

2020 Team Kentucky Workforce WHERE Report



Moving Kentucky Forward Through
Workforce Training & Development



Team Kentucky Workforce
WHERE our goal is better **W**ages, quality
and affordable **H**ealthcare, excellent
Education, well-earned **R**etirement, and
leading by **E**xample

TEAM
KENTUCKY

Each year has its own unique challenges and opportunities, but PY2020 was unlike any time we have experienced as a state, nation and world. We have had to learn new ways to communicate with and help our customers and each other. While we continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes it has brought, I am proud of the way our partners have worked together during an uncertain and turbulent time. We have made new partnerships and strengthened established ones to serve our customers and I believe we will carry those positives lessons forward.

While Kentucky, like other states, has endured significant job losses and business closings because of the pandemic, we are striving to regain losses and come back better. That requires a workforce that is ready to take on the challenge of post- pandemic business and industry growth and revival through education and training and I believe we are up to that challenge.



The Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) and its 10 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) are at the forefront of this effort to build back a better Kentucky and I believe we are headed in the right direction. We appreciate the hard work and cooperation of government, business and industry and schools to promote education and training across every region during this difficult time. We encourage all communities to work toward a robust recovery by encouraging business and industry to engage with education and training at all levels.

We are looking forward to unprecedented federal funding and economic growth that will continue to challenge us to coordinate all of the workforce efforts in our state to ensure that the funds are purposefully deployed to maximize the positive impact in every community. By including all partners as we plan a strategy to use the funds, we are focused on making sure that we do not leave any community behind as we build back from the pandemic.

Adversity brings transformation, challenges and opportunities to improve. As we review Kentucky's economy and workforce in this report, you will see how each of our local boards answered the call to lead its community during some of the roughest days we have experienced in our country. We are optimistic that Kentuckians will come out of this pandemic stronger and more resilient than before COVID-19 hit.

Sincerely,
Mary Pat Regan
Deputy Secretary
Labor and Education & Workforce Development Cabinet

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Kentucky workforce professionals, businesses, training providers, career seekers and educators--the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) strives to bring together the Kentucky workforce ecosystem to help spark innovative approaches to hiring, retaining and developing Kentucky's workforce recovering from the pandemic and beyond. The KCC is the one-stop hub for all workforce initiatives.

The KCCs are designed to serve two primary customers: job seekers and businesses. Job-seeker services involve job-readiness assistance, such as resume building, interview skills, training opportunities, and connection to an equitable career path. For businesses, at no cost to the employer, the KCC serves as a dynamic extension of their human resources department to assist companies with recruitment, upskilling and accessing incentives to make diversity hiring widespread. The KCC serves as the access point to the workforce ecosystem; employer services are customized to the business' needs and fall into three categories: workforce recruitment, training and incentives.

Workforce recruitment is one of the biggest requests the KCC gets from employers, and rightfully so, as the KCC is the bridge between talented Kentuckians and their next career. Before the pandemic, the local career center would hold community- wide job fairs with local employers and job seekers. However, since the onset of the pandemic, such services have shifted to innovative uses of technology, to utilize social media platforms, virtual and drive-thru job fairs, and hosting employer spotlights. Kentucky's workforce partners established a hybrid model for direct services, which are still in place today.



Keeping innovation as the key to adjusting to the times, the training and upskilling of Kentucky's workforce is an essential service of the KCC. Companies consistently report that while they can teach employees hard technical skills, they often miss the soft skills that result in better teamwork and effective communication. The KCC can answer that need through local workforce partners who can help create a robust training program that builds on essential skills for success--communication, teamwork, collaboration, critical thinking and workplace professionalism.

The goal is to provide certification or credentials to employees in a specific skill set. The trainings, from virtual soft-skill development courses to mastery of a skilled trade to a local coding boot camp to strengthen an information technology (IT) department, help businesses meet their workforce projections. Further, having engaged companies develop their own workforce is critical for retention and filling those hard-to-fill jobs.

We are all working towards building a better commonwealth through a resilient and robust workforce. Our goals are boiled down to the acronym WHERE for wages, healthcare, education, retirement and example. Our goals are for Kentuckians to have better wages, access to quality and affordable healthcare, an excellent education, and well-earned retirement. In addition, we can do all of that while leading by example. These are the areas that Governor Andy Beshear and our leadership are dedicated to improving, and business plays an essential role in that effort.



Performance Indicators

Kentucky has selected the business penetration rate and repeat business customers measures to gauge its effectiveness in serving businesses. These approaches are designed to gauge the critical workforce needs of the business community by providing businesses with skilled workers through quality relationship-building engagement.

The business penetration rate is the percentage of businesses using KCC services out of all businesses in the state. This approach tracks the percentage of businesses using the core program services from all known businesses represented in the state. The penetration is an evaluation of whether the core programs adequately meet the area's workforce needs. In the program year (PY) 2020, strategic workforce business engagement was provided to approximately 45% of the businesses in the commonwealth, up from 37% in PY2019.

Kentucky's second indicator, repeat business customers, is the percentage of repeat businesses using services within the previous three years. This approach tracks the percentage of businesses that receive services that use core program services more than once. Measuring repeat customers helps determine whether businesses that receive assistance from the core programs get enough value from those services to return to the KCC system. In PY2020, for the 45% of the businesses served in the commonwealth, 66% were repeat business customers.

Kentucky business services network has over 200 business service professionals with various skill sets and resources readily available.

The business solutions specialists are comprised of individuals from Titles I, II, III and IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Kentucky Labor Cabinet, Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet, local economic development agencies, Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges System (KCTCS) and their member schools, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Employment Programs, the Department of Corrections Re-Employment Programs and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Workforce Center.

Business solution teams play a strategic role in communities by integrating economic development, education and government. Kentucky business services play a more responsive role by retaining and creating jobs, understanding competitive challenges, and identifying and pursuing opportunities. They develop relationships with businesses, discover and diagnose the challenges they face in growing their business and bring the necessary resources to the table to help them overcome obstacles.

To continue effective business services, partner coordination and performance, the Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services (OEAS) has implemented a team of Workforce Development Consultants. This team responds to the immediate workforce needs of employers; provides local workforce development area technical assistance to realign the education system to meet business needs; engages businesses to define their current and future needs; empowers communities to design their own solutions, and increases the workforce pipeline to accommodate growth in their industry or their region.

OEAS consultants work with local workforce development service providers, businesses and industry partners to share their workforce development challenges and connect them with resources to assist their needs. In PY2020, five consultants, each serving two local workforce regions, comprised the OEAS Workforce Development Consultant team. Being the liaison between state government and the local workforce Business Service Teams (BST) allows OEAS to work closely with local partners and offer collaborative solutions.

Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services

OEAS in the Kentucky Career Center system provides educational and informational services to help employers uncover innovative approaches to hiring, retaining and developing their workforce during this pandemic and beyond. The central purpose of the OEAS is to coordinate, promote, market and provide businesses access to workforce partners with resources and services designed to meet their needs. A qualified labor market is a primary objective for workforce development in Kentucky. By aligning business personnel needs with skills training, Kentucky's economy can be continuously improved and strengthened.

Kentucky continues to strive to create a business-led workforce system as envisioned in WIOA. Career centers recognize businesses as an equally important customer as the job seeker and are working towards a demand-driven focus offering a streamlined approach to assisting businesses with recruiting talent, training new and existing employees, and developing workforce strategies. At its core, the business services strategy consists of the primary organizations that provide direct resources and services to businesses, including:

- Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB)
- Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC)
- Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development (CED)
- The Kentucky Chamber's Workforce Center (Workforce Center)
- KCTCS and
- Kentucky Labor Cabinet

KCC Tax Credit Incentive Programs

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from certain targeted groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment, including qualified veterans, ex-felons, long-term unemployment recipients, individuals who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, and individuals who have received rehabilitative services for a disability. KY WOTC staff has issued 50,982 certifications for these targeted

groups for the PY2020. Kentucky employers saved from \$1,200 - \$9,600 per qualified hire.

