



COLORADO PY2024

WIOA ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT ON TALENT DEVELOPMENT
ACTIVITIES FUNDED THROUGH THE
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT



Colorado Workforce
Development Council

Colorado WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative Program Year 2024

November 2025

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A Letter from the Colorado Workforce Development Council

We are excited to share the successes of the first year of Colorado's [2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan](#). Partners across the state embraced a bold vision for our talent development network, strengthening collaboration year after year to enhance systems to better serve all Coloradans.

In Colorado during PY24:

- 212,458 job seekers utilized the public workforce system
- 13,656 businesses were served
- 512,952 jobs were posted
- 60,196 job seekers received in-person services
- 6,885 job seekers enrolled in more extensive training programs

This work is grounded in federal support and strengthened by state and local initiatives tailored to meet the unique needs of Colorado's workforce. This Annual Report on activities funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) serves as a companion to the Colorado Talent Pipeline Report, which offers an in-depth analysis of the state's talent demand and supply landscape.

Within this report, you will find:

- Highlights of our progress and results from all core programs outlined in the strategic sections of Colorado's state plan;
- Best practices developed across Colorado's local workforce areas ([Attachment 1](#)); and
- State-level outcomes driven by the Division of Employment and Training within the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment ([Attachment 2](#)).

We are proud to share achievements from the first year of the 2024-2027 Combined State Plan under WIOA, and look forward to continued collaboration in the years to come.



Jonathan Liebert, Chair



Lee Wheeler-Berliner, Managing Director

Waivers

In July 2024, Colorado was approved for the following six waivers, which allow local workforce areas greater flexibility in service provision to job seekers and businesses.

1. Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 134(d)(4) and 20 CFR 680.800(a) which states that local boards may reserve and use no more than 20 percent of the Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for incumbent worker training. (PY24-PY27)
2. Waiver associated with the statutory and/or regulatory requirements of 20 CFR §680.780, which states that a worker must have an established employment history with the employer for 6 months or more to qualify as an “incumbent worker.” (PY24-PY27)
3. Waiver associated with WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(H)(i), which permits the Governor or local boards to increase the amount of on-the-job training reimbursements up to 75 percent of the wage rate of a participant. Local areas may also increase the reimbursement rate of OJT up to 90 percent for employers with 50 or fewer employees. (PY24-PY27)
4. Waiver associated with 20 CFR 681.550, which allows ITAs funded by WIOA youth funds to be used only by out-of-school youth (OSY). (PY24-PY25)
5. Waiver associated with WIOA Section 129(c)(4) and 20 CFR 681.590(b) which requires local workforce development areas to count only WIOA local youth formula funds toward the minimum 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experience. (PY24-PY25)
6. Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor’s reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on Out-of-School Youth. Local areas may lower the expenditure requirement for Youth formula funds from 75 percent to 50 percent for Out-of-School Youth (OSY). (PY24-PY25)

Of these six waivers, only one was implemented during PY24 with an increased participation from two local areas to five local areas. The results by local area are limited to those outcomes currently available in Colorado’s recently launched modernized case management and labor exchange systems, or outcomes tracked by the individual local areas.

Lower the Expenditure Requirement for Out-of-School Youth Funds

Waiver associated with the requirement of WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on Out-of-School Youth (OSY). Local areas may lower the expenditure requirement for Youth formula funds from 75 percent to 50 percent for OSY during PY24 and PY25.

Adams County

- Increased In-school Youth enrollments from 4% in PY23 to 13.6% in PY24
- Increased Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) from 37.50% in PY23 to 47.89% in PY24

Tri-County

- Increased In-School Youth enrollments by 15% in PY24 over PY23
- Increased Measurable Skill Gains from 61.40% in PY23 to 70.37% in PY24

Pikes Peak

- Increased In-School Youth enrollments by 35% in PY24 over PY23
- All youth Measurable Skill Gains increased to 57.79%

Mesa County

- Increased In-School Youth enrollments to 46% of total enrollments
- Increased Credential Attainment to 40.38% and Measurable Skill Gains to 32.28%

Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium (CRWC)

- Increased In-school Youth enrollments from 19.2% of the PY23 total to 36.3% of the PY24 total enrollments
- All youth Measurable Skill Gains increased by 2.26% in PY24 over PY23
- All youth Credential measure increased by 15.10% in PY24 over PY23

Local Areas Reserve up to 20% of Adult and Dislocated Worker Funds for Incumbent Worker Training during PY24-27

Waiver associated with the requirement of WIOA Section 134(d)(4) and 20 CFR 680.800(a) that local boards may reserve and use no more than 20 percent of the Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for incumbent worker training during

PY24-PY27. Pikes Peak did not use the waiver, but conducted the most robust Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program in the state, as follows:

- Total businesses served via IWT contracts in PY24: 54.
- Total participants served via IWT contracts in PY24: 364.
- Both represented an increase in services over PY23.

Evaluations

Evaluation Initiative with Northern Illinois University Workforce Policy Lab

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates that the [Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's \(CDLE's\) Employment and Training \(E&T\) Division](#) conduct formal evaluations of its program activities to explore and test innovative services and strategies, aiming for high levels of performance and positive outcomes. In collaboration with the [Northern Illinois University Workforce Policy Lab \(WPL\)](#), E&T developed a model for evaluating WIOA programs, which was previously [recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor \(USDOL\) as a best practice](#) . Together, they have produced four Annual Evaluation Reports. E&T and WPL continue to provide technical assistance and training to a group of local area staff known as the WIOA Evaluation Team. This training aims to enhance the Team's ability to utilize a mixed-methods evaluation approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative strategies.

Each local workforce area participates in a quantitative analysis while also conducting qualitative research to understand the reasons behind the data trends. The evaluation team identifies best practices in each local area and integrates recommendations to improve outcomes for WIOA participants. Local areas utilize various tools, including the [Evaluation Tool](#), to conduct independent evaluations of their WIOA programs, with a heightened focus on serving marginalized populations and enhancing program service delivery. This collaborative effort has significantly strengthened the capacity of state and local workforce staff to enhance yearly program planning, ensure equitable access to high-wage employment, and conduct independent evaluations that yield data-driven recommendations to maximize program performance for all individuals served. Colorado has presented these evaluation efforts at numerous national, state, and local conferences; and board and team meetings.

Results of evaluation:

Affirmation of Role: Colorado's public workforce system remains critical in supporting individuals through career transitions, skills acquisition, and overcoming complex employment barriers.

Validation of Approach: The evaluation validates CDLE's modernization efforts, which are guided by Kotter's 8-Stage Change Model and a commitment to integrating customer feedback (collective learning) to drive system reform.

Persistent Challenges: Despite positive outcomes reported by many participants (e.g., successful training completion), the evaluation revealed persistent challenges across the customer journey. These include inconsistent outreach, variable case management quality, funding delays, limited training guidance, and minimal post-program follow-up. These gaps disproportionately affect underserved populations (e.g. rural communities, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and those impacted by the digital divide).

Call to Action: To remain responsive to federal and state mandates, CDLE must continue with intentional, data-driven reforms. This involves standardizing processes, deepening employer engagement, updating service delivery tools, and ensuring all customers receive timely, personalized, and barrier-free access to services.

Need for Investment: The report emphasizes a clear and urgent need for increased WIOA funding to reinforce program infrastructure, expand staff capacity, and enhance service delivery. Additional investment is necessary to achieve robust labor market intelligence, continuous professional development, and long-term workforce resilience.

Roadmap: The findings and recommendations serve as a roadmap for the future, positioning CDLE to lead a modern, inclusive, and outcomes-focused workforce system through continued collaboration and increased funding.

Important Note on Data Sources & Methodology (both 11 months and Q3)

As we work to finalize year-end reporting for Program Year 2024, please note that the data in this evaluation summary is not yet complete. The participant and demographic information is based on 11 months of available data, pending the full validation of our recently modernized system. Similarly, the performance data reflects results through Quarter 3 (ending March 31, 2025). We are currently prioritizing the finalization of our Quarter 4 submission to USDOL and will share the complete, validated PY24 results as needed.

PY24 WIOA Evaluation Team Accomplishments:

1. In partnership with WPL, CDLE provided technical assistance and training to local evaluation leads for this year's efforts.
2. Each local area analyzed its client flow process from entry point through follow-up services, with a focus on training and supportive services, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation.
3. The WIOA Evaluation Team analyzed similarities and differences in the local areas, and this information was presented to the directors.
4. WPL and CDLE conducted focus groups to examine the experiences of WIOA Title I customers as they navigated training programs.
 - a. The participant pool included individuals who received training services between April 2019 and February 2025, as well as those currently enrolled in training, to correlate with the PY23 [Colorado's WIOA Title I - Adult and Dislocated Worker Annual Evaluation Report](#), which addresses the evaluation of data from PY22.
 - b. Each local area emailed participants with an invitation, including dates and three time slots from which to choose.
 - c. The participants were randomly selected, ensuring that a wide spectrum of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds were represented in the focus groups.
 - d. WPL and CDLE conducted virtual focus groups, inviting 10 participants per group.
 - e. Attendance for each session varied between one and nine participants, resulting in a total of 85 participants.
 - f. Participants received a \$50.00 gift card from WPL for their participation in the focus group. This incentive was provided to encourage participation and compensate for their time, but it was not so large as to unduly influence their responses.
 - g. WPL submitted the PY24 Annual WIOA Evaluation report on June 30, 2025: [Streamlining for Modernization in Colorado's Workforce System WIOA – Title I FY24 Evaluation Report](#)

In PY 25, the Evaluation Team will align its current evaluation Learning Agenda with [America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age](#), ensuring that our evaluation work is in line with the mission of the U.S. Departments of Labor, Commerce, and Education.

Colorado Workforce Development Council - Continuous Improvement Process

Toward awarding Performance Incentive Funds (PIFs) to local workforce areas, the CWDC issued its [Performance Incentive Fund Grants Policy Guidance Letter \(PGL\)](#) and [supporting documents](#), which detail our rating scale, reporting templates,

application guidelines and best practices forms. The PGL and supporting documents are all reviewed annually. This year, in order to create a feedback loop, CWDC modified Attachment 02 to provide space for local workforce areas to request CWDC support in any programmatic area needed. The CWDC will use these requests to develop technical assistance and support for all local workforce areas. PIFs are issued once the state and local performance outcomes are adjusted per USDOL guidelines.

