

# WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

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PROGRAM YEAR 2023  
ANNUAL REPORT



**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
(WIOA) Kansas Title I and Title III  
Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative  
Program Year 2023**

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## **2024-2026 Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Plan is to guide the focus, oversight, and investments of the **KANSASWORKS** State Board over the next four years. There are four main goal areas approved in the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan.

1. Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth.
2. Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders.
3. Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system.
4. Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership.

### ***Goal 1: Enhance and improve workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth.***

Strategy 1: Assess strategies and outcomes of current programming for disadvantaged youth to identify strengths as well as gaps by:

- Reviewing and synthesizing available outcomes data and information on current programming, initiatives, and resources for disadvantaged youth to identify effective approaches for expansion/scaling and documenting gaps and opportunities for enhanced partner and resource alignment. Developing and implementing prioritized solutions during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle. (PY2023 data analysis will be available during December 2024 KWSB meeting.)

Strategy 2: Expand workforce transition services, including work-based learning experiences, for foster care youth through deepened partnership efforts with the Department for Children and Families (DCF) by:

- Collaborating with the Older Youth and Young Adult Services Partnership led by DCF to better define specific workforce transition service needs for foster care youth, identifying any barriers to service provision, and designing and implementing a plan for expanding service delivery for this population during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle. Founded on the analysis of accurate and comprehensive Labor Market Information.

Strategy 3: Expand and better integrate workforce transition services, including work-based learning experiences, for youth with disabilities through enhanced

partnership efforts with DCF/Rehabilitation Services and the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) by:

- Collaborating with the Transition Coalition to determine specific workforce transition service delivery needs for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-defined youth with disabilities and designing and implementing a plan for expanding service delivery for this population during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle.

### ***Goal 2: Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders.***

Strategy 1: With the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) and other relevant partners, lead implementation efforts to develop workforce system and reentry partners' capacity to:

1. Increase career planning and development services and expand work-based learning opportunities for justice-involved individuals
2. Enhance support for reentry-friendly employers looking to hire, upskill, and advance justice-involved individuals
3. Enhance collaborations with community corrections partners.

- Analyze available data on workforce service provision and outcomes for WIOA Titles I and III reentry populations to inform design and implementation of efforts during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle. (First-year data and analysis will be available for December KWSB meeting.)

- Use findings from data analysis to develop and implement efforts in the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle to build workforce system and reentry partners' capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and interested employers and collaborate with community corrections partners more comprehensively. (Commerce has hired two Employer Champions to date and is recruiting for a third to promote the business case for hiring justice-involved workers. Staff will be participating in community-level outreach and networking to support re-entry-friendly employers and increase capacity of community partners to provide services, such as on-the-job learning and on-the-job training, needed by individuals returning to the community. PY2023 data and analysis will be available for KWSB in December 2024)

- Examine outcomes data and existing policy and



practices to identify and recommend opportunities to streamline pre-release and release procedures for justice-involved youth and adults. (The Justice-Involved Program Manager meets monthly with the Education and Training Director and team from Department of Corrections, and with other Re-entry staff to identify real world employment preparation issues and help resolve them. Further, Commerce has employed a Youth Employment Services Specialist at the Juvenile Correctional Facility to mitigate pre-release and release issues for youth and young adults leaving the juvenile correctional facility. All interactions between Commerce and Corrections staff are designed to enhance collaborations with post-release community corrections partners as well as pre-release correctional facility partners)

***Goal 3: Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system.***

Strategy 1: Commission surveys to gather insights about workforce system awareness, perception, and utilization.

- Partner with Local Workforce Development Boards, Universities, Community Colleges, and Technical Colleges in the state to conduct a statewide survey of a sample of residents and employers to gather baseline data on workforce system awareness, perception, and utilization. Based on survey results, annual or biennial surveys could be considered thereafter.

Strategy 2: Identify and implement efforts to enhance awareness and perceptions of the system and increase utilization of the system by residents and businesses. (More information given about efforts regarding goal 3 have been included in Attachment B.)

- Based on survey results, identify, and implement (in the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle) up to three high-priority, high-value outreach, messaging, and communications strategies to enhance awareness and perceptions of the system and increase usage of the system by residents and businesses.

***Goal 4: Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership.***

Strategy 1: Gather Board member and Board staff input on challenges to and ideas around increasing and sustaining engagement.

- Conduct an internal assessment with staff to identify opportunities to enhance Board staff support and activities that advance Board member engagement

(e.g., staff serving as “project managers” for Board Committees, overseeing cadences for reporting and information-sharing in between Board meetings, etc.). (This process is on-going and includes discussions with the Governor’s Appointments Staff regarding strategies for recruiting additional KWSB members. Commerce staff and Board Chair have begun a review of the KWSB By-Laws, KWSB New Member Orientation and Training, and State Workforce Board requirements contained in WIOA. Modifications to by-laws, member training and related documents will be approved by subcommittee/workgroup.)

- Survey Board members for input on improving Board member engagement, member Committee leadership and participation, Board organizational structure and communication, and other relevant areas.

Strategy 2: Review existing Board structures and practices to identify potential opportunities to maximize Board member engagement.

- Utilize internal assessment and Board member survey results and insights to review and revise, as necessary, items like onboarding processes and resources, bylaws, Committee structure and activities, and Board meeting protocols to maximize Board member engagement.
- Support efforts to develop a knowledgeable pipeline of Board member talent by charging Board members/Committees with identifying employers, community organizations, and others who might serve as effective and impactful future Board members.

Strategy 4: Develop tools and resources to build Board member understanding of expectations, responsibilities, and time commitments.

- Utilize internal assessment and Board member survey results and insights to develop tools to support Board member engagement, which might include a role description for Board members that identifies expectations, responsibilities, and time commitments; updated onboarding and onboarding “refresher” materials and processes, etc.

### Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Kansas continues to make progress with employer effectiveness measures as per direction from USDOL. At this time, Kansas does not have state specific measures/indicators established. Employer indicators are not measured against negotiated goals as the cohort collected will serve as a baseline for this annual performance reporting period. Kansas Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV partners elected to designate Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce) as the lead reporting agency for these indicators.

Collaborative efforts between these partners ensured all data for each of the core programs collected during PY2023/FY2024 are combined and reported to USDOL as one set of data. As baseline reporting continues, the Effectiveness of Serving Employers performance indicators reported in the PY2023/FY2024 include the following primary indicators:

1. Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Date
2. Repeat Business Customer Rate

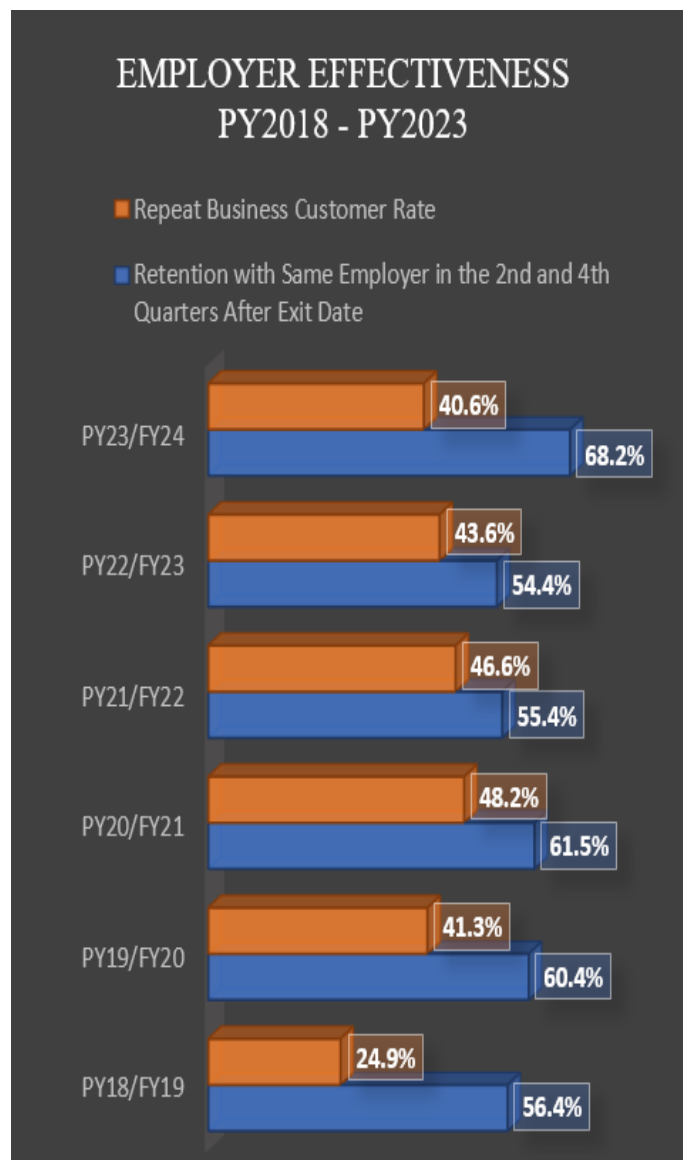
As depicted in the chart to the right, Kansas has experienced a 13.8% increase in retention rates for 2nd and 4th quarters and a 3.0% decrease in repeat business customers over the course of the last program year. As in past years, employers have been reported the need for services such as including supportive services, recruitment assistance, and training services.

Kansas employers continue to receive business services, however, overall progress for the measures of retention and repeat business customers has decreased slightly for PY2023/FY2024. Commerce business service teams expect to expand outreach efforts to promote continuous improvement in the upcoming program year. Albeit slight, the decline of these measures is attributed to system changes, lack of staff resources utilized for outreach efforts across the state, and employer adaptation to the next generation of the state job board, **KANSASWORKS.com**.

Of the 23,374 employers actively utilizing the **KANSASWORKS.com** system, a reported 46,803 job postings were available as of 6/30/2023. In addition to job postings, repeat business customers received a total of 4,484 services over the course of the PY2023/FY2024.

To coincide with these employer services, 15,938 participants who gained employment retained employment at 68.2%. Geographically, statewide success was experienced with retaining employees as a result of service delivery and pinpointed job matching between job seekers and employers. See Attachment C for a chart that demonstrates the breakout of employer outreach efforts by region intended to increase business engagement in workforce services.

Kansas will continue to focus on employer needs and job seekers qualifications to reduce unemployment rate and boost the economy in the upcoming year. Additional Effectiveness in Serving Employers charts and graphs can be found on Attachment C, in the Attachment section of this document.



### Customer Satisfaction

In PY2023, Kansas continued the efforts of Workforce 2.0 to ensure we are continually adjusting to meet the needs of our customers and improving the services we provide and how we provide them.

One of the key efforts we have been working on improving is developing candidates to be qualified for positions. This effort was in response to employers requesting better resumes in the system. For this effort, there were quarterly resume audits conducted. Based on the overall results of the audits, we then offered feedback to staff on what improvements have been made and those that still need to be worked on. Another strategy to assist with this effort was the continuation of the Big Interview tool on **KANSASWORKS.com**. This tool is an online resource for jobseekers that provides basic and best practices of interviewing, the opportunity to practice behavioral questions across all industries and feedback to assist in preparation for the real interview.

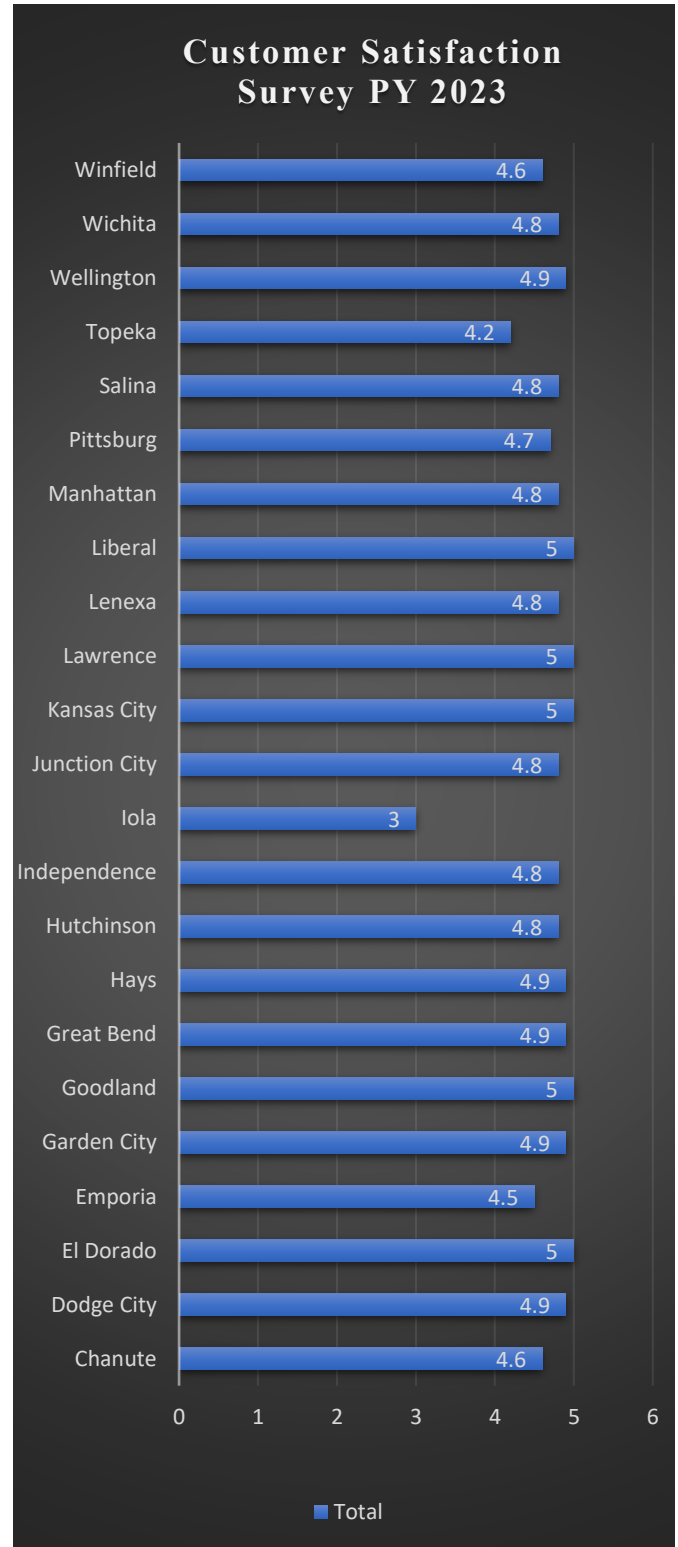
Two additional efforts include connecting businesses to job seekers and providing hands-on assistance to jobseekers. An example of this is hosting an industry-specific Job Fair. Paired with that event, reaching out to jobseekers who match the open positions with those hiring at the Job Fair and preparing the jobseekers to be equipped for the Fair (ensuring their resume is current and providing interview assistance, if needed). Examples of the hands-on assistance to jobseekers includes a variety of jobseeker workshops, both in-person and virtually.

Another avenue to ensure continuous improvement of customer service has been the sustained usage of the customer service kiosk surveys within each Workforce Center. As they leave the Centers, customers are encouraged to fill out a survey regarding the services they received during their visit. The following are the PY2023 results from the Customer Service Kiosk surveys.

Customer satisfaction survey results are shown in chart to the right.

Survey results were customer service based and focused on quality service delivery vs types of services received during the job seekers visit. The scale implemented identified satisfaction with regards to their customers service with 1 (least satisfied) to 5 (most satisfied). For this annual reporting period, 3,830 surveys were provided with an average satisfaction rate of 4.7, indicating job seekers were mostly satisfied with the customer service

received



## Program Evaluations

Within the State of Kansas, Kansas Department of Commerce is responsible for WIOA Title I and Title III activities, which includes program evaluations. Commerce program evaluation processes are focused on two areas: 1) topic/activity specific evaluation and 2) program specific evaluation. Commerce continues to build and improve upon these evaluation processes. The process is intended to create a consistent and meaningful evaluation regardless of focus area within a reasonable amount of time. Evaluations will further support continuous improvement and assist in identifying best practices across programs within the local areas and state. As Commerce completes the evaluations, a published version of the summative report can be found at <https://ksworksstateboard.org/program-evaluation/>

### WIOA Title I Evaluation

Commerce is in progress with WIOA Title I program evaluation in which a task group of experts will come together and focus on pointed questions in efforts to identify best practices and promote continuous improvement. WIOA Title I task group members have a good understanding of the programs to include Adult, Dislocated Worker, (DW) and Youth programs.

This long-term evaluation for WIOA Title I started in the spring of 2023 with the establishment of the task group. This group consists of representatives from all five local areas to include one-stop partner representation, research analyst, program managers, and other key partners as needed. This evaluation is currently in the Pre-Implementation state (See Attachment D for Program Evaluation Stages).

During this stage, the group assembled to become familiar with the process, review objectives, and address questions. Progress continues within this phase in that the WIOA Title I task group experts submitted for consideration questions in which are high priority for evaluation. This exercise provided definition to the course for the program evaluation as the task group moves forward. Questions were narrowed to 2 questions per program and can be found in Attachment D along with the Program Evaluation Stages chart. With questions being agreed upon, the task group will be transitioning into the Accountability stage. During this stage, the research analyst will be conducting data analysis to provide to the task group for assessment of program operations against expectations. Based on the questions posed, outcomes

could result in a wide spectrum of conclusions from higher employment rate to increased wages. When data analysis is complete, the task group will resume meeting

to continue with the stages of the program evaluation efforts. While a firm completion date has not been identified, progress continues within evaluation efforts.

The completed results from the WIOA Title I Program Evaluation for the Adult program are that supportive services had a positive effect on wages and employment for the program, and that receiving training had a very positive effect on wages and employment. For the Dislocated Worker program, supportive services also had a positive effect on wages and employment, and that receiving training had a very positive effect on wages and employment. The Youth program had slightly different questions than the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, and the findings from the Program Evaluation for the Youth program were those participants with access to the supportive services and occupational skills training experienced increases in employment compared to those youth reported as unemployed during the timeframe reviewed. For those receiving supportive services, employment rate was 22.95% whereas 14.68% employment rate was reported for those who did not have access. Likewise, for those who received occupational skills training, 21.79% employment rate was reported vs 14.77% for those with no occupational skills training. See the link for more information on evaluation type, data collected, and outcomes. <https://ksworksstateboard.org/program-evaluation/>

In addition to this, Commerce was approved to participate in a Peer Learning Cohort (PLC) on Program Evaluation. This PLC will be meeting during PY2023 and forward. Commerce team members include WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV partners. This comprehensive team will be working to create a transparent program evaluation process, which could expand beyond those receiving employment and training services to adult basic education and vocational rehabilitation services.

The outcome from the Evaluation PLC for PY2023 was creating an Evaluation Action Plan, where the WIOA Titles I-IV continues to work together and explore options for sharing referral data. This aims to create a smoother transition for participants who are referred to services across WIOA Titles and was identified by members from all four titles as an important step in the process of best assisting our participants.



### Kansas RESEA Program Evaluation

The Kansas RESEA program is currently examining the impact it has on participant UI reciprocity and employment outcomes. The program has completed an evaluation for a proposed Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) Design. For more information regarding this evaluation, see included proposal in Attachment D of this report.

### Kansas MSFW Program Evaluation

Migrant Seasonal Farmworker - Comparison of the current monitoring advocate equity ratios with specifications written to look at Job Service PIRL only vs same equity ratios report if all programs are considered.

WIOA Dislocated Worker and Trade Adjustment Act - Determine the impact of the discontinuation of TAA and the potential of serving these eligible participants with Dislocated Worker funding.

### Workforce Centers Activities and Training

Over the past year, the **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Centers continued to provide services both in-person and virtually, based on the needs of the customer.

For both employers and jobseekers, Job Fairs were provided both virtually and in-person. The in-person events that were the most successful were the smaller industry-targeted Fairs at the Workforce Centers. These events were able to match jobseekers to the open positions available from these employers better than the larger events. Other successful events this past year provided by the Centers were both in-person and virtual workshops. These workshops included: Job Success, Experienced Worker, and How to fill out state and Federal applications. Also, we continued to utilize both Mobile Centers to provide services to events that matched jobseekers to employers, in communities that don't have physical Workforce Centers.

Regarding training, an area of focus during PY2022 for staff was in response to the Workforce 2.0 findings. One of the main efforts was geared towards training staff on providing excellent resume assistance. Throughout this past year, our in-house resume expert provided in-depth resume training to all Workforce Center staff. This training included some of the following: different resume formats, how best to list skills, identifying and handling

gaps or other potential barriers, how to target different jobs/fields, and the top five items' employers are looking for in a resume.

Another great addition to training for our Workforce Center staff came in the form of Registered Apprenticeship for Supervisors. Our first edition of this program started in January 2023 with five Workforce Center Supervisors. These staff will have a full year of classroom training, followed by another year of mentorship with their Regional Operations Managers. After six months in the program, they all are not only enjoying the training aspect of it, but also the relationship building they have with each other.

All Workforce Center staff continue to receive quarterly trainings provided by the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL), on updated information regarding Unemployment Insurance and how Workforce Center staff can best partner with KDOL on assisting these customers. It's a great partnership between the two agencies.

Over the past year, **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Centers continued to offer both in-person and virtual services, adapting to the needs of customers. For employers and jobseekers, Job Fairs were conducted in both formats. The most successful in-person events were smaller, industry-targeted fairs held at Workforce Centers, which more effectively matched jobseekers with open positions compared to larger events. Additionally, the Centers hosted a range of in-person and virtual workshops, including topics such as Job Success, Experienced Workers, and Completing State and Federal Applications. Mobile Centers were deployed to bring services to communities without physical Workforce Centers, connecting jobseekers with employers at events.