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

The Federal Bonding Program can provide employers a no-cost, no-deductible insurance program ranging from \$5,000-\$25,000 in protection to help minimize risk for employers and offer opportunity to job seekers. In PY2020, employers ranging from automotive retail, manufacturing, hospitality, logistics and others have utilized the program to help hire individuals with justice involvement.

Kentucky Registered Apprenticeship

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

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

A RAP combines on-the-job training, learning from doing the job, and the theoretical knowledge of the particular occupation. Through this joint approach, the apprentice becomes a subject-matter expert and can fill the most in-demand and hard-to-fill positions on the market today. Kentucky's RAP is a model program in preparing individuals to enter and advance in the workforce successfully. Even in a global pandemic, these programs have provided career pathways for those just entering the workforce, and a means to broaden opportunities for those looking to expand their careers.



In PY2020, RAP faced challenges to serving people because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Kentucky showed its resiliency by adding new programs, occupations, employers and apprentices throughout the year. The commonwealth created initiatives to expand outreach in the past year, including a dedicated email to apprenticeships, virtual weekly open office hours, and multiple monthly and weekly collaborations focused specifically on registered apprenticeships. In addition, Kentucky added two Registered Apprenticeship and Training Representatives (ATRs) to the team, who jointly registered 24 new programs and added 33 occupations to the roster of more than 500 sponsors and over 4,000 apprentices.

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

Over 1,200 occupations are recognized for apprenticeship programs. These innovative programs offer an alternative path to postsecondary education and is the original four-year degree. RAPs can help strengthen Kentucky's workforce and competitiveness through this work-and-learn model with 500 plus programs with 300 plus sponsors serving over 4,000 apprentices. RA is one of the best programs to drive innovation, increase retention and create a pipeline of incoming talent.

Partners & Assessment tools

National Career Readiness Certificate

PY2020 saw a slight growth in the Kentucky Work Readiness credentials. The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and the Kentucky Career Readiness Certificate (KCRC) by WIN measure those foundational skills that employers need. In PY2020 there were 1,292 Work Ready NCRCs earned by job seekers, fueled by KCTCS Workforce Solutions testing in Kentuckiana and Green River, and by OEAS in the Owensboro Kentucky Career Center partnering with the aluminum plant team.

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

KESC is an evidence- based soft-skills credential measures teamwork, communication skills, problem-solving ability and professionalism. The number of certificates jumped from 26 last year to 161 this year. Additional growth in the KESC will be determined by success in employer outreach through our Business Services Teams and OEAS Consultants to use the tool for job screening and incumbent worker training.

The WIN Career Readiness System has been targeted as one of the pre-apprenticeship tools OEAS uses to mitigate washout for academics. We also are working with the Department of Corrections' adult institutions and probation and parole offices on ways to use the KESC.



Image courtesy of Dunn & Bradstreet

Kentucky Integrated Business Engagement System (KIBES)

Kentucky tracks business services and engagement through the Kentucky Integrated Business Engagement System (KIBES), a statewide customer relationship management system. The implementation of OEAS Workforce Development Consultants has increased statewide staff business engagement and focused on returning value to business customers. Through KIBES, the 200 BST members representing 10 workforce regions can communicate and track the progress of company contacts, ongoing relationships, programs and activities utilized, and the overall status of company engagement. Having BST members on one platform makes more collaboration possible as an existing company record owner could introduce their colleague to the BST with a unique program or opportunity for the business customer.

Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Market Insight System

The OEAS Workforce Development Consultant team uses the Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Market Insight System to align business needs to core partner services. This innovative, proactive approach uses data to identify which companies are in a growth pattern, a stable state, or experiencing a potential downturn and need early intervention for layoff aversion strategies. D&B applies the following two leading indicators of a business's financial growth outlook:

- Financial Stress Score provides predictive insights into the most likely businesses to fail within the next 12-18 months. Conversely, it enables strategic targeting of financially solid conditions and candidates for expansion.
- Material Change/Opportunity Segment follows real-time business activity and operating signals to determine what businesses demonstrate in-the-moment growth characteristics or show signs of contraction or declining business activity.

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

Kentucky Rapid Response

Kentucky's Rapid Response efforts are coordinated through the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's (EWDC) OEAS in partnership with teams in each LWDA. Rapid Response from the Kentucky Career Center is a layoff aversion strategy and a business transition service provided on-site to deliver a smooth transition to new employment for all affected employees.

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

Reaching out to the Rapid Response Team can reduce the cost of layoffs for the business and employees. The team provides the following services:

- assistance with transition planning;
- information about alternatives that could lessen the impact of a layoff;
- pre-layoff services to help workers shorten their transition time;
- information on Kentucky Career Center and unemployment insurance;
- assistance in maintaining worker morale and productivity during the transition;
- help in preparing affected workers to find new employment; and
- information about the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notice Act (WARN) and plant closing laws.

Evaluations and Customer Satisfaction

KYSTATS, a partner agency in the cabinet, is responsible for developing, maintaining and utilizing the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System (KLDS) to inform policymakers, practitioners and the public throughout the state regarding outcomes for Kentucky's education and workforce programs. KYSTATS is legally authorized to collect and utilize data to evaluate education and workforce efforts in the commonwealth, and is the best resource available to its partners in the Kentucky workforce ecosystem.

KYSTATS develops reports and provides statistical data about these efforts so policymakers, practitioners and the public can make better informed decisions about Kentucky's education systems and training programs.

For example, KYSTATS links high school and college data to better understand how high school experiences affect college going and success. It provides much richer data about college preparation to high schools as well as to colleges so the state can improve alignment between the two areas.

As another example, KYSTATS links education and employment records to determine if graduates are entering the workforce and earning a reasonable wage, how well the state's colleges are meeting the needs of Kentucky's industries, and what the return on investment is for our education and training programs.

KLDS was developed through grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Institute for Education Sciences Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems program, and is one of the most robust longitudinal data systems in the country. In addition to the benefits of providing better data to inform decision making, KYSTATS develops reports on issues such as college going, and success and employment of graduates that can only be answered through a system of this nature.

Just as information in an annual report can show a corporation's year-to-year success, having a data warehouse for all Kentucky education, training and workforce information together where it can be studied and evaluated makes sense for the state.

COVID-19 Employment Outcomes

During the initial months of the pandemic in the first quarter of 2020, there were 1.9 million people employed in Kentucky in jobs covered by the unemployment insurance (UI), according to KLDS data. As PY2020 began, KYSTATS assessed the number of those 1.9 million people remained employed throughout the second and third quarters of 2020. During the first three and a half months of the pandemic, from March 15 - June 30, 21% or 399,445 Kentuckians who were employed during quarter 1(Q1) received an unemployment payment.

Among those Q1 workers who received a pandemic payment as their first of 2020 UI covered employment status as of the third quarter (Q3) of 2020:

- 75% were employed in the same industry as they were in Q1 2020;
- 72% were employed by the same employer from Q1 2020;
- 20% were not receiving wages covered by unemployment insurance; and
- 5% were employed in a different industry than they were employed in Q1 2020.

The number of Kentuckians quitting their jobs reached an all-time high of 66,000 in January 2021. There were 47,000 who quit in February followed by 64,000 in March. The number of Kentuckians who their jobs increased from 34,000 in July to 57,000 in August, well above pre-pandemic levels. In July 2020, the quits rate was 1.8% and reached its highest point in January 2021 at 3.5%.

Among all workers who earned any covered wages in both the 2019 and 2020 comparison periods, more than 115,000 or 46.1% of minority workers experienced a reduction in wages. A plurality (almost 69,000) of these were black workers, 48% of whom were paid lower wages in the 2020 comparison period. Kentucky is working to ensure a just and equitable recovery to ensure that no Kentuckian is left behind as we build back better with a specific focus on those hardest hit populations.

Achievements in Strategic Goals and Vision

The keys to successful outcomes in workforce development reside in sustained collaboration by diverse, cross-sector partners over time.

Continuous data-driven refinement of our approaches coupled with strategic investment by workforce stakeholders to build capacity and leverage resources will help the commonwealth anticipate and adapt to the disruptive forces that impact Kentucky's employers and workers.