Adult Education Evaluation Efforts and Outcomes

For the 2024 program year, the [Colorado Department of Education's \(CDE's\) Office of Adult Education Initiatives \(AEI\)](#) worked with a small group of grantees to refine and pilot a Landscape Analysis, a strategic tool used to assess grantee programmatic offerings, identify gaps, and inform future professional development and technical assistance planning. The Landscape Analysis will be used for all [AEFLA grantees](#) in the 2025-2026 program year and will better enable AEI to align Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) grantees with [CDE's strategic priorities](#) and meet [AEFLA reporting requirements under WIOA Title II](#).

As part of this process, AEI conducted meetings with each AEFLA grantee to facilitate self-assessment against key indicators tied to CDE strategic priorities and AEFLA reporting requirements. CDE's strategic priorities include increasing student engagement, accelerating student outcomes, strengthening the educator workforce, and providing operational excellence. In the future, grantees will develop professional learning goals that reflect their unique contexts and support AEI's broader compliance and leadership responsibilities. The Landscape Analysis utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data. This integration supports stronger decision-making, which in turn improves the state's ability to deliver targeted professional learning support through the required state leadership activities.

The Landscape Analysis also promotes a more responsive and differentiated approach to professional development. AEI can now tailor offerings to meet grantees where they are, identify shared areas of need, and build a multi-tiered system of support for adult education professionals statewide. Recognizing the historic lack of baseline and siloed data, this effort marks a significant step toward more cohesive and informed planning. Early feedback on the Landscape Analysis has been positive, and AEI will continue to gather input to refine and improve it.

AEI is an active participant in the My Colorado Journey working group, contributing to expanding career and education navigation tools for learners statewide. Through ongoing outreach, AEI encourages AEFLA grantees to engage with the platform and explore its potential to support adult learners in setting and achieving personalized

goals. This collaboration helps integrate digital resources into adult education programming, enhancing access to career pathways and support services.

Through a statewide longitudinal data system grant from the U.S. Department of Education, AEI worked with the [University of Denver's Linked Information Network of Colorado \(LINC\)](#) to study the long-term economic impacts of participation in Colorado's adult education programs. With permission from CDLE, LINC was able to match quarterly wage data for the previous 2.5-year period. While this fell short of the proposed 10-year study period to align with existing participant data, the data show there could be a connection between participation in Colorado's adult education programs and employment outcomes. More data is needed to establish a link between participation in a Colorado adult education program and the likelihood of post-program employment, the consistency and duration of post-program employment, and increases in wage post-program participation.

AEI continued data sharing agreements with CDLE in the 2024-2025 program year for the purposes of obtaining employment, wage, and co-enrollment matching data for required WIOA Title II reporting. AEI also engaged in numerous meetings with CDLE and CWDC to discuss findings and recommendations of the [Colorado Talent Pipeline Report \(TPR\)](#), which gives insight into Colorado's high-demand industries, credential attainment, and salary expectations. The TPR is a valuable tool in supporting adult learners looking to enter or advance in the workforce.

In the 2024-2025 program year, AEI emphasized outreach to share the successes and collaborative opportunities existing within the adult education space. The effort's most significant focal point has been in partnership with CWDC. Through this connection, AEI has actively participated in conversations to improve WIOA State Plan implementation, as well as through additional efforts such as advising on current career pathway practices in adult education in support of a broader review of state-supported career pathway tools. AEI will continue to strengthen connections with CWDC to strengthen alignment with Colorado's workforce priorities and deepen AEI connections within Colorado's workforce system.

Across all agencies, Colorado works to be responsive to Federal requests and visits for evaluations.

Customer Satisfaction

Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser - CDLE

Business Satisfaction Data - Through the Statewide Business Services Alignment initiative, local business services staff identified 11 staff-assisted business services

available to all business customers. Local business services staff then emailed a customer satisfaction survey to any business customer receiving any of the core services. The survey's standardized questions are a valuable feedback loop for staff, providing information that enables staff to continuously improve service provision. Business customers receiving services were asked to rate the following statement: "My engagement with the workforce center helped me find the right number of employees with the skills and experience I need." In PY24, 96.40 percent of employers rated themselves as satisfied or very satisfied.

Job Seeker/Customer Satisfaction Data - During PY24 local areas in Colorado conducted independent job seeker customer satisfaction surveys through the use of locally determined survey questions and methodologies. Because of the transition to virtual services, and the diversion of staff resources to assist customers with unemployment insurance claim issues, use of surveys primarily focused on customer satisfaction with virtual workshops rather than overall program services or workforce center experiences. In addition, due to variations in methodologies, survey results were not comparable across local areas.

Office of Adult Education Initiatives - CDE

Title II Adult Education programs did not collect employer satisfaction data in PY23 or prior years. The majority of allowable activities under Title II funds are customer-facing services rather than employer-facing services. AEI continues to collaborate with E&T on the Statewide and Local Performance Report by sharing employer name, address, and Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). These data elements are used to match on the measure of Effectiveness in Serving Employers, to be defined as Retention with the Same Employer and no longer collected as a baseline. This update reflects the final rule that took effect March 25, 2024, and defined the Effectiveness in Serving Employers primary indicator of performance, as required by WIOA section 116(b)(2), as Retention with the Same Employer.

Retention with the Same Employer

Focus on Stability: This measure focuses on the quality and sustainability of the job placements facilitated by the workforce system. A successful outcome means the placement was good enough for the participant to remain with the same employer for a minimum of six to twelve months after the program exit.

Time Frame: It compares employment status in the Second Quarter (Q2) after exit with the employment status in the Fourth Quarter (Q4) after exit.

Shared Indicator: Unlike other measures that might be program-specific, the ESE measure is reported as a statewide, aggregated, and unduplicated result across all six core WIOA programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Employment Service, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers (Retention with the Same Employer) Program Year (PY 2024) Colorado Performance Result: 68.05 percent.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation - CDLE

Business Customer Satisfaction Data

CDLE's [Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's \(DVR's\) Business Relations Unit \(BRU\)](#) has an established business customer satisfaction process designed to gather feedback across five key satisfaction measures.

Table 7: BRU Business Customer Satisfaction Key Measures

BRU Business Customer Satisfaction Key Measure	PY24 satisfaction rating
1. Timely and courteous service	96.62%
2. Information or service met my needs	95.52%
3. BRU staff member was knowledgeable on the topic	97.58%
4. Overall satisfied with the service received	96.55%
5. How likely are you to seek services from the BRU again?	95.17%
Total average business customer satisfaction rating	96.29%

The BRU has continued to lean into the hybrid business model of providing services to business customers virtually and in-person based on customer preference, which has enabled BRU to be more creative in its service delivery model and to meet a variety of business needs. This continued adaptation has contributed to BRU maintaining a high customer satisfaction rating with its business customers.

Table 8: DVR Customer Satisfaction Data

DVR Statewide Customer Satisfaction Key Measure	PY24 satisfaction rating
1. DVR staff were welcoming.	78.11%
2. DVR staff were helpful.	74.65%
3. DVR staff were knowledgeable.	76.06%
4. DVR staff were responsive.	73.55%
Overall Customer Satisfaction Rating	75.59%

DVR continues to explore strategies to improve the customer experience and ensure individuals interacting with DVR receive the best experience possible. Current strategies include modernization of DVR's case management system to support efficiencies within the VR process, recruitment and retention of qualified staff, and recruitment of service providers to ensure statewide access to high-quality, timely services.

State Strategies

Priority One: Increase affordability of career connected education and training for Coloradans of all skill levels who have completed or left the K-12 education system.

AEI collaborated with CDLE on more participant support processes to facilitate post-secondary pathways through support for concurrent intake processes and leveraging advantages of the Connecting Colorado modernization, such as the universal release and streamlined self-referral to WIOA Title I. The CRWC was a particularly capable and supportive partner of these efforts.

AEI also worked with the [Colorado Community College System \(CCCS\)](#) to help community and technical colleges offer adult high school diploma programs. Additionally, the office is working with the [Colorado Department of Higher Education \(CDHE\)](#) and CCCS on implementing the Ability to Benefit statute (ATB) in Colorado, which allows individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent to receive federal financial aid for college.

AEI also collaborated with the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) to align existing goals and data matching periods. To measure success, AEI is using metrics from the [Technical Assistance Guide for Performance Accountability under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#).

The [Colorado Department of Education's \(CDE's\) Office of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness \(PWR\)](#) began work to ensure each secondary student graduating in 2029 leaves high school with the Big 3: work-based learning, an industry-recognized credential and/or postsecondary credit.

[Apprenticeship Colorado \(AC\)](#), Colorado's state apprenticeship agency, scaled its work by providing technical assistance to potential Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) sponsors on cost of programs, which are displayed in the [Colorado Apprenticeship Directory](#). It also provided [BuildUp Grants](#) to provide no-cost training to apprentices in the building and construction trades.

AC, the [Colorado Department of Human Services \(CDHS\)](#), and CDLE strengthened their interagency partnership to expand access to RAPs for Coloradans receiving public assistance. This collaboration builds on an interagency agreement that leverages CDHS resources, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF; called [Colorado Works](#)) funding, to support AC staff in developing new apprenticeship opportunities and improving pathways for individuals who receive food assistance and TANF benefits to engage in RAPs.

Through this partnership, AC staff provided training and technical assistance to program operators, helped connect employers to apprenticeship opportunities, and supported the design of referral processes between human services and workforce partners. Efforts also included creating communications tools to increase awareness of apprenticeships among both employers and job seekers.

A significant milestone of the partnership was the Apprenticeship Summit on July 10, 2024, which convened stakeholders across workforce development, human services, and community-based organizations. More than 50 food assistance and TANF partners were trained on how to effectively support clients in accessing local apprenticeship programs. These trainings focused on the fundamentals of RAPs, how to engage employers, and strategies for connecting public assistance participants directly to apprenticeship opportunities.

By leveraging TANF resources, CDHS increased the reach and impact of this partnership, ensuring that clients - particularly those with barriers to employment - are connected to sustainable career pathways through apprenticeships. AC continues to provide ongoing technical assistance, policy alignment, and employer engagement, creating a coordinated infrastructure that expands apprenticeship access statewide.