In terms of staff development, **KANSASWORKS** has expanded its commitment to training by offering three distinct Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs for its workforce: Supervisors, Frontline Staff, and Reemployment Navigators. Each RA program is specifically designed to address the unique training needs of these groups, providing targeted resources and hands-on experience. The Supervisors program focuses on leadership skills, operational management, and team development, while the Frontline Staff program equips employees with the tools to enhance customer service, job matching, and program knowledge. The Reemployment Navigators program provides specialized training in guiding individuals through the reemployment process,



## STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

focusing on personalized support and job placement strategies. These RA programs are invaluable for professional growth, offering staff continuous learning opportunities, mentorship, and the skills needed to excel

### Rapid Response

For PY2023, Kansas received 14 WARN notices affecting 2,708 employees and had 23 non-WARN events, affecting 1,060 employees. Rapid Response (RR) customers can be linked to Workforce Centers through a variety of methods. One occurs if they attend a Rapid Response meeting. Over this past year, RR meetings have been held virtually or in-person, based on the company preference. During these meetings, employees learn about the **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Centers, the services available and may even connect with a **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Center representative. Whenever possible, one of the two mobile Workforce Centers is present at the meetings. Dislocated workers can have an in-person experience at that time and are encouraged to visit their local Workforce Center for further assistance. A second opportunity is when workers file Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims. Workers receive information on the **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Centers, including all services available to them, and again are encouraged to visit their local Workforce Center. A third opportunity is if they are selected to participate in the RESEA or My Reemployment Plan programs with the Workforce Centers. Both programs require the recipients to contact a Workforce Center to assist them with their employment needs. A fourth opportunity is if they attend a job fair where our **KANSASWORKS** team is present or participate in one of our Virtual Job Fairs. They will learn about the Workforce Center resources and be encouraged to visit one for assistance. It is our goal in Kansas to lead all Rapid Response customers to the Workforce Center to utilize resources in as many ways as possible.

Currently, **KANSASWORKS.com** gathers WARN and non-WARN basic information regarding Rapid Response events. When information is entered into **KANSASWORKS.com** for these events, an automated number is assigned to the event, staff can select a company or Rapid Response event number, and the enrollments and services are tied to the selection.

The strategies for linking RR recipients to the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Dislocated Worker (DW) programs is also a priority for Kansas and to coordinate with the strategies listed above for connecting

these customers to the Workforce Centers. The TAA, DW and Workforce Center employees are cross-trained and have open communication to ensure RR customers are getting the best services they can and are able to enroll in

the programs best suited for their employment needs and goals. All WARN and non-WARN layoffs are sent to the TAA team to research for petition application opportunities. Additional strategies include: (1) The TAA and DW programs are discussed at the Rapid Response meetings; (2) Our UI partners at KDOL send out information on these programs; (3) RESEA and My Reemployment Plan representatives refer customers to these programs, as well as other Workforce Center representatives as they work with Rapid Response recipients in the centers.

The TAA Program Manager and Rapid Response Coordinators work closely together to ensure petitions are filed in a timely manner. The TAA Program Manager participates in the Rapid Response Coordinators meetings to ensure consistent communication regarding the program and possible petitions.

Kansas has a statewide Workforce Response Coordinator who has constant communication with local Economic Development representatives, Human Resource groups and other statewide organizations to keep a pulse on employers, particularly those who may be struggling. They participate in job fairs, to communicate with employers, especially those needing assistance to avoid closure and/or relocation. This staff member visits with job seekers who could potentially fill open positions at companies or businesses who may be struggling to find qualified employees. They work closely with local Rapid Response representatives who are in contact with any struggling companies to help them understand the services available to them. The RR Workforce Response Coordinator also keeps a good pulse on layoffs or closings across the state and sends that information out to the local Rapid Response Coordinators.

### Layoff Aversions

Another plan of action is reaching out to the company who may be laying off staff or closing to get to the employees as quickly as possible to let them know about the **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Centers and the services available to them. This will assist them in getting reemployed or enrolled in training to help prepare them for a new career. Kansas does not set a minimum number of laid-off employees to trigger a Rapid Response

meeting or contact, so staff responds to any qualified layoff, regardless of the number. If the layoff has already occurred, an effort is made to get information to employees. Outreach on social media in each area is conducted to inform those potentially affected about the availability of **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Center services that can be of assistance during a layoff. Notices about these layoffs come in a variety of ways: WARN notices, newspaper articles, individual reporting to a Workforce Center, etc. Staff also receive e-mails from UI partners on a weekly basis that lists companies who have filings of 25 or more employees. Commerce can proactively reach out to those employers or employees regarding the layoff however, if Commerce receives notice, staff conduct diligent activities to supply information to these employees as quickly as possible so the individual can make a quick and smooth transition into new employment.

Please see associated chart in Attachment E which shows the PY2023 industries with individuals affected by a layoff in both WARN and Non-WARN categories.

### **Rapid Response Program Aligns with Business**

The Kansas Workforce Response Coordinator and Local Area Rapid Response Coordinators are involved with business engagement through their participation in local and statewide organizations, attending business functions and constant communication with these groups. As far as sector strategies and career pathway efforts, our Coordinators continue to work in partnership with the Local Workforce Development Boards to ensure they are part of Sector Planning and are aware of the Career Pathways available to these employees.

The Rapid Response services available to companies and affected workers include:

- Immediate contact with the employer to discuss plan of action to assist the employees.
- Rapid Response meetings (to include virtual) to discuss all the services available to them at the Workforce Centers, unemployment, local resources, and possible training opportunities.
- Folder containing all the above information, so the employees have something to take home.

- Job Fairs with local employers interested in hiring the affected workers.
- Resume writing, job search and/or interview skills workshops.
- Mobile Center on-site to provide basic services of a Workforce Center.
- Possible participation in either the RESEA or my Reemployment programs.
- Possible referrals to training programs such as DW or TAA.
- Possible filing of TAA certification application.
- Assistance with UI filing.

### **National Dislocated Worker (NDWGs)**

Commerce did not have any direct NDWG grants for PY2023/FY2024. LAI and LAIV do have NDWG's in progress during this program year. Please see the local area submissions for further details relating to these grants.

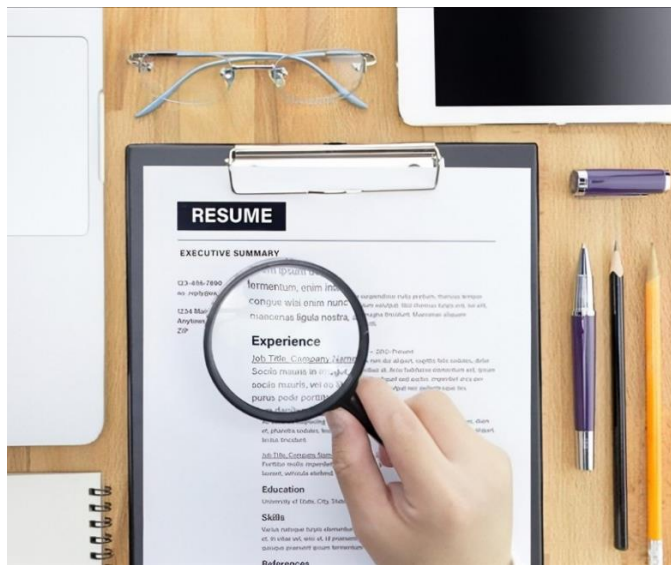
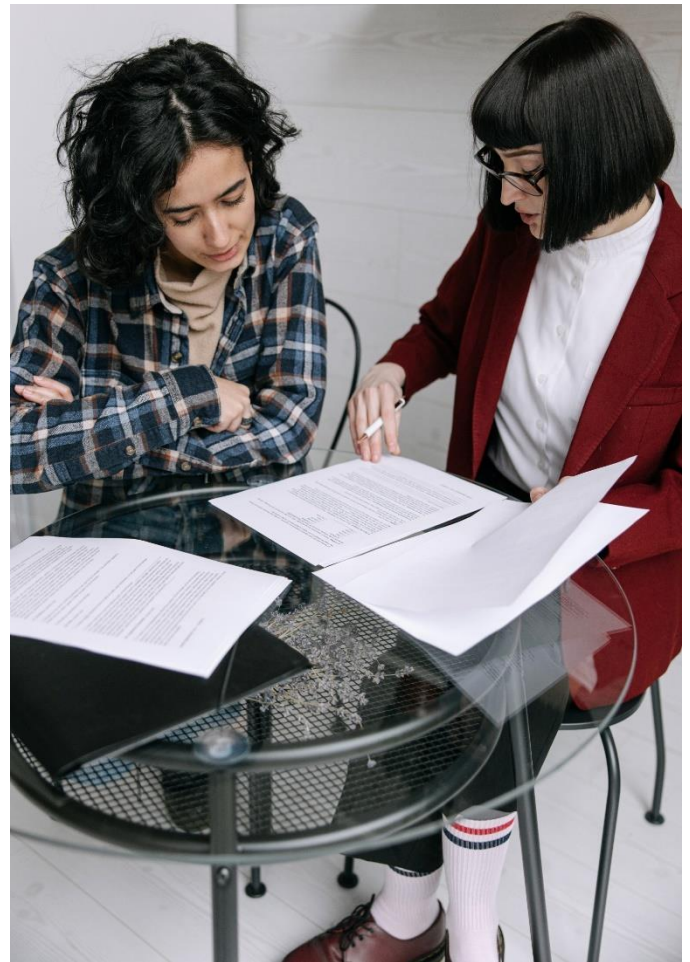
### **ReEmployment Services and Eligibility Assessment**

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) is a collaboration between the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Kansas Department of Labor. The goals of RESEA are to shorten the number of weeks Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits are claimed, prevent, and detect UI overpayments, decrease the likelihood of claimants exhausting UI benefits, cost savings to the UI trust fund and rapid reemployment for UI claimants and establishing RESEA as an entry point for UI claimants into other workforce system partner programs.

RESEA is provided in sixteen **KANSASWORKS** Workforce Centers around the state. There are sixteen grant-funded positions located at five Workforce Centers. Claimants scheduled for RESEA are required to report to a Workforce Center as a condition to receiving UI benefits. RESEA scheduled 8,236 claimants for services showing a 16.08% increase from FY2022 with 5,419 completing RESEA which is a 36% increase from FY2022 over the course of this program year.

## My ReEmployment Program (MRP)

Beginning June 2021, My (Re)Employment Plan (MRP) was revived and updated in HB2196. The program is a collaboration between the Kansas Departments of Commerce and Department of Labor and KANSASWORKS Workforce System and provides enhanced reemployment services to Kansans who are unemployed and looking for work. The program connects unemployment recipients who have received three consecutive Unemployment Insurance payments with KANSASWORKS.com. Selected claimants are required to complete a Job Search Plan and have an active resume in KANSASWORKS.com. Customers needing assistance are encouraged to visit their nearest Workforce Center. During PY2022, 7,638 claimants were notified of their required participation in the My (Re)Employment Plan program. (4,590) 3,690 have successfully completed all program requirements, the remaining 1,923 potentially returned to work prior to completion or other unknown factors. 1,125 were waived from participation, mainly due to returning to work.



In September 2022, the program achieved full automation via the customer's utilization of KANSASWORKS.com. This automated system seamlessly integrates the job search plan and skills assessment components within the KANSASWORKS.com platform. Upon successful completion of these tasks and a published resume, the program's associated services are finalized, and notifications are automatically transmitted to the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) to update customer status.

During Phase 2 of the program, Designated staff have been tasked of quarterly reviews of the resumes uploaded during the My (Re)Employment Plan (MRP) process, checking for content and quality. This followed by two local areas initiating a pilot initiative involving proactive outreach, which includes cold calling, customers who have completed their My (Re)Employment Plan (MRP) requirements to extend supplementary workforce services. These endeavors serve as a pivotal entry point for individuals seeking access to the Workforce Center.

MRP Website Link:

[My Reemployment - Kansas Department of Commerce \(kansascommerce.gov\)](https://www.kansascommerce.gov)



## Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

The Jobs for Veterans Grant (JVSG) works directly with the military installations of Fort Leavenworth, Fort Riley, McConnell Air Force Base and Forbes Field. This overview provides a snapshot of **KANSASWORKS** Veteran Employment Representative outreach across Kansas. JVSG staff continue to attend virtual SHRM, Chamber of Commerce meetings, Veterans attending colleges, universities, and technical colleges. This is used to target Veterans within Kansas to market Workforce Center Services across the state to ensure that Veterans, transitioning service members and military spouses are aware of services that ensure them “Priority of Service” at all of the workforce center locations.

Veterans served in the Workforce Centers During PY2023, 3,384 Veterans were served within the workforce centers with 1,476 receiving further assistance by Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists (DVOP) based on significant barriers to employment. This assistance consisted of customized resume assistance and/or review, workshops, and basic employment skills required for each individual Veteran’s needs. Through outreach by this staff, a total of 2,888 Veterans and their spouses were provided with information on services available by JVSG staff at Workforce Centers across the state, with 506 of these Veterans receiving services during PY2023. Additionally, JVSG staff provided this information to 1,865 transitioning service members and spouses during PY2023 with 240 receiving services. 2,028 Employer engagements, 615 of which were with federal contractors, were made by Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER). Additionally, Veteran Employment Representatives in partnership with Veterans Affairs, Veterans Readiness, and Employment (VR&E) program assisted 454 Special Disabled, Disabled Veterans with 38 obtaining suitable employment during PY2023. A total of 453\_Veterans, transitioning service members, and spouses received job placements.

JVSG Staff conducted email outreach to 19,008 Veterans and Transitioning Service Members throughout the program year with DVOP Newsletters to offer DVOP services, advertise virtual and “in person” job fairs, to disseminate resources and free training information as well as new developments in Veterans benefits and Veteran news. Additionally, throughout PY2023, JVSG Staff conducted “in person” outreach to 5,391 Veterans, Transitioning Service Members, and Military Spouses.

These sessions were conducted on the military

installations, in local communities, and at various non-profit meetings to discuss services and employment opportunities in Kansas. Additionally, JVSG staff attended 485 hiring events/job fairs during the program year. JVSG staff engaged with 1,401 Veterans, transitioning service members, and spouses at these events.

**KANVET.org** provides direct access to State of Kansas Veteran-specific resources and benefits without having to navigate multiple state and federal agency websites. From 07/01/23, to 06/30/24, 2,934 users visited the website with 3,331 views/sessions with the most popular links being the employers page, support page, and college/universities page. Please take a few minutes to view the site and see what the new site brings to our Kansas Veterans and those still serving. [www.kanvet.org](http://www.kanvet.org).



During PY2023, The Kansas Department of Commerce, in partnership with Hilton Hotels and Resorts, processed 79 Hilton Honors referrals for Veterans, transitioning service members, and spouses. Points awarded to a Hilton Honors account are redeemable for hotel stays in participating Hilton chain facilities for employment related activities such as confirmed out of state job interviews, training for a new/existing job or certification, and pre-employment testing, such as physicals, drug testing, aptitude, agility, or licensure. Of the 79 referrals processed during the program year, 8 of these referrals will be staying in the state of Kansas upon their discharge from military service.

Success stories for the Jobs for Veterans State Grant can be found in the Success Stories and Testimonies Section in Attachment H.



## Registered Apprenticeship

The Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship (KOA), operating under the Kansas Department of Commerce, serves as the state's designated authority for Registered Apprenticeships. Recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), KOA collaborates closely with the Federal Department of Labor Employment and Training Division to enhance and modernize the apprenticeship system, benefiting workers, employers, and the broader economy.

KOA supports a diverse range of training programs through an appointed Council of 12 industry and educational experts. The Kansas Apprenticeship Council's goal is to foster robust apprenticeship programs across various sectors, including union training, business training, non-government organizations, higher education, K-12 education, and other entities. By aligning with the needs of Kansas's high-wage and high-demand occupations, KOA ensures that apprenticeship programs are tailored to the state's economic landscape.

The Kansas Apprenticeship Council has developed a 6-year strategic plan, underscoring its commitment to advancing the apprenticeship system in Kansas. This plan is supported by a clear vision and mission statement, reflecting KOA's proactive approach and dedication to meeting the evolving needs of the Kansas workforce. The office works to break down barriers to growth and sustainability, with an emphasis on sustainability through blended state and federal funding.

### Notable activities for PY2023 include:

**Demystifying Youth Apprenticeship:** The KOA has worked to define youth apprenticeship for Kansas and debunk the misconceptions around workers compensation liability and premiums with hiring youth apprentices. We hope that the work in this area set the stage for significant growth in retaining our young people in this bright state. The Kansas Department of Insurance has issued a letter clarifying this, which is available on our website: <https://ksapprenticeship.org/youth-apprenticeship/>

**Kansas Apprenticeship Tax and Grant Act:** To date, Kansas has promised nearly \$1.7 million in apprenticeship employment incentives and growing. This has paved the way to support all registered apprenticeship activity across the state of Kansas.

**MeadowLARK Grant Initiative:** This USDOL funding opportunity is revolutionizing apprenticeship in Kansas by focusing our workforce boards and the Kansas Department of Education on our most high-demand, high-wage occupations to meet industry needs.

**State Apprenticeship Expansion Funding:** This USDOL funding will be used to modernize the office, enhance our outreach efforts, and leverage existing funding to expand Registered Apprenticeship numbers across Kansas.

**State Apprenticeship Equity and Expansion Initiative:** Goals met and exceeded for this USDOL grant! Our seven intermediaries are working hard to expand opportunities apprenticeship opportunities in construction, healthcare, information technology and more!

**Statewide Equal Employment Opportunity Plan:** The Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship is required to have a statewide EEO plan. After a concerted effort, Kansas has submitted a new EEO and is working on developing a resource website for our stakeholders.

**Program Evaluations:** the KOA is working with a national apprenticeship expert and 3rd party advisor to conduct long-overdue RAP compliance evaluations in accordance with the expectation of reauthorization passing.

**Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship Grants:** The KOA awarded more than \$520,000 in state grants to 8 established Registered Apprenticeship programs including joint apprenticeship training committees from across the state. This funding went to support new training equipment, personnel dedicated to expansion and outreach.

**Return on Investment Study:** With the University of Kansas, the KOA has been able to conduct a comprehensive econometric analysis of 20+ years' worth of RAPIDS data and return on investment study for Kansas based businesses.

This high-level activity and generated actionable growth are in existing and new industry sectors that Registered Apprenticeship programs can serve.

Supporting Existing Programs in the State: The KOA’s roots are in the dozens of Registered Apprenticeship programs already existing across the state of Kansas. Many of these programs have been registered with the state as early as the 1950’s, 1970’s, and early 2000. With modernization efforts in new program areas, it is imperative that the KOA supports the efforts of long-standing joint apprenticeship training councils (JATC’s) and other programs. Our work has included investments in several state unions including Greater Kansas City Laborers Training, Joint Apprenticeship Training Council, Ironworkers Joint Apprenticeship & Training Trust in Wichita, Plumbers and Pipefitters Training of Kansas, United Association 441 (UA441), Topeka Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 226 (IBEW 226), and Wichita Electrical Industry Training Fund, IBEW 271. We are also working to expand registered apprenticeships in advanced manufacturing in the state with many of our major employers including Spirit Aerosystem, Textron Aviation, MARS, Orange EV, and newcomers to the state like Panasonic. We also support our many important electrical cooperatives and their lineman apprentices including Wheatland Electrical, Evergy, Midwest Energy, Kansas Municipal Utilities and more. The KOA is investing time and money to help these programs expand and meet USDOL Registered Apprenticeship requirements.

Exciting New Registered Apprenticeship Programs in the State: The KOA worked to develop new programs that meet the needs of Kansas and its citizens. Some of the most unique, and important programs include agriculture, education, disability services, information technology, and healthcare. The Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) is now set up as a statewide multi-Employer Intermediary for Teacher Education, allowing apprentices to receive training and a wage while in the classroom, while pursuing a bachelor’s degree within a teacher preparation program (in Kansas an individual must have a bachelor’s degree to become a licensed teacher). KSDE’s is on track to serve nearly 100+ teachers. We also have several initiatives around intellectual and developmental disability (“IDD”) services to celebrate through the InterHab Kansas Direct Support Professionals (DSP+) program as well as Down Syndrome Innovations, employing and training young people with developmental disabilities in production manufacturing. Our largest non-traditional sector has been growing in healthcare! We currently have registered apprentices in multiple occupations such as Certified Nurse Aides, Certified

Medical Assistants, Phlebotomist, Pharmacy Technicians, Surgical Technicians, Certified Dietary Managers, post-licensure Practical Nurse, and more. Kansas is continuing to expand in the healthcare sector and will likely see further expansion in a game changing pre-licensure nursing occupations.

KOA’s Summary of PY2023 by industry shown below.

| Industry                                   |        |
|--|--------|
| Engineering, Architecture and Construction | 44.06% |
| Energy and Natural Resources               | 13.95% |
| Advanced Manufacturing                     | 9.80%  |
| Education                                  | 9.45%  |
| Corporate and Professional Services        | 8.64%  |
| Health Care                                | 7.87%  |
| Agriculture and Animal Health              | 2.54%  |
| Aerospace and Defense                      | 2.28%  |
| IT   | 1.03%  |
| Logistics and Distribution                 | 0.39%  |

The Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship has included additional information on federal funding initiatives and data regarding certain demographics and industries served. This information can be found on Attachment F, in the attachments section of this report.



## **Workforce/Corrections Initiatives/Addressing Barriers to Reentry**

The Manager for Justice-Involved Programs serves as the liaison between Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce) and Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) to work Statewide at increasing opportunities for individuals involved in the criminal justice system to rejoin the workforce in sustainable living wage employment. Statewide involvement activities include:

- Regular meetings with KDOC Director of Employment and Director of Education, to discuss goals and connections needed to foster employment for individuals exiting the correctional facilities
- Train Department of Commerce Workforce Services Specialist Registered Apprentices and other staff on assisting individuals who have been involved in the justice system with rejoining the workforce
- Train Workforce Center Business Services Teams on engaging employers in conversations about hiring justice-involved individuals
- Providing training for partner agencies on employment support specific to individuals involved in the justice system
- Connecting with businesses interested in expanding their hiring pool to qualified justice-involved individuals
- Providing oversight for shared position with Commerce and Kansas Juvenile Correctional Complex (KJCC)
- Administering multiple Federal competitive grants received by Commerce

### **Federal Competitive Grants**

- **ReSpECTWORKS** (Reentry Specialized Employment Counseling and Training), an “inside/outside” employment counseling and training program funded by the US Department of Labor Reentry Employment Opportunities Pathway Home 2 initiative, serving participants exiting Kansas Correctional Facilities. Since January 2022, the program has been providing inside/outside intensive case management and workforce development services. As of 6/30/2024, 504 participants have enrolled and of those who have

released from the facility 80% have had an initial job placement.

