (High Demand Sectors) Roundtable Discussion on What do Employers Want in Applicants and Employees; Expungement and Reentry; Meet Customer Need through ADA Compliancy; and Embracing Diversity

Partner agencies who participate regularly in the retreat include KCTCS, Title V, Area Development Districts, Career Development Office, Commonwealth Education Opportunity Center, Dept. for Community Based Services, Dept. of Corrections, Goodwill Industries, Job Corps, KEDC Adult Education, KY Works, Workforce Solutions, Vocational Rehabilitation, and WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth Programs.

Monday Morning Wake Up Calls: During the pandemic, the Operator also implemented Monday Morning Wake Up Calls with all partners to maintain solidarity among staff. It was so beneficial and informative that staff requested the Monday morning calls continue as a link to the partners serving our local area. During the 15-minute calls, staff and partners learn about hiring events, highlight businesses, gain knowledge on special projects, discuss funding opportunities, positive experiences, concerns, questions, and updates to center policy/procedures.

Regional Workforce Conference: TENCO supported and participated in the first annual Regional Workforce Conference sponsored by our local Rowan, Fleming, and Mason County Chambers of Commerce. This conference provided local businesses the opportunity to explore the services available to them through the Commonwealth and the local workforce area. Employers left the conference with real-life solutions to the ever-changing workforce challenges in recruitment and retention, second-chance employment, alignment of business needs with educational opportunities, addressing talent concerns, motivating employees, and innovative workforce development strategies.

Teacher Academy/Educator's Guide to Industry: Many teachers and administrators in our secondary school systems have spent their entire life in education. With the responsibilities surrounding teachers and administrators, it is very difficult for them to stay abreast of the changing labor markets, business expectations, high-demand occupations and skill sets that prepare youth for those fields. Previously, the

TENCO Workforce Development Board facilitated the first Teacher Academy event in our area, however, COVID prevented staff and schools from participating during the last couple of years. In conjunction with the KY Chamber, TENCO brought back the project to their school districts in 2022. It was well attended by four school districts. This is seen as an opportunity to share knowledge and resources with those who daily affect our young people's decisions. Staff are currently working on plans to expand the event for next year.

The **Youth Employment Program** gained momentum five years ago as the TENCO WDB recognized that while we have a high secondary school graduation rate, many youth do not transition easily into post-secondary and/or employment. Each year, the board supports a work-based learning project which provides youth opportunities to prepare for employment (workshops in essential job skills, financial literacy, transitioning to unsubsidized employment and/or training, problem-solving, communication, team building, and career awareness). After an assessment, the at-risk youth are then placed at a worksite to demonstrate the work ethic skills deemed necessary for employment. An evaluation is conducted throughout the eight -week work experience to reflect success and/or areas of improvement. Youth are eligible for incentives after completing their workshops and/or after achieving a successful worksite evaluation. Youth are then transitioned into post-secondary, employment or partner programs for additional services.

Bag-A-Job

As part of National Library Week, the TENCO Workforce Development Board partnered with local libraries in all 10 counties to provide career information to customers. Libraries were provided with information about current job openings, employer flyers, career center resources, and job preparation skills. Libraries had options to hand out bags of information, have career center links added to their computers, and/or run videos designed to make the customer's job search process easier. Throughout the week, 108 individuals received information on local job opportunities. Libraries continue to be valuable partners and an important access point for career services.

West Kentucky Workforce Development Board

Impacting Veterans/Military at Fort Campbell –

West Kentucky Workforce Board (WKWB) works with Fort Campbell Military and Veterans to assist veterans and eligible spouses in gaining access to high-quality jobs and careers in addition to assisting businesses with hiring and retaining skilled workers. The WKWB also collaborates with Tennessee in serving veterans and exiting military and their spouses.



Derek Poor, Military and Veterans Liaison at Fort Campbell under the West Kentucky Workforce Board, assists a military spouse and veteran seeking an administrative position in healthcare. On the right is Donietta Hawkey, Kentucky Director VETS-DOL, speaking with the transition staff at Fort Campbell. Every week, two mornings are devoted to job fair events.

Rapid Response –

Rapid Response from the West Kentucky Workforce Board (WKWB) Kentucky Career Center includes layoff aversion strategy and a business transition services team to provide on- or off-site services to deliver a smooth transition to new employment for all impacted employees. The WKWB team also delivered Trade Orientation and COVID grant employer resources via online virtual meetings, pre-recorded Rapid Response employee and trade orientation videos, websites, Facebook live sessions, outdoor socially distant employee meetings, and youth registration using laptops in parking lots and community parks. Materials are provided in a packet, online or via a virtual link.



For virtual Rapid Response information events in West Kentucky Workforce Board Kentucky Career Center's, please visit <https://wkworkforce.work/rapid-response-information>.