Priority Two: Increase the quality of upskilling opportunities, jobs, and career pathways.

The CWDC developed a [Quality Career Pathways Framework](#) that defines quality career pathways; aligns stakeholders in implementation of [Colorado's Job Quality Framework](#); adheres to the [Colorado 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan's](#) priorities of affordability, quality, equity, and access; and focuses on increasing the quality of upskilling opportunities, jobs, and career pathways.

The CWDC also published industry career pathways on [My Colorado Journey](#). The CWDC, [Education and Training Steering Committee](#), and public and private partners (including industry) identified Creative Industries and Financial Services as needing industry career pathways to be published on [My Colorado Journey](#).

The CWDC also initiated a refresh of [ColoradoTalentDashboard.com](#) so that

Coloradans can see the outcomes of all state agency work contributing to [Colorado's 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan](#), increasing state transparency.

Finally, the CWDC implemented a Credentials of Value and Colorado Credential Registry Project, which filtered Colorado's Career Development Incentive Plan List and Eligible Training Provider List through [Colorado's Quality, In-Demand, Non-Degree Credential Framework](#) in order to surface non-degree credentials of value. The project also identified several state-owned credential lists to publish to [Credential Engine's Credential Registry](#) towards the eventual creation of a registry specific to Colorado so that Coloradans and workforce and education staff across the state can compare non-degree credentials.

CDHS developed standardized reporting processes across counties for [Colorado Works](#).

AC implemented an [Apprenticeship Data Dashboard](#) to display statewide program and apprentice data and organized a data group to implement data projects demonstrating agency impact.

Priority Three: Increase equitable economic opportunity for individuals who experience barriers based on race, ethnicity, gender, ability, age, zip code, and/or socioeconomic status.

[CCCS' Colorado Skills Institute](#) focused on badging and microcredentialing short term, non-credit credits that can be stacked. Towards increasing concurrent enrollment, CCCS' Concurrent Enrollment Director worked with Concurrent Enrollment teams at each CCCS college and school districts to understand concurrent enrollment policy, especially toward ensuring equitable access to students across the state. CCCS continued to implement [Skill Advance](#), which provides mini-grants for employers to upskill employees, and collaborated with the [Colorado Organization of Economic Development and International Trade \(OEDIT\)](#).

CDHE published its annual [Return on Investment Report](#) showing public postsecondary program wage outcomes. It also organized a working group to develop the [Minimum Value Threshold \(MVT\)](#) for public postsecondary programs, which was proposed to be Incremental Earnings minus Costs Specific to Higher Education.

CDHE also implemented [Colorado Promise: Two Free Years of College Expanded](#), which expanded provision of a tax credit reimbursing out-of-pocket tuition and fees for low- and middle-income students.

CDHE also implemented the [Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative Accelerated Study in Associate Programs \(COSI ASAP\)](#) to support students in rural

Colorado to obtain an associate degree at [Colorado Mountain College](#) and [Lamar Community College](#).

CDHE also implemented [FosterEd](#) and [EmpowerEd](#) and administered the [Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\)](#) to provide higher education funding and support to individuals who are in foster care or experiencing homelessness.

AEI supported increased Integrated Education and Training offerings such as job skills and credentials for individuals while earning their GED.

CDHE measured the number of high school students participating in dual/concurrent enrollment via dashboards with trend data, comparisons by institutes of higher education (IHEs) and K-12 school districts, and disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.

CDHS continued to leverage case management training and the Paving Access to Careers and Employment Pathways for Advancing Careers and Employment (PACE) program to promote access to concurrent enrollment opportunities. CDHS' [Senior Community Service Employment Program \(SCSEP\)](#) recruited and trained older adults so they may return to the workforce.

DVR modernized its case management system to include an online client portal, which makes it easier for people with disabilities to apply for and participate in services. It also implemented an Employment First - Virtual Connection Center to support access to information and resources necessary for people with disabilities to pursue and retain employment. DVR also implemented the [National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network \(NEON\) program](#) to ensure people with disabilities have access to benefits counseling to understand the impact of work on their benefits, as well as the ability to work while applying for or retaining Social Security Insurance and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Finally, DVR continues to focus on reducing the prosperity gap by increasing the workforce participation and wages of, and reducing poverty among, people with disabilities.

AC leveraged policy and coordinated with the statewide public workforce system to align apprenticeship activities.

Priority Four: Enhance access to programming by creating more seamless connections between high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce.

CCCS inspired legislation permitting community colleges to offer high school diplomas. It also worked to implement [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\)](#) programs of study connecting middle school and postsecondary education. It also worked with the AC and CTE to align competencies and pathways. Finally, it

succeeded in work-based learning being measured at the secondary level as part of Perkins V.

PWR began work to ensure each secondary student graduating in 2029 leaves high school with the Big 3: work-based learning, an industry-recognized credential, and/or postsecondary credit.

CDHE worked with IHEs to implement best practices to become designated [Career Connected Campuses](#).

CDHS continued to leverage case management training and the PACE program to promote access to concurrent enrollment opportunities. CDHS' [SCSEP](#) recruited and trained older adults so they may return to the workforce.

DVR implemented its [Disability Innovation Fund: Pathways to Partnership Grant](#), which funds projects to improve transition services for students and youth with disabilities.

CDLE's [Office of the Future of Work \(OFW\)](#) updated Work-Based Learning Quality Expectations.

The [AC](#) implemented legislation to increase access to apprenticeships for high school students as a post-secondary option in Colorado Springs School District 11 and Weld County School District Re-3J. It also began work to prepare a Future Ready Apprenticeship Center of Excellence.

Supportive Action: Articulate a shared vision and agreed-upon design principles for technology

The CWDC convened state agency partners to understand individual and collective technology needs. It also developed, iterated, and received consensus on a shared [Vision for Strategic Deployment of Technology to Support Talent Development](#), which includes agreed-upon design principles such as human-centered design and interoperability.

Performance Accountability

Monitoring System

CDLE's comprehensive monitoring system, recognized as a model by USDOL, is hallmarked by an ongoing monitoring and technical assistance process that has built a strong working relationship between the State and the local workforce areas. Quarterly, State Monitors from CDLE review the local areas they oversee to analyze client service levels, program expenditure rates, and performance outcome results.

Through these reviews, staff identify areas that may require additional technical assistance and training to rectify any deficiencies prior to the start of annual state compliance monitoring.

For the PY24 annual monitoring cycle, CDLE was in the fourth year of a Unified Monitoring Process with a team consisting of the CDLE Regional Services Unit (RSU), Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU), and Equal Opportunity Officer (EOO). They:

- Notified local areas of upcoming annual monitoring reviews
- Conducted a combined annual monitoring entrance and exit
- Conducted a combined annual mitigation process
- Issued a combined annual monitoring report

For more detailed information regarding the Unified Monitoring Process, please see [ADM-2021-02: Unified Monitoring Process Policy Guidance Letter \(PGL\)](#).

At-A-Glance Reports

A key support to these reviews are the quarterly At-A-Glance reports that capture critical performance indicators for each local workforce area. This report contains data from the WIOA reporting system and, when evaluated with data from the state financial system, paints a picture of the current progress toward program and fiscal performance goals.

Performance Measures for PY24 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025) and PY25 (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026)

Table 1. WIOA Title I - Adult: Performance Measures Statewide

Performance Measure	Statewide	PY24 Standard	PY25 Negotiated Performance Level
Q2 Employment Rate	70.30%	76.00%	76.00%
Q4 Employment Rate	69.60%	75.00%	75.00%
Median Earnings	\$9,685.00	\$9,100.00	\$9,100.00
Credential Rate	80.10%	75.00%	75.00%
Measurable Skills Gains	72.50%	68.00%	68.00%

For Title I PY 24 - Adult, Colorado met at 90% or greater or exceeded its targets.

Table 2. WIOA Title I - Adult: Negotiated PY24 Performance Levels, by Local Workforce Area

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$	Credential Attainment Rate	Measurable Skill Gains
Adams	76.00%	75.00%	\$10,100	75.00%	66.00%
Arapahoe/Douglas	75.10%	75.00%	\$8,700	76.00%	67.00%

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$	Credential Attainment Rate	Measurable Skill Gains
Boulder	74.00%	75.00%	\$9,100	75.00%	66.00%
Denver	74.00%	75.00%	\$10,100	75.00%	66.00%
El Paso/Teller	76.00%	75.00%	\$9,100	75.00%	64.00%
Jefferson	76.00%	75.00%	\$9,100	73.00%	66.00%
Larimer	76.00%	75.00%	\$8,500	71.00%	66.00%
Mesa	76.50%	75.00%	\$8,600	75.00%	64.00%
Rural Consortium	80.00%	75.00%	\$8,800	77.00%	67.00%
Weld	76.00%	75.00%	\$9,100	77.00%	67.00%
Statewide Standard	76.00%	75.00%	\$9,100	75.00%	66.00%
Actual Statewide Avg.	76.02%	75.00%	\$9,106	75.29%	66.08%

Table 3. WIOA Title I - Dislocated Worker: Performance Measures Statewide

Performance Measure	Statewide	PY24 Standard	PY25 Negotiated Performance Level
Q2 Employment Rate	71.30%	76.00%	76.00%
Q4 Employment Rate	71.20%	78.50%	78.50%
Median Earnings	\$12,191.00	\$11,681.00	\$11,681.00
Credential Rate	78.70%	79.00%	79.00%
Measurable Skills Gains	77.90%	68.00%	68.00%

For Title I PY24 - Dislocated Worker, Colorado met at 90% or greater or exceeded its targets.