Kentucky's employer engagement has seen an 8% increase in the employer penetration rate, with additional access to resources and incentives that will allow them to re-invest in their workforce.

The additional growth in work-based learning and Registered Apprenticeship models ensure that the life-long learning model is supported and encouraged through all stages of employment.

Our education and training partners are continuing to expand short-term credentialing options so workers can quickly increase their skills and start a career pathway that helps them earn a self-sustaining wage that supports their family. The increase in skilled workforce participation will make Kentucky an attractive home for new business and jobs of the future, including agritech, electric-vehicle battery supply chain and renewable energy projects.

While Kentucky has faced unprecedented challenges during the pandemic, it also presented tremendous opportunity to impact a just, equitable and responsible recovery that provides on-ramps to bring Kentuckians back to work. The intentional policy work on the benefits cliff and self-sustainability model ensure that every Kentuckian has the tools to reach their potential, as we enter the next phase of the pandemic.

During the first and second quarters of 2021, the U.S. saw a large shift in the labor force that has been called the Great Resignation, because of the large number of workers who quit their jobs to find a new job or career pathway. The education and training sector has capitalized on that trend with increased access to retraining programs and earn short-term credentials. All these tools prepare our workforce for unparalleled economic growth in the commonwealth, as the recovery continues.

Activities Provided by State Funds Bluegrass Workforce Development Area

In 2018, the Bluegrass region recognized there was a need to help individuals with extensive barriers to employment. To assist job seekers who have the most challenging barriers to employment, they developed the Transitions 2 Transformation (T2T) Program. In the T2T Program, career coaches go to the individuals instead of them having to come to the KCC. Daily the Bluegrass staff go to jails, recovery houses and clinics, probation and parole offices, human trafficking recovery homes, neighborhood community centers, colleges and universities, and veterans' facilities throughout the region.

This program provides a paid internship at the prevailing wage for up to 480 hours as well as supportive services such as transportation and uniforms. Bluegrass has agreements with over 130 employers to host the work-based learning opportunity. These jobs are career positions that pay no less than \$12 per hour with benefits. The success rate of employers hiring participants after completion of the internships averages 88%-90% a year.

Due to the success of the T2T Program, Bluegrass has partnered with the Isaiah House on a grant that they applied for to assist individuals in recovery. Through this partnership, the Isaiah House will provide \$80,000 per year for five years to the Bluegrass WIB to assist individuals in recovery with career services.

COVID-19 complicated some provision of services. Although jails were closed to partners, the Bluegrass staff worked with the Fayette County Detention Center to provide Life and Essential Skills Training, utilizing Kentucky Career Edge. The inmates begin the training six weeks before release, and upon release the participants receive career services, job seeking support and other resources. Also, due to COVID-19, many of the facilities that offered clothing, shoes and hygiene items for our participants were temporarily or permanently closed. To assist with this need, they created a clothing/needs closet.

Every year the Bluegrass hosts a Joint Board Meeting and Training for the WIB and Governing Board of Local Elected Officials. This has been recognized nationally by the U.S. DOL as a good practice.

According to research, the second most common reason individuals come to libraries is for workforce assistance. The Bluegrass Area partners with all the libraries across the region to offer technology such as a computer tablet at the library dedicated to workforce assistance. Library patrons can use the tablet to link directly to a career center staff member for assistance or schedule meetings at the library for individual help.

Through the National Dislocated Worker Grant, Bluegrass Area assisted local businesses with the Healthy at Work Coordinator Online Training, produced by the Bluegrass Community and Technical College. The training provides information about COVID-19, preparing a safe workplace, contact tracing, employee training, navigating regulations, and a variety of safety policies. Bluegrass Area pays for one employee from each business to receive the training.

Bluegrass Area hired a resource navigator/crisis counselor to help individuals that have been affected by COVID beyond the workforce-related issues. The navigator has assisted with needs such as housing, mental health, clothing, food, transportation and Christmas presents for children. The navigator gave the career coaching staff the opportunity to focus on employment, while the counselor dealt with barrier removal and support.

In the Fall of 2020, Bluegrass youth services were highlighted, and Workforce Services Manager Tiffanie Reeves was interviewed by USDOL about youth opportunities amid the COVID crisis.

Bluegrass also hosted a Stand Down Veterans Event with 40 partner agencies and employers for the veterans in the region. The successful event created several strong partnerships and referrals sources for veterans and become an annual event.

Bluegrass maintains an In-School Youth Initiative at Phoenix Academy in Scott, Anderson and Clark county high schools. The school counselors work with the staff on referrals of low-income youth to

WIOA programs for Career Edge workplace readiness skills and placement in WE assignments. Through this program, the business staff recruits businesses that allow 16-and-17-year-old students to gain work experience at their sites.

The Bluegrass WIB hosted their first Small Business Summit in November. It was held virtually to assist small businesses dealing with the effects of the coronavirus. The business services staff found that when the pandemic began and businesses were shut down, they did not know where to turn. Through this summit, small businesses were more prepared for any event that comes their way. Summit presenters were from Eastern Kentucky University, Bluegrass Community and Technical College, the Small Business Administration, The Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass, and the Small Business Development Center. In addition, Judge Reagan Taylor, Mayor Robert Blythe and Mayor Bruce Fraley made guest appearances. Due to the success of this event, Bluegrass intends to continue the Small Business Summit each year.

The Bluegrass partnered with the Julietta Market, a non-profit multi-vendor market in downtown Lexington that helps new entrepreneurs start their businesses at a very low cost. Upon locating at the Julietta Market, the vendors receive entrepreneurial training included in the cost of renting a stall. To assist the new vendors, the Bluegrass applied for a Statewide Reserve Grant to cover the training material costs for the individual businesses. In addition, many of the vendors signed agreements to participate in the work experience program for youth and internship program for our adults. Bluegrass also provided personal protective equipment (PPE) to vendors to offset costs to them during the pandemic.

Since March 2020, Bluegrass has managed a total of 167 original content workforce videos focused on providing information on employment, health, safety, soft skills, or supportive services available throughout the Bluegrass area. The videos are available on their website or social media sites.

Cumberlands Workforce Development Area

There are three business services staff members who act as a conduit for employer services for its 13 counties in the Cumberlands Workforce Development Area (CWDA). Individuals and employers within the area benefit from utilizing on- the-job training (OJT) to prepare individuals for in- demand occupations and to supplement employer training costs and the Incumbent Workers program. During the PY2020, 75 participants were served by the Cumberlands Workforce Development Board (CWDB) through these programs and paid out \$38,362 to employers.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) are also utilized in the Cumberlands to serve unemployed customers, those making low wages and unskilled individuals to find self-sufficient employment. During PY2020, the CWDB served 240 adults through ITAs using WIOA formula funds with expenditures of \$249,005. A total of \$942,135 was expended through these programs.

The Dislocated Workers program provides services to eligible workers who lose their jobs due to a business or plant closing or laying off a portion of its employees. During PY2020, the CWDB served 33 dislocated workers through ITAs using WIOA formula funds with expenditures of \$71,617. A total of \$449,934 was expended through all dislocated worker programs and co-enrolled trade participants. The total cost for all staff for the adult, dislocated workers, and co-enrolled trade programs was \$1,028,399.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance program (TAA) helps trade-affected workers who have lost their jobs due to increased imports or shifts in production to outside of the United States. During the program year, the CWDB served six trade participants with trade funds expenditures of \$1,295 for ITAs. A total of \$161 of Rapid Response funds were received and expended for case management for these programs.

The Cumberlands Youth program provides youth and young adults, up to age 24, with services to meet the requirements of WIOA Youth 14 Elements.

Services include but are not limited to, adult mentoring, comprehensive career guidance and developing or finding opportunities for occupational skills training in the approved high demand sectors of healthcare, manufacturing, transportation/logistics, energy creation, information technology, construction and criminal justice. Cumberlands staff are housed and available in the local KCC and high schools to ensure youth and young adults are aware of the services and introduced to community partners and resources.