National Dislocated Worker Grant Resources

COVID-19 Grant and Response – Kentucky, as well as other states, experienced significant job loss and layoffs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The West Kentucky Workforce Board (WKWB) operates the employment Recovery (ER) grant in their region. The grant funds pay wages for individuals placed in temporary employment, provide financial assistance for high-demand training (occupational, OJT, customized training and incumbent worker training) and pays for case management services as well as activities related to administering the grant.

The WKWB received \$840,039 COVID-19 National Dislocated Worker Grant funding for assistance in response to the major dislocations and layoff in western Kentucky. The state received a no-cost grant extension in March 2022. The grant now will run through March 2023. During this extension, we will not be able to add any participants, but will be able to continue to serve the customers that currently are enrolled. In response, the WKWB created Employment Recovery to assist workers impacted by closures and layoffs due to the pandemic. Services included short-term training leading to employment opportunities in existing high-demand jobs as well as emerging sectors, temporary employment to assist with humanitarian assistance and recovery, health and safety, individualized career services and counseling, in addition to supportive services and assistance to retain employment quickly in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, transportation, and other regional demands. There were 39 participants enrolled in Temporary Relief Employment; 73 participants enrolled in Career Services; 12 participants enrolled in High-Demand Occupational Training; and 15 participants enrolled in on-the-job training. In addition, 61 participants have exited and 49 have obtained full-time employment, with an employment rate of 80.33%. All of the funding obligated is expected to be expended.

Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant

- In the days following the EF-4 tornado that devastated western Kentucky, the WKWB partnered with Dawson Springs and Graves County High Schools to establish temporary internet resource centers. As soon as these locations had power, staff began assisting individuals to replace personal identification documents. Two weeks prior to Christmas, the locations served approximately 550 individuals who received services from organizations, including Kentucky Office of Unemployment Insurance (UI), Kentucky Revenue

Cabinet, Kentucky Division of OSH Compliance, Kentucky Department of Community Based Services, and the Purchase Area Development District.

On December 22, 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor announced \$8,333,333 in funding to the Commonwealth of Kentucky to support disaster-relief employment after the series of tornadoes. Administered by the Department's Employment and Training Administration, the funds are the first increment of a Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant of up to of \$25 million for the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training to create temporary employment opportunities to assist with clean-up and recovery activities. The WKWB received \$1.5 million to assist the nine counties impacted in the West Kentucky Workforce local area, specifically Fulton, Hickman, Graves, Marshall, Lyon, Caldwell, Hopkins, Muhlenberg and Christian. Participants are enrolled in Temporary Relief Employment.

Impacting Youth – WKWB invested over \$490,000 in Youth funds to prepare students for the workforce needs of the future. Contracted youth providers provide tailored programs and workshops designed to serve economically disadvantaged youth in the West Kentucky area. Low-income youth, ages 16-24, who have a barrier to employment, are offered assistance in completing high school, preparing for college, and establishing work-based learning opportunities.



Youth contractors have revised service offerings, online offerings, and social media to be more successful during COVID-19, assisting young adults and keeping employment rates moving up.

The Christian County Public Schools youth program partnered with the Christian County Rotary Club to provide clothing for interviews, job fairs, etc.

Impacting Reentry, Second Chance and Non-Custodial Parents – The Right Choice Program gives non-custodial parents the opportunity to accept financial responsibility by providing guidance and strategies to enhance their employment efforts to financially support their child or children. In addition to the Right Choice Program, board and state staff assist with the Drug Court grant serving Muhlenberg County and the AOC grant in McCracken County.

Western Kentucky Reentry Council – has a local chapter both in Christian County and McCracken County to reintegrate individuals of the justice-involved population into its local communities through expungement event, advocacy, economic support and local resources. Members of the council are involved in workforce events in the area and provide resources to aid this population. During the past year, the West Kentucky area has partnered with the local career centers, and has held expungement events across our region.

The Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE) – seeks to expand and sustain a comprehensive, equitable recovery-oriented system of care to end the opioid epidemic that has reached into every community in Kentucky. Through federal SAMHSA funds, KORE supports the implementation of evidence-based prevention, treatment and recovery efforts to effect change at the state, community, family and individual levels.

WKWB area has joined the movement in assisting those recovering from opioid addictions in re-entering the workforce. Since 2019, two liaisons from EKCEP aligned with the Career Center were assigned to the area to assist with this population. Referrals are made from recovery treatment facilities to these liaisons who then work with the individual to find employment.

The staff play a role in WKWB Business Services Team, Reentry Council, and other groups. Events have included regional Opioid Summits with experts from the medical community, second-chance employers, and individuals providing information on opioid addiction and its impact on individuals and the workforce. The goal of these events was to enlighten attendees and encourage employers to become transformational in their approach to hiring.