Table 4. WIOA Title I - Dislocated Worker: Negotiated PY24 Performance Levels, by Local Workforce Area

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$	Credential Attainment Rate	Measurable Skill Gains
Adams	76.00%	78.50%	\$12,000	79.00%	67.00%
Arapahoe/Douglas	75.00%	78.50%	\$12,000	79.00%	68.00%
Boulder	76.00%	78.50%	\$12,000	79.00%	68.00%
Denver	75.00%	78.00%	\$12,000	79.00%	68.00%
El Paso/Teller	74.00%	78.50%	\$11,000	79.00%	65.00%
Jefferson	77.00%	79.50%	\$12,681	77.00%	68.00%

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$	Credential Attainment Rate	Measurable Skill Gains
Larimer	76.00%	77.00%	\$12,000	79.00%	68.00%
Mesa	77.00%	79.00%	\$10,500	79.00%	70.00%
Rural Consortium	79.00%	79.50%	\$11,181	79.00%	70.00%
Weld	76.00%	77.50%	\$11,500	81.00%	68.00%
Statewide Standard	76.00%	78.50%	\$11,681	79.00%	68.00%
Actual Statewide Avg.	76.02%	78.50%	\$11,686	79.04%	68.24%

Table 5. WIOA Title I - Youth: Performance Measures Statewide

Performance Measure	Statewide	PY24 Standard	PY25 Negotiated Performance Level
Q2 Employment Rate	71.00%	72.00%	72.00%
Q4 Employment Rate	70.70%	70.80%	70.80%
Median Earnings	\$6,065.00	\$5,200.00	\$5,200.00
Credential Rate	73.60%	62.00%	62.00%
Measurable Skills Gains	65.00%	61.00%	61.00%

For Title I PY24 - Youth, Colorado met at 90% or greater or exceeded its targets.

Table 6. WIOA Title I - Youth: Negotiated PY24 Performance Levels, by Local Workforce Area

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$	Credential Attainment Rate	Measurable Skill Gains
Adams	59.10%	58.00%	\$9,000	\$5,700	48.00%
Arapahoe/Douglas	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,500	\$5,500	67.00%
Boulder	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000	\$5,400	50.00%
Denver	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000	\$4,200	62.00%
El Paso/Teller	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000	\$5,500	63.00%
Jefferson	59.10%	58.00%	\$9,000	\$5,700	54.00%
Larimer	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000	\$4,500	63.00%
Mesa	59.10%	58.00%	\$7,500	\$5,400	48.00%
Rural Consortium	59.10%	58.00%	\$7,500	\$5,500	63.00%
Weld	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000	\$5,000	67.00%
Statewide Standard	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000	\$5,200	61.00%

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$	Credential Attainment Rate	Measurable Skill Gains
Actual Statewide Avg.	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,033	\$5,234	61.08%

Table 7. Title II - Adult Education: Performance Measures Statewide

Final data was submitted to the National Reporting System in October 2025 but has not yet received final approval.

Performance Measure	Statewide	PY24 Standard
Q2 Employment Rate	29.23%	25.20%
Q4 Employment Rate	28.10%	24.00%
Median Earnings	\$7,711.10	\$6,100.00
Credential Rate	26.56%	19.00%
Measurable Skills Gains	51.64%	44.00%

Table 8. Title III - Wagner-Peyser: Performance Measures Statewide

Performance Measure	Statewide	PY24 Standard	PY25 Negotiated Performance Level
Q2 Employment Rate	62.60%	59.10%	59.10%
Q4 Employment Rate	63.50%	58.00%	58.00%
Median Earnings	\$9,457.00	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00

For Title III PY24 - Wagner-Peyser, Colorado met at 100% and exceeded its targets.

Table 9. WIOA Title III - Wagner-Peyser: Negotiated PY24 Performance Levels by Local Workforce Area

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$
Adams	59.10%	58.00%	\$9,000
Arapahoe/Douglas	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,500
Boulder	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000
Denver	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000
El Paso/Teller	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000
Jefferson	59.10%	58.00%	\$9,000
Larimer	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000
Mesa	59.10%	58.00%	\$7,500
Rural Consortium	59.10%	58.00%	\$7,500

Local Workforce Area	Q2 Emp %	Q4 Emp %	Median Earnings \$
Weld	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000
Statewide Standard	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,000
Actual Statewide Avg.	59.10%	58.00%	\$8,033

Table 10. Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation

Performance Measure	Performance	Target
Q2 Employment Rate	53.40%	58.80%
Q4 Employment Rate	52.00%	53.00%
Median Earnings	\$5,615.37	\$5,559.00
Credential Rate	26.40%	31.80%
Measurable Skills Gains	34.10%	26.90%

Validation and Methodology

Colorado’s data validation approach involves an annual Data Element Validation (DEV) process, which uses a statistically valid random sample of Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) records. The methodology requires a file review where the value reported for specific PIRL data elements is verified against the acceptable source documentation (e.g., monitoring records and eligibility forms, wage records) to ensure accuracy and compliance with federal guidelines (TEGLs).

The state has updated and reissued two Policy Guidance Letters after review by the US Department of Labor. These PGLs and attachments can be viewed at the following links:

- [MIS-2020-03: Data Integrity and the Participation Cycle for WIOA and TAA Programs](#) - includes common exit policy for WIOA Title I, III, and National Discretionary Grants, plus JVSG.
- [MIS-2023-01: Data Validation for WIOA and TAA Programs](#) - includes the following:
 - written procedures
 - regular training
 - monitoring protocols
 - review of program data
 - documentation
 - regular assessment

Statewide Governor's Reserve Funds

Required Statewide Activities

Annually, the CWDC works in partnership with E&T to implement required statewide activities with reserve funds. These efforts break into three categories, with the following amounts dedicated to each from the total PY24 allocations to Colorado for Title I-B programs.

- Industry-led Strategies: \$337,644
- Evaluation, Technical Assistance, and Technology: \$1,432,369
- Incentive Funds and Local Board Training: \$487,555

Industry-led strategies focused on enhancement of the [statewide sector partnership network](#). Actions led by the CWDC include supporting the community of practice for sector partnership conveners and dedicated work on key industries. As of 2025, there are 27 active sector partnerships across the state. These partnerships exist in nine of the 14 economic development regions and in diverse industries such as retail, health care, aerospace, tech, construction, and more.

Annually, the CWDC releases the Sector Partnerships Business Impact Survey to better understand how regional sector partnerships advance the goals of businesses, the workforce, and the wider community. Key findings from the 2025 survey include:

- 72.97% noticed increased recognition or visibility within their community.
- 60% surveyed supported worker upskilling or career advancement opportunities, while 55% promoted skills first practices & developed or enhanced training and education programs.
- 50% implemented workbased learning programs such as apprenticeships, internships, and job shadowing opportunities.

The statewide reserve funds supported the evaluation efforts of Northern Illinois University and the state's WIOA Evaluation Team. These efforts worked in concert with the technical assistance provided by E&T to all local areas that is directly tied to performance measures. This work included the regular publication of the At-a-Glance reports above that indicate whether areas are on track to achieve performance targets. E&T staff connect with boards and center team members as needed to provide guidance and direction to achieving performance targets each year. Targeted technical assistance is provided to areas who are off track or fall below the target standard on any specific performance measure.

This segment of statewide funds was also used to operate the state's Eligible Training Provider List and to promote in-demand career pathways. These critical tools connect WIOA participants to training programs that will provide the best likelihood for economic opportunity based on the individual's interest and desires.

Local areas were rewarded for achieving performance measures and engaging in state-prioritized strategies through performance incentive funds. The process implemented annually by the CWDC recognizes excellence first in achieving the target performance metrics for a specific area, and then rewards areas for their work on aligned sector strategies, career pathways, and work-based learning initiatives. Colorado's process also includes an application to be designated as a high-performing local workforce board. This distinction is based primarily on the work of board members and connects to the board's community engagement and strategic leadership. In PY24, eight local workforce boards earned this designation.

Statewide funds also enhanced a local area's ability to achieve performance targets through ongoing training opportunities. Statewide funds supported the Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Association, which held a statewide conference in the spring of PY24 and provided targeted training to senior leadership, local board members, and business services staff.

Allowable Statewide Activities

The CWDC works in partnership with the Governor's Office to implement allowable statewide activities with the reserve funds. These efforts break into two categories, with the following amounts dedicated to each from the total PY24 allocations to Colorado for Title I-B programs.

- Governor's Strategic Initiatives: \$1,068,807
- Council Initiatives: \$236,303

In PY24, the CWDC designed a new process for allocating Council Initiative dollars. This approach allowed for widespread input and idea generation, and those ideas were then filtered through the lens of strategic impact, scalability, and systems focus. The first implementation of this process led to the decision to support a pilot-program connecting youth to opportunities in the emerging quantum industry led by Workforce Boulder County (WBC). This approach continues in PY25 and shows promise for identifying the highest impact opportunities for the state.

The Governor's Office annually identifies strategic initiatives allowable through WIOA to advance specific objectives. In PY24 this included the expansion of RAPs in state government, a teacher externship program that is developing stronger

connections between the K-12 system and in-demand industries, and a review of Colorado's overall approach to postsecondary education and talent development.

Rapid Response

[Rapid Response](#) provides an early connection to resources that accelerate reemployment. [Rapid Response's](#) partners include local area workforce centers, [Trade Adjustment Assistance \(TAA\)](#) Counselors, [Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment \(RESEA\)](#) Coordinators & Staff, [Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#) Counselors, workforce center Career staff, Business Development Representatives, and Colorado state agencies. Other partnerships include [Connect for Health Colorado](#), [Osaic Institutions](#) (formerly CUSO Financial Services), [Money Management International](#), [Right Management](#), and [Spring Institute - The Interpreter Network](#).

Program Impact

- 55 Worker Adjustment Retraining Notifications (WARNs) were received, impacting 4,648 workers.
- 2,396 Rapid Response services were delivered to 1,925 seekers across Colorado.
- Services delivered included workshops, reverse hiring events, and job fairs.
- 100% of job seekers rated Rapid Response services as good or excellent.
- Two new brochures for employers were delivered: [Layoff Aversion](#) and [Layoff Assistance Services](#).
- Continued traffic to [Help After Job Loss webpage](#).

Wagner-Peyser Activities

Colorado received \$11 million to provide ongoing career guidance and placement services for job seekers, as well as business services to help employers find qualified candidates. The program offers universal access to all job seekers and businesses, with a particular focus on veterans, [Unemployment Insurance](#) claimants, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and individuals with disabilities. Services include online self-service registration, job matching, workshops, and in-person and virtual staff-assisted services through local workforce centers.

The program operates through job seeker registration and job matching via CDLE's labor exchange system, and business registration and job listing through national

and CDLE labor exchange systems, in partnership with all workforce centers (American Job Centers).