- **PROWD** (Partners for Reentry in Workforce Development) funded by US Dept. of Labor Reentry Employment Opportunities, serves individuals under the custody of the Federal Bureau of Prisons residing in USP Leavenworth or one of the three Residential Reentry Centers in the state. Program staff connect them to workforce development services, training, intensive case management and supportive services to aid them in gaining and maintaining employment post-release in high demand occupations.
- **Women’s Second Chance Reentry Employment Counseling and Training Program** funded by the US Dept. of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance Second Chance Act initiative, will serve women releasing from the Topeka Correctional Facility, providing intensive collaborative case management and workforce development services and connection to occupational training and supportive services, both pre- and post-release.

### **Kansas Network for Employment and Career Transition for Youth (knectY)**

Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Services was one of four states awarded \$17M from the federal Equitable Transition Model Demonstration Grant through USDOL Office of Disability Employment Policy. The purpose of this project is to create opportunities for competitive integrated employment for youth/young adults with disabilities and provide the necessary education/services. The grant will use work-based learning, family involvement, and youth leadership to support access to transition services and career pathways to “Good Jobs.” Since awarded, a one-year pilot has been implemented in southwest Kansas, more specifically, Garden City.

Program partners include Kansas WorkforceONE, Families Together, Inc., and Kansas University Center on Disabilities. Notable program activities include creation of processes, procedures, guides, and initial outreach items; defining necessary data elements; development of partnerships and employment opportunities; education and advocacy for parents of youth/young adults with disabilities; producing curriculum for job coach training; delivering Self Determined Career Design Model training; and planning for statewide expansion.

## Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN)

**RETAINWORKS** is part of the Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (**RETAIN**), a federally funded initiative exploring early stay-at-work/return-to-work (**SAW/RTW**) intervention strategies that keep people in the labor force following illness or injury which could result in a work disability. The overarching goal of **RETAINWORKS** is a cultural change to viewing employment as an outcome of medical treatment.

**RETAINWORKS** is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration under a grant award of \$21,600,000 to the Kansas Department of Commerce. The primary objectives are to increase employment retention and labor force participation, and to reduce long-term work disability among project participants.

Through a statewide collaboration between three of the largest medical systems in Kansas, Ascension Via Christi, Stormont Vail, and the University of Kansas Health Systems, in partnership with all five Local Workforce Development Boards, Nurse Navigators, employed by the medical systems, and Workforce Coordinators, employed by the Local Workforce Development Boards, are coordinating health interventions and employment service delivery to support the employee in returning to or staying at work after an illness or injury. Additionally, Referral and Enrollment leads track program progress and assist with recruitment and training of participating Medical Providers.

As of 06/30/2024, 1170 individuals were enrolled. This demonstrated an increase of 415%, compared to the previous program year. Partnering medical providers across the state now total 470, exceeding the program's original goal of 250 providers.

## WorkKeys / National Career Readiness Certificate

WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC®) is an assessment-based credential issued at four levels: Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze. The NCRC measures and certifies the essential work skills needed for success in jobs across industries and occupations. The WorkKeys (NCRC®) has helped

Kansas businesses streamline the selection process for hourly manufacturing employees. The level of certificate easily indicates if the job seeker can grasp key concepts to be successful in the manufacturing industry. Other Kansas businesses have used the WorkKeys (NCRC®) to provide wage increases if the employee reaches a higher certificate level. The Kansas Workforce Centers provide the WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC®) at no cost to the Employers and the Job Seekers.

The credential is awarded in four levels and verifies skills proficiency in:

- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Reading and using work-related text
- Applying information from workplace documents to solve problems
- Applying mathematical reasoning to work-related problems
- Setting up and performing work-related mathematical calculations
- Locating, synthesizing, and applying information that is presented graphically
- Comparing, summarizing, and analyzing information presented in multiple related graphics

A National Career Readiness Certificate is earned by achieving a Level Score of 3 or better on all three WorkKeys assessments:

- Applied Math
- Workplace Documents
- Graphic Literacy

Assessments Administered and Certificates earned statewide:



|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Platinum | 325 |
| Gold     | 582 |
| Silver   | 844 |
| Bronze   | 697 |

Total Assessments Administered 7,954.

## Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program is a federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. An employer can receive a federal tax credit that varies between the amounts of \$2,400 to \$9,600 per applicant.

The WOTC program implemented an interface system to automate and assist with eliminating application requests. Currently, the program is processing within 90 days of submission of an application.

## Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program is designed to assist workers who experience a reduction in work as a result of U.S. foreign trade. Worker groups are identified within a Certified TAA Petition. In addition to reemployment services provided through the Local Workforce Centers, they receive individualized assistance from TAA Case Managers who provide in-depth benefit details, enroll them in services, provide employment counseling and assistance throughout their TAA enrollment. The TAA Program provides adversely affected workers an opportunity to update their skills to increase their marketability for the ever-changing competitive workforce. In addition to TAA Training Benefits (both classroom and work-based), TAA Workers may be eligible for income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) while attending TAA Approved Training. Out-of-Area Job Search Assistance, Relocation Allowance and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) are also available. Adversely affected workers must apply for the TAA Program for an eligibility determination and then apply for each TAA Benefit.

The TAA Program entered termination provisions effective 07/1/22, due to no Congressional action to reauthorize the program. Although the termination

provision of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015 (TAARA 2015) prohibits USDOL from certifying petitions for TAA group eligibility as of 07/01/22, workers certified as eligible to apply for assistance under a petition approved prior to 07/01/22, and who were separated on or before 06/30/22, continue to be entitled to TAA Program Benefits and Services. States are required to continue to operate their TAA Program in accordance with the termination provisions and must continue to administer the 2002 Program, the 2011 Program, the 2015 Program and the Reversion 2021 Program in accordance with existing regulations. In addition, under phase-out termination, states must continue to provide outreach to identify affected workers and must serve any workers covered by a certified petition who were separated from trade-affected employment on or before 06/30/22.

In PY2023, even under termination status, the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program served 87 Adversely Affected Workers in total. During PY2023, no new RTAA Enrollments could be approved after termination took effect, however three TAA Workers received at least one wage subsidy payment. Many TAA Workers across the state have gained reemployment through recalls or new employment opportunities. This increased number of TAA Workers returning to reemployment has changed the program's strategies to retain participants in the program. The TAA Team across the state continues to work with these TAA Workers to exhaust all options to continue their TAA Training. In some cases, the TAA Team has been able to work with the training provider to adjust schedules from full-time to part-time or online learning opportunities so TAA Workers can continue to attend TAA Training while also working full-time.

Even with an increase in reemployment and termination status of the program, TAA sponsored three new TAA Training Plans during this program year. In addition, 25 TAA Workers successfully completed TAA Training. Of the 69 TAA Workers whose TAA Enrollments exited during PY2023, 63 were employed.

During PY2023, no Transportation Payments or Subsistence Payments to defray expenses while that TAA Worker attended TAA Training outside their commuting area. In addition, no TAA Workers received Relocation Assistance or Out- of-Area Job Search Assistance, but this was reflective of the increase of available employment within their commuting areas.

The TAA Program Administrative Office continued to

work very closely with Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) TRA Unit Staff with a high level of communication and cooperation to define service delivery. Quarterly monitoring tools were used to review all actions across the State of Kansas and make improvements when necessary.

## Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Title I Activity

### Training Services provided by Local Area

| Local Area   | Adult      | Dislocated Worker | Total      |
|--|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Local Area I Kansas WorkforceONE                     | 120        | 64                | 184        |
| Local Area II Heartland Works, Inc.                  | 203        | 74                | 277        |
| Local Area III Workforce Partnership Inc.            | 72         | 11                | 83         |
| Local Area IV Workforce Alliance of South Central KS | 0          | 12                | 12         |
| Local Area V Southeast KANSASWORKS                   | 57         | 5                 | 62         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>452</b> | <b>166</b>        | <b>618</b> |



### Participants Served by Local Area

| Local Area                          | Adult | Dislocated Worker | Total |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| Local Area I Kansas WorkforceONE    | 308   | 108               | 416   |
| Local Area II Heartland Works, Inc. | 281   | 76                | 357   |

|  |              |            |              |
|--|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Local Area III Workforce Partnership Inc.            | 535          | 32         | 567          |
| Local Area IV Workforce Alliance of South Central KS | 1,369        | 92         | 1,461        |
| Local Area V Southeast KANSASWORKS                   | 166          | 7          | 173          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>2,659</b> | <b>315</b> | <b>2,974</b> |



Commerce and local areas are routinely working to provide accurate cost per participant statistics to state and local workforce boards. While expenditure data is available on a program year and fiscal year basis, ETA 9130 reporting continues to show expenditures aggregately for each WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Wagner-Peyser open grant award. Because Commerce utilizes first in first out, current program year participants may be funded with the oldest active/open grant award. This does have an impact on the cost per participant reported in year-end performance reporting as the expenditures are reported aggregately on the ETA 9130 for the grant award and by program year on the ETA 9169 reports. Cost per participant can be substantially large for these reasons

**Veteran Services**

Dean was an imminently homeless, justice involved, Transitioning Service Member referred to DVOP by the Fort Riley USO Pathfinders. When the USO staff member called, Dean was going to be separating the next day and was losing his housing that day as well. He was almost completed with the first semester of a welding certification program, and he has 10+ years of heavy equipment operation experience from the military.

DVOP first assisted Dean with Veteran housing and community resources for any immediate needs. He mentioned one employer that had come to his welding course to recruit employees. DVOP and Dean drafted a customized résumé over the phone while he was clearing his housing. DVOP also did a market survey and send him five other welding/fabrication employers in the area that would likely hire an entry level welder. DVOP also assisted him with a Motor Vehicle Operator custom résumé the same day. DVOP checked back in with Dean frequently and learned that he was able to stay with a friend and was able to concentrate his attention on job search. He was open to applying for any positions to get him started with employment. DVOP assisted him with a 3rd custom résumé and coordinated with LVER to get the resume in front of HR staff at a JC company.

Within approximately one week, Dean reported that he had completed several interviews already. Dean let DVOP know that he accepted a position at Walmart with the automotive department as of 1/4/2023 at a wage of \$17/hr. He was glad to have some income again and a job that would work around his school hours in the welding program.

**Business Services**

**Success Story:**

Yellow Corporation and its operating affiliates, YRC Inc. (d/b/a YRC Freight), made the difficult decision to permanently close their regular operations on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and laid off employees at all their locations. This shut down left many area employees unemployed. The Workforce Center in Area III organized a Rapid Response and employment workshops including resume writing, interviewing and job search strategies to affected employees. This all culminated in a Yellow Job Fair held on September 7<sup>th</sup> at Johnson County Community College. The event was a success.

**Job Seekers**

- 125 Pre-registered on Eventbrite
- 175 plus in attendance – we believe some job seekers entered the side doors and didn’t register.
- 9 Veterans
- 32 Non-Yellow Job Seekers

**Employers**

- 53 Employers were in attendance

**Testimonial:**

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, three **KANSASWORKS** staff members in conjunction with KDOL staff conducted a Rapid Response at Valu Merchandisers in Fort Scott. Staff made the presentation covering services to 70 employees including front office and management. Staff then handed it off to the KDOL staff member for their UI presentation. Once it concluded, the meeting was opened for questions and best practices were discussed. The meeting was concluded with contact information and follow up measures. Follow up measures include being on site every Wednesday, 8:30-10 a.m. and a multiple employer job fair on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2-p.m. The warehouse manager, Brandon Peck wrote a statement about our involvement in the Rapid Response.

*“Dustin, I really appreciate the timeliness and sense of urgency in getting a presentation together for our workforce. Our people were lost and confused about what to do next. They were starting to ask us a lot of questions that we don't have answers for. The crew that you brought in was very knowledgeable and courteous. They did a great job of presenting and answering questions. We really appreciate you taking the time to do this and leaving us with the literature that we need to navigate the path forward. I'm sure we will have more questions come up. I appreciate your partnership through the process. “*

*Brandon Peck  
Warehouse Manager  
VMC Fort Scott, KS*

More success stories have been included on Attachment H in the attachments section of this report.



### **Local Area I - Kansas WorkforceONE**

Darby, a lifelong resident of Garden City, geared up for her senior year in high school with a bright future ahead. Referred to Kansas WorkforceONE's In-School Youth program through the Department for Children and Family's Pre-ETS program, Darby was given the opportunity for a Paid Work-Based Learning Experience. Kansas WorkforceONE, in collaboration with DCF and Rehabilitation Services, connected Darby with her Employment Specialist to identify her interests, prepare for employment through soft skills training, and find a work experience that aligned with her goals. An existing partnership with Downtown Vision provided a seamless transition to Darby's first job experience, where she eagerly contributed and built valuable connections with the community. Darby's enthusiasm for her role at Downtown Vision helped her develop essential social and professional skills. Despite her visual impairment, she remained determined to demonstrate her abilities and make a positive impact. Darby's experience deepened her connection with her hometown and empowered her to pursue her future goal of joining a religious community. "I want people to know that being blind doesn't define me. I was more than willing to do what I needed to help people," she shared confidently.

Darby's journey highlights Kansas WorkforceONE's dedication to helping youth gain the skills and experiences needed to thrive in their communities and future careers.

### **Local Area 2 – Heartland Works**

The client was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. The client was a military spouse and had also received notification of their impending separation from military employment. Their highest educational attainment at enrollment was a high school diploma. In addition, he lacked the education, training, and experience to transition to high in demand work in production or manufacturing without WIOA assistance. The client learned about the Heroes MAKE America program through the Career Skills program at Fort Riley. The client was interested in the program because it provided education, training and certification relating to maintenance, production management and a variety of other positions of interest to the client. These positions are connected to demand occupations in the Local Area. The client was enrolled in the Heroes MAKE America program. During one of the monthly updates the client stated, "I am thoroughly enjoying the program, learning about the production industry while making valuable

connections that boost my confidence in transitioning my career." The client completed the program and obtained his Certified Production Technician certificate from Washburn Institute of Technology in December 2023. The client accepted the position as a Restaurant Consultant where he manages a several restaurants overseeing logistics and ordering of supplies. The client started working in February 2024, earning \$62,000/year.

### **Local Area 3 – Workforce Partnership**

Last year, the Mid-America College of Health Sciences, located in Merriam, KS, celebrated the graduation of 44 students from its Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program, marking a significant milestone in the careers of these aspiring healthcare professionals. Fourteen of those individuals received training funds through Workforce Partnership's Wyandotte and Johnson County Workforce Centers in order to help fund the accelerated nine-month LPN program, reflecting Workforce Partnership's commitment to providing comprehensive and accelerated nursing education to meet the growing demand for qualified nurses in the healthcare industry.

The journey to becoming an LPN is both a significant financial and personal commitment. With a program cost of over \$20,000 per student, the financial burden is considerable. Workforce Partnership's financial support covered approximately \$94,000 in total costs for tuition, fees, and supplies for these 14 students. Even with our financial support, many students find it necessary to maintain full- or part-time employment alongside their studies. This dedication often means sacrificing precious family time to fulfill academic and work commitments.

Becoming an LPN also requires passage of the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). This rigorous exam is a pivotal step for nursing students, leading to new opportunities and advancements in their careers. One of our proud graduates, Chasity R., who successfully completed her NCLEX in June 2024, experienced a commendable promotion and pay raise from \$21.75 to \$33.00 per hour, reflecting the value and trust her company places in her enhanced skills and qualifications. Witnessing the students' transition from learners to healthcare professionals is a profound experience, symbolizing their dedication, hard work, and the bright future that lies ahead in their nursing careers. This achievement not only signifies the dedication and hard work of the students but also underscores the importance of community resources in fostering educational opportunities.



## Local Area 4 – Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas

### Success Story 1:

Andrew enrolled in the Industrial Electrical Technology program through the One Workforce Grant after being laid off and seeking new employment. While in training, Andrew utilized fuel, utility, and housing assistance through supportive services, providing him the financial stability he needed to focus on training. After successfully completing his degree from Hutchinson Community College he now works for Northern Natural Gas as a Controls Measurement Technician, earning \$32.00/hour.

### Success Story 2:

Jaden reached out to the Workforce Center for assistance to move into a different industry, as she had been employed in food service since her teens. She worked closely with her WIOA Youth Case Manager and Work Experience Coordinator to narrow down her interests, revamp her resume and practice her interview skills. Jaden interviewed with Dondlinger Construction. She nailed the interview and is now earning \$17 per hour with employer paid health and dental coverage as a full-time laborer in Dondlinger's Facilities Service Division.

## Local Area 5 – Southeast KANSASWORKS

### *In School Youth and Incumbent Worker Success Story*

In Program Year 2020, Skyler Bigley was just a 16-year-old high school student with no prior work experience and the challenges of a documented disability. He wasn't sure how to get his foot in the door of the working world, but he knew he wanted to build a future. Little did anyone know at the time that Skyler's journey with Southeast KANSASWORKS would span years and evolve into an incredible success story—one that began with entry-level work and culminated in a high-demand welding career.

Skyler came to the Independence Workforce Center looking for help. He was set to graduate high school in May 2023 but had never been employed. His lack of experience and disability posed barriers, yet his determination to make something of himself was clear. The Youth Career Advisor quickly recognized that Skyler was eligible for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) In-School Youth Program, and the wheels were set in motion to equip him with the tools

and experiences he needed.

Skyler's first breakthrough came when Southeast KANSASWORKS helped him secure a Work Experience at Neodesha School District USD 461, where he started working as a construction laborer earning \$10 per hour. This wasn't just a job—it was the beginning of a new chapter. Under the guidance of his Youth Career Advisor, Skyler developed an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), completed the Lifeworks skills workshop, and built his resume, wrote a cover letter, and participated in mock interviews. His dedication earned him multiple incentives, including a \$100 reward for completing Lifeworks and another \$100 for completing his work experience.

Skyler performed so well that Neodesha School District brought him back for another year of Work Experience, allowing him to gain even more skills while still in school. Through it all, Skyler stayed focused on his long-term goal—he told his Career Advisor that one day, he wanted to become a welder.

After graduating high school and achieving the goals set in his ISS, Skyler exited the Youth Program, having built a solid foundation for his future career. But this wasn't the last time Southeast KANSASWORKS would cross paths with Skyler.

In Program Year 2023, Southeast KANSASWORKS was approached by Tindle Construction, where Skyler had been working full-time. The company was facing significant challenges due to a downturn in the boat industry and feared layoffs in their workforce. Skyler, who had developed his skills at Tindle, was now at risk of losing his job.

Tindle Construction reached out for help with Incumbent Worker funds to retrain employees and avert layoffs. The solution was Carbon material welding—a high-demand skill that would allow employees to shift into a more critical role at the company.

Thanks to Southeast KANSASWORKS' quick action, Tindle Construction secured the funding necessary to retrain its employees, including Skyler. The Incumbent Worker Program funded Skyler's training at a total cost of \$8,311.11 per employee, transforming Skyler into a carbon material welder earning \$22 per hour, more than double what he had earned during his initial work experience.

## KANSASWORKS.COM

During PY2023/FY2024, KANSASWORKS.com continues to adapt to the needs of Kansas employers and jobs seekers as well as expansion of programs.

KANSASWORKS.com, hosted by America’s JobLink Alliance (AJLA), expanded to include additional enrollments for new grant as relates to the case management modules of the system. Kansas continues to strive to make routine adjustments to the site to foster a welcoming appearance for all users.

To learn more about navigating the KANSASWORKS website, visit the following link: <https://rise.articulate.com/share/bJPUSLzaz5R8sPsIom3iyIFk0QEu6wiZ>

KANSASWORKS.com is available on a mobile application as well. Job seekers can access the most current jobs via this application on any “Smart” cellular phone or tablet. Demonstration of application screen shown below.



AJLA has also implemented a third-party security scan for the purposes of data security, integrity, and protection. These security scans will be applied monthly going forward vs the annual scanning in previous years. In addition to this, a reorganization of the team resulted in more focused workgroups to address consortium needs. These teams include:

- Customer Success
- DevOps
- JobLink/Mobile/Vocal
- CertLink
- Data/Reporting/Tableau
- API/Ingestion/FEDES

Kansas job seekers, employers, providers, and staff have embraced and appreciate the changes incorporated. The long-term plan will be to continue to make updates to customize the system in efforts to work more efficiently and accurately for our customers.

## Big Interview

In May of 2022, the Department of Commerce initiated the process of seamlessly integrating the AI technology offered by Big Interview into the user accounts of KANSASWORKS.com. Big Interview is a sophisticated interactive tool meticulously crafted to deliver virtual services to job seekers and employers affiliated with KANSASWORKS.com. Subsequently, in August of 2022, this integration was successfully deployed and activated within the framework of KANSASWORKS.com.

Since its official launch, a total of 2,357 users have registered on the platform, comprising 36 administrators, 125 front-line staff members, and 2277 customer accounts.

## Live Chat

The KANSASWORKS.com Live Chat was implemented in January 2020, and it continues to assist customers with all their online needs from password resets to step-by-step instructions on how to build a resume on our site. Most participants are able to resolve their issues through chat, with no additional follow up needed.

Between 7/1/2023 and 6/30/2024 our digital assistants handled (6,352) a 5.50% increase from the 6,021 those assisted in PY2022. The average satisfaction rate was 91%.

To ensure accessibility for all populations, an ongoing accessibility audit is in place for KANSASWORKS.com. In addition, all staff have received training in working with individuals with disabilities.