The Cumberlands Career Managers provide information about all services available through WIOA and other partner providers. Career managers work with career counselors in the 13 counties to identify prospective participants prior to and upon high school graduation. Career managers and counselors interview students and help them complete the required Kentucky Career Edge assessment prior to their graduation. In many cases, CWDB can help secure a paid work experience that aligns with the youth's or young adult's interests and goals and has a high probability of successful completion while remaining challenging and engaging.

Under WIOA, the law requires 75% of the funds to be expended for out-of-school youth. Upon graduating high school, out-of-school youth can be placed into Work Experience (WE). WIOA requires 20% of youth funds be spent for WE. During PY2020, 220 youth were put into the WE component with \$282,344 being spent on wages, salaries and career manager expenses. Other youths were placed in OJT contracts with expenditures totaling \$8,000.

The Cumberlands set funds for out-of-school youth ITAs that would allow them to continue occupational or technical training after graduation. In PY2020, \$191,819 was expended on 75 youth for ITA. A total of 259 out-of-school youth were enrolled.

Additionally, the Cumberlands area served 140 National Dislocated Worker participants with expenditures of \$379,687 for ITAs and work experience.

EKCEP Workforce Development Area

Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program's (EKCEP) work in PY2020 focused heavily on meeting employers' needs and increasing workforce participation within target populations, including individuals who remain active in their recovery from substance use issues and youth who have barriers to entering the workforce.

EKCEP's Teleworks USA initiative continued to address the needs of both area job seekers and national and global telework employers by providing a wide array of work-from-home opportunities during PY2020. Teleworks USA fully embraced an all-virtual service model first implemented during the initial COVID-19 restrictions in March 2020 and increased its effectiveness. Since its inception in 2015, Teleworks USA has helped place over 3,400 Eastern Kentuckians in new jobs with employers based outside of the region, including such well-known companies as Amazon, KellyConnect, Concentrix, Broadpath, Hilton, Wayfair and Transcom.

EKCEP partnered with Appalachian Regional Healthcare (ARH) and Galen College of Nursing in Hazard to address the region's shortage of registered nurses. This partnership has provided 260 nursing students with \$7,000 scholarships to attend the school and work toward nursing careers, representing an investment of more than \$1.8 million of EKCEP's WIOA formula funds. To date, 78 students have graduated and an additional 145 are currently enrolled.

EKCEP's partnership with the East Kentucky Advanced Manufacturing Institute (eKAMI) in Johnson County assisted 170 people to date with tuition and supportive services as they learned skills such as CNC machine operations and graduated qualified for new careers. Nearly 100% of these graduates have obtained jobs. The lineman and fiber optic training program at Hazard Community and Technical College (HCTC) assisted 26 graduates with tuition and supportive services during the program year. To date, 87% of the 359 lineman who graduated from this program remain successfully employed. During 2020, EKCEP's Opportunity Youth program continued to help individuals aged 18-24 youth

with barriers to employment, especially those with past criminal offenses.

Green River Workforce Development Area

The Green River LWDA provides local Rapid Response activities for qualified companies and laid off employees. During PY2020, Green River held Rapid Response events for a closures at Dal-Tile and Hartshorne Mining Group - Popular Grove mine, a mass layoff at Owensboro Municipal Utilities, and a temporary layoff at Chick-fil-A. In addition, the Rapid Response Team worked with Equus Workforce Solutions to coordinate several hiring events throughout the year.

Trade Case Management

Green River served 25 trade customers in PY2020. Case Management services provide comprehensive services for each program participant. Case notes are one of the tools that document the participants' journey throughout the duration of the program, they organize information about participants, and are used to plan case management strategies. Case managers interact with individuals to assess skills, competencies and employment interests. Participants are provided resources, and skills to help them obtain employment, address existing barriers and become successful.

The GO Females (Greater Owensboro Facilitating Equitable Manufacturing and Leadership Educational Solutions) launched in October 2019 to increase the number of females participating in manufacturing training programs and employed in advanced manufacturing.

While the primary population to be served is female incumbent workers, out-of-school youth, low-income adults, individuals with disabilities, and those with barriers to employment are also supported. It builds upon the innovative practices developed by the Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education to address the needs of manufacturers to remain competitive by creating a pipeline of highly skilled workers through successful work and learn models. The project incorporates innovative partnerships, employer engagement, diverse instructional models, flexible nontraditional

delivery strategies and comprehensive advising, support services and a success coach. The project is a result of industry, economic development, workforce and education leaders working together to address the need for skilled workers in the Green River area.

In the first cohort, 15 students employed at UniFirst Corporation in Owensboro graduated. UniFirst has made a commitment to give females access to education by eliminating financial and accessibility barriers and supporting personal and career opportunities. As the first GO Females employer champion, UniFirst paid employees' full-time wages and benefits throughout the program and provided paid time off during work shifts each week to attend classes.

National Dislocated Worker Grant

Green River received a National Dislocated Worker Grant to provide employment recovery and training for eligible dislocated workers affected by COVID-19. The grant enables employers and job seekers to recover from the negative impact of COVID-19 in the counties of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union and Webster.

The employment and training opportunities available are in the sectors of advanced manufacturing, business and information technology, construction and skilled trades, healthcare and transportation and logistics with focusing on workers directly laid off as a result of COVID-19, unemployed individuals, long-term unemployed (including homeless individuals and offenders) and those who are underemployed.

The board partners with local employers, community agencies, KCTCS, the Kentucky Career Center - Green River, county jails and shelters to address training and workforce needs in Green River.

The grant funds pay wages for individuals placed in temporary employment, provide financial assistance for training (occupational and OJT), pay for case management services, and activities related to administering the grant.

Currently, 105 individuals have been placed in temporary employment with a focus on humanitarian assistance, 20 individuals have

been placed in short-term training and eight are participating in OJT.

The board supports employers with practices that promote healthy, productive and efficient workplaces; job seekers who, with additional training, would benefit from the opportunity to obtain employment in a high demand sector; and temporary employment to those who have been laid off.

Green River has served individuals who have recently been released from incarceration, individuals with disabilities, older workers and those with significant barriers to employment. The board has ensured flexibility to allow funds to be utilized efficiently and effectively based on employer and job seeker needs. The board is committed to providing the local workforce system resources and employment and training opportunities.

There have been many successes, but Green River wants to share Heather's story. She was self-employed, but unable to work due to the financial impact of Covid-19 on her business. Heather was enrolled in a Work Experience program through the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) and quickly found a position at the Webster County Senior Services.

Her supervisor said, "Heather continues to be our saving grace. She is a forward thinker and has taken on several huge projects since she has been here. She has drafted letters to our local, state and national leaders about what our program has accomplished. That letter led to a 30-minute phone conversation with our congressman, which led to our program being acknowledged in his report on the House floor and aired on CSPAN.

"She has cooked almost 1,000 meals for us to freeze to give to our clients. She is increasing our on-line presence as well as starting a live Facebook bingo event weekly that has become quite popular. She has been a life saver."

Employer Services

The KCC partnered with Goodwill Industries to hold the “Closing the Gap” job fair with 28 employers in Owensboro. The event was promoted on KCC Green River social media and on Cromwell Radio with ads and live on-air coverage. Job seekers had the opportunity to have a resume created by KCC and Goodwill staff before meeting with employers.

Lupita Garcia with Innovative Staffing said, “We were able to get more applicants than we have had at all of our job fairs this year. We got a total of six applicants and 10 people interested or asked for information. Again, that is a huge success for us. We loved getting to meet all the participants as well and made some needed connections with places that could help our applicants to start a job clothes/ shoes. We want to thank the Kentucky Career Center and Melissa for the opportunity and the hard work put into making the event a success.”

Courtney Payne with Daviess County PublicSchools, said, “The job fair was a success for us. We met with candidates and scheduled a few interviews with principals in the schools. The timing was perfect for the school system with school starting back soon. Thank you for inviting DCPS to the job fair.”

Robin Phillips with Envision, said, “The job fair was very organized and impressive. You could tell a lot of work was put into making the job fair a success. Envision would attend another event like this.”