National Dislocated Worker Grants

The [QUEST 1 and QUEST 2 grants](#) are [Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grants \(DWG\)](#) funded 100 percent by USDOL under the WIOA. These grants provide supplemental funding to address major economic dislocations that exceed the capacity of existing WIOA formula funds. The specific purpose of these two grants is to help individuals, communities, and businesses recover from the adverse social and economic effects exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The overarching mission of both grants is to connect eligible individuals to quality jobs in high-growth industries, including Infrastructure, the care economy, and Colorado's 14 Major Industries. Eligibility is focused on those most affected by the pandemic and includes:

- Individuals temporarily or permanently laid off as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Long-term unemployed individuals (QUEST 2 expands this definition to include individuals who are justice involved, persons with disabilities, [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) and public assistance recipients, and older workers aged 55+).
- Dislocated Workers as defined by WIOA.
- Self-employed individuals who became unemployed or significantly underemployed due to the pandemic.

The grants provide a comprehensive set of employment and training services, connecting job seekers directly with work and income.

- **Services Provided:** Career services, occupational training, work-based learning, and disaster-relief temporary employment.
- **Supportive Services:** A critical component, supportive services are offered to accelerate success, which can include assistance such as rental support.
- **Workforce System Integration:** The programs supplement Local Area Workforce Center Business Service programs and are accessed through workforce centers. Eligibility is determined by program staff who then develop individualized plans.

State Best Practices and Needs

1. [Connecting Colorado](#), Colorado's labor exchange and case management system, implemented a modernized platform in PY24. The significant technology transition and associated data migration has been a challenge. But it is anticipated that with a modern design and enhanced functionality, the updated platform will provide improved tools to help job seekers connect with career opportunities and support employers in finding skilled talent.
2. In addition to the content presented in the [Evaluation](#) and [State Strategies](#) sections, Colorado is submitting two attachments: [Attachment 2 - Best Practices of Local Workforce Areas](#) and [Attachment 3 - Employment and Training Division Strategic Initiatives](#).
3. In PY24, Colorado did not implement pay-for-performance contracting.

Attachment 1 - Best Practices of Local Workforce Areas

Adams County Workforce & Business Center

Co-enrollment has long been a key focus for the [Adams County Workforce & Business Center \(ACWBC\)](#), with staff dedicated to connecting customers to multiple programs and services to support their career goals. This important innovation in Program Year 2024 embraced work-based learning opportunities, becoming a clear area of impact where co-enrollment efforts led to strong results. ACWBC's goal was to expand access to paid work-based learning opportunities by strategically using co-enrollment across WIOA and partner programs. Staff aimed to connect more customers, especially those facing barriers to employment, with internships that could build experience, improve job readiness, and lead to long-term career pathways. At the same time, ACWBC sought to strengthen employer relationships and emphasize the benefits of hosting work-based learning participants. Through coordinated efforts among WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, TANF ([Colorado Works](#)), [Employment First](#), [RESEA](#), and Career Services programs, staff identified co-enrolled customers who would benefit from work-based learning experiences. The Business Services team worked closely with frontline staff to identify internship sites and promote the program to employers. Staff maintained regular communication with business development representatives, highlighted the support provided to participants during internships, and emphasized the importance of investing in future talent pipelines. Priority was given to underserved populations, including New Americans, ensuring people-centered service delivery opportunities. As a result, in PY24:

- 15 co-enrolled customers participated in a paid internship.
 - 10 co-enrolled customers successfully completed their internship.
 - 5 internships will continue into PY25.
- The average duration of a paid internship was 89.5 days.
- The average internship wage was \$19.37 per hour.
- Co-enrollments helped WIOA Adult reach 125.2% of its program enrollment goal through May 2025.

The ACWBC met or exceeded performance benchmarks for Employment Rate (Q2 and Q4), Credential Attainment, and Measurable Skill Gains. Employer engagement was enhanced through active coordination with Business Services, resulting in

ongoing and new partnerships that will continue to support work-based learning placements in future program years.

By aligning funding sources and referral processes, staff streamlined pathways into strong work-based learning opportunities while reducing administrative workload. This effort was made unique by the integrated role of Business Services, where employer outreach, relationship management, and promotion of work-based learning became a shared priority across teams. The result is a repeatable model demonstrating how cross-program coordination can achieve positive outcomes for both participants and employers.

This approach demonstrated innovation through its intentional use of co-enrollment as a tool to increase access to paid internships. By aligning funding sources and referral processes, staff could streamline pathways into strong work-based learning opportunities while reducing administrative workload. What makes this effort unique is the integrated role of Business Services, where employer outreach, relationship management, and promotion of work-based learning became a shared priority across teams. The result is a repeatable model that shows how cross-program coordination can achieve positive outcomes for both participants and employers.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works!

As part of the [Governor's Summer Job Hunt initiative](#), [Arapahoe/Douglas Works! \(A/D Works!\)](#) hosted a four-day Summer Job Hunt Boot Camp in June 2025 with the goal of empowering young adults ages 14–18 with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to successfully navigate their first steps into the workforce through participation in intensive, targeted programming. The camp aimed to bridge the gap between education and employment by providing practical, real-world preparation in a supportive and engaging environment. Through hands-on activities, career exploration, and direct connections with employers, the program sought to equip youth not only to secure their first job, but to understand what it takes to succeed and grow in today's evolving workplace. By focusing on both personal and professional development, the event helped youth begin building a foundation for long-term career success.

The Summer Job Hunt Bootcamp's success stems from its holistic and youth-centered approach. Following the success of the PY23 Summer Job Hunt Boot Camp, the event was enhanced after receiving feedback from participants and employers to innovate on the featured topics and curriculum for a more holistic impact. Rather than delivering standard job readiness workshops, the camp brought together professional development, career discovery, emotional

intelligence, and financial education into a cohesive, intensive, hands-on experience. It leveraged strong community partnerships with local employers, libraries, thrift stores, and youth-serving organizations to provide wraparound support and real-world context. Additionally, by incorporating digital professionalism and job scam awareness, the camp addressed the unique challenges faced by today's youth in the job market. This design allowed youth to practice and reflect in real time, preparing them not just to get hired, but to thrive.

Another innovation in the PY24 event was a partnership with the [Aurora School to Work Alliance Program \(SWAP\)](#) serving young adults with disabilities and barriers to employment, which resulted in 20 SWAP participants attending the event.

Nearly 30 youth participated in a series of highly engaging and practical workshops designed to build both soft and hard skills critical for workforce entry. From professionalism and communication to resume writing, career exploration, financial literacy, learning how to use labor market information, and mock interviews, the camp delivered a comprehensive experience that met youth where they are and helped move them forward. The event concluded with a youth-focused job fair featuring 12 local employers and 68 total jobseekers, giving participants a real-time opportunity to apply what they had learned.

Prior to the Summer Job Hunt Boot Camp, the absence of hands-on, youth-focused job readiness programming was a critical gap in workforce development. Many youth who participated had limited exposure to the foundational skills and experiences necessary for entering the workforce. Many had minimal to no prior access to career exploration tools, labor market data, and direct employer engagement. Some youth lacked confidence in navigating workplace expectations or understanding how to present themselves professionally in person and online. Without targeted support, these young adults would continue to face significant barriers to securing meaningful employment or identifying viable career pathways.

The outcomes of the PY24 Summer Job Hunt Boot Camp were both immediate and impactful. Of the nearly 30 participants, several reported scheduling interviews as a direct result of the job fair, while others left with a clear plan of action, job leads, and new professional connections. Participants also walked away with updated resumes, improved interview skills, and a better understanding of the importance of workplace behavior and personal branding. Engagement with six community partners, hands-on activities, access to resources such as vouchers for interview attire from a local store, and engaging in mock interviews all reinforced participant learning and increased confidence. Feedback from both youth and community partners emphasized that the event was a welcoming and empowering environment in which participants could explore their interests, ask questions, and envision their futures in the workforce. This initiative strengthened local

collaboration between workforce professionals, employers, and community organizations, setting a strong example of how targeted youth programming can lead to meaningful outcomes in early career development.

Fostering a Data-driven Workforce Ecosystem through Strategic Collaboration

A/D Works! noticed that regional access to reliable, customized labor market intelligence was limited, disjointed, and slow to address current and future business needs. There was limited coordination to share insights, develop standardized approaches, or respond quickly to emerging industry trends. Often, employers found it difficult to translate labor market data into actionable strategies and might lag behind to inform current needs. There was a constant challenge to ensure data intelligence products were attuned to local employer needs.

In response, A/D Works! used strategic collaboration to foster a data-driven workforce ecosystem. By bringing together workforce economists, local workforce centers, educational institutions, economic development partners, and employers, A/D Works! ensured that data was not only collected and rigorously analyzed but also shared with multiple stakeholders to address real-time workforce challenges. Additionally, A/D Works! sought to increase employer guidance on the design and distribution of data intelligence products that would contribute to local talent and economic development strategies.

In order to better align workforce services with regional economic priorities, the A/D Works! Workforce Development Board (ADWDB) hosted a focused data session in December 2024 to understand how workforce development stakeholders were using A/D Works! data intelligence products, hear suggestions for improvements to support analysis and strategic planning, and understand where additional products or resources could fill gaps for local employers.

As a result, many of these initiatives were implemented and processes refined. One example is the new Data and Labor Market Information Taskforce (DLMIT), formed in response to an increasing demand for timely, sector-specific data to inform decisionmaking across business, workforce development, education, and economic development systems. The ADWDB convened the DLMIT and encouraged business and community participation. One of the first initiatives of the DLMIT was to design and launch a monthly Economist's Corner containing bite-sized labor market insights on labor availability, competitive wages, and hiring demand through social media. Posts were designed to make complex workforce data more accessible to businesses, job seekers, and community stakeholders. To multiply impact, DLMIT coordinated with the Outreach and Marketing Taskforce to improve and expand communication about data intelligence provided by A/D Works! This new taskforce

provided a centralized resource for accurate, approachable workforce data while continuing to develop strategies for enhancing data insight delivery and engagement.

The combined efforts of DLMIT, new data products like the Economist's Corner, and top skills reporting contributed to an increase in followers to [A/D Works! LinkedIn](#) from 1,946 followers in December 2024 to 2,135 in June 2025.