## Virtual Job Fairs

Kansas Workforce Centers provide a wide range of free services for both workers and employers across the state, and **KANSASWORKS** has placed an emphasis on the importance of providing virtual services, which includes virtual job fairs. Providing access to virtual job fairs has eliminated geographical barriers and has enabled more accessibility to the event for job seekers and employers. This has also reduced the cost and number of staff needed as opposed to a job fair at a physical location. **BIG Interview** is another virtual service/resource that has been made available to job seekers to prepare them for interviews, which complements the virtual job fair platform.

**KANSASWORKS** continued the Virtual Job Fair during the 2023 Fiscal Year utilizing Premier Virtual as the virtual platform provider. The Premier Virtual platform is very easy to navigate with on-going enhancements to meet the needs of its users. The past year we alternated the monthly virtual events holding a Statewide Virtual Job Fair (for all employers) one month and then a State Agency Job Fair the other months. The State Agency Job Fairs are set-up by workforce area. The Statewide Job Fairs are set-up by workforce area and then by industry categories in each area so job seekers can easily access the jobs they are looking for. This past year a Holiday Hiring job fair was added in October and a Spring Hiring Job Fair in March. Hilmar Cheese a new company to Kansas, held a single employer job fair on March 16, 2024. Employers

and Job Seekers can chat back and forth regarding job opportunities and employers can initiate a video conversation if they choose to do along with scheduling interviews. Employer booths consist of their company bio, logos, social media links, job postings and/or job link. Employers can download a list of job seekers who visit their booths along with resumes provided by the job seeker. Employers are able to see all job seekers who are registered for events and invite them to their booth.

Training videos to navigate the virtual platform are available on the virtual platform for job seekers and employers. Additional employer training is held prior to the virtual job fairs for employers who want to participate and if unable to attend a recording of the training can be sent to them. A list of the employers participating is included in the Job Seeker registration section for their information and is also sent out to the workforce center staff.

**KANSASWORKS** hosted Virtual Statewide Job Fairs open for all KS employers and job seekers in August, October, and December of 2023 and February, April, and June of 2024. Those events averaged 63 employers participating and 312 job seekers attending.

**KANSASWORKS** hosted Virtual State Agency Job Fairs in July, September, and November of 2023 and January, March, and May of 2024. These events averaged 243 job seekers and 10 state agencies.

The events are marketed to **KANSASWORKS** employers, employers registered on the virtual platform, Kansas Chambers & Economic Development Directors, Kansas Government Agencies, Kansas SHRM, via social media and other employer lists. To promote the events to job seekers, thousands of emails are sent to job seekers registered on **KANSASWORKS**, the virtual platform, along with emails to Kansas Post-Secondary schools, JAG-KS, Kansas Libraries, Kansas Military installations, posting and social media postings. Press Releases are sent out for events and Kansas Department of Labor shares the job fair flyers with unemployment claimants. To connect with additional College students in Kansas and contiguous states, the job seeker flyers are posted on Handshake on multiple school accounts.

We have seen some decrease with attendance as some employers and job seekers prefer in-person events, but the virtual events give employers and job seekers another option for recruitment and job search.



Kansas Department of Commerce fulfills the responsibility of required activities mandated in WIOA Sections 129 and 134. In addition to this the Governor has utilized reserve funds to support projects aligned with our strategic goals and needs. These projects are designed to implement innovative programs and strategies to meet the needs of all employers in Kansas while effectively serving individuals with barriers to employment.

Governor's Reserve Funds are also used to fund staff who develop strategies for effectively serving identified populations with multiple barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, justice-involved job candidates and older workers.

### Opportunity Youth Program (NCCC)

During the report year, Commerce sub granted WIOA discretionary funds to Neosho County Community College to provide specialized, intensive services to Out-of-School youth who have serious barriers to employment. Participants will soon, or have already, aged out of Foster Care; lack a high school diploma; have not acquired the skills and tools needed for typical adult living such as a driver's license or basic banking; or other barriers. The project seeks to demonstrate that expansive, intensive delivery of one-on-one employment and training services and supports, results in increased employment for young adults with multiple barriers.

### WorkReady

The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is a nationally recognized certificate that lets Employers know a job candidate's skills before they even walk into the interview. Job seekers present their Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum Certificate to Employers as proof of skills in reading, locating information, and mathematics.

### Workforce Innovation Conference

The Annual Workforce Innovation Conference took place in October and was hosted by the Kansas Department of Commerce and Kansas Board Regents. Presentations and workshops were provided to enhance and improve workforce solutions in Kansas. Plus, the schedule included Local Area discussion groups that provided an opportunity for each local area to discuss take aways from the conference and share ideas that can be implemented in their Local Areas.

### Registered Apprenticeship

The Registered Apprenticeship training programs are available in 1,500 occupations across 170 industries found in businesses of all sizes and last from 1 – 5 years. Apprenticeship programs are for people of all ages who want to earn a salary while they learn, gaining skills and knowledge. These programs offer employers the opportunity to strengthen and build their workforce providing a high-quality talent pipeline. Registered Apprenticeship programs meet the needs of both employers and job seekers.



### KANSASWORKS.com

KANSASWORKS.com continues to adapt to the needs of Kansas employers and jobs seekers as well as expansion of programs. KANSASWORKS.com, hosted by America's JobLink Alliance (AJLA), expanded to include additional enrollments for new grants such as Pathway Home 2 and SAEI as relates to the case management modules of the system. Kansas continues to strive to make routine adjustments to the site to foster a welcoming appearance for all users.

### KANSASWORKS State Board Strategic Plan

Every two years the state board develops a new strategic plan to guide the focus, oversight, and investments of the KANSASWORKS State Board. Additional details can be found on page one of this document as well as on the KANSASWORKS State Board website.

[State Plans – KANSASWORKS STATE BOARD \(ksworksstateboard.org\)](https://ksworksstateboard.org)



### Work Based Learning (WBL) Intermediaries

Kansas Work Based Learning Project is a comprehensive approach that ensures Kansas students have equitable access to high quality work-based learning experiences designed to prepare each student for postsecondary, and workforce success, in high wage, high demand and critical need occupations of our state and regions. The WBL project includes an integrated partnership between The Kansas Department of Education, Kansas Department of Commerce, Kansas Board of Regents, and the Local Workforce Development Boards. There are five regional work-based learning intermediaries, one in each region, to connect education, business and industry, and economic development in each of the five workforce regions. Intermediaries act as a liaison and expand existing working relationships between education, business and industry, and economic development in the regions. Additionally, Intermediaries coordinate career exploration experiences in the identified career clusters for all students that may include job shadows, mock interviews, field trips, internships, and career mentoring.

| Measure                  | Quarterly Statewide Totals |       |       |        | Annual Totals |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|--------|---------------|
|                          | Q1                         | Q2    | Q3    | Q4     |               |
| Student Participation    | 4,653                      | 9,944 | 7,452 | 10,168 | 32,217        |
| School Districts Engaged | 41                         | 59    | 61    | 98     | 98*           |
| Schools Engaged          | 111                        | 151   | 155   | 219    | 219*          |
| Businesses Engaged       | 1,445                      | 1,390 | 1,450 | 1,784  | 6,069         |

### Framework for Growth Report

Kansas’ comprehensive economic development strategic plan, the, The Kansas Framework for Growth, is an aggressive strategy to align our state’s strengths with emerging trends across the global economy, while guiding economic development at state and local levels into the future.

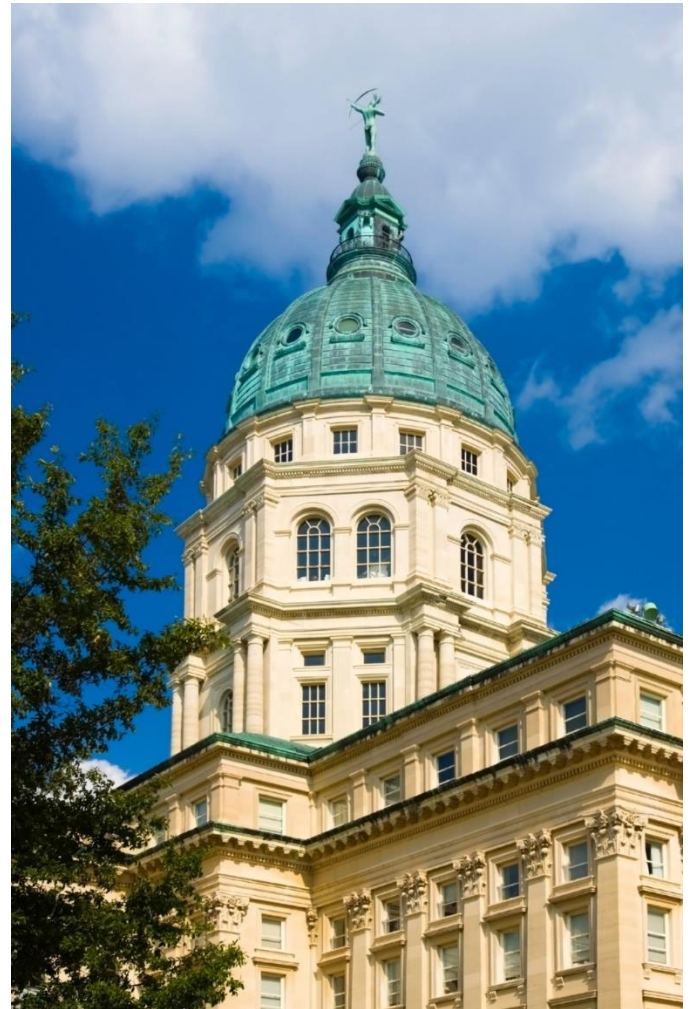
The Framework for Growth was created through data analysis and with input from Kansans statewide. Business and community leaders were engaged to offer suggestions and determine priorities for the Kansas economy, and through a virtual survey and town hall meetings across the state, thousands of Kansans came together to help create the final plan.

The Framework for Growth outlines specific approaches to help develop the state’s number one asset – its people. By focusing on talent and innovation, the Framework aims to build resiliency in the Kansas workforce and unlock the potential for new ideas to cultivate and develop into tomorrow’s prosperous businesses.

Some key initiatives outlined within Framework for Growth include a renewed emphasis on the following, among many others:

- Talent development and retention
- Harnessing the state’s colleges and universities for job and business creation
- Innovation as a driver of new business opportunity
- Community assets and regional approaches to economic development
- Policies to support long-term growth

[Kansas Framework for Growth | Kansas Department of Commerce \(kansascommerce.gov\)](https://www.kansascommerce.gov)



## **Data Collection**

Common exit is applied to participants enrolled in multiple programs but have not received qualifying services from any of the programs for a period of 90 days. Once 90 days has elapsed the participant will exit as of the last day of service.

Common exit is applied to the following partner programs:

- Title I - Adult
- Title I - Dislocated Worker
- Title I - Youth
- Title III - Wagner Peyser
- Trade Adjustment Act
- National Dislocated worker Grants
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- Reentry Employment Opportunities

Kansas' common exit policy, including ETA-funded partner programs, is included in the common exit policy. Common Exit Policy can be found via the link below.

Policy Number 5-32-00, Data Collection Link:  
[Policies and Procedures - KANSASWORKS STATE BOARD \(ksworksstateboard.org\)](https://ksworksstateboard.org/policies-and-procedures/)

## **Data Validation**

This past program year, Kansas significantly revised the Data Validation policy based on feedback and Technical Assistance from the Regional Office. The revised Data Validation policy (#5-33-00) is attached and was approved by the State Board on 05/01/24.

The steps for the Data Validation process are detailed in Data Validation Policy, on page 2. Data validation is done quarterly, and the schedule is included as the state policy. For sampling methodology, each sample is selected using a two-state stratified sample design. At the first state, a state is divided up into five sampling strata. The five strata correspond to the five local workforce development areas within the state. Within each of these strata, primary sampling units (PSUs) are formed and selected. The PSUs for the sample are defined as employment service offices. The PSUs are randomly selected using a probability-proportionate-to-size (PPS) procedure that gives a higher change of selection to PSUs having a larger number of files. Samples will be files from the current program year to include both active participants and participants that have exited during the same program year.

Commerce has developed a full sampling methodology and it can be found using the following link under Reference Materials:

<https://ksworksstateboard.org/policies-and-procedures/>

To document that missing and erroneous data has been corrected, the policy identifies the responsibilities and how the entities work together to correct data errors. The entities with responsibility for data correction are America's JobLink Alliance, the Workforce Services Unit, Commerce Regulatory Compliance, and local area and program managers.

Error rates are evaluated two different ways. First, a review is done of each program across the entire state. For instance, the adult sample is reviewed and see how many errors there are in the file compared to how many values are entered. Second, a review is done at the local area level and the error rate calculated for each local area for all programs combined. Errors rates are compared to overall values in the samples for each local area. Reviews are done through the programs at the local area level and noted if any error rates go above 2%. The state threshold for errors is 2%.

For follow-up training - If error rates trends go above 2% in any program year, a meeting is scheduled with Training and Technical Assistance staff to describe the issues found. Training and Technical Assistance staff then follow up local area and program managers to schedule training accordingly.

Data validation records are maintained consistently with State Policy #5-13-00 to comply with federal records retention policy.

Kansas has an approach and ongoing effort to ensure Kansas data is accurate and has the highest data integrity possible. Commerce staff regularly reviews Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) files and Quarterly Performance Reports (QPR) before submission. Electronic edit checks are performed quarterly, in advance of submitting reports to DOL. Electronic edit checks include checking for errors, missing data, out-of-range values and anomalies. This approach to regularly review the quality of reported program data serves to ensure that Kansas reports quality data that is reliable and free from errors.

**Waivers**

ETA has approved for PY2024/PY2025, Kansas’ request to waive the requirement that the State expend 75 percent of Governor’s reserve youth funds on OSY.

In addition, ETA has approved for PY2024/PY2025, Kansas’ request to waive the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local youth formula funds on OSY. Kansas may lower the local youth funds expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY.

Similarly, on 09/28/23, ETA approved for PY2023, the Kansas’ request to waive the requirement that the State expend 75 percent of Governor’s reserve youth funds on out-of-school youth. Our Federal Project Officer clarified via email that the waiver does apply to local youth funds spent on direct services to youth.

As a result of this waiver, Kansas served 581 Youth during PY2023, an increase over the 553 Youth that Kansas served in PY2022.

Likewise, Kansas served 100 in-school youth during PY2023, also an increase over the 83 in-school youth Kansas served in PY2022.

Some local areas in Kansas are using the waiver to deepen their partnership with Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) – Kansas. The JAG-K representative at Wyandotte High School, in particular, maintains regular contact with the local area for referrals and sharing information on ISY. Other local areas are still continuing to emphasize and enroll mostly OSY, not utilizing the waiver.

Performance accountability outcomes for overall WIOA Youth have remained steady or increased for the majority of WIOA Youth performance indicators:

| Kansas Youth Performance Comparison |          |    |         |          |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----|---------|----------|
| Performance Indicator               | PY 2022  |    | PY 2023 |          |
| Youth Employment Q2                 | 78.2%    |    | 77.5%   | Steady   |
| Youth Employment Q4                 | 83.2%    |    | 73.6%   | Decline  |
| Median Earnings                     | \$ 4,526 | \$ | 5,306   | Increase |
| Credential Rate                     | 66.2%    |    | 59.4%   | Decline  |
| Measurable Skill Gains              | 54.1%    |    | 61.2%   | Increase |

The two performance measures that have seen a decline are the two measures that have the largest lag time in reporting. The reporting cohorts for both Youth Employment Q4 and Credential Attainment are looking at youth participants served from 1/1/2022 through 12/31/2022. Since our initial waiver request was

approved on 09/28/23, we would not expect this waiver to have an impact on Youth Employment Q4 and Credential Attainment to date.

Although not completely related solely to in-school youth, Kansas has evaluated the WIOA Youth program and looked at the effects supportive services and occupational skills training have had on the outcomes of Youth program participants. As one might expect, both supportive services and occupational skills training have a positive impact on youth. There is more information in the Studies for Research and Evaluation section of this Annual Report.

This waiver is having a positive impact on those at-risk youth who are in-school but need additional assistance from WIOA to stay in school and complete necessary education that will eventually lead to better career options in the future.

**State Workforce Challenges**

Over the last few years Kansas has seen a low unemployment rate which has hovered around 3.3% for the past year alone. Currently in **KANSASWORKS.com**, there are over 38,000 jobs. Employers consistently express concerns finding qualified workers in this environment. Kansas continues to look for new ways to upskill the existing workforce, while at the same time looking for underutilized labor pools within the State to meet the unmet labor needs of Kansas employers. Kansas is ready to meet this challenge of expanding the labor force so that our economy can continue the record growth and prosperity it has seen the past few years.

**Local Area Reports**

Promising practices, lessons learned, and success stories that focus on serving employers, communities, and individuals with barriers to employment, including information based on the state's evaluation and related research projects can be found in Attachment A. This discussion covers a broad range of at-risk and priority populations served, including out-of-school youth, low-income adults, dislocated workers, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals with limited language proficiency, individuals with disabilities, veterans, the long-term unemployed, and any other individuals with barriers to employment, or other populations the state may wish to discuss. See Attachment A for all Local Area Reports.



**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)  
Kansas Title I and Title III  
Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative  
Program Year 2023**

**ATTACHMENTS**

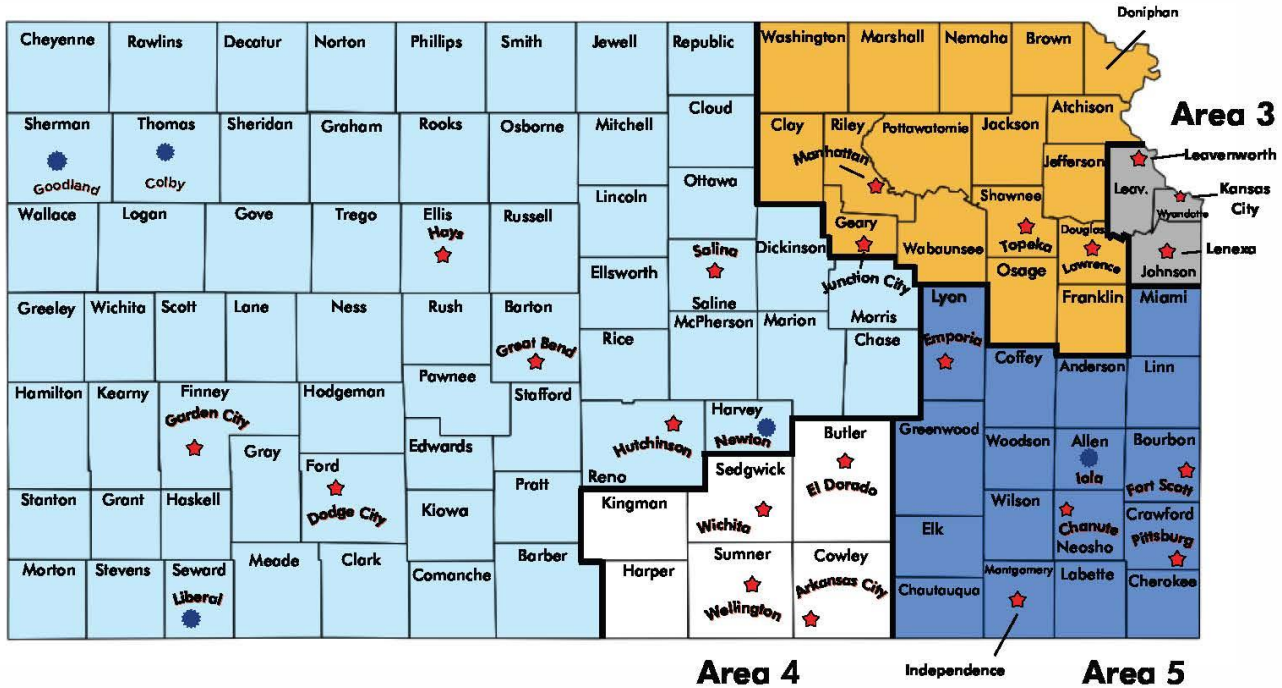
- A. LOCAL AREA OVERVIEW, SUCCESS STORIES AND PERFORMANCE
  - Local Area Kansas Map
  - Local Area I – KANSAS WORKFORCEONE
  - Local Area II – HEARTLAND WORKS, INC.
  - Local Area III -WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP
  - Local Area IV – WORKFORCE ALLIANCE OF SOUTH CENTRAL KANSAS
  - Local Area V – SOUTHEAST **KANSASWORKS**
- B. **KANSASWORKS** State Board Strategic Plan
- C. Effectiveness in Serving Employers
- D. Customer Satisfaction/Program Evaluation
- E. Statewide Activities
- F. Registered Apprenticeship
- G. Other State Program Services
- H. Success Stories and Testimonials
- I. Performance Measures, Data, and Analysis

Attachment A



Area 1

Area 2



| Kansas Workforce Centers  |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
|  | Full-Time Workforce Centers |
|  | Part-Time Workforce Centers |

# **Kansas WorkforceONE**

## **PY2023 Performance Narrative Report**

The PY2023 WIOA Title I Annual Report highlights Kansas WorkforceONE's achievements and efforts in serving the workforce needs of Local Area I, which extends across the 62 counties in Western Kansas. Throughout PY2023, WorkforceONE dedicated its resources to empower job seekers, provide vital services to business and industry, and to provide training in high-demand occupations.

### **Reaching Every Corner -**

In PY2023, Kansas WorkforceONE provided workforce services throughout the 62-county service area of Local Area I in central and western Kansas, ensuring that both job seekers and employers received tailored support. By partnering with local and regional resource providers, training providers, school districts, employers, and economic development organizations, Kansas WorkforceONE customized services and projects to meet the unique needs of each area.

### **Excellence in Performance –**

Driven by the mission of their Local Workforce Development Board, Kansas WorkforceONE once again exceeded all fifteen federal WIOA Titles I and III performance measures, validating their effectiveness in enabling job seekers to find stable, meaningful employment throughout their communities in central and western Kansas, by utilizing an array of job seeker and employer services, demand driven training opportunities, and strong partnerships with business and industry.