Thomas Donahoe with ManPower, said, “Despite the heat, the fair was a success. Employers are able to get people back to work and those searching are able to walk away with a job opportunity.”

David Lambert with Gibbs Die Casting, said, “We hired a very strong candidate from the job fair and would be interested in attending future job fairs. The live music was amazing. Melissa and Nikolas were extremely helpful. Helping several people get their booths set up. Candidates seemed very well prepared for the process.

This is not the case at most job fairs. I assume the resume table and work put in behind the scenes helped with this.”

Job Seeker Services

Elizabeth was enrolled in school when she came to the career center looking for assistance in paying for training in radiology. Elizabeth knew financial aid would only cover a portion of her tuition and cost of living expenses. She had been accepted into the radiology program at Owensboro Community and Technical College, and was driven to finish and get a career to better her life and the lives of her children. She graduated from Owensboro Community and Technical College in May 2020, and is employed with a local pain management facility as an x-ray technologist making \$19.70 an hour.

Elizabeth said, “The WIOA Scholarship was a huge part of me being successful in finishing school and earning my title in the medical field as an x-ray technologist. This scholarship took the stress off me worrying about how much money I was going to owe when I finished, and it helped with so many fees throughout the semesters that my program required. It would have been very hard on my family financially without WIOA. I thank them and my Career Coach, Melissa, for all the help I received. Melissa was integral in my success. She kept an open line of communication and took such good care of me. My family and I will always be thankful to Melissa and the WIOA scholarship.”

KentuckianaWorks Workforce Development Area

KentuckianaWorks WIOA-funded adult career services include center-based services in Louisville (Jefferson County) and six surrounding counties as well as mobile services to ensure coverage in every part of the service area. In PY2020-21, about 445 job seekers were placed into permanent employment with an average hourly wage of \$18.47. A success story comes from a customer’s experience working with a case manager in Trimble County. A case manager started working with a customer in April 2021 who had been receiving UI benefits. The customer wanted to work as a heavy equipment operator, a field in which he had previous work experience. The case manager helped the customer register in Focus Career to find similar work.

After working with the case manager and receiving career guidance, the customer found a job at a Louisville Paving Company making \$25 an hour.

WIOA also funds the KentuckianaBuilds program. KentuckianaWorks, in partnership with the Louisville Urban League (LUL), created the KentuckianaBuilds program in 2016 to respond to the need for a pipeline of trained construction employees and to increase the number of minorities and women going into the sector regionally. In PY2020-21, about 52 people were placed into construction trades employment with an average hourly wage of \$16.50 per hour.

WIOA Youth Services

KentuckianaWorks provides WIOA youth services through career centers in Louisville, Shepherdsville, Shelbyville and Eminence, as well as through a mobile team that partners with libraries and Adult Education to reach customers throughout the seven counties.

From July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021, they served 191 young adults including 83 who were new to the program. About 68 of the active participants (36%) obtained one or more of the following: employment, occupational credentials, GEDs, internships, job shadowing, and postsecondary education.

In July 2021, KentuckianaWorks partnered with Goodwill Industries of Kentucky to rebrand the Kentucky Youth Career Center to The Spot: Young Adult Opportunity Campus. Foot traffic has increased and between July 1, 2021 and Oct. 31, 2021, KentuckianaWorks served 68 participants, including 31 who were new to the program.

Julie is a great example of a participant who achieved long-term benefits from the program over time and continues to move forward in a positive trajectory. Julie has been with KYCC since March 2018. She started the program needing her GED at the same time she was starting drug recovery and rehabilitation. She needed safe and stable housing, support and guidance, and a job that was not too demanding.

Julie started working on a GED immediately upon enrollment and earned it on May 9, 2018. Julie won an award at graduation that year

and returned as a guest speaker at the 2019 graduation ceremony.

While seeking the guidance and counseling Julie needed for recovery and rehabilitation, she stayed focused on her employment and educational goals. She started working at UPS in the summer of 2018 and started community college in the fall of 2018. She continued her engagement in the WIOA program and completed different KCC training programs and earned many of the certifications we offer. She has learned discipline, self-care and boundaries through this process.

Julie recently completed her fourth semester at the community college and plans to transfer to the University of Louisville in the spring. She has been sober for over two years. Julie has always wanted to participate in the Internship Academy (work-based learning) program and feels like now could be the perfect time for her to do so.

The obstacles that Julie has overcome in life are more than many of us could ever imagine. Her discipline and mental strength are admirable. Her work ethic is something that anyone would welcome on their team.

Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Area

The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board administered a Statewide Reserve Grant from January - September 2020, which allowed Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC) to establish the Greater Knox Coding Academy. The grant assisted in setting up a coding lab for a pilot cohort with the intention of replicating the program. In addition, the academy model could be used in the future to deliver other short-term, high-demand training.

Since the academy began, 59 students have enrolled. In the last cohort, 88 certifications were awarded with potential for over 100 college-credit hours.

All students who wanted to work obtained a position while some decided to pursue a college degree. Starting salaries ranged from \$41,000 - \$72,000. Some of the students were hired in remote positions providing them the opportunity to work from home. The program offers soft skills and employment skills to help the students with

professionalism and how to be successful in their future workplaces.

The academy has evolved and made some adaptations since the initial pilot such as dividing the training into specific areas of focus with shorter time spans and offering it in the evening and remotely. These programs are on the WIOA Eligible Training Provider list making them eligible for WIOA funding. Scholarships are also available through ECTC, based on availability of funds.

Due to the in-demand skills the training provides, employers continue to recruit from the program and numerous organizations that have hired former students are contacting ECTC about additional hires. ECTC is planning to expand the variety of short-term, certificate-based programs being offered and is flexible in customizing programs to meet the needs of the business community.

In-Demand Careers Outreach Campaign

Kentucky Career Center - Lincoln Trail (KCC-LT) has transitioned much of its traditional outreach budget to digital. Digital outreach offers detailed results that better gauge the return on investment. Additionally, these outreach platforms offer a more affordable option to deliver the KCC-LT message to the target market. They focused on promoting virtual career services in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, pausing its in-demand career campaign.

Digital messages were placed on Facebook, YouTube, Google, Snapchat and Instagram. The campaign promoted career coaches, resume writing assistance, mock interviews and help with job searches, as well as the NDWG. The campaign achieved more than 500,000 impressions from August-October.

Starting in January 2021, KCC-LT returned to its in-demand career campaign, where it promotes year-round five in-demand careers on YouTube, Google, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook to increase inquiries and awareness of career services and to highlight career fields that are in-demand in the Lincoln Trail region. Five new careers are promoted every six months.

Digital outreach directs visitors to one of three landing pages on the KCC-LT website where job seekers and employers can quickly and easily

contact the career centers. The messages consist of static images and videos highlighting in-demand careers, while promoting KCC-LT as a one-stop shop for job seeker and employer services. The campaign achieved more than 3.5 million impressions.

Baptist Health Hardin Expungement Program

The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board's Workforce Crisis Taskforce partnered with Hardin Memorial Health, now Baptist Health Hardin, to implement an expungement pilot program that can be replicated throughout the region.

Through this program, employers can assist employees with the expungement process and associated costs to remove qualifying Class D felony convictions from their records which can be a barrier to successful employment. Through expungement program, employees that stay committed to the job for a year while adhering to general standards, such as showing up to work on time and meeting deadlines, receive \$1,000 upon their year anniversary.

As the need for skilled, available workers continues to grow, the program creates new paths for residents to enter the workforce. As a result of the successful pilot, a how-to guide was created for employers to create a similar program.

Leading Nation in Military Spouse Employment Support

The Lincoln Trail region has been home to Fort Knox for more than a century. In addition to being a premier military installation and critical to national defense, it is the region's largest employer and a great source of talent for other regional employers.



Much has been said about the value of hiring veteran talent but far less has been written about military spouse talent. Military spouses are often the unsung heroes of the military family.

Adaptive, resourceful and highly skilled, military spouses move from place to place taking care of the family while often trying to find employment in meaningful careers that are easily transferable.