Guided by ADWDB's support of a collaborative data-driven strategy, A/D Works! staff also continued to support local, state, and regional workforce data initiatives through DLMIT's continuing development of a Labor Market Information Work Group to train staff and produce data products for the agency, job seekers, and employers. A/D Works! also partnered with other stakeholders to further the value of data intelligence to inform talent strategies and economic development:

- Partnered with the Tri-County Workforce Center to use labor market data to identify occupations and pathways towards developing a definition of the emerging quantum computing sector. The resulting definition was vetted and validated by economists at Lightcast and will be adopted by Jefferson County as the working framework for regional development in this field.
- At the request of an economic development leader, joined workforce economists from Boulder and Denver to produce a comprehensive labor data report for the City of Greeley. The report was so well received that it generated further requests to expand analysis into six additional industry sectors in Weld County.
- At the request of the [Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado Boulder](#), contributed to the narrative for Professional and Business Services (NAICS 54 and 56) super sector
- Partnered with the [Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation](#) to form a statewide group that used 2022 NAICS codes to redefine the aerospace and aviation manufacturing sector
- Supported the new [Arapahoe Community College Colorado Space Institute](#) with data around skills demand in 2025 in each talent cluster in the aerospace sector within greater metro Denver, which includes computer, business and financial, executive, operations and engineering and factory floor
- Partnered with Stephanie Mufic of CDLE to present an Economic Development class, sponsored by the [Economic Development Council of](#)

[Colorado](#) in partnership with [Colorado State University](#) and the [Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation](#)

- Collaborated with [CWDC](#) to develop an aerospace career pathway to support Colorado job seekers
- Participated in the state's WIOA Evaluation Team project to evaluate the engagement in, and performance and outcomes of, WIOA programs. The resulting report is informing processes and strategies to improve and innovate services for program participants to support long-term, successful outcomes using human-centered design.

The ADWDB believes that the provision of accurate, timely, and sector-specific labor market intelligence enabled workforce professionals, educators, and economic developers to better align training programs with employer needs and emerging industry trends, encouraging:

- Reduced skills gaps, improved job placement, and acceleration of talent pipeline development for job seekers
- More effective recruitment and talent retention strategies by employers as a result of clearer insights into labor availability and competitive wage data
- Curriculum development at educational institutions that reflects real-world demands, preparing students for in-demand careers.

A/D Works!' approach to data-informed practices broke down traditional silos between workforce centers, economic developers, educational institutions, and employers to create a unified, data-driven ecosystem.

Enhancing WIOA Services and Funding

Traditional federal and state sources of workforce development funding, such as Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, and Workforce Enterprise Funding have been subject to cuts, fluctuation, and new requirements and restrictions. Potential unfunded mandates and administrative funding cuts to support programmatic operations threatened required performance outcomes. Areas of particular concern included Veteran services, adult education/GED services, in-demand career pathway access, and expansion of worker upskilling and RAPs.

At the same time, there was increased demand for services from local businesses and job seekers.

Therefore, the ADWDB and A/D Works! partnered with county, workforce development, business, economic development, and education and training

partners to identify and pursue diversified grant funding opportunities. Networks and new grant tools were used to identify opportunities, the internal grant approval process was refined, and staff upskilled in grant writing and management skillsets and best practices. As a result, the ADWDB and A/D Works! and collaboratively submitted multiple new grant applications and were awarded the following as new funding sources:

- Apprenticeships Building America, USDOL – \$6 million. This grant supports employers in creating and expanding RAPs, expanding career pathway access to job seekers to earn and learn, and strengthening talent pipelines and retention.
- Good Jobs Challenge, Economic Development Administration (EDA) - \$2.5 million. A/D Works! and [Denver Economic Development & Opportunity](#) will train individuals for Information Technology positions with Aerospace and Defense companies.
- [Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program \(HVRP\)](#), USDOL - \$165,000 for PY25 with an anticipated \$507,591 over years. This is the only federal grant to focus exclusively on competitive employment for veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. Program participants receive services such as career exploration, career technical training, job placement, and supportive services with the goal of empowering them to secure employment in high-demand occupations, paying wages consistent with the relevant market.
- [Adult Education and Literacy Act \(AELA\) Grant](#), Colorado Department of Education - \$314,892 for PY25 with an anticipated \$1,259,567 over 4 years. This grant supports services to eligible adults for basic education in literacy, digital literacy, and numeracy that lead to additional skills acquisition, a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate, postsecondary credential attainment, and employment. A/D Works! will offer adult basic education and GED services through two Adult Basic Education/GED instructor staff positions.
- [Denver Regional Council of Governments \(DRCOG\) Green Workforce Hub Grant](#), Environmental Protection Agency - \$5.2 million. Funding will support operation of Green Workforce Hubs throughout the region in collaboration with Adams, Boulder, Denver, and Jefferson workforce areas. This grant aims to connect individuals with training and job opportunities in the green energy and clean technology sectors. This initiative is part of a larger effort to build a green workforce in the Denver metro area, addressing both climate resilience and workforce development.

Expanding and diversifying funding through new avenues and direct applications became a new focus for A/D Works! as critical to continue and expand current

service delivery to local businesses and job seekers to support economic vitality. DDiversifying funding also allowed the ADWDB and A/D Works! to be more holistically responsive to the needs of the local region when funding across education and workforce development has been subject to cuts and additional requirements. Finally, diversification of funding was also a new layoff aversion tactic at A/D Works!, which has thus far successfully sustained staffing levels to maintain grant operations and provide service delivery excellence.

Workforce Boulder County

[Workforce Boulder County's \(WBC's\)](#) career coaching program was highly impactful in equipping clients with the foundational skills, confidence, and direction needed to successfully enter and advance along in-demand career pathways.

Prior to the launch of WBC's career coaching program, clients did not have the opportunity to regularly meet one-on-one with a career coach unless they were enrolled in WIOA or another program with eligibility requirements. Many clients ineligible for these programs still needed more intensive career support, which created a significant service gap.

Additionally, for many clients, the challenge was not a lack of interest in advancing their careers. The challenge was that they were not quite ready to jump into a training program or certification. Some clients who were ready did not know how to navigate the processes. Clients needed a space to identify their next steps, build work readiness skills, and receive individualized guidance. Without this support, clients often lacked direction, an awareness of career options, and the self-reflection needed for informed decisions.

In response, the WBC Training Team designed and launched the career coaching program. The team drew on its collective expertise in workforce development, labor market trends, and client engagement to create a model that is both structured and flexible enough to meet diverse client needs.

The program began with an intake and readiness assessment that evaluated each client's current employment status, willingness to engage in the coaching process, potential barriers to employment, career goals, and work history. This step ensured that services were targeted, relevant, and aligned with the client's starting point.

Once enrolled, clients were matched with a dedicated career coach for an average of 3 to 6 months of ongoing support. Coaching sessions were scheduled weekly or bi-weekly based on the client's availability, goals, and progress. Session content was fully customizable: Some clients worked on strengthening executive functioning skills like organization, time management, adaptability, and follow-through. Others

focused on deeper career exploration, identifying viable pathways in in-demand industries, or aligning their current skills with labor market opportunities.

Coaching often incorporated a mix of practical tools and reflective exercises, including:

- Career assessments to help uncover strengths, interests, and transferable skills
- Analysis of labor market information to connect clients with emerging and high-demand fields
- Job search strategies tailored to the client's target industry, including networking plans, resume and cover letter development, application assistance, and interview preparation
- Career pathway exploration to help clients visualize long-term opportunities and plan for advancement

In addition, clients were encouraged to participate in relevant labor market workshops such as Executive Functioning, Overcoming Challenging Work Histories, Career Exploration, and the Future of Work. These workshops complemented one-on-one coaching by providing peer learning opportunities and expanding skills development in a cohort setting while also addressing important challenges faced by job seekers.

Spotlight on the Executive Functioning Workshop: The Executive Functioning Workshop trained clients organization, time management, and follow-through skills, and was the only program of its kind in Colorado. It was also unavailable prior to the career coaching program. While many workforce programs focused on technical training or job placement, the Workshop took a skills-first approach to build the foundational skills that directly influence long-term employment success: communication, organization, adaptability, and effective interaction.

The Executive Functioning Workshop consisted of three interconnected workshops delivered in a cohort model, creating a supportive peer environment in which participants felt seen, heard, and encouraged. This structure not only fostered accountability and connection but also mirrored the collaborative dynamics of the workplace. Each workshop built on the last, allowing participants to practice and strengthen their skills in real time.

What made this approach truly innovative was the integration of skills development with personalized career coaching. After completing the workshop series, clients could work one-on-one with a career coach to apply their newly strengthened skills to identify career pathways, explore in-demand industries, and take tangible next steps such as enrolling in training or applying for jobs. Clients were also guided to

reflect on their strengths, interests, and transferable skills, while also addressing barriers that may have previously held them back. This seamless transition from group-based learning to individualized support bridged a gap that many programs overlook: moving clients from skills awareness to skill application. Also, by providing structured support and accountability, coaches helped clients stay on track and adapt their plans as needed.

Another central goal of the program was to ensure clients could effectively market themselves in a competitive job market. This included building the ability to articulate skills and experiences in a way that resonates with employers, while also developing job search strategies, resumes, and interview skills tailored to their target industry.

By offering individualized coaching and targeted workshops, WBC significantly increased client exposure to viable, in-demand industries, enabling them to explore a range of career pathways they otherwise would not have been exposed to through traditional job searching methods. Through coaching, clients gained a much clearer understanding of how their existing skills and experiences align with these pathways and can begin envisioning working in those fields. This process strongly bolstered confidence and also led to tangible next steps such as applying for jobs, enrolling in training, or pursuing further education - all with consistent support along the way. Through anecdotal data and client feedback, it became clear that one-on-one coaching support was transformative.

Career coaching and navigation support also helped WBC clients to manage unexpected hurdles that arose along the way instead of becoming too discouraged to continue.

Together, the innovative Executive Functioning Workshop and WBC's personalized coaching model formed a comprehensive, scalable approach that equipped clients not just for their next job but for a lifetime of meaningful, sustainable employment.

Denver County

Among its accomplishments, [Denver Workforce Development \(DWD\)](#) is very proud of the support offered to its young people. In part due to countless recruitment and connection events for youth and employers, DWD connected youth to expanded work-based learning opportunities, which resulted in exceeding its WIOA Out of School Youth enrollment goals. DWD secured an additional \$2.5 million in funding from the City's Broncos Fund that was solely dedicated to youth workforce development and launched the [Mayor's YouthWorks Program](#), which provided a \$500 retention payment for Denver youth who reached 100 hours of summer

employment. The [Mayor's YouthWorks Program](#) also provided a hiring incentive payment to employers who hired Denver's youngest youth, ages 14-17.