### **Strengthening Career Pathways –**

WorkforceONE employed a multitude of strategies to enhance career pathways, sector strategies, and Work-Based Learning opportunities within the region. Drawing from the wealth of knowledge provided by local businesses, industry experts, economic development organizations, and collaborative efforts with Local Area Partners, they have continually refined and updated their Local Area I Demand Occupation List to ensure that resources are utilized to train job seekers in the high demand, high wage positions available throughout the 62-county region.

By working closely with training providers, Kansas WorkforceONE continued to support short-term occupational skills pathways, on-the-job training opportunities, and registered apprenticeships - all aimed at arming job seekers with the skills necessary for self-sustaining employment. In doing so, they've created numerous training opportunities while nurturing direct partnerships with employers whose success is tied to their ability to employ well-trained individuals.

As a dedicated Workforce Development Board, we have long understood that the recruitment and training of youth within our communities are central to meeting the demands of our employers. Our WIOA Youth Program, as well as our Work-Based Learning partnership with the Kansas Department of Education, has paved the way for Kansas WorkforceONE to offer a wealth of opportunities for young individuals to cultivate and practice the skills necessary for successful entry into the workforce. This comprehensive approach encompasses an array of workshops, engaging speakers, work experiences, enriching job shadows, and opportunities to directly connect with area employers. This process combines an individual's



career aspirations with structured learning and genuine work experiences, all made possible through sustained partnerships with Kansas businesses and industries.

**Overcoming Barriers to Employment –**

Despite historically low unemployment numbers in Western Kansas, PY2023 once again focused on serving job seekers who encounter increasingly complex barriers to securing and maintaining employment. In PY2023, Kansas WorkforceONE served 308 participants through its Adult Program, with 76.30% of them in priority populations, which includes Basic Skills Deficiency, Low Income, and Public Assistance Recipients. To address these needs, Kansas WorkforceONE utilizes comprehensive case management techniques including motivational interviewing, integrated service teams, assistive technology, and services and support targeted to helping the whole person, improving their likelihood of maintaining employment. Additionally, Kansas WorkforceONE staff work closely with their partners to leverage programs, funding, and services, tailored to the needs of individuals, and providing a wraparound approach to co-serving customers. These partnerships include Vocational Rehabilitation, Pre-ETS, DCF, Ticket to Work, Adult Education, and the Kansas Department of Corrections, as well as a number of local and regional resource providers.

| Barriers to Employment (Adu/DW/Youth) | Basic Skills Deficiency | Low Income | Public Assistance Recipients | Justice Involved | Disability | Substance Abuse |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|
| % of PY2023 Enrollments               | 14.61%                  | 72.40%     | 27.27%                       | 29.43%           | 37.63%     | 24.58%          |

**Promising Practices – Staff and Partner Professional Development**

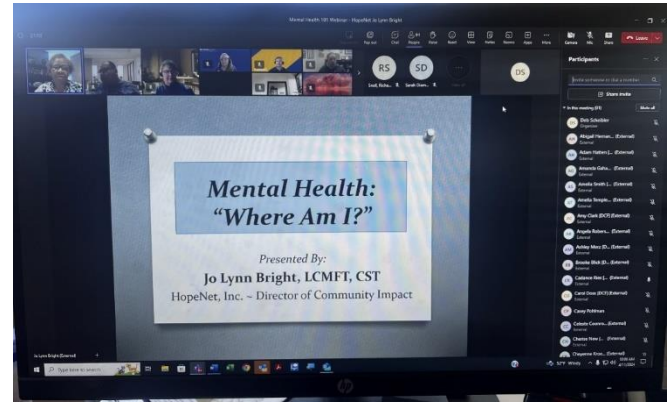
Kansas WorkforceONE is committed to staff development as a cornerstone of their mission to better serve job seekers, employers, and partners within the workforce system, recognizing that an empowered, well-trained staff is essential to meet the diverse needs of their community effectively.

For new Workforce Center Staff, they invested in comprehensive training, which included important topics such as Disability Awareness, Business Services, Mental Health First Aid, Motivational Interviewing, Intensive Case Management, as well as the opportunity to become a Certified Workforce Development Professional through the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals. These trainings equip staff with the knowledge and skills to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all clients, regardless of their unique circumstances.

This commitment to staff development not only ensures a high level of service for job seekers, employers, and partners but also reflects Kansas WorkforceONE's dedication to creating a supportive, informed, and responsive workforce system that can adapt to the evolving needs of all of those interacting with the workforce system.

Throughout PY2023, Kansas WorkforceONE collaborated with their One-Stop Partners to provide significant training opportunities to staff, partners, and resource providers alike, with attendance averaging more than 150 attendees. Some of these training opportunities included When Everyone Leads, presented to workforce center staff through the Kansas

Leadership Center. Staff and partners had the opportunity to expand their knowledge of mental health and mental illness with a series of webinars provided by HopeNet. Jo Lynn Bright with HopeNet presented “Mental Health 101” and “Compassionate Care: Serving those Struggling with Mental Health Challenges”. Additional in-person training focused on Disability Awareness was conducted by Kansas WorkforceONE as well as a Workforce System Overview and Orientation webinar.



Staff and partners also had the opportunity to grow their knowledge of how to leverage assistive technology and accommodations to better serve their customers through a webinar training opportunity provided by the Job Accommodations Network and Assistive Technology of Kansas. Catholic Charities conducted webinar training to expand staff knowledge of refugees in Kansas. Lastly, a virtual AI training allowed staff to better understand how AI impacts the workplace and the role it has in the changing landscape of workforce development.

**Partnership Success Story: FAST-Track**

Kansas WorkforceONE’s success is built on strong partnerships, and the collaboration with Hutchinson Community College is a shining example. Kansas WorkforceONE has partnered the last two years with Hutchinson Community College’s FAST-Track pre-apprenticeship program, which has provided approximately 100 young adults with hands-on training in Construction, Manufacturing, Auto Mechanics, and Auto Collision Students

| Industry                     | Employer                | Location             |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Construction                 | Prestressed Concrete    | Newton, KS           |
|                              | Wiens & Company         | Hutchinson, KS       |
|                              | Simpson Construction    | Wichita, KS          |
|                              | Kansas Electric         | Newton, KS           |
|                              | Woodwork Manufacturing  | Hutchinson, KS       |
|                              | Ward Davis Builders     | Hutchinson, KS       |
| Manufacturing                | Superior Boilers        | Hutchinson, KS       |
|                              | Bradbury                | Moundridge, KS       |
|                              | AGCO                    | Hesston, KS          |
|                              | Rawhide                 | Abilene, KS          |
|                              | Grasshopper             | Moundridge, KS       |
|                              | Westlake Pipe & Fitting | McPherson, KS        |
|                              | Collins Bus             | South Hutchinson, KS |
|                              | Haven Steel             | Haven, KS            |
|                              | Jackson Dairy           | Hutchinson, KS       |
| Auto Body and Auto Collision | Conklin                 | Hutchinson, KS       |
|                              | AGCO                    | Hesston, KS          |
|                              | Grasshopper             | Moundridge, KS       |
|                              | JZ Auto                 | Hutchinson, KS       |
|                              | The Garage              | Wichita, KS          |



Students received 120 hours of in-person training, earned college credits, and were paid stipends for their participation. This program opened doors for youth by offering not only skills development but also direct connections with local employers through on-site visits and interviews.

One standout participant, Logan, enrolled in the Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship, and with support from Kansas WorkforceONE, he became a registered youth apprentice at Bradbury. Partnerships like this have enabled WorkforceONE to offer tailored resources, such as materials, tools, and accommodations, ensuring youth in rural Kansas have the support they need to succeed. The program's success is a testament to the power of collaboration between education, workforce development, and local employers.





## Success Story: Siemens Gamesa Layoff Aversion Project

In early 2024, Kansas WorkforceONE stepped in to assist Siemens Gamesa during a challenging period that threatened to lay off 70 employees for three months due to a 10-week production gap caused by material delays. Initially engaged in supporting a smaller layoff, Kansas WorkforceONE quickly identified the larger issue and collaborated with Siemens leadership to develop an innovative Layoff Aversion Project. Instead of facing unemployment, Siemens employees were kept on board and engaged in a comprehensive training program that not only prevented the layoff but also enhanced their skills and employability. From safety and wellness training to cross-training in new areas, electrical testing, and crane operations, the employees received vital knowledge to improve their efficiency and adaptability. Siemens also introduced specialized trainings, such as Lead Safe and Active Shooter preparedness, further enhancing workplace safety and preparedness.



As a result of this collaborative effort, all 70 employees remained employed, strengthened their skills, and increased their value within the company. The Layoff Aversion Project was a resounding success, demonstrating Kansas WorkforceONE's commitment to supporting local businesses and workers through creative and forward-thinking solutions.

## Impact on Youth Workforce Development

Kansas WorkforceONE has consistently demonstrated leadership in youth workforce development by pioneering opportunities that prepare young individuals for their future careers. Through strategic partnerships, Kansas WorkforceONE has elevated the scope and quality of services available to youth, ensuring that every young person,



regardless of barriers, has access to the dignity and empowerment that comes from meaningful work. Kansas WorkforceONE's contributions have significantly enhanced the growth and reputation of youth workforce development in Kansas. For over 20 years, they have led the state in WIOA performance, consistently exceeding standards across all performance metrics,

including WIOA Youth Performance. In PY2023, Local Area I once again surpassed all performance standards, with

youth median wages more than doubling the negotiated targets, reaching \$8.817.26.

Kansas WorkforceONE's leadership in youth workforce development extends to supporting youth with disabilities. Their coordination of Paid Work Based Learning Experiences through Pre-ETS, along with collaboration with programs like My Career My Transition, Employment First, and the Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities, has set a new standard for equitable workforce services. Their role as the pilot local area for Kansas's Equitable Transition Model grant further distinguishes them, as they pioneer efforts to ensure youth with disabilities can transition into secure post-secondary training and employment plans.



### Success Story: Expanding Horizons Through Work-Based Learning

Kansas WorkforceONE has taken innovative strides to equip high school students across the 62 counties of Local Area I with invaluable Work-Based Learning opportunities. The program engages students through a variety of workshops, hands-on activities, and innovative tools. One key highlight is the use of



Transfr VR headsets, which provide students with immersive experiences of



various job duties across a wide range of occupations, helping them visualize and explore potential career paths. In addition to workshops, Kansas WorkforceONE partners with local schools and employers to arrange internships, giving students practical experience in their own communities. Building Bridges events have been a cornerstone of these efforts, where students and employers meet face-to-face, providing a vital link between education and the workforce. This collaboration allows students to learn about career opportunities firsthand and prepare for life after graduation.



Students also have access to virtual job shadowing through Pathful Explore and the opportunity to earn Conover Workplace Readiness Credentials, equipping them with credentialed soft skills essential for career success. Kansas WorkforceONE staff frequently hear positive feedback from teachers



about how engaged students remain even after workshops conclude. Whether it's mock interviews or interactive life-skill games, WorkforceONE's dedication to building relationships with students and schools has made a lasting impact, helping students take confident steps toward their future careers.



This comprehensive approach ensures students are not only prepared for the workforce but also inspired to pursue meaningful, sustainable careers in their communities.

### **Results**

During the 23-24 school year Kansas WorkforceONE was able to work with 1,708 students through our Work Base Learning Program involving 50 school districts and 96 schools within those districts. We were able to work with students setting up Job Shadows in their communities, working on resume and interviewing skills as well as career exploration opportunities. 72 Students were able to participate in mock interviews and 75 participated in company tours.





## Kansas WorkforceONE - Justice-Involved Services Highlights & Impacts

Program Overview: Kansas WorkforceONE provided extensive support to 262 justice-involved participants through multiple programs, including VR-Direct, **ReSpECTWORKS**, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker, and Apprenticeship programs. Participants came from diverse backgrounds, including community corrections, adult prisons, and referrals from Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselors. Services focused on both pre-release and post-release, helping address the challenges associated with employment and re-entry, including:

- Customized Resume
- Mock Interviews
- Soft Skills Training
- Relapse Prevention Planning
- Individualized Employment Plans
- Problem-Solving for Criminogenic Needs
- Intensive Case Management
- Job Development
- Employer Advocacy, and
- Occupational Skills Training
- Supportive Services
- On-the-Job Training
- Clothing/Uniform/Tools/Supplies for New Employment Readiness
- Integrated Service Teams
- VR-Direct's Customized
- Employment Strategies

### FY 2023 Recidivism & Risk Assessment Scores

| Metric  | Score/Percentage |
|---|------------------|
| Recidivism Rate (WIOA, VR-Direct, ReSpECTWORKS) | 9.91%            |
| Average LSIR Score (Risk Level)                 | 27.92            |
| Education/Employment Domain Score               | 5.48             |

## Pathway Home 2 (ReSpECTWORKS) Program Outcome

| Metric                                  | FY 2023   |
|---|---|
| Participants Enrolled                   | 168   |
| Participants Released                   | 160   |
| Employment Post-Release                 | 144 (90.10%)  |
| Supportive Services Provided            | Healthcare, transportation, emergency housing, car repairs, communication tools |
| Follow-Up Participants                  | 119   |
| Completed One-Year Follow-Up            | 63  |
| Employment Rate (2nd Quarter Post-Exit) | 83%   |
| Employment Rate (4th Quarter Post-Exit) | 71%   |
| Recidivism Rate                         | 4.96%   |

### Stories of Success



#### National Dislocated Worker Grant Success Story: Kansas WorkforceONE's Impactful Response to the MasterBrand Closure

In December 2022, when Kansas WorkforceONE received the unsettling news of the impending closure of MasterBrand, a major local employer, they embarked on a journey of swift and comprehensive support that has left an indelible mark on the dislocated workers and employers in their region. This National Dislocated Worker Grant allowed them to respond effectively and proactively, culminating in a remarkable 98% success rate for On-the-Job Training (OJT) placements in the past year.

#### Closure Notification and Initial Response (December 2022):

The journey began with the news of the closure on December 5, 2023. Kansas WorkforceONE sprang into action, organizing a job fair just four days later, attended by 97 regional employers. During the job fair, staff engaged with employers to discuss potential OJT opportunities for MasterBrand employees needing additional training.

On December 12, 2022, Rapid Response meetings were held with 165



impacted employees in attendance. Simultaneously, a robust media outreach campaign was launched to ensure that the affected employees were aware of the services and support available to them.

**Continuing Efforts to Provide Services to Displaced Workers and Employers:**

Kansas WorkforceONE's commitment did not stop at the initial response. They continued their efforts to determine eligibility and employment plans for MasterBrand's dislocated workers. This included the development of OJT opportunities with local employers, involving interviews and contract execution.

Regular contact was maintained with OJT participants and employers to monitor their progress. The organization identified some employees who needed Occupational Skills Training (OST) instead of OJT and provided basic career services that led to numerous placements without OJT. Furthermore, an outreach campaign targeted all MasterBrand employees to track job search results.

In the end, 28 Dislocated Workers were enrolled and established into OJT positions, and additional Rapid Response events were conducted to offer continuous support.

**The impact of Kansas WorkforceONE's efforts was notable and far-reaching:**

Kansas WorkforceONE demonstrated swift and effective responses through Rapid Response and employer services. They successfully organized a large-scale job fair, connecting numerous employers with impacted employees. They established OJT opportunities with multiple employers, an accomplishment made possible through the strong relationships that have been built and sustained with employers throughout Local Area I. Through their strong relationships and partnerships with businesses, economic development agencies, and community organizations, they provided crucial support to impacted individuals.

To date, a total of eleven companies have engaged in OJT opportunities with Kansas WorkforceONE, utilizing National Dislocated Worker Grant funds. Additionally, many employers were successfully matched with impacted employees through job placements. Leveraging local Dislocated Worker funds, Kansas WorkforceONE has supported staff, infrastructure, basic career services, and occupational skills training for MasterBrand employees following the closure.

Impressively, 27 out of the 28 OJT placements have seen successful completion. As the following quarter approaches, Kansas WorkforceONE plans to gather additional data to further support their exceptional performance, focusing on skill attainment, retention of employment, and wage increases.



Kansas WorkforceONE's dedication to its mission was also demonstrated in their performance metrics. During PY2022,

they exceeded all performance measures for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. The Dislocated Worker Median Earnings for the 2nd Quarter After Exit reached \$11,122.25, exceeding the standard by nearly \$1,500.

Kansas WorkforceONE's targeted response to the MasterBrand closure serves as a shining example of their commitment to supporting their community's dislocated workers and employers. Their proactive approach and adaptability have not only helped individuals regain employment but have also contributed to the resilience and strength of the local workforce. During PY2023, Area I staff spent time providing thorough follow-up services to both those impacted from the layoff, as well as employers, both those who participated in OJTs, as well as those who continue to have needs for a skilled workforce, ensuring that opportunities exist for both job seeker and employer customers.

### **Success Story: Equipping Participants for Success with United Healthcare Grant**

In partnership with United Healthcare, Kansas WorkforceONE utilized grant funds to purchase 25 laptops and backpacks to support WIOA participants preparing for employment. So far, eight laptops have been distributed to individuals co-enrolled in the WIOA Title IB Adult/Youth Programs and Salina Adult Education's Partners 4 Success program. This 12-week, 200-hour program provided essential life skills training, including resume and application preparation, mock interviews, workshops on positive employment habits, and mental and physical health support.

Upon completion of the program, participants continued to receive support through On-the-Job Training or Adult and Youth Work Experience opportunities provided by the WIOA Title I program. These laptops are critical tools in helping participants successfully transition from training to employment, equipping them with the technology needed to thrive in today's job market. This initiative highlights Kansas WorkforceONE's dedication to empowering individuals with the skills and resources needed to achieve long-term success in the workforce.



### **Success Story: Darby's Journey Towards Independence**

Darby, a lifelong resident of Garden City, geared up for her senior year in high school with a bright future ahead. Referred to Kansas WorkforceONE's In-School Youth program through the Department for Children and Family's Pre-ETS program, Darby was given the opportunity for a Paid Work-Based Learning Experience. Kansas WorkforceONE, in collaboration with DCF and Rehabilitation Services, connected Darby with her Employment Specialist to identify her interests, prepare for employment through soft skills training, and find a work experience that aligned with her goals. An existing partnership with Downtown Vision provided a seamless transition to Darby's first job experience, where she



eagerly contributed and built valuable connections with the community.

Darby's enthusiasm for her role at Downtown Vision helped her develop essential social and professional skills. Despite her visual impairment, she remained determined to demonstrate her abilities and make a positive impact. Darby's



experience deepened her connection with her hometown and empowered her to pursue her future goal of joining a religious community. "I want people to know that being blind doesn't define me. I was more than willing to do what I needed to help people," she shared confidently.

Darby's journey highlights Kansas

WorkforceONE's dedication to helping youth gain the skills and experiences needed to thrive in their communities and future careers.

### **Mark's Road to Independence**

Mark, a 56-year-old, had been out of the workforce and on disability for several years. Determined to change his life, Mark, who is also on probation, sought help to re-enter the workforce as a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) driver—a career he had previously left behind to raise his family. Kansas WorkforceONE staff enrolled him in the WIOA Adult Program and provided the funding for his CDL training.

In September 2023, Mark passed his CDL exam and secured employment in Hutchinson. His new career path has not only given him financial independence but also a renewed sense of purpose.

### **Resilience and Transformation in Dodge City**

One of Kansas WorkforceONE's justice-involved participants faced significant barriers to employment after being released from Stockton Correctional Facility. He had struggled with substance abuse and lacked community support and stable housing. However, with assistance from the Respect Works Grant Program, he secured a place at an Oxford House in Dodge City and obtained employment at National Beef.

As of July 2024, he remains gainfully employed, sober, and actively contributing to his Oxford House, even serving as the house president. His journey demonstrates the power of comprehensive support and determination in overcoming adversity.

### **Becky's Career Shift**

After years in the food and hospitality industry, Becky faced midlife career challenges, compounded by relocation and health changes. With the help of Kansas WorkforceONE, Becky revamped her resume and developed a job search

strategy tailored to her new goals. She transitioned to a less physically demanding role, successfully securing employment while also setting long-term educational goals to further her career. This change has provided her with a sustainable income and the stability she needed during a time of uncertainty.

### **A.J.'s Path to Success**

A.J., a young man with a troubled past and multiple felony charges, struggled to find employment and direction. With the help of Kansas WorkforceONE's WIOA Title I Youth Program, A.J. participated in a Work Experience program that introduced him to the maintenance field. Through consistent support from WorkforceONE staff, he not only completed his work experience but also secured a full-time position with benefits at The Cedars. A.J. is now working toward earning his GED and saving for his own apartment.

### **From Recovery to Triumph**

A participant in Kansas WorkforceONE's RETAINWORKS program faced the challenge of finding new employment after undergoing surgery. Despite physical limitations, the participant worked closely with her employment coordinator to prepare for her job search. Kansas WorkforceONE provided essential resources, including professional clothing and resume development, enabling her to confidently attend job interviews.

She successfully secured employment and, thanks to her determination and the ongoing support from WorkforceONE, is thriving in her new role.

### **Stay Connected!**

Kansas WorkforceONE continues to transform lives through tailored employment services and innovative programs. For more updates on how we're making an impact, visit [www.kansasworkforceone.org](http://www.kansasworkforceone.org).



## LOCAL AREA II-HEARTLAND WORKS, INC. PROGRAM YEAR 2023 ANNUAL REPORT NARRATIVE



Heartland Works, Inc. (HWI) oversees the workforce development system in a seventeen- county area in northeast Kansas, also known as Local Area II (LAII). HWI coordinates and provides workforce development services across the area, serving both employers and job seekers. Services are provided by a network of partners focused on the economic development of businesses and workers in the area. LAII Workforce Centers (WFCs) are in Junction City, Lawrence, Manhattan, and Topeka with outreach services provided throughout the area.