For decades the LTWDB and KCC-TL have maintained a strong partnership with Fort Knox leaders providing services to military spouses who are seeking employment while their service member is stationed at the installation.

In February 2020, news came that the Army had selected Fort Knox as the location of its new V Corps headquarters and that some 2,000 people (650 Soldiers and their families) would call the Greater Fort Knox Region home beginning in the summer of 2020 (fiscal year 2021). While the Army's traditional summer moving season always saw people coming to and moving from the region, the summer of 2020 would bring a much larger surge of inbound families than they were accustomed to serving.

Creating a First-of-its-Kind Model of Support

The LTWDB saw this larger than usual influx of military families as an opportunity to evaluate its model of support. In partnership with the Knox Regional Development Alliance (KRDA), a community-based non-profit organization focused on supporting Fort Knox, LTWDB met with Fort Knox officials, learned about their evolving needs and examined their process for providing support to military spouses seeking employment. As a result, the LTWDB created a first of its kind spouse employment model that includes contact information for career services for military spouses on all military orders of soldiers coming to Fort Knox.

"Providing employment support to our military spouses is a top priority from the Secretary of Defense to the Chief of Staff of the Army and, of course, right here at Fort Knox. We always are looking for new and innovative ways to tap into community resources and I think this new model could become an Army best practice. We are fortunate to have great community partners who

want to help us do the very best we can for our Army families," said Melinda Roberts, Fort Knox's Chief of Army Community Services.

That contact information allows military spouses to take a proactive approach to their career search even before they arrive at Fort Knox. A simple contact form was also added to the greaterfortknox.com website that KRDA created for military families moving to the region. The jobs page contact form is emailed to LTWDB staff who assign a dedicated KCC-LT staff member to reach out to the military spouse and provide support.

Volunteer Community Connectors



Since most job opportunities come from relationships and networking, military spouses are often at a disadvantage because they are new to the area and lack a valuable professional network that can help open doors. That is where volunteer community connectors serve as an important piece of LTWDB's spouse employment model. With the support of KRDA and the business services team, a dedicated group of business professionals in a variety of industry sectors have volunteered to be a network catalyst for military spouses who request their support.

Whether it's introducing them to key contacts, inviting them to networking events or passing their resume to friends and colleagues, volunteer community connectors can provide that added community support that comes from years of being engaged in the local community.

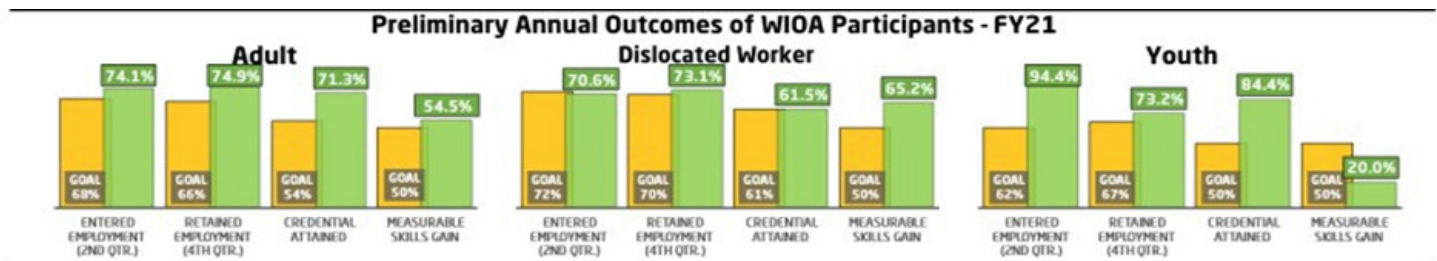
Tracking Success

Since launching this new model, dozens of military spouses have reached out for support. We are excited to offer military spouses a proactive tool for no-cost professional career services and a network of volunteer community advocates willing to help.

Northern Kentucky Workforce Development Area

Key Performance Indicators

- Served 9,069 individuals through Basic Career Services via our 8 Career Center locations Provided skill building and informational workshops to 434 customers
- The NKY Labor Force Participation Rate is 67.3%, exceeding the rate of Kentucky and the US
- Exceeded most WIOA performance outcomes for PY20 (Please see info graphic below for metrics) Leading the state in the number Kentucky Essential Skills Certificates, with 131 credentials being earned through the KCC. Through our collaboration and partnerships, additional KESC credentials have been earned through our region



Career Center Location and Partner Highlights

In the last year, the Northern Kentucky area has certified three new KCC Access Point locations to expand its service reach for a total of eight sites. Those locations include Kenton County Public Library (Erlanger), Owen County Public Library (Owenton) and Pendleton County Public Library (Falmouth). They have both on- site and virtual services to accommodate all customers safely.

In the beginning of FY21, the Career Development Office (CDO) moved from the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet to the Kentucky Labor Cabinet. CDO has recently expanded its local team from four to nine staff, with plans to add three more staff. While handling the inundation of Unemployment Insurance claims has been their priority over the past year, they now will shift focus to Wagner Peyser re-employment services.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), in response to COVID-19, has been offering career counseling appointments in a virtual format, enabling their consumers to access services in a safe and convenient way in addition to offering in-person counseling sessions. In addition, OVR is undergoing a major transition from hard-copy files to maintaining all case records electronically.

NKADD's Employment Connections (EC) program has taken an innovative approach by allowing their clients the option to be assessed either

in-person or virtually to participate in program activities. Along those lines, EC is in the process of offering their monthly Job Readiness class (JRA) in an online format for both KTAP and SNAP E&T clients. SNAP E&T clients also have the option of borrowing one of the program's laptops to attend classes virtually.

Horizons Youth Services (contracted provider for Job Corps) will station two staff at the career center in Covington.

Code Kentucky is based on a nationally recognized software development training program. In collaboration with Code Louisville, the NKADD is working to connect interested participants and related employers with the Code Kentucky team. Code Kentucky's enrollment totaled 47 from Northern Kentucky in the inaugural fall class.

WIOA Direct Services Highlights

NKY KCC Business Services Representatives have served 1,084 unique employers. NKY KCC staff helped facilitate 2,146 applicants and connected them with employers resulting in 901 reported job placements. They have increased their virtual services for both job seekers and employers. This includes Facebook Live sessions in which there were 72 total broadcasts, 250 unique watches (watching 95% of the video) and 36,546 unique views overall from July 1, 2020 - August 11, 2021.

In July 2020, NKY was the first region in the state to kick off a multi-employer virtual job fair. This was their 14th Veterans Job Fair, and served 20 employers and 107 job seekers using an innovative “landing page” on the website which featured multiple zoom links, breakout rooms, access to different employers through the links, and veteran resources.

From July 2020 - June 2021, NKY had 131 customers obtain their Kentucky Essential Skills Certification (KESC). The KESC can be obtained by completing coursework in communicating effectively, conveying professionalism, promoting teamwork and collaboration, and thinking critically and solving problems.

The Lift Up program, a \$2.4 million, five-year grant was awarded to St. Elizabeth Healthcare and was introduced locally in February 2021. It is funded through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. St. Elizabeth Healthcare is in partnership with the Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board, Brighton Center, Life Learning Center and Journey Recovery Center.

This program helps people who are in recovery with soft skills, career coaching and obtaining career and educational goals. Since February 2021, NKY has served 61 customers through this program, with 22 job placements. This program takes a holistic approach by offering an alignment of services for individuals in recovery and local businesses willing to be transformational employers.

Talent Development Services served a total of 5,588 customers with basic services from June 2020 - July 2021.

Youth Talent Development Services served a total of 2,350 customers with basic services from June 2020-July 2021.

Through the NDWG Career Link, NKY has served 26 customers impacted by Covid-19 and placed them into great rapid re-employment opportunities with eight local community non-profits. Through the program, 13 participants have obtained permanent employment while others continue to participate while job searching. Career Link serves participants

dislocated from employment due to COVID-19 who cannot find employment under current conditions.