DWD continued its \$1.5 million partnership with [Denver Public Schools](#) through the [Denver Youth Employment Program](#), which provided more than 300 low-income Denver youth with paid work experiences.

These investments not only offered real-world work experience to Denver's young people but provided financial literacy coaching to encourage responsibility with their hard-earned wages.

Larimer County

Creation of the Business and Economic Development (BED) Team

An integrated economic development and talent solutions business team is essential to the success of a modern economic and workforce development office. [Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development \(LCEWD\)](#) brought together Larimer County economic development investments with federal public workforce system investments to support economic vitality. By bridging these into a single point Business and Economic Development (BED) Team, Larimer County served as a critical connector between employers, job seekers, government entities, industry relocation selectors, and the broader ecosystem of education, training, and support services. This model maximized the impact of public investment, leveraged assets, eliminated duplication, and helped businesses more efficiently navigate systems. It strengthened regional competitiveness by ensuring that economic growth is supported by a ready, skilled workforce - something businesses and citizens find of value as they travel between geographical lines for work.

Retaining and Expanding Existing Key Employers

The LCEWD also identified that most new jobs and investments came from existing businesses rather than new arrivals. However, businesses faced talent shortages, skills mismatches, infrastructure barriers, and uncertainty about expansion. Without strategic support, the community risked losing key employers, which would reduce job opportunities for residents and weaken economic stability.

Targets:

- Retain and expand existing businesses in Larimer County by strengthening their workforces, connecting them to critical resources, and ensuring resiliency during disruptions.

- Build strategic partnerships across industry, education, and workforce systems to address shared needs and ensure a sustainable talent pipeline aligned with employer demand.

Actions:

- Business Retention & Expansion (BRE): Conducted on-site business visits to assess employer needs, challenges, and growth plans; facilitated access to permitting support, incentives, and space expansion resources.
- Industry Sector Partnerships: Convened employers, educators, workforce experts, and economic development staff to address shared issues such as skills gaps, infrastructure needs, and policy barriers.
- Workforce & Talent Pipeline Development: Partnered with K–12 schools, higher education, and private training providers to align training with in-demand occupations, ensuring WIOA participants and job seekers had clear pathways into quality jobs.
- Strategic Partnerships: Collaborated with public, private, nonprofit, and education stakeholders to align resources and drive systemic economic and workforce solutions.
- Business Incentives: Utilized targeted incentives to encourage investment, job creation, and climate-conscious growth strategies.
- Business Resiliency: Provided guidance and support to help employers prepare for and recover from disruptions, ensuring job retention during economic or environmental crises.

Results:

- Strengthened relationships with high-impact employers, leading to greater job retention and expansion opportunities.
- Increased alignment between workforce training programs and employer demand, improving job placement rates for WIOA and Wagner-Peyser participants.
- Expanded employer participation in industry sector partnerships, resulting in collaborative solutions for talent shortages.
- Enhanced business preparedness for future disruptions, reducing downtime and preserving employment.

Pikes Peak

Incumbent Worker Training Program

The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program has steadily grown since its launch in 2017. Increased awareness led to rising demand from both new and returning

businesses. Over time, the program evolved into a widely respected employer-focused initiative supporting business sustainability and employee advancement.

[Pikes Peak Workforce Center's \(PPWC's\)](#) goal was to strengthen business partnerships and meet employer skills development needs by reimbursing workforce training expenses. To do so, the Business Services Team executed a comprehensive outreach campaign that included attendance at networking events, direct email outreach, press releases to local media, and invitations to all Chambers of Commerce in the region. Two phases of outreach were launched, reaching more than 130 businesses. Program results included:

- 72 training applications received
- 61 businesses awarded contracts
- \$427,050 total funding awarded

The program's success led to peer-to-peer referrals among local businesses. The model remains adaptive through employer feedback and continuous process improvements, making it a standout in scalable workforce development.

Industry-Led Governance

Recognizing a lack of industry focus, engagement, and outcomes in Sector Partnerships, PPWC built on the success of two business-led events executed through the partnership, restructured governance by establishing an official board to ensure that all actions remain industry-driven. Additionally, PPWC developed formal Vision, Mission, and Purpose statements that were adopted by the group to maintain a clear and focused direction aligned with the partnership's goals.

The group conducted a "Purple Team" exercise (allowing a Red Team and a Blue Team to collaborate), using the values outlined in the Mission Statement to identify and prioritize key initiatives aimed at advancing the industry sector in the region. One of the key priorities that emerged was improving access to resources. While the group acknowledged that developing a shared platform would take time, industry leaders recognized that their collective knowledge is the most valuable resource. By sharing best practices, they could immediately tap into proven solutions that are ready for implementation.

Career Coaching as a Bridge between Job Seekers and Employers

When a 2022 grant for career coaching for individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic expired in December 2024, PPWC noticed the need for career coaching remained strong. In response, PPWC transitioned career coaching to Wagner-Peyser to allow for broader access to job seekers. Since January 2025, more

than 125 job seekers have been served, with 239 receiving coaching services over the program year. Sixteen participants either attested to securing employment or demonstrated wage increases in [MyUI+](#). The coaching model filled the gap between standard Wagner-Peyser offerings and grant-funded programs, provided targeted support to job seekers, and maintained employer relevance by being housed under Business Services.

Career Pathway Infographics for 19 School Districts

In comparison to other larger cities and workforce areas with consolidated school districts, El Paso and Teller counties encompass 19 school districts and more than 70 high schools, each offering discrete Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs. With multiple systems and disparity, there was no centralized resource or dashboard to understand the landscape of CTE offerings. This fragmentation made it difficult to assess alignment with regional labor market demands, understand available pathways, and evaluate the skills and education levels required for related careers.

PPWC's primary objective was to create a clear and accessible visualization that mapped high school career-connected learning opportunities to real-world jobs and in-demand skills. A secondary goal was to provide a comprehensive understanding of existing CTE offerings across all school districts to better inform stakeholders and guide future workforce development efforts.

Through the leadership of the Pikes Peak Workforce Development Board (PPWDB) and the Youth Committee, and in collaboration with in-school youth staff at the [Pikes Peak Business and Education Alliance](#) (PPBEA; a subsidiary of PPWC), PPWC conducted an in-depth review of regional CTE pathways. The team developed a set of eight visually engaging career pathway infographics showing the connections between high school CTE programs, required skills, education levels, and associated job opportunities in key industry sectors.

Since launch, all 19 districts have integrated the pathway infographics into their career counseling, and 540 employers have initiated partnerships with aligned high schools. The effort produced quantifiable and strategic outcomes:

- **Improved Decision-Making:** CTE Career Advisory Panels and school district leaders now make more data-informed decisions about program development. Since launch, all 19 districts have used the infographics to adjust or expand CTE offerings.
- **Stronger Business Engagement:** Employers are now more effectively identifying which high schools offer aligned training and can build long-term

talent pipelines. Over 500 local employers have engaged in conversations or partnerships directly tied to the mapped pathways.

- Postsecondary Alignment: The local community college overhauled its concurrent enrollment offerings to better reflect what is taught - and what is missing - at the high school level.
- Broader Visibility: The infographics sparked cross-sector conversations and became a shared language between educators, employers, and parents.

This project bridges a long-standing gap between K-12 education and workforce demands. Rather than creating new programs, PPWC strategically highlighted existing assets to reduce duplication and guide systemic change. This asset-based approach repositions K-12 as a business-aligned talent incubator and simplifies access to opportunity pathways for students and families. In a space often cluttered by competing initiatives, the focus on what already exists - and what is possible - is both refreshing and actionable.

Tri-County

In PY 2024, [Jefferson County Business & Workforce Center \(Tri-County\)](#) leadership set out to reenergize its Workforce Development Board - transforming it from a compliance-focused group into a high-performing, strategically engaged body representing Jefferson, Clear Creek, and Gilpin Counties. Through targeted recruitment, intentional strategy sessions, and a facilitated strategic planning retreat, Tri-County ensured its local plan reflected the informed voices of an active and invested board.

The board met virtually every other month, with one in-person meeting at year's end. While members fulfilled all WIOA compliance requirements, meetings were largely facilitated by Workforce Center staff, with limited member-led engagement.

Actions:

- Workforce Staff Marie Wilkinson (Board Administrative Coordinator), Diana Herring-Stark (Business Innovation & Outreach Manager), and Michelle Foley (Associate Director) designed a year-long board program aligned with strategic goals. They coordinated member-led presentations, hosted meetings at member businesses, promoted workforce events, and recognized member contributions.
- Strategic Advisor Andrew Bercich, (CEO, [SummitWorX Solutions](#)) led bylaw revisions, created a governance committee, and implemented engagement and succession planning strategies.
- Board Chair Annie Lozano (Director of Resource Development, [Mountain Vista Senior Living Community](#)) spearheaded new member recruitment,

expanded committee participation, and launched activities to connect members outside of formal meetings.

Results:

Engagement

- 75% of members actively participate in new workgroups supporting local plan goals. Workgroups are board member-led.
- 100% of board meetings now include member-led content.
- Board attendance at workforce events reached 100%.

Representation

- 300% increase in small business representation
- 10% increase in overall business and industry representation
- First-ever industry representation from all three counties served.

Visibility

- Four meetings hosted at member businesses from July 2024-August 2025, featuring board member-led tours and industry presentations.
- Hosted [CWDC](#) for the first time in January 2025.

Tri-County's innovation included developing a year-long strategic board engagement plan that integrated meeting content, speakers, and activities with local workforce area goals - ensuring meetings were relevant, dynamic, and impactful.

Weld County

Career Pathway Development - Youth Engagement

[Employment Services of Weld County \(ESWC\)](#) sought to increase youth voice in workforce planning and engage employers and educators in meaningful dialogue around preparing young people for the workforce.

Formerly, youth involvement was limited to Youth Committee meetings with limited structured focus on connecting discussion topics directly to youth career pathways and workforce readiness trends.

In response, ESWC incorporated themed meetings centered on Career and Technical Education (CTE) and other priority topics, such as Youth Apprenticeship, Youth Mental Health in the Workplace, and Youth with Disabilities. Meetings featured both youth representatives and employer perspectives and highlighted

inclusive hiring practices and ESWC's involvement in the [Project SEARCH](#) internship program.