In PY2023, over 13,000 customer visits (either walk-in or virtual) occurred, which was an increase over PY2022 numbers. In addition, concerted efforts were made to increase the number of outreach efforts in our area communities, taking Workforce Center services to the public in their communities.

The Mobile Workforce Center provided a comprehensive range of employment, reemployment, and employer services to support those offered by local area staff in Northeast Kansas. In the absence of traditional "brick-and-mortar" centers, the Mobile Workforce Center is deployed to areas where services are needed. Its uses include, but are not limited to, responding to national and state disasters, rapid response events, trade shows, job fairs, extending workforce development services to rural communities, and attending employer organization meetings to promote its benefits. During PY2023, the Mobile Workforce Center traveled over 15,000 miles, ensuring that Kansans in these towns and communities had access to résumé creation, job search assistance, interview preparation, and opportunities to apply for jobs close to their homes.

**KANSASWORKS-Northeast** Staff worked diligently to outreach to employers and job seekers to provide workforce development services. During the PY2023 program year, the LAII WFCs hosted over 126 in-person hiring events with 1,675 job seekers in attendance at those events. These hiring events offered job opportunities for veterans, non-transitioning service members, military spouses, and non-veteran customers.





## Good Year Hiring Events and Testing – KANSASWORKS-Topeka

Goodyear in partnership with **KANSASWORKS- Topeka** initiated “Ramsay Testing” as part of their application process. The proctored test is approximately 80 minutes, with 240 applicants being administered a variety of modules such as mechanics, pipefitting, machinist, HVAC, and powerhouse. In addition, Goodyear and the **KANSASWORKS-Topeka** team assisted with walk-in customers throughout each successful event.



## Fort Riley & KANSASWORKS-Junction City Army Community Service (ACS) Career Fair



DVOP Karl Kandt, from **KANSASWORKS- Junction City**, attended the Army Community Service (ACS) Job Fair hosted by the Employment Readiness Program on Fort Riley along with twelve other employers. This job fair was open to Military Spouses and community members, and they offered on the spot interview opportunities with employers. Karl assisted in reviewing their resumes and informed patrons of the services that **KANSASWORKS** provides.



Karl showcasing flyers of the up-coming Virtual Job Fair and the open positions the **KANSASWORKS-Junction City** office has, he visited with 18 spouses, civilians, and transitioning service members and they all requested follow-up services.





## **Junction City Patriot Day Career Fair – KANSASWORKS-Junction City**

Junction City Chamber of Commerce in partnership with **KANSASWORKS-Junction City** hosted the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Patriot's Day Career Fair at the Junction City Municipal Building. 52 Employers were in attendance with 162 participants from the local area.



## **Quarterly Mini-Job Fairs – KANSASWORKS-Topeka and KANSASWORKS-Lawrence**

During PY2023, Topeka and Lawrence held quarterly mini job fairs, featuring over thirty employers, and attracting more than 150 attendees. These events were focused on specific occupations and qualifications needed by local companies.



## **Hiring Our Heroes Skill Bridge Exploration Career Fair**

**KANSASWORKS-Junction City**, in collaboration with the Hiring Our Heroes organization, held a Job Success Workshop alongside the event. The event featured seventy local and regional employers and attracted 270 attendees.

## FRITO-LAY Hiring Event

**KANSASWORKS-Topeka** hosted a semi-annual hiring event in collaboration with Frito-Lay, offering a variety of open positions. To promote the event, **KANSASWORKS Topeka** produced several infomercials and shared them across social media platforms, along with radio advertisements. On the day of the event, 274 applicants applied for the available positions at the company.



## Fort Riley Career Summit -KANSASWORKS-Junction City and KANSASWORKS-Manhattan

**KANSASWORKS-Junction City** and **KANSASWORKS-Manhattan** Staff attended the Manufacturing Career Fair in Fort Riley on June 11th at the Riley Conference Center.

Staff worked the outreach table and connected with several transitioning service members, veterans, and spouses about Workforce Center services in training and employment.

Seventy local and regional employers and 318 attendees were also presented with information on employer services available through our local Workforce Centers.



## Community Partnership – KANSASWORKS Topeka

**KANSASWORKS Topeka** staff, in collaboration with GoTopeka and other non-profit organizations, were recognized for their support of the Ukrainian refugee population. The team helped over fifteen refugees with resumes, cover letters, and job applications for local employment.



## **Jobs for American Graduates (JAG-K)**

Staff from the **KANSASWORKS**-Junction City office had the opportunity to teach and mentor our states youth in resume writing and interviewing skills at the HD Kerns Innovations Opportunity Center in Junction City currently going through the Jobs for American Graduates in Kansas (JAG-K) program. With over thirty students in attendance, they successfully created a **KANSASWORKS** account that allowed them to build their resume, look for employment, and use Big Interview to practice showcasing their skills for current and future employers. Ranging from Freshman to Seniors the students are all at different stages in

looking for employment and gained valuable experience and skills to help them be successful adults when the time comes for them to navigate the workforce.



## **Mobile Workforce Center (Leavenworth Disciplinary Barracks) Job Success Workshop**

The **KANSASWORKS** Mobile Center Manager launched a new program at the Fort Leavenworth Correctional Facility/Disciplinary Barracks aimed at equipping incarcerated soldiers with essential job- ready skills to help them secure employment post-release. The program's first Job Success Workshop saw fourteen soldiers participate, divided into three groups of six or fewer. After completing the workshop, all groups were escorted to the **KANSASWORKS** Mobile Center, where they created profiles on **KANSASWORKS.com**.

During the workshop, the soldiers were instructed on how to compile a resume, including relevant work history and other essential details. Once completed, their resumes were uploaded to their **KANSASWORKS** accounts. Additionally, staff provided a demonstration of the platform, highlighting features such as job searching and labor market data for local and regional employment opportunities. Given the success of this collaboration, the workshop will continue, with the next session on a quarterly basis.

### **Heroes Make America Partnership:**

Local Area II continued its successful collaboration with Ft. Riley’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP), the Manufacturing Institute, National Association of Manufacturers, Kansas State University, and Washburn Institute of Technology, enrolling sixty-two new transitioning soldiers into the HMA program. Upon completing the program, participants acquired the skills and certifications required to pursue careers in the manufacturing industry. Additionally, they had the opportunity to tour and interview with various manufacturing companies.

### **Kansas Employment Exploration Program (KEEP):**

Through our continued partnership with Ft. Riley Army along with area Chamber of Commerce, the KEEP program is designed to introduce transitioning soldiers and their families to local employers, city leaders, local schools, community members and workforce centers to learn about job opportunities, housing, entertainment, schools in the respective areas. The goal is to show soldiers the opportunities and quality of life that they can have in Kansas.

**Junction City/Manhattan** – A bus tour of forty-six transitioning soldiers and their families, **KANSASWORKS**-Junction City, and the Junction City Chamber Military Council. The experience included a panel discussion with the Chamber, eight local employers and community partners in the area to discuss job opportunities, salaries, and the quality-of-life options available in the community



### **LAI Sector Strategies & Career Pathways:**

The LAII Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program utilizes funded work experiences, combining academic and occupational learning, to help youth research careers, identify pathways of interest, learn in-demand work skills, and develop work-related references for future career endeavors. In PY2023, 64 WIOA youth participated in paid work experiences at 24 different worksites.

Youth gained experience in a variety of occupations while not only earning a wage and developing excellent work references, but also learned about a variety of careers and the steps needed to develop progressive skills which promote movement along the career pathway.

HWI WIOA Employment & Training Specialists (ETs) continued their strong partnership with the Topeka Electrical Joint Apprenticeship (JATC) training program in PY2023. WIOA Adult funding was utilized to help offset the apprentices’ costs of books/reference materials/curriculum for their first year of a five-year electrician apprenticeship. This partnership has existed for many years. In PY2023, twenty-two apprentices were enrolled in WIOA and received funding to support the first year of their apprenticeship training. Of those twenty-two apprentices, nineteen completed their first year successfully and entered their second year of apprenticeship with a wage increase.



In PY2023, WIOA Title I training funds were invested across several sectors/industries with a total of 272 individuals receiving training assistance. Training participation across the sectors:

| ONET Job Family Code | ONET Job Family Title                | # of Individuals Trained |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 15                   | Computer & Mathematical              | 4                        |
| 29                   | Healthcare Practitioners & Technical | 57                       |
| 31                   | Healthcare Support                   | 28                       |
| 43                   | Office & Administrative Support      | 14                       |
| 47                   | Construction/Extraction              | 53                       |
| 49                   | Installation, Maintenance & Repair   | 11                       |
| 51                   | Production                           | 74                       |
| 53                   | Transportation & Materials Moving    | 31                       |

**LAII Work-Based Learning Activities:**

Local Area II continues to grow and see success in our Work-Based Learning (WBL) program. WBL is a set of instructional strategies that help businesses and schools provide career learning experiences for students. The WBL program builds student awareness of potential careers, facilitates student exploration of career opportunities, and helps students prepare for careers.

This last year our Work-Based Learning Intermediaries worked with thirty-one schools within twenty-seven districts in our local northeast Kansas area. WBL staff engaged with over five thousand students for career exploration.

A particular success this year was the Mock Interview Day that was held in the far Northeast counties of our local area. Staff worked with three schools in the area and held Mock Interviews for ninety-four junior and senior students. To prepare students for the mock interviews, WBL staff facilitated a variety of job readiness workshops that included Leveraging Your Agilities.

Agilities encompass the work skills applicable across all professions and reflect a blend of students' strengths and interests. Understanding this allows students to recognize their value to employers and kickstart their careers. Resume and Job Readiness workshops were also held.

All participants completed a Pre-Interview Questionnaire that gathered information on their desired occupation, employer details, whether they were interviewing for a current or future job, and the education and experience required for that position. The students expressed how this helped them be better prepared for the interview. Students had time after the Mock Interview to receive feedback for further development along with recognition of the great interview they had.

The students and teachers shared how much they are looking forward to this again next year.

## **ReSpECTWORKS:**

**ReSpECTWORKS** is a program designed to provide eligible, justice-involved individuals (residing in Kansas state correctional facilities) releasing to our 17-county area to work with LAII Workforce Centers (WFC) pre and post release and continue services after release.

The intensive case management services of this program help participants become job ready by teaching foundational skills in a variety of ways to include, needs assessment, career exploration, resume building, assistance with job applications and recommendations, mock interviews, job search strategies, occupational training that leads to industry-recognized credentials to help them obtain sustainable positions. In a partnership with the US Department of Corrections, LAII has enrolled and served 91 participants in this program since its implementation in 2022. 85% of enrolled participants have obtained employment.

Participants can begin building relationships and networks by meeting in person or virtually in facility. Staff can determine individual needs and begin developing Individual Employment Plans to break down barriers for gaining meaningful employment in local industry.

Through the workforce centers connection to employers in the participants returning to communities, we have also been able to work with them on how to talk to employers about their strengths that match the position they are interviewing for as well as how to talk to them about their barrier due to their justice involved situation. Staff provide direct linkage to other social

service agencies for additional support. Staff provides employer advocacy to promote the skills and qualified participants with employers as well as discuss programs such as Federal Bonding and Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) to help both the employer and participant in securing employment.

## **RETAINWORKS:**

LAII is a proud partner in the **RETAINWORKS** initiative, a federally funded initiative exploring stay-at-work/return-to-work (SAW/RTW) strategies for injured or ill workers. The program is a blended partnership of healthcare and workforce system professionals working together to offer collaborative case management to the shared customer by implementing early intervention strategies with the goal of improving their SAW/RTW outcomes and returning them to productive work as soon as medically possible. The LAII Workforce System's role in **RETAINWORKS** is to assist the participant in setting employment goals and succeeding on the job once they return. If the participant needs to return to a different position, they may be able to help the participant get training to help them transition smoothly. The coordinator will also work collaboratively to help the participant, and their employer implement any accommodations they may need to effectively transition back to work, or to a new position. This grant is part of a federal evaluation study and as such has a random assignment component with some applicants being assigned to a treatment group and others being assigned to a control group. Since **RETAIN** enrollments began in LAII in 2022, the area has processed 466 enrollments for the grant, 167 in Control and 299 in Treatment. Control group members were provided information about the services available

through the workforce system and treatment group members entered one-on-one RETAINWORKS grant activities with KANSASWORKS-Northeast Staff.

### **LAIH CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORIES:**

#### **Rolando – WIOA Dislocated Worker**

The client was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. The client learned about the Heroes MAKE America program through the Career Skills program at Fort Riley. The client was interested in the program as it provided education, training and certification relating to maintenance, production management and a variety of other positions of interest to the client which were also occupations in demand in the Local Area. Barriers to the client included his highest education was a high school diploma, and he had received notice of his separation of employment in the military. The client lacked the education, training, and experience to enter/advance in the manufacturing or production field without WIOA assistance. The client was enrolled in the Heroes MAKE America Program Certified Production Technician (taught through Washburn Institute of Technology) and successfully completed the program in December 2023. The client accepted a Maintenance Supervisor position and started working full- time in February 2024 earning a salary of \$85,000/year. The client learned about the company through both the Heroes MAKE America program and the KANSASWORKS-Junction City office.

#### **Diego – WIOA Dislocated Worker**

The client was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. The client was a military spouse and had also received notification of their impending separation from military employment. Their highest educational attainment at enrollment was a high school diploma. In addition, he lacked the education, training, and experience to transition to high in demand work in production or manufacturing without WIOA assistance. The client learned about the Heroes MAKE America program through the Career Skills program at Fort Riley. The client was interested in the program because it provided education, training and certification relating to maintenance, production management and a variety of other positions of interest to the client. These positions are connected to demand occupations in the Local Area. The client was enrolled in the Heroes MAKE America program. During one of the monthly updates the client stated, “I am thoroughly enjoying the program, learning about the production industry while making valuable connections that boost my confidence in transitioning my career.” The client completed the program and obtained his Certified Production Technician certificate from Washburn Institute of Technology in December 2023. The client accepted the position as a Restaurant Consultant where he manages a several restaurants overseeing logistics and ordering of supplies. The client started working in February 2024, earning \$62,000/year.

#### **Breaonica – WIOA Adult**

Breaonica is a single parent of two young children and has faced many challenges as she worked to provide for her family. The barrier which brought her the most worry was knowing she needed a better income with adequate hours to provide for her and her children. She worried constantly about how she would provide for her family. Breaonica knew she



wanted to attend a training program that could help further her current career, but worried about the cost of attending school. She knew it would take great effort to coordinate the care of her children, continue at her current employment, and balance school. Knowing all of this would add to her many challenges, but she was ready to face any hurdle. Breanica was working a part-time job as a Certified Nurse Aide at a home health aide agency. She has been working in the home healthcare field for many years and was ready to expand her knowledge and become a Certified Medication Aide. She believes by earning a CMA certificate she would be able to increase her skills and income. She was very driven to create a better life for herself and her children. She was encouraged by her family to pursue her dream and find out how she might achieve her goal of better pay and a stable career to support her family. She learned through the **KANSASWORKS-Topeka** office that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act might be able to help her. The day the Employment and Training Specialist (ETS) met with Breanica she was excited and worried. She was hopeful that WIOA could help her. After meeting with the ETS, Breanica learned that she would be a great candidate for the program. Breanica enrolled in Neosho County Community College CMA class and excelled in her education. She was very determined to finish the course and add her newly learned skills to her current employment. Breanica continued working at her part-time job while attending school and taking care of her family. She worked very hard studying, attending class, and attending the required hours needed in the labs /clinical portion of her education. She studied every day and took advantage of the support her instructor provided during class and fellow students provided outside of class. She called her case manager to keep the ETS informed of her successes and challenges. Breanica came back to the **KANSASWORKS-Topeka** office to speak with her case manager. She wanted to tell the ETS the great news in person. She passed the course! After receiving her certification Breanica was offered a raise in her salary and was given more working hours. Her goal of completing training and getting better opportunities to earn more income and work hours was achieved. Through her success completing the program and learning new skills, she began to think bigger. A greater passion was ignited within her. She realized the healthcare field was interesting, and she wanted to continue working in the healthcare field. She reached out to her WIOA ETS and talked about the next steps in furthering her career goals. Breanica decided she would find a way to pursue the career path of a licensed practical nurse. She plans to attend an LPN program in Spring 2025.

### **Jessica – ReEmployment Program**

Jessica first visited the **KANSASWORKS-Junction City** office in April 2024, with Reemployment Navigator staff, completing all intake documentation that indicated three barriers (unemployment, Child Care and Language) she needed assistance of returning to the workforce. Staff assisted Jessica with translation from English to Spanish. Staff helped Jessica navigate **KANSASWORKS.com** utilizing all the tools provided through the system. With the help of her Navigator, Jessica created a functional résumé based on her knowledge, skills and abilities of her last positions then uploaded her résumé into **KANSASWORKS**.

Once that was completed, they worked together on job searching skills, and how to navigate the system for employment. Over the next few weeks, Jessica came back to the Workforce Center, continuing to work with staff. Finally, Jessica announced that she had accepted a job with a hospital employed as a full-time Cafeteria Cook earning \$17.00 per hour. Jessica was very pleased that her she received employment assistance, referred to an English as a Second Language (ESL) organization, as well as being employed near her child's day care center.

### **John -Jobs for Veteran State Grant (JVSG)**

John was a Transitioning Service Member that was retiring from the Army who came into the **KANSASWORKS**-Manhattan office to seek assistance with his transition. He filed a pre-separation VA Claim and needed to avoid crawling and lifting heavy items overhead. He had been an Electronic Warfare Systems Maintainer and he was not sure how those skills would translate into the civilian job market. He wanted to stay in the local area and have stability for his spouse's employment and their child's schooling.

The Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) consultant conducted a comprehensive assessment with John and learned that he had transferrable computer skills and would find the best matches for his job criteria in federal contracting jobs. DVOP suggested a Career Skills Program internship, but he did not feel that he had enough time left to complete one. DVOP identified several free training courses he could complete to enhance his certifications. DVOP gave him feedback on his résumé and sent him a federal résumé template, worked with him on interview preparation and provided a range of pre-retirement planning resources. DVOP conducted a job survey to find job matches for his skills to identify specific companies and opportunities that were a match for his criteria. DVOP made suggestions for companies and industries to watch for openings that will have the types of work he seeks. Over the next several months, when DVOP saw something that was a job match, she sent it to him. In early October, DVOP saw a Special Security Technician for a Federal Contractor and sent it to him. He applied immediately as his resume with military experience was a great match for it. John let DVOP know that he had interviewed and accepted an offer as a Special Security Technician on Fort Riley at a salary of \$99,000/yr. He was extremely glad to find a local position without physically intensive requirements that will use the expertise he gained in security and intelligence environments and will pay him \$33K over his goal.

### **Cheri – Wagner-Peyser**

Cheri first made her visit to the **KANSASWORKS**-Topeka office, where her Workforce Services Specialist met with her to conduct an Initial Needs Assessment. This helped identify what services she needed to re-enter the workforce. Staff helped Cheri register with **KANSASWORKS** and create her job seeker account, creating and uploading her resume. They worked together on job searching activities. Staff referred Cheri to several opportunities, and she began submitting applications. On a subsequent visit to the Workforce Center, staff provided additional job leads. The next week she told WP and the entire workforce center that she had accepted a job working full time in Housekeeping earning \$15.00/hr.

### **Jewell - ReEmployment Program/Wagner-Peyser**

A local employer contacted the **KANSASWORKS**-Junction City office requesting a resume match for candidates who could qualify for a Range Technician I position with their company. WP staff had recently worked with Jewell (a veteran) on RESEA services for his unemployment and checked his resume before they contacted him to see if he would be interested in this position.

Staff then sent the veteran's resume to the employer, and he asked her to let the candidate know to apply on the company's website. After a few weeks, the employer informed the WP staff, that they indeed hired the veteran that was referred for the Range Technician I position, earning \$26.23/hr.

### **Shelly- ReEmployment Program/Older Kansas Experience Program (OKEP)**

Shelly an RESEA client met with ReEmployment Navigator Emily, and during Shelly's first appointment she explained that her lack of experience and confidence could hinder her from obtaining meaningful employment. The Reemployment Navigator referred Shelly to the Older Kansas Experienced Worker Program (OKEP) where the team started working together, assisting Shelly in her employment goals. During those meetings Shelly indicated she had worked in the food industry for several years and was very apprehensive in that occupation. However, she also mentioned she had worked as a Pharmacy Tech and was eager to pursue that occupation again.

The team provided career coaching and customized resume assistance Shelly's self-confidence was boosted and within two weeks of the OKEP program, Shelly had begun to overcome her barriers. The team focused on Shelly's needs and wants and reached out to a local employer promoting Shelly's years of experience as a certified Pharmacy Technician.

Based on Gabrielle's interaction with the employer and advocating for Shelly, she was offered a position earning \$13.00 per hour and working 40 hours a week which will not interfere with Social Security benefits stipend.

### **Jeff – (justice-involved) Wagner-Peyser services**

Jeff a justice-involved customer visited the **KANSASWORKS**-Topeka office, indicating he was recently released from a correctional facility after serving six years. He shared that he had a great deal of professional experience and many skills. WP staff provided resume review, customized resume assistance, and several referrals to various employers in our community that are welcoming to justice involved individuals.

After much perseverance, Jeff informed staff that he had been hired by a production facility in the Lawrence area, as a Tool Technician, earning \$23.65 per hour.

### **Kevin (Transitioning Service Member) DVOP and Wagner-Peyser Services**

Kevin a Transitioning Service Member who was referred to the **KANSASWORKS**-Junction City office by a TAP counselor. He was due to exit the military and on base housing in 2 days, had no savings, was late on phone/internet bills and no job lined up. He and his wife wanted to remain in the local area. Kevin was seeking at least \$18/hr. to build up some funds to be able to afford his first month's rent and deposit while staying with some friends.