Commonwealth Coders is a web and app development training program administered by Barren County Skills Development Academy in collaboration with the Bluegrass, Cumberland, Northern Kentucky and South Central workforce boards. In the intensive 16- week program, participants learn the skills needed to find a job as a junior web developer, potentially earning an average salary of over \$67,000 (base salary for a junior web developer in Kentucky). Northern Kentucky enrolled nine participants in the inaugural cohort. The current cohort will be completing the program in December 2021.



Rapid Response Funding

While 120 employers filed WARN notices in Northern Kentucky in 2020, many employers thought the layoffs were temporary due to the global pandemic and did not approve on-site Rapid Response activities.

Eight employers received traditional Rapid Response services during FY21, which provided critical postsecondary and employment information and resources for affected workers.

The experience with Eagle Manufacturing’s Rapid Response services exemplifies how Northern Kentucky partners provided services for both employers and job seekers impacted by large layoffs. Individuals being laid off from Eagle Manufacturing were connected with 17 unique employers which resulted in 113 interviews before the closure was complete.



In addition to traditional events, Rapid Response layoff aversion services also assisted employers with strategic and proactive approaches offered through the one-stop delivery system. This includes connecting employers to the Northern Kentucky Strategic Workforce Action Team (SWAT), a team of economic, workforce and community development organizations that mobilize to provide customized and bundled workforce services to Northern Kentucky employer. Through SWATs, the WIOA Business Service Representatives have provided layoff aversion services to more than 25 Northern Kentucky employers since November 2019.

Northern Kentucky Rapid Response services personnel also work closely with a workforce development consultant from the Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services to do strategic outreach to businesses with high financial stress scores on the Dun and Bradstreet report to provide services and resources to avert layoff.

Trade Case Management

In FY21, they served five clients in trade training programs as they finish the last open trade case in the NKY area at Itron in Owen County. Three of those customers completed training in the program last fiscal year and are employed and earning above 200% of the federal poverty line.

At the beginning of FY21 when the Trade Case Management application was made, there were U.S. trade policy changes that Northern Kentucky anticipated could negatively impact several companies located in the area. The Northern Kentucky team has continued to work with local companies negatively impacted by both

economic implications and the global pandemic in a proactive manner focused on layoff aversion strategies.

IRS Closure - Starting in March 2019, KCC - Northern Kentucky team members helped IRS workers impacted by the Covington facility closure, initially indicated to be 1,800 employers but later downgraded to a workforce of 800.

Services included on-site hiring events at the IRS facility, resume assistance and workshops.

While initial data indicated a high need for training for impacted workers, many IRS workers preferred to stay with the federal government.

Meanwhile, at the beginning of the project, there was a federal government shutdown from January - March, which delayed on-site services.

CVG Airport Career Center - Statewide Reserve Funds were used to open this Career Center Access Point at its current location outside the baggage claim at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport in April 2019.

Since then, 2,646 customers have been served, 783 on-site hiring events hosted, and 1,419 interviews initiated, which resulted in 878 reported job placements. With many employers at the airport finding the logistics of interviews and hiring behind the security checkpoints a major challenge, the partnership is a benefit that allows employers to use the space and the expertise of the Airport Career Center team to assist with employee attraction. This access point has become one of the busiest locations across the eight-county area.

Innovation Room Equipment - These Statewide Reserve grant funds enabled a full modernization of the Innovation Room at the Kentucky Career Center - Covington location. The facility now has 18 computers, a projector, and a podium with microphone/audio capability. This room is used by the business community and clients for various needs such as trainings and employer prescreening.

Most recently, the location hosted one of their training providers, Kable Academy, enabling them to provide on-site and virtual computer training for customers beginning in June 2021

for a 12-week program. They also have hosted a pre-apprenticeship program, Trades to Success, at this location. With the pandemic increasing the need for hybrid virtual and in-person working environments, the upgrades in the innovation room have been instrumental in giving their clients access to technology.

Cumberlands and South Central Workforce Development Regional Efforts

Throughout PY20 the Cumberlands and South Central Workforce Development Boards continued to pursue their shared Regional Strategic Goals to expand innovative, collaborative programming aimed at putting their “focus populations” into employment and training opportunities.

Joint Statewide Reserve Grant funding provided dedicated staff who each coordinated targeted workforce services for justice-involved individuals through their Reentry Program, and graduating high school and postsecondary students and alumni through their Secondary and Postsecondary Program.

The boards’ Reentry Program was developed as a comprehensive workforce triage model that provides a localized support structure around justice-involved individuals towards gaining and maintaining employment. The model, which offers a dedicated staff member to serve as the point of contact and that launched March of 2020, was implemented in 15 of the regions’ 23 counties in PY20 and led to increased labor force participation, reduced recidivism, and a strong increase in restitution for the individuals served.

The linkage between these judicial, community-based and workforce providers as well as individualized, local- level triage provided by workforce board personnel created opportunity and reduced recidivism. The Reentry Program provided county attorneys an accountability mechanism that they have never had before, exemplifying how local officials in partnership with workforce development boards have power to reduce and interrupt incarceration.

Covering the 23-county service area within the region required them to develop innovations for reaching and accessing the needs of justice-involved customers. The boards developed

an online intake form for people who either personally contact the re-entry staff or are referred a customer to the program. The online intake form provides information for staff to quickly identify needs and respond with a plan of action. To reach this population, they developed mobile kiosks (tablets with internet access) outfitted with the intake form and located in the county attorney’s office and a Justice Center.

The kiosks created an access point for re-entry program services. In PY2020, 534 individuals and over 70 employers were engaged resulting in 145 positive employment outcomes, over 200 referrals to community partners. Job seeker pipelines were established with eight substance abuse disorder recovery centers, I.D. card processing was initiated in two counties, and collaboration occurred with one county jail to create a welding program for inmates that will launch in PY21.

The region also built a successful pilot that strategically connected secondary and postsecondary institutions with workforce development services to enhance employment outcomes and talent retention in rural Kentucky. The pilot combats “brain drain” (post-college and post-graduates who leave the state) of local talent by connecting out-of-school youth, postsecondary students, and alumni to regional career opportunities through services provided by the Director of Post-Secondary Programming.

Since launching, the Secondary and Post-Secondary Program has engaged over 800 individuals with 50 individuals referred for additional WIOA services, over 80 individuals placed into employment, and nearly two dozen individuals placed into internships. Additionally, over 120 employers were engaged with the director assisting with four job fairs that attracted nearly 150 job seekers and 83 individuals hired. Additionally, the two boards piloted a 16-week hybrid training course that prepared participants for a career as a junior web developer in Spring 2021. During the initial pilot program, the regions served 28 individuals with an age demographic of 18-65 and a 50:50 male and female ratio. After completion of the

training program, 85% of the graduates gained employment either in a virtual, hybrid, or office format.

South Central Workforce Development Area

To meet the needs of participants laid off due to the pandemic, the SCWDB and its Direct Service Provider (Career Team) staff contributed 2,364 staff hours towards assisting individuals and companies with navigation of UI. The SCWDB hosted their annual Workforce Summit completely virtually with dozens of participants and over 1,600 views and engagements following the fall event. In addition, the SCWDB launched its own YouTube page and produced unique social-media-friendly content for job seekers and employers.

The SCWDB took several major steps forward with engaging transitioning military service members in PY20. The most significant accomplishment was partnering with the Fort Campbell Army Transition Center to create a virtual access point in August 2020.

Over 5,000 service members exit the military from Fort Campbell each year and must attend a five-day transition course in the Transition Center. As the pandemic unfolded in March 2020, the SCWDB began working with the Fort Campbell Army Transition Center to place a kiosk and digital billboard (i.e., a 43" flat screen TV) in the Transition Center. Branded "Kentucky Career Vision", the digital billboard advertised open jobs for Kentucky employers and the kiosk connected separating service members to the SCWDB using a three-question intake form.

The kiosk yielded 50 intakes with an additional dozen other personal referrals received. The SCWDB also worked with Career Team Corporate HQ to create a Fort Campbell-branded version of Kentucky Career Edge that is offered to service members and military spouses for free. SCWDB helped coordinate a virtual tour of a local plant for 10 soldiers to learn about roles with the company. The SCWDB also partnered with the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes Corporate Fellowship Program to intern three separating service members in 2020.