These efforts resulted in strengthened alignment between committee discussions and youth workforce priorities, increased engagement from community partners, and raised awareness of inclusive workforce practices and CTE opportunities.

Our innovation of thematic, stakeholder-rich meeting content - paired with youth and employer perspectives - created a more targeted, impactful approach to engaging partners and shaping youth workforce strategies.

Work-Based Learning Opportunities - Youth Services

Youth in the justice system had limited access to coordinated mentorship, workforce training, and trauma-informed interventions.

ESWC's goal was to provide integrated support, mentorship, and work-based learning opportunities to justice-involved youth ages 14–18. It partnered with the 19th Judicial District, [Colorado Rebalance](#), and the [Colorado Youth Detention Continuum](#); provided paid internships and work-based learning opportunities; and applied Trust-Based Relational Intervention strategies to develop self-regulation skills. Six youth enrolled in the pilot program and ESWC aims to expand to serve twelve more youth by mid-year, resulting in improved youth readiness for employment and daily life challenges.

This innovation combined legal system partnerships, trauma-informed coaching, and paid work experience in one coordinated program.

Youth Career Exploration - Employment Readiness

Middle school students had limited exposure to career exploration and job readiness skills. In response, ESWC's goal was to prepare younger youth (ages 13–15) for future workforce opportunities through early skill development.

Therefore, ESWC partnered with [Colorado GEAR UP](#) to implement science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM)-based activities, educational field trips, and career exploration to 150 students. ESWC also facilitated a four-day employment readiness curriculum including interest profiling, resume creation, job applications, and mock interviews. As a result, students gained foundational job readiness skills and increased awareness of career pathways well before traditional employment age.

Work-based Learning Opportunities and Business Engagement

Employers and educators in Northern Colorado needed a coordinated platform to promote, develop, and expand work-based learning opportunities across industries.

In response, ESWC aimed to strengthen regional collaboration to increase awareness and adoption of WBL programs, and provide employers with tools to implement and expand these opportunities. Towards this goal, ESWC brought together partners from Weld and Larimer counties, K-12, higher education, and business; developed industry-facing WBL Toolkits; coordinated targeted social media campaigns (e.g. Apprenticeship Month, Internship Success Stories); and hosted quarterly Industry Happy Hour events linking sector partnerships with employers. ESWC's work resulted in improved employer awareness and engagement in WBL programs; expanded toolkit resources for employers; and strengthened cross-county collaboration between workforce, education, and industry partners

Business Engagement - Career Pathway Development

Recognizing that sector partnerships need consistent engagement and relevant programming to sustain employer participation and alignment with education systems, ESWC sought to increase employer participation and ensure sector partnerships directly addressed industry needs. ESWC hosted industry-specific career exploration events (e.g. Construction Con, Health Expo, [NOCOM Expo](#)); facilitated manufacturing advisory committees to align education and industry needs; and launched a new Finance Sector Partnership to meet emerging workforce demand. This resulted in expanded employer involvement in career exploration, strengthened ties between employers and educational institutions, and positioned new sectors for future growth. By combining large-scale public events with targeted advisory committees, ESWC created a dual approach to sector engagement and sustainability.

Business Engagement - Workforce Development

Employers needed practical guidance and tools to understand and apply Artificial Intelligence (AI) in workforce settings. ESWC's goal was to provide hands-on, accessible training for employers on integrating AI tools into business operations. ESWC also expanded the [Workforce Symposium](#) format to include additional breakout sessions and created an AI Resource Room where employers could explore AI applications relevant to workforce development and partnered with experts to deliver live demonstrations and answer questions. This resulted in increased employer understanding of AI applications, provided practical tools and connections to resources, and enhanced the value and reach of the Workforce

Symposium. By embedding a technology-focused, hands-on training space within a broader workforce event, ESWC gave employers immediate access to applicable tools and strategies.

Attachment 2 - Employment and Training Division Strategic Initiatives

The following pages provide additional information on the outcomes and impact of the [E&T Division's \(E&T's\)](#) strategic initiatives through PY24.

Policy Development

Through active participation on workforce committees at the federal, state, and local levels, E&T took a [leadership role](#) in shaping and aligning initiatives across multiple states and affecting workforce policies at the national level. Colorado has fully embraced the key principles of WIOA to achieve total integration of WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, and Trade Act employment and training programs, and enhanced state and local partnerships with [TANE](#), [SNAP](#), [AEI](#), DVR, and other workforce partners. To implement this integration, E&T leads the development of [state policy guidance letters \(PGLs\)](#).

The E&T Policy Team has organized a statewide policy team, including director champions and policy representatives from each local workforce area to elevate state policy throughout the system by developing shared priorities, increasing communication and training around state policy, and improving the statewide process for developing state policy.

Since March 2025, the statewide policy team has:

- Developed a user-friendly and accessible Policy Guidance Letter template
- Developed an enhanced strategy for issuing interim guidance while awaiting final policy decisions
- Formed a work group comprised of state and local subject matter experts to develop an aligned template for local procedures

Leadership Positions

E&T staff serve the system through the following leadership positions:

The National Governors Association ([NGA](#))

Center for Best Practices State Liaisons

State Liaisons Policy Subcommittee

National Association of State Workforce Agencies ([NASWA](#))

WIOA Information Technology Steering Committee
Employment and Training Committee
Veterans Committee
Apprenticeship/Work-Based Learning Committee
Policy Subcommittee
National Association of Workforce Development Professionals ([NAWDP](#))
Board of Directors
Executive Committee
Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Association Executive Committee
Colorado [Governor's Behavioral Mental Health Commission](#)
Colorado [Governor's Education & Workforce Cabinet](#)
Colorado [Governor's Rural Cabinet Working Group](#)
Opportunity Now State Board
Economic Development Council of Colorado
Communications Committee Co-Chair for CREC Project
Board Members on Colorado's Ten WIOA Local Workforce Areas Boards
Colorado Migrant and Rural Coalition Co-Chair
Northern Area Migrant Coalition Co-Chair
Colorado Work Requirement Working Group
Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (COSI) Board
Colorado Space Coalition
Direct Care Workforce Stabilization Board

Success Stories

Success Story 1. "Steering Toward Success: A Journey of Personal & Professional Renewal"

Determined to rebuild her life and reconnect with her children after being incarcerated, Maria came to Denver Workforce Development through an [Emerge Careers](#) cohort with an unwavering "can-do" attitude. Having worked every job she could find from physical labor to cleaning and painting, she was ready for a stable career.

With her Commercial Driver's License (CDL) permit already in hand, Maria fearlessly committed to the training program. She met every deadline and never missed an appointment, completing her enrollment in just two weeks. When her probation officer initially restricted her to local driving routes, she remained proactive, communicating her progress every week as she passed her courses and gained confidence.

Maria's dedication paid off. Before she even completed her training, she secured a full-time job. Impressed by her success, her probation officer approved her for a

regional route, opening up even more opportunities. Now, Maria is starting her new career at \$23.00 an hour, successfully rebuilding her life, her career, and most importantly, her relationship with her family.

Success Story 2. “Credentialed for a Comeback: Securing a Future in IT”

After being laid off due to a reduction in force, an experienced IT professional found himself struggling to secure a new role in today's competitive market. Recognizing the need to update his qualifications, he proactively sought assistance from the workforce center to become a more marketable candidate.

In response, we fully funded his training for the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) certification, a key credential in his field. He dedicated himself to the intensive two-month program and successfully earned his CCNA in December 2024.

This strategic investment had an immediate and direct impact. The participant shared that he had already secured a job offer that was contingent upon receiving this very certification. By upskilling, he not only met the requirements for his new role but is reentering the workforce with improved credentials and renewed confidence.

Success Story 3. “A Partnership in Perseverance: Clearing the Path to a New Career”

When James came to the WIOA program, his goal was to earn a Class A CDL and build a stable career. However, the path forward was filled with immediate roadblocks. He was grappling with urgent financial pressure, had limited transportation, and was suddenly unable to work his day labor jobs after breaking his thumb and needing surgery.

Despite this series of setbacks, James's unwavering positivity and "can-do" attitude never faltered. In partnership with his career coach, he began to systematically tackle each challenge. While his coach helped update his resume and find resources such as a CDL school on a bus route and free phone service, James took powerful personal initiative. He financed his own permit and physical exam, secured a bus pass, and was always on time for training.

James' perseverance paid off. He has already completed the online portion of his CDL training, secured a temporary weekend job to manage his bills, and met the majority of his initial career goals. Now on the final step of completing his behind-the-wheel training, James is on the verge of launching the new, stable career he worked so diligently to achieve.

Success Story 4. “Beyond the Classroom: How a Strategic Pivot Led to a High-Impact Career”

Elena is a charismatic changemaker whose potential was evident from day one. After being laid off from her position as a full-time university lecturer, she was determined to channel her skills into the perfect new role.

Approaching her career transition with purpose and dedication, Elena completed every workshop, meticulously updated her resume, and researched her options. Inspired by other success stories, she set her sights on the Prosci Change Management training, and she excelled. The biggest challenge that followed was finding an employer worthy of her considerable talents.

Despite a few initial interview setbacks, Elena's resolve never wavered. She and her career coach stuck to their plan, and she kept herself motivated with contract assignments and guest lectures. Her persistence paid off.

Today, Elena has secured a full-time position earning over \$37.50 an hour, where she assists social service organizations with a full range of business solutions. It's a fitting role for a natural leader dedicated to making a positive change.

Program Accomplishments

In addition to ensuring that the workforce system has the funding, policy, and technical resources it needs to ensure the success of all Coloradans, E&T administers a number of programs at the state level. Below are links to high-level performance reports for each program.

- [Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth \(WIOA Title I\)](#)
- [Colorado Works Subsidized Training & Employment Program](#)
- [Disability Program Navigator Program](#)
- [Governor's Summer Job Hunt](#)
- [Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Program](#)
- [Paving Access to Careers and Employment Program](#)
- [Pathful](#)
- [Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, & Training \(QUEST 1\)](#) Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant
- [Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, & Training \(QUEST 2\)](#) Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant
- [Rapid Response Layoff Aversion and Assistance](#)
- [Wagner-Peyser](#)