DVOP conducted a comprehensive assessment and recognized the urgency of Kevin's job search and worked on a tailored resume for diesel mechanic roles and one for a machine operator that day with him. The DVOP staff referred him to some community resources to support his immediate housing needs. DVOP staff suggested nine positions that he could apply for within a 20-mile radius that would pay at least \$18/hr. and encouraged him to apply to all of them. Staff also suggested Kevin come to a local employer hiring fair occurring that week. Kevin did come and had an on-the-spot interview. DVOP followed up with Kevin the following week and checked in on his progress as well as sending additional referrals to employment. Ten days after initially coming into the center, Kevin had interviewed with another employer and had a second interview with the employer he spoke with at the job fair. DVOP also sent a list of entry-level remote positions for

his spouse as they have one vehicle.

Kevin let DVOP know that he started working as a second shift maintenance technician at a wage of \$21/hr. Later, he got an offer from another employer as a Maintenance Technician, which he accepted, at a wage of \$24.10/hr. He also let DVOP know that a third company had contacted him for an interview. He was very relieved to get to work and it was a great confidence boost to get multiple interviews and two offers.

### **Manolo (bi-lingual services) Wagner-Peyser Services**

In early Manolo entered the KANSASWORKS-Topeka office seeking employment opportunities in the Topeka area. As Spanish as Manolo's primary language, he expressed concerns about potential language barriers, particularly in securing a new position. After reviewing his qualifications, WP staff assisted Manolo in completing his application and prepared him for an interview with a local employer.

After his visit to the center and submitting his application, Manolo contacted staff, informing them that after his interview he had been successfully hired, with a competitive hourly wage of \$16.50.

### **June – WIOA Youth**

June applied to the Arts Train program at Van Go in November 2022, eager to make it her first- ever job. In her interview, she shared her ambitious goals of getting into college and learning how to navigate the workforce, although she often felt unsure of her place in the working world. June faced significant challenges, including mental health struggles, difficult family relationships, transportation issues, and housing instability.

Throughout her work experience in the Arts Train program, June regularly met with the on-site social worker to develop strategies for overcoming these barriers. Together, they created a plan to help her achieve her goal of enrolling in college. June also completed 32 hours of soft-skills employment training, which provided her with a strong foundation for future opportunities.

Her performance at Van Go was exceptional, earning her merit-based bonuses, pay increases, and additional leadership responsibilities. As her confidence grew, June successfully enrolled in classes at Johnson County Community College. With continued support, she secured employment as a paraeducator within the school system, all while managing her online classes.

The skills she developed at Van Go continue to be a key part of her success and happiness in both her work and education

“Van-Go single handedly helped me realize that I *am* an artist, I *am* talented, and that I *do* have a future in the arts. I'm so proud of every piece I've made for this program, and even more proud knowing they'll get to be enjoyed by so many people. From magnets to murals, Van-Go has encouraged me to define my own voice as an artist, because people will love it all the same.” – June



## **Skylar – WIOA Youth**

Skylar applied for the Arts Train program at Van Go in July 2023. From the moment Sky applied, they had a goal of finding an apprenticeship or another learning opportunity to become a baker. Skylar faced many challenges with mental health (which included confidence in abilities, anxiety surrounding communication, combatting struggles with memory, among others) that lead to them dropping out of post-secondary education and made aspects of securing long-term employment difficult. Through work experience at Van Go for the Arts Train program, Skylar was met with wrap-around services to help address these barriers. Skylar met consistently with the on-site social worker to develop coping strategies to overcome many of these challenges, as well as to work in partnership to create a plan to achieve their goal of becoming a baker. Skylar also received 32 hours of soft-skills employment training to help give a solid foundation for future employment. Skylar performed very well at her work experience at Van Go and received several merit-based bonuses and pay increases, in conjunction with additional leadership duties. Skylar was finally placed in a work experience at a local business, Taylors Donuts/1900 Barker, where they were able to have their desired baker “apprenticeship”. Skylar performed so well in this position that, after the work experience elapsed, she was offered permanent employment.

She has been successfully and happily working her “dream job” since, utilizing the skills developed and learned at Van Go daily.

## **Logan – ReSpECTWORKS**

Logan was referred to the **ReSpECTWORKS** program in January 2023. He was released from facility in February 2023 to the LAII area (Topeka). He was a high school graduate and had some college credit hours from a local Community College. His focus of study was in welding, with hopes of transferring those college credits to the University of Kansas. Besides welding, Logan had other transferrable skills in plumbing and construction. He reported having stable housing upon his release. However, his immediate concern, and one he viewed as a huge barrier, was that he was required to register as an offender for his particular offense. He was certain this would have an impact on his ability to find employment.

Logan showed initiative in applying for employment. He also completed the Conover workplace readiness curriculum. Within a short period of time, and to his surprise, he was offered two jobs in his area of interest. After consideration, Logan decided to accept a local job at a production facility as the facility was closer to where he resided, and it was within his area of interest (a welding position). In preparation, Logan requested and received supportive services in work-related equipment and clothing needs. Due to some vehicle problems, he was having, Logan also received supportive services to assist with his vehicle repair needs to assure he could get to/from work. Logan was able to start this full-time job with initial earnings of \$22.15 per hour. Within two months, he was promoted within the company.

In early January 2024, Logan expressed interest in exploring other employment opportunities. He knew he needed to maintain his employment while starting job search efforts through the **KANSASWORKS**-Topeka office.

With the assistance of the Employment Training Specialist, Logan updated his resume. He also outlined some future goals to include either a career with the railroad or to open his own welding business. Within a few months, Logan shared that he had secured a job with Railroad. He expressed a great deal of enthusiasm in starting his new job. His initial earnings were \$28.00 per hour while in training. Upon completion of his training, Logan shared his official position would be as a railroad conductor and he would average an annual salary of \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year. Logan also shared that by securing this job, he has since been able to move out on his own and live comfortably.

One last goal that Logan wanted to share about surrounded his requirement to be on “post- release supervision” (parole) for the remainder of his lifetime and register as an offender for 15 years. Logan shared that he is working with a legislative representative to negotiate a decrease in his parole and registry requirements as he, in his words said, “I am no longer that guy.”

As Logan’s time with the **ReSpECTWORKS** program came to an end, he was able to express gratitude for the support and services he received during his transition from facility to community. He recognized how he was able to secure the job he wanted and that by helping him with supportive services in the form of tools, work-related clothing, vehicle repair needs, etc., he was able to focus on employment and not stress about barriers. Now, some 18 months later, he is looking forward to a promising career that provides a secure income for many years to come.

### **Stephanie– ReSpECTWORKS**

Stephanie came to the **ReSpECTWORKS** grant in October 2023 while housed in the Topeka Correctional Facility, with a release date in November. While working with Stephanie inside the facility and discussing future goals, it became clear she had found her passion for substance abuse counseling. While speaking with reentry staff at the facility, I came to know that Stephanie led many group classes and had a reputation as the “go to “person for supporting others in their sobriety. Stephanie was accepted into group living home prior to her release (which she did on her own with assistance from the reentry team at Topeka Correctional Facility). Stephanie was released from Topeka Correctional in November 2023 and by December 2023 she had secured a fantastic position at a local production company. Stephanie plans to enroll in online classes at Washburn to complete addiction counseling training on her own. Staff will continue to support throughout her follow-up period to ensure her employment situation stays stable and that she has access to the community supports needed to pursue additional education. Stephanie has a drive and a tenacity to propel her forward to secure a career in a field she is passionate about.

Stephanie is currently working 40+ hours per week and saving most of her income for her own place. Stephanie was chosen for a success story because her spirit and drive are what we need most from our participants to become successful with assistance from **ReSpECTWORKS**.

### **Kelcey – RETAINWORKS**

Kelcey’s original barriers to employment included left-sided lower back pain along with mental health and substance abuse issues. Kelcey was homeless at the time of enrollment and was living at a local rescue mission. He was

experiencing significant barriers with mental health and medication management and had applied for several jobs with no success.

During the Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) meeting these barriers were discussed and the Return-to-Work Employment Coordinator (RWEC) started assisting him by helping him obtain new employment references as his were old and outdated. Staff also assisted him with resume- building skills to create a new resume while he worked with the nurse navigators to adjust his medication. Kelcey was provided with emergency housing assistance funds to help stabilize his housing situation while working on his resume.

Once Mr. Schuetz had gotten the correct adjustment to his medications, and help with his job skills, he applied and secured employment with a local employer and even pursued and was hired for a second job to bring in more income. He received employment plan, return-to-work and

stay-at-work incentives while enrolled as well as the emergency assistance and was exited from the grant in April having successfully obtained his own residence and moving from the homeless ranks to the housed, while maintaining his employment.

### **Cameron – RETAINWORKS**

Cameron's original barrier to employment when enrolled was a physical condition, a radial styloid fracture to his left wrist. At the time of enrollment, Cameron was unemployed, and his biggest challenge was finding new employment that would not exacerbate his wrist injury.

Cameron reported that he was unable to continue with his prior line of work, being a cook, due to his injury.

During the Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) meeting he and the Return-to-Work Employment Coordinator discussed what skills he possessed, and it was determined that his lack of transferrable skills was also a barrier to his quality employment. Finding a new occupation was discussed and the Coordinator provided a list of high-demand occupations to Cameron to see if any occupations interested him. He identified Information and Network Technology as a career he could see himself pursuing. The Coordinator went over financial aid, scholarship programs, and grants that he could apply for, suggesting that he schedule a tour with a local technical college so that he could get a first-hand view of the training he would be involved in. The Coordinator also highly encouraged him to seek employment, even if part-time, as the earliest classes started would be several months away.

Cameron secured full-time employment as an inspector with a local employer, working 40 hours a week, earning \$19.86/hour, an increase of almost double over his prior employment as a cook. This position also provided benefits, including health coverage, and Cameron states he is very happy with the outcome. He received employment plan, return-to-work and stay-at-work incentives while enrolled and was exited from the grant after his 6-month enrollment deadline was reached. He is currently working with staff, through another grant, to achieve his goal of going to school.

## Workforce Partnership Kansas Local Area III PY2023 Annual Report Information

Workforce Partnership (WFP), which serves Johnson, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte Counties in the Kansas City metropolitan area, continued to provide outstanding service to job seekers and employers during PY2023 while managing the extremely tight labor market. PY2023 saw the launch of our registered apprenticeship intermediary services and a focus on infusing this training model into our business services work with employers. Workforce Partnership also continued to invest in driving “net new” job seekers into the labor market through its work with special populations who are often loosely attached thereto.

### Services and Performance

In PY2023, WFP served 16,256 job seekers logging 37,566 services to those individuals. While many of these customers entered our doors to obtain basic services in the career centers and online through **KANSASWORKS**, WFP provided intensive services to 1,575 individuals in WIOA, and other grant programs as shown below.

| Program   | Number of Individuals Served |
|---|------------------------------|
| WIOA Services   | 729                          |
| <i>Adult</i>  | 529                          |
| <i>Dislocated Worker</i>                              | 32                           |
| <i>Youth</i>  | 168                          |
| Older Kansan Employment Program                       | 256                          |
| Registered Apprenticeship                             | 29                           |
| JoCo Works Program (CARES Act, county funds and ARPA) | 173                          |
| WyCo Works Program (CARES Act, EDA funds and ARPA)    | 162                          |
| YouthBuild KCK  | 53                           |
| RETAINWORKS   | 49                           |
| <b>ReSpECTWORKS</b>                                   | 124                          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1,575</b>                 |

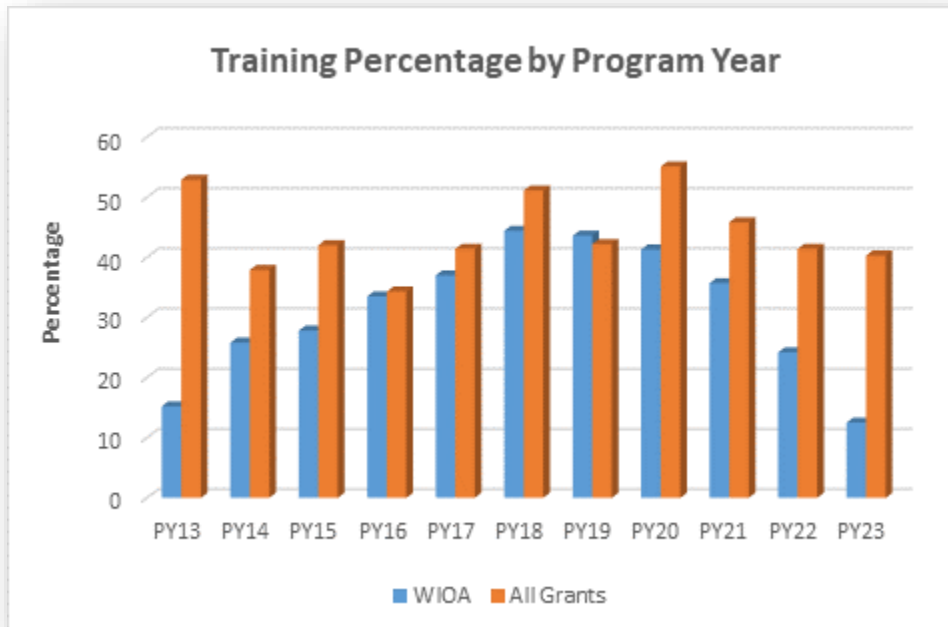
WFP *met all 15* of its WIOA performance goals and *exceeded 14 of those goals*. Final performance numbers are shown below.



| Performance Measures  | Goal PY2023 | Local Area PY2023 | Percentage of Goal Met |
|---|-------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Adult</b>  |             |                   |                        |
| Employment Rate (2 <sup>nd</sup> Q After Exit)                                | 76.00%      | 73.59%            | 97%                    |
| Employment Rate (4 <sup>th</sup> Q After Exit)                                | 71.90%      | 77.91%            | 108%                   |
| Median Earnings   | \$6,784     | \$9,630           | 142%                   |
| Credential Rate (4Qs After Exit)  | 76.50%      | 82.81%            | 108%                   |
| Measurable Skills Gain  | 64.10%      | 84.06%            | 131%                   |
| <b>Dislocated Worker</b>  |             |                   |                        |
| Employment Rate (2 <sup>nd</sup> Q After Exit)                                | 77.00%      | 83.30%            | 108%                   |
| Employment Rate (4 <sup>th</sup> Q After Exit)                                | 78.00%      | 84.21%            | 108%                   |
| Median Earnings   | \$9,653     | \$13,050          | 135%                   |
| Credential Rate (4Qs After Exit)  | 86.90%      | 91.67%            | 105%                   |
| Measurable Skills Gain  | 58.10%      | 62.50%            | 108%                   |
| <b>Youth</b>  |             |                   |                        |
| Placement in Employment, Education or Training (2 <sup>nd</sup> Q After Exit) | 72.30%      | 81.25%            | 112%                   |
| Placement in Employment, Education or Training (4 <sup>th</sup> Q After Exit) | 69.40%      | 82.22%            | 118%                   |
| Median Earnings   | \$3,050     | \$7,623           | 250%                   |
| Credential Rate (4Qs After Exit)  | 66.30%      | 73.91%            | 111%                   |
| Measurable Skills Gain  | 49.20%      | 51.47%            | 105%                   |

### Training Dollars Invested

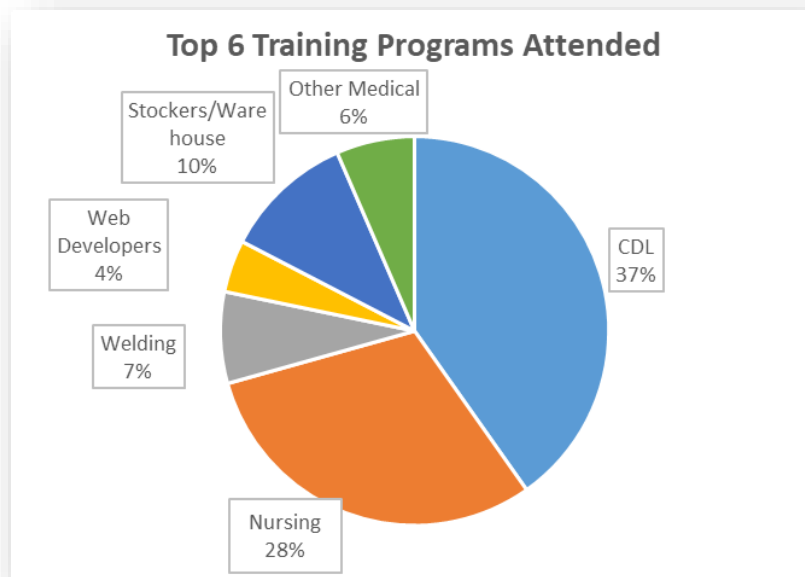
During the Great Recession and through PY2016, with one exception, WFP's direct investment in participant training failed to meet the state requirement to spend forty percent (40%) of all funds on the direct training of participants. Since that time, WFP has worked to increase the percentage of both WIOA, and other program funds dedicated to direct training activities. ***We are proud to report that for the 7<sup>th</sup> year in a row, WFP met this training goal by investing 40.3% of its total funds in direct training.*** The table below demonstrates the excellent progress made over the past ten years to shift more funding to direct training while continuing to maintain our high level of service through efficient and effective staffing. Note, however, that as our WIOA funds have significantly decreased in the last several years, the WIOA dollars that can be dedicated to training have been dropping quickly, as WIOA is the only source of funds for certain infrastructure and board-level costs. Infrastructure requirements and required board-level functions remain constant under WIOA, and the costs associated with those required functions have increased over time. Because the costs of these mandatory LWDB functions increase every year, fewer overall WIOA dollars in our local area simply means we have far less funding that can be allocated to training. ***The only way WFP can currently meet its state-required training percentage is by securing a large portion of non-WIOA funding.***



*\*Note: PY2013's high overall training percentage was driven by the receipt of a single, large HIB grant, while WIOA training investments were at a low point that year.*

### Sector Strategies

WFP has used sector strategies for many years focusing its resources in six priority sectors: Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare/Life Science, Transportation/Logistics, Construction/Skilled Trades and Financial and Insurance Services. As shown below, four of the six priority sectors are reflected in the top six most popular training programs.



WFP also brings the same sector-based approach to its business services work. That work continued in PY2023 with WFP hosting a total of 338 career events, including in-person and virtual job fairs and small hiring events, with 2,624 employers and 2,754 job seekers attending. In PY2023, WFP's Business Services Team worked with 343 employers through its Hot Jobs publication, virtual/in-person job fairs, job postings and community outreach activities including an *additional 21 new* employers over the course of the year with talent attraction, training and retention services and had over 2,549 service interactions with existing employers. The Hot Jobs publication alone highlighted 540 careers with immediate hiring needs in our area. Some of those sector events and interactions are highlighted below:

### **Advanced Manufacturing**

With Panasonic Energy opening an Electric Battery Manufacturing facility in Q1 2025, WFP established a recruiting Partnership with the company in April 2024 and has already hosted 4 hiring events in Johnson and Wyandotte County to hire for Panasonic's Registered Apprenticeship Program and various other positions. The Company will be hiring up to 4,000 new employees once the plant is fully operational.

Continued to partner with the Kansas City FAME (Federation of Advanced Manufacturing Education) program, the Wyandotte County Economic Development Council, Kansas Manufacturing Solutions and KCK Community College, assisting in the FAME Chapter's recruitment efforts. In this second year, the FAME chapter sponsored 14 students in the program (both second year and first year students), with an additional 22 students enrolled for fall 2024.

### **Healthcare/Life Sciences**

WFP continues to participate in the Health Care Career Pathways Initiative. This initiative includes regular meetings between a variety of local area hospitals and nursing facilities, WFP and representatives from the LWDB for the Kansas City, MO area. Health care providers share updates and information about their needs and discuss ways to create better pathways in a variety of careers. In total, we promoted openings within 12 different hospitals in our local area through social media and hot jobs publications.

WFP registered the first apprenticeship program in the State of Kansas for bio-manufacturing technician level 1 as part of the KC region's effort to push forward with various human capital initiatives as part of its designation as an EDA Tech Hub in vaccine manufacturing. We are now working to recruit more employers and to spread the word about this new opportunity.

### **Information Technology**

WFP partnered with SnapIT Solutions and enrolled 8 WIOA Youth in a new summer youth internship, a seven-week contextualized learning program teaching Foundations of Web Development (see full success story in Appendix).

### **Transportation/Logistics**

In spring 2024, WFP assisted Zeta Driving School in its efforts to develop a new registered apprenticeship program for Diesel Mechanic. We helped the company draft all work processes and document all related technical instruction,

provided technical assistance, and filed the paperwork with the Kansas Office of Apprenticeship. The program was approved in early July 2024.

Continued to partner with the United Postal Service to provide weekly hiring events in our local area to help meet the critical need for postal careers. Due to a local labor shortage mail is not being delivered in our area daily.

### **Construction and Skilled Trades**

As our US DOL YouthBuild grant came into its final funding year with only follow up services, WFP and its YouthBuild staff set out to reimagine its YouthBuild KCK programming to better accommodate the needs of its participants while at the same time to take advantage of a new focus on Youth Registered Apprenticeship. In PY2023, WFP re-worked its YouthBuild programming so that instead of providing a singular, lengthy pre-apprenticeship program, our YouthBuild program now consists of a much shorter pre-apprenticeship, plus a fully registered Youth Apprenticeship for a Carpenter Assistant. We have one employer signed up to participate in the program with several participants likely to complete their pre-apprenticeship work soon and be available to be hired as a Youth apprenticeship with Dahmer Contracting Group.

In addition to sector strategy work, our Business Services Team also organized a number of non-sector specific events to assist other businesses and job seekers in need:

- Assisted the Johnson County Department of Corrections with its monthly Resource and Job fair for the Second Chance population.
- Provided resume assistance at the Veterans Job fair in January.
- Conducted two on-line resume workshops for Hire our Hero's Program.
- Provided a resume assistance workshop to Veteran students at Johnson County Community College.
- Provided Resume and Career Coaching for a Gardner Kansas Career Fair

### **Registered Apprenticeship**

In fall 2023, WFP launched new registered apprenticeship (RA) services for employers as part of its Business Services portfolio. This effort was made possible due WFP's MeadowLARK grant award, which supports staffing, curriculum development and related technical instruction costs. Our focus for the grant was to develop Youth Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) and tie them directly to either existing or new Adult RAPs in our area. As part of the kick-off of these services, WFP hosted three employer workshops to educate them on the benefits of RA and how our grant funds could help defray their start-up costs.