TENCO Workforce Development Area

The pandemic threw a curve ball in providing traditional services to many WIOA Title I customers during PY20. It may have changed the delivery method, but it did not prevent services from continuing. Although the focus appeared to be on unemployment, many businesses needed assistance in filling vacancies and supporting their economic growth, while individual customers needed assistance preparing for employment and increasing their educational level.

The TENCO WDB quickly increased its virtual footprint through social media, including an updated website. Job readiness PowerPoints, videos, virtual job boards, and other resources were added for job seeker. Online Rapid Response activities were included for those laid off from their jobs. TENCO's Facebook and web page provided business highlights and became the go to place to market hiring events for companies. Technology tools such as Zoom were used to run economic development activities, professional meetings and trainings.

Through coordination with EKCEP, the TENCO WDB created a virtual portal allowing customers to apply and complete eligibility for WIOA Title I services completely online. Case management was then completed through zoom or by phone. Although the TENCO Career Centers opened on April 15, 2021, the need and desire for virtual services continued and has become another tool that assists the board in achieving accessibility and quality services for all.

Youth Employment Program - Although a challenge in PY20, the TENCO WDB agreed to support the Youth Employment Program for the fourth consecutive year. Five counties received contracts to provide 230 youth with soft skills, job readiness skills, and a paid work experience. Contracts were awarded to Augusta Independent Schools, Fleming County Board of Education, Lewis County Board of Education, Mason County Board of Education, and Robertson County Board of Education. The program provides training in financial literacy, communication, problem-solving, transitioning to postsecondary

training, finding a job, completing applications, interviewing skills, and keeping a job.

Youth are provided with up to 256 hours of paid work experience in public and private work sites where they demonstrate the skills taught by the program. The worksite supervisors evaluate the youth on these skills throughout the program. Youth have an opportunity to earn incentives by completing all workshop material and receiving an excellent rating on their final worksite evaluation.

Robertson County Judge-Executive Holbrook said, "This summer alone, the program gave 63 youth in Robertson county, the smallest county in population in the Commonwealth, the opportunity to learn new skills and gain experience in the workforce, totaling \$182,199.08 in wages for youth living in a high poverty county, and gave the county \$2,732.99 in county occupational tax. Being one of the worksites that hosted a youth worker, I can't begin to tell you how helpful that person was for the road maintenance crew...."

Talent Pipeline Management - Kentucky's Talent Pipeline Management system, sponsored by the Kentucky Chamber Foundation, has two employer collaboratives in the TENCO region in healthcare and manufacturing. The manufacturing collaborative has completed two phases of demand projections and a competencies/skills survey. Through this process, employers have decided to focus on entry-level machine operators as the industry's critical job.

The collaborative met in September to discuss its competency survey, validated the data, and expressed interest in focusing on soft-skills during the solution-building step of the TPM process. Employers are now completing their "back-mapping" survey, which will demonstrate the current talent supply chain and identify areas of opportunity. The healthcare collaborative has moved through the data-gathering steps of TPM, and the employers decided to partner with the TENCO WDB to sponsor cohorts of licensed practical nurses up-skilling to registered nurses at Maysville Community and Technical College starting in January 2022.

On the Job Training Opportunity - In April 2020, the TENCO local area saw the closure of Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital. The King's Daughters Medical Center, also located in Boyd County, was determined to fill the void of healthcare services left by the closure of OLBH and transition as many OLBH workers to King's Daughters as possible. This required King's Daughters Medical Center to develop a plan that would physically and financially support their current growth.

An agreement with the TENCO WDB provided support for both the workers and the medical center as the lengthy transition began. TENCO WDB provided \$43,689.93 in funding to support short-term OJT for individuals transitioning to the King's Daughters Medical Center.

King's Daughters decision to expand facilities, purchase additional equipment, and increase staff not only ensured the local area would continue to have timely, high-quality healthcare services, but also prevented long-term dislocations for many local residents.

National Dislocated Worker Grant - TENCO WDB received a grant of \$505,709.19 to provide disaster relief work experiences and/or short-term training opportunities for individuals dislocated due to COVID-19. The TENCO WDB chose secondary schools as worksites because they were desperately trying to get back to or maintain safe in-person services for students, but did not have adequate staffing in areas such as maintenance, healthcare, tutoring and teaching assistants.

The TENCO WDB placed 17 workers in disaster relief activities through worksite agreements with the following sites: Augusta Independent Schools, Robertson County Board of Education, Lewis County Health Department/School health providers, and Fairview Independent Schools. As of June 30, 2021, \$296,912.70 has been spent on wages and fringe benefits for the workers. Of the 17 individuals enrolled, eight are still employed through their work experience, five have recently completed their work experience and are working with the career center for employment opportunities, and four are in their first quarter of follow-up and employed. TENCO WDB also provided CDL training assistance and supportive services for eight individuals totaling \$32,582. Six of

the eight enrolled in training are employed full time.

Individual Customer Data - TENCO enrolled 664 participants in adult, dislocated worker, trade and youth services during FY21. Individuals enrolled received assistance with training costs, supportive services, work experiences, and/or job readiness/ case management. Of the 281 individuals enrolled in high-demand, high-wage occupations, 95 were in healthcare, 110 skilled trades/construction trades, 19 in manufacturing, 18 in business, 18 in transportation/distribution and 21 in support programs.

West Kentucky Workforce Development Area

Impacting Veterans/Military - WKWB assists veterans and eligible spouses in gaining access to high-quality jobs and careers and helps businesses hire and retain skilled workers. When veterans or transitioning service members and eligible spouses seek services at local career centers, they receive priority of service.

Campbell Strong Workforce Partnership - WKWB is part of a cross-state collaboration with the Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board to assist and support transitioning service members and their spouses in finding employment. A U.S. DOL \$7.8 million grant funded a transition center to serve the approximately 400 exiting military per month, as well as their eligible spouses. The facility houses staff including Kentucky and Tennessee career advisers who provide customers with employment resources, training assistance and career counselling. Services include mock interviewing, job fairs, specialized transition resume assistance and career counseling.

Rapid Response - Rapid Response from the WKWB KCC includes layoff aversion strategy and a business transition services team to provide on or off-site to deliver a smooth transition to new employment for all affected employees. The WKWB team also delivered Trade Orientation and COVID grant employer resources through online virtual meetings, pre-recorded Rapid Response employee and trade orientation videos, websites, Facebook live sessions, outdoor socially distant employee meetings, and youth registrations

using laptops in parking lots and community parks. Materials are provided in a packet, online or in a virtual link.

As an example of the virtual Rapid Response events in WKWB KCCs, please visit <https://wkworkforce.work/rapid-response-information>.

National Dislocated Worker Grant Resources COVID-19 Grant and Response

Kentucky, as well as other states, have experienced significant job loss and lay-offs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To provide, WKWB runs the Employment Recovery (ER) grant in their region. The grant funds pay wages for individuals placed in temporary employment, provide financial assistance for training (occupational, OJT, customized training and incumbent worker training) and pay for case management services as well as activities related to administering the grant.

Currently, the WKWB ER grant has served 73 individuals with 39 placed in temporary employment (TRE) with a focus on humanitarian assistance, 15 in OJT, eight in supportive services, and 12 in short-term training. Twenty-two remain active in TRE and they expect to fully expend remaining funds. WKWB supports employers who promote healthy, productive and efficient workplaces, and giving job seekers the opportunity and training to obtain employment in a high-demand sector.

Impacting Youth - WKWB invested over \$500,000 in Youth funds to prepare students for the workforce needs of the future. Contracted Youth Providers tailored programs and workshops to serve economically disadvantaged youth in the West Kentucky area. Low-income youth ages 16-24 who have a barrier to employment are offered assistance in completing high school, preparing for college, and establishing work-based learning opportunities.

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

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

Western Kentucky Reentry Council has a local chapter in Christian County and McCracken County to reintegrate individuals of the justice-involved population into its local communities through expungement event, advocacy, economic support and local resources. Members of the council are involved in workforce events in the area and provide resources to aid this population.

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

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

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