Our focus on RA this year also fell in line with the Overland Park Chamber's new Workforce Development efforts, and we began to work closely with Chamber leaders to drive apprenticeship interest. WFP worked in partnership with the Chamber to host an event at Johnson County Community college to bring educational awareness to over 100 employers, where they had an opportunity to meet and have one-to-one conversations with National Intermediaries. WFP's Employer partner, Full-Service Chimney, was one of the featured panelists and highlighted how its RAP has helped the company meet its ROI goals. WFP also provided RA expertise to the Overland Park Chamber at subsequent multiple events and



workshops.

In addition, Full-Service Chimney and WFP hosted Congressional Rep. Sharice Davis at the company's training facility in December. Rep. Davis and her team were able to tour the training facilities and participate in demonstrations at Full-Service Chimney. WFP had assisted Full-Service Chimney in creating its RA Program a few years prior.

In April, WFP hosted two Youth Registered Apprenticeship boot camps for local school districts to help schools understand how RAPs can blend into their CTE programming and support the schools' "real world learning" initiatives. We also held a Workforce Partnership Connect Employer Round Table with the Kansas Office of Apprenticeship, Full-Service Chimney and Snap IT, to educate 32 employers on the benefits of creating a RA program in their company. WFP staff also presented at the Kaufman Foundation Communities of Practice Meeting, where we spoke to area school districts about Youth RAP.

The MeadowLARK funding has been instrumental in a number of other ways, allowing WFP the bandwidth to:

- Develop a Youth RAP for a Carpenter Assistant as part of WFP's YouthBuild program and recruit at-risk youth
- Assist Zeta Driving School to develop a RAP for Diesel Mechanics
- Assist SnapIT to develop a RAP in for an IT Generalist.
- Develop a RAP for a Biomanufacturing Technician Level I in collaboration with BioKansas and its employer members
- Provide technical assistance to Advent Health to develop a RAP in Medical Assistant, Surgical Technician and Sterile Processing
- Assist Midwest Glass and Glazing to develop and roll out its RAP program
- Help recruit and support apprentices for the Painters Union, Pipefitters and Electrical Unions, Sprinkler Fitters, and MO-KAN Teamsters.

### **Yellow Corporation Closure and Rapid Response Efforts**

Yellow Corp unexpectedly shut down its operations late July 2023, resulting in the layoff of nearly 865 full time employees from the company's Overland Park office alone. WFP assisted these individuals by ramping up the number of hiring events in our Johnson County workforce center, hosting a large job fair in partnership with the Overland Park Chamber and Johnson County Community College, and providing on-going workshops in resume development, interview skills, and staying positive in the job search for up to two months to provide support to these job seekers. Since there was no advanced notice of the closure, there was no opportunity to meet with employees in advance of the layoff.

Accordingly, we worked closely with Yellow's HR team to post unemployment benefits and re-employment services information on its internal company LinkedIn page to ensure laid off employees had the information they needed. WFP also participated in an event with the Overland Park Chamber to provide direct 1-1 resume support, as well as financial wellness information (see full success story in Appendix).

## **New Strategic Goals**

Beginning in January 2024, WFP's Board launched a strategic planning effort to develop new goals that would transcend the WIOA programs and provide an umbrella of direction for the organization as a whole. The Board authorized a Task Force Team to work with select Board Staff to develop potential goals to be presented to the full Board. In May 2024, the Board approved the following three Strategic Goals to focus on over three years beginning July 2024:

- 1) Increase non-WIOA resources
- 2) Develop industry partnerships that lead to quality jobs in health care and advanced manufacturing.
- 3) Expand opportunities for justice-involved individuals.

## **Special Populations**

WFP also worked with special needs populations from English Language Learners to individuals with disabilities to students in our K-12 school districts. Highlights of some of those efforts:

Center of Grace - WFP continued its partnership with Center of Grace, a community center serving the Hispanic community in Olathe providing staff and resources at Center of Grace each month, including conducting a workshop entitled "How to Get a Job in the United States."

Hosted KC Regional Disability Mentoring Day 2023 – Workforce Partnership helped plan and participated in the 19th Annual Disability Mentoring Day held on October 25, 2023. Disability Mentoring Day is a local event that is held in recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This event focused on career development for students and jobseekers with disabilities. There were approximately 100 participants in attendance at the event. Participants received assistance in resume writing and interviewing. Employers and service organizations were available to discuss career exploration, job opportunities and available resources for students and jobseekers. The day included an interviewing presentation which explained the do's and don'ts in the interview process. There was also a motivational presentation from The Transition Academy which is a nonprofit organization in the Greater Kansas City area created to improve postsecondary opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Innovation in Delivering Work-Based Learning Experiences to K-12 –The 2023-2024 academic year marked a period of significant growth and innovation in work-based learning activities for K-12 students throughout the 16 school districts in Johnson, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte counties. WFP worked with 260 schools in these districts to launch and sustain WBL experiences with over 1,600 employers, providing nearly 11,000 students the opportunity to build critical skills, apply technical knowledge, explore career pathways, and gain real-world work experiences.

WFP also started a new partnership with the Kansas School for the Deaf, located in Olathe, KS and arranged several employer tours in June 2023. The tours were conducted with some of the region's top employers: WellSky (Health IT in Overland Park), Webco (Steel Fabricator in Olathe), Honeywell (Olathe), and Huhtamaki (Packaging Center in DeSoto), as well as a stop at the Johnson County Workforce Center to learn about opportunities through the Young Adult program

(see success story in Appendix).

During PY2023, WFP and participating school districts provided the following WBL experiences:

- 12 career fairs
- 215 employer classroom encounters
- 13 mentoring experiences
- 65 job shadows
- 1942 mock interviews
- 25 facility tours

## **WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS STORIES AND JOB SEEKER TESTIMONIALS**

### **WIOA Success Stories**

When Nicole came to WFP in August of 2023, she was homeless, long-term unemployed and had prior involvement in the criminal justice system. After working with our Career Navigator to explore careers and job training options, she decided to obtain a CNA certification given the high-demand and plentiful job openings. By fall 2023, Nicole successfully attained CNA certification and licensure, and subsequently obtained a CMA certification in early 2024. Nicole is now working as a CNA/CMA at Piper Assisted Living. She is extremely grateful for the support and funding from Workforce Partnership and the Skill-Up WyCo initiative, and always has a huge smile and a hug for her Career Navigator.

Bradley was referred to the Johnson County workforce center by an internal staff person, having been laid off from his residential construction position of six years due to the business closing. He had worked in residential construction most of his life and was looking to obtain a career with more stability, and health and retirement benefits. Bradley had concern about this transition due to some historical involvement the criminal justice system that had proven in many instances to be a barrier to getting hired. Bradley was also an honorably discharged veteran of the U.S. Armed Services. He ultimately decided to pursue a CDL in order to secure employment in the trucking industry. He successfully completed CDL training and was hired soon after by American Central Transport. His full-time, over-the-road driving position pays \$28.00 per hour with full benefits and mileage bonuses. Bradley shared that this was the most money he has ever made, and it was the first position he has held that offered Health Benefits or Retirement Savings.

Marynell was formerly employed as a Call Center-based Academic Counselor and Marketer but displaced due to corporate restructuring that resulted in the elimination of her position. Marynell was introduced to WFP when she was called-in for Reemployment Services. The Reemployment Services Navigator provided the customary slate of services and suggested that she meet with the One-Stop's Assessment Specialist for additional career exploration and individualized resume assistance and possible career interest assessment. The Assessment Specialist coached Marynell on how to present her strengths more prominently and offered suggestion for some different job search strategies and tactics. Marynell started her new job as a full-time NLS Contact Agent is very excited to have joined the team. Her starting wage

was \$21.21 per hour, paid biweekly, with a monthly bonus program. She was appreciative of all the assistance, guidance and direction she received by various staff at Workforce Partnership and communicated that Workforce Partnership was instrumental in her obtaining this new position.

Holli was a young woman who was cleaning houses for other people to support herself and her twin teenaged boys, with SNAP benefits providing some additional support for family meals. She realized she could not continue such physically demanding work and began searching for resources to help her access training for a new career. Holli's search for education funding led her to discover WFP. Holli had worked as a CNA some years back, and decided to explore re-entering the field, but was unsure how to finance her training. She took the proactive step of attending an orientation session at the Johnson County workforce center, which provided essential information about available programs, eligibility criteria, and next steps, as well as led to assignment of a Career Navigator to assist with career exploration and training options. Holli ultimately chose to attend CNA refresher training, and next completed Certified Medication Aide (CMA) training. She is now working for Meadowbrook Rehabilitation Hospital as a Certified Medication Aide starting at \$19.00 per hour with benefits for herself and family.

### **WIOA Youth Success Stories**

Eight WIOA Youth elected to participate in a five-week contextualized learning program teaching Foundations of Web Development at SnapIT Solutions of Overland Park, KS. Training was held four days per week. Mornings were dedicated to virtual technical training activities and lessons, while afternoons were dedicated to hands-on work-based learning to apply and reinforce technical concepts introduced in morning lesson plans. Workforce Partnership's WIOA financial assistance offered support for tuition and fees and work-based learning, as well as transportation services for conveyance to and from the training facility. A small graduation ceremony was held upon conclusion of training activities to celebrate the students' successes.



*Students hard-at-work applying technical concepts in the onsite computer lab (left).  
A graduate proudly displaying his completion certificate (right).*



Alex was an older, out-of-school youth who approached Workforce Partnership for assistance and support with post-high school career guidance and workforce transition services. He received workforce preparation services and conducted some career research but needed to work close to home due to transportation issues. Workforce Partnership's Work Experience Coordinator had recently engaged with local Walgreens stores who were in the process of implementing their national REDI (Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative) program, which teaches valuable career skills giving candidates the tools to be successful in any retail setting. Walgreens works closely with community organizations, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and state and local social services agencies, to identify and screen REDI program candidates for placement. Through this program, Alex successfully completed a paid work experience assignment and was in-line for permanent hire at a Walgreens store were it not for falling revenues at the store in which he was placed. Thankfully, the skills he acquired are transferrable to most any retail environment, particularly other pharmacy stores, and he is in the process of searching for unsubsidized opportunities with the help of a Workforce Partnership Youth Career Navigator.

### **Success Story: Supporting Accelerated LPN Education**

Last year, the Mid-America College of Health Sciences, located in Merriam, KS, celebrated the graduation of 44 students from its Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program, marking a significant milestone in the careers of these aspiring healthcare professionals. Fourteen of those individuals received training funds through Workforce Partnership's Wyandotte and Johnson County Workforce Centers in order to help fund the accelerated nine-month LPN program, reflecting Workforce Partnership's commitment to providing comprehensive and accelerated nursing education to meet the growing demand for qualified nurses in the healthcare industry.

The journey to becoming an LPN is both a significant financial and personal commitment. With a program cost of over \$20,000 per student, the financial burden is considerable. Workforce Partnership's financial support covered approximately \$94,000 in total costs for tuition, fees, and supplies for these 14 students. Even with our financial support, many students find it necessary to maintain full- or part-time employment alongside their studies. This dedication often means sacrificing precious family time to fulfill academic and work commitments.

Becoming an LPN also requires passage of the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). This rigorous exam is a pivotal step for nursing students, leading to new opportunities and advancements in their careers. One of our proud graduates, Chasity R., who successfully completed her NCLEX in June 2024, experienced a commendable promotion and pay raise from \$21.75 to \$33.00 per hour, reflecting the value and trust her company places in her enhanced skills and qualifications. Witnessing the students' transition from learners to healthcare professionals is a profound experience, symbolizing their dedication, hard work, and the bright future that lies ahead in their nursing careers. This achievement not only signifies the dedication and hard work of the students but also underscores the importance of community resources in fostering educational opportunities.

Photos below from the Practical Nurse Pinning and Graduation Ceremony on May 10, 2024:



*Johnson County Workforce Center Career Navigator June Wayne seen with proud graduate Eunice K (left).  
Johnson County Workforce Center Career Navigator Carla Owens seen with proud graduate Karima K (right).*

### **Work-Based Learning: Transforming Futures for Students at KS School for the Deaf**

Since traditional school districts are on summer break, our Work-Based Learning Intermediaries turned their attention to working with alternative schools that remain in session during the summer. Workforce Partnership hosted a series of industry tours for the Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD) throughout the month of June. The initiative aimed at bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world applications. By partnering with local business and industry, students were provided with hands-on experiences and insights into various local high wage, high demand jobs in key industry sectors such as information technology and manufacturing.

The tours were conducted with some of the region's top employers: WellSky (Health IT in Overland Park), Webco (Steel Fabricator in Olathe), Honeywell (Olathe), and Huhtamaki (Packaging Center in DeSoto), as well as a stop at the Johnson County Workforce Center to learn about opportunities through the Young Adult program. At each employer location, students received an up-close and personal tour of the facility and had the opportunity to talk directly with company leaders/HR professionals and learn about the industry, jobs available, wages and the training needed to be successful in those roles. Workforce Partnership hired Deaf Interpreters to assist with the tours and to ensure there were sufficient numbers of individuals who could use ASL and read lips in order to help ask/answer questions for everyone involved in the tour. Each tour hosted approximately 10-15 students. The impact of the tours was evident on the students' faces as they returned to school with a newfound enthusiasm and clarity about their career interests. Many expressed how these experiences brought to mind career possibilities they had never considered.



*Photo above from KSD tour of Hutamaki Packaging Center.*

The tours also fostered a stronger relationship between the business community and KSD. Many companies were so impressed with the students' level of interest and enthusiasm that they were encouraged to apply for internships and part-time jobs, providing further work-based learning opportunities. Moreover, the tours highlighted the importance of inclusivity in the workplace, encouraging companies to consider more inclusive hiring practices and creating a welcoming environment for people of all abilities.

### **RETAINWORKS Success**

“John” was a RETAINWORKS participant who worked as a cook before his injury. He was interested in a career change but did not know exactly what he wanted to do next. Together he and his career navigator researched potential training programs that held interest for him. John is now in the process of completing training to become a Certified Nutrition Coach and Weight Loss Specialist, allowing him to capitalize on his knowledge of food and nutrition, but in a new field.

### **Rapid Response Success**

The closure of Yellow Corporation was a surprise to its Overland Park headquarters' employees who came to work finding the parking lot blocked off with a sign stating that the company was closing operations nationwide. The closure of Yellow's Overland Park headquarters, and other logistics sites on the Missouri-side of the metro, affected approximately 1,000 employees and required swift and comprehensive response from WFP, in collaboration with many partners.

Due to the abrupt nature of this closure, WFP first had to engage in research and information gathering in order to understand the full situation. We determined that:

- Out of all of the employees laid off in the Kansas City metro area, 865 of those were based in Overland Park, KS. Of those, 206 were union employees and 659 were non-union.

- The largest numbers were for employees in the following functions: IT/Technologies and Support (roughly 181 individuals), Drivers and Driving Trainers (roughly 128 individuals), Accounting/Billing/Finance (roughly 118 individuals), Operations and Logistics (over 72 individuals), Sales and Sales Support (roughly 56 individuals) and Human Resources (roughly 56 individuals). And many more of course.

We used this detailed information to ensure that the right employers are contacted to participate in future hiring events and job fairs.

Communicating with affected employees was a challenge. Initially, since there was no advanced WARN notice filed by the company, we were unable to host our typical employee meeting prior to the actual lay off day. Instead, we had to resort to pushing information out to affected employees through a Sr. HR Manager at Yellow who was still working and managing the effort. In the early days after the layoff, she sent out to employees and posted on internal employee resource pages, including Yellow's Career Networking LinkedIn page, information about our services and how to connect with us, as well as information on unemployment insurance and how to file for benefits. In the months thereafter, WFP continued to post information about its services – both basic and intensive – on our social media accounts and included that information in our weekly e-newsletters.

Within a few weeks of the closure, we were excited to finally obtain a list of affected employees, including names and home addresses (but no phone numbers or email addresses). Our best option for direct employee outreach was to create an old-fashioned mailer to those addresses. We mailed to all 865 Overland Park employees two flyers – one about an upcoming job fair (see below) and another about Workforce Partnership's services to laid off employees. All three of our workforce center front desk staff teams also took names/info for all Yellow employees who came to the centers, so that we could better direct resources and job opportunities to them. We also created a new website landing page for Yellow employee resources. Channel 9 local News (KMBC) aired a report on August 11 about how we were assisting employees and provided information about the large job fair being planned for early September in collaboration with the Overland Park Chamber and JCCC.

We also partnered with Congressional Representative Sharice Davids, who held a press conference at JCCC in advance of the large job fair, at which she asked WFP's Executive Director to say a few words about the services Workforce Partnership and the **KANSASWORKS** system provided to these employees and to help promote the distribution of Rep. Davids' Layoff Resource Guide.

In addition to the large job fair, WFP also coordinated a number of other events and activities to support these dislocated workers. Immediately after the closure announcement, we hosted resume workshops and several Hiring Events in our Johnson County Workforce Center in mid-August with employers interested in Yellow employees. In mid-August, we also partnered with the Overland Park Chamber to assist with a half-day workshop event at the Chamber offices which included speakers on modern resume writing, information about JCCC programming and information about health care insurance. Workforce Partnership staffed a room for one-on-one resume assistance during the duration of the half-day event. Finally, we hosted a new Talent Support Network series of workshops on "Navigating the Job Search."



## **Registered Apprenticeship Event Featuring National Intermediaries**

On June 4, Workforce Partnership joined the efforts of the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce and the KS Office of Apprenticeship to host the first-ever Registered Apprenticeship event for employers that featured in-person representatives from *multiple, national apprenticeship intermediaries* across a variety of sectors. The half-day event began with a Registered Apprenticeship 101 presentation from the KS Office of Apprenticeship, followed by a presentation from Keely Schneider, Workforce Partnership's Executive Director, about the local workforce board and how it can assist employers with developing, registering, and managing apprenticeship programs. Next, Ms. Schneider facilitated a panel of speakers (local business utilizing apprenticeship, SHRM representative for the Human Resources apprenticeship and a representative from USDOL's Center of Excellence on apprenticeship). Finally, employer guests were invited to join all of the national intermediaries at breakout tables by sector, so that they could directly engage and learn more about the resources available to them through these intermediary organizations. The event brought in over 100 attendees and there has been a great deal of follow up at the local level with interested employers since the event.

# **WORKFORCE ALLIANCE OF SOUTH CENTRAL KANSAS**

## **LOCAL AREA IV –**

### **Program Year 2023 Annual Narrative Report**

The Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas (Workforce Alliance) is the Local Workforce Development Board serving a six-county region including Butler, Cowley, Harper, Kingman, Sedgwick, and Sumner counties. There are offices in four of the six counties, excluding Kingman and Harper counties where partnerships and service locations have been established to meet local needs. The operating philosophy for the Workforce Alliance is to leverage resources and align services with community partners to maximize impact for employers and job seekers in Local Area IV beyond the annual funding allocations of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Due to this philosophy, job seekers and employers in Local Area IV had access to 16 additional employment and training programs beyond WIOA. Over 39,000 individuals received services in Local Area IV in 2023.

#### **Work-Ready Certificate**

The Work-Ready certificate is a reliable and nationally validated system evaluating and analyzing workplace skills. Thousands of jobs are “profiled” to identify skill levels necessary to perform each job. Skills measured are transferable skills and necessary for most jobs. Spirit AeroSystems, the largest employer in the state of Kansas, utilizes the Work-Ready Certificate as a required element for onboarding hourly production workers. This year 5,572 people were scheduled to test, 3,437 tested, and 280 Work-Ready testing sessions were held. There were 2,944 Work-Ready credentials awarded this year in Local Area IV.

#### **Registered Apprenticeship**

Registered Apprenticeship, an “earn and learn” model, is a proven system for training employees in a variety of occupations that require a wide range of expertise. An ideal way for employers to build and maintain a skilled workforce, Registered Apprenticeship combines employment, on-the-job learning, mentorship, and related technical instruction to both educate and develop the workforce for employers. In the local area there are 27 Registered Apprenticeship sponsors and three Intermediaries, including the Workforce Alliance, totaling 51 approved RA programs. The Workforce Center accepts onsite applications for five Registered Apprenticeship programs. There are currently 618 registered apprentices “earning and learning” through these programs.

The City of Wichita proclaimed November 13-19 Registered Apprenticeship Week 2023. See image on the following page.



*Back row: Cristin Boyle (Spirit), Elizabeth Harp (Spirit), Molly Brown (Flagship), Melody Head (WA), John Clark (Plumbers and Pipefitters) Front row: Lori Hladik (Spirit), Bob Potter (Metal Finishings), Mayor Brandon Whipple, Marcus Curran (Sheetmetal Workers), Conner Hamilton (Flagship)*

### **National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs)**

The Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas did not have any active National Dislocated Worker Grants in program year 2023.

### **One Workforce Grant**

The Workforce Alliance was one of 19 organizations awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Labor under the H-1B One Workforce Grant program. The Workforce Alliance received \$9.9 million to support education and skills training in 2021, with the goal of increasing the number of people with the skills needed for successful careers that will help grow the regional economy. The project will serve 900 individuals that are under-employed or unemployed, training them to enter middle and high skilled jobs in Information Technology or Advanced Manufacturing sectors

To date, 814 participants have completed the eligibility process, 719 participated in training, and 124 received supportive services for utility, housing, transportation, and employment related assistance. A total of 580 participants have successfully completed training and 436 earned a credential.

### **Justice Involved Initiative**

A strategic priority for the Workforce Alliance is to create partnerships and leverage resources to assist justice involved individuals in finding quality employment. Since 2012, the Workforce Alliance, Kansas Department of Corrections, and Sedgwick County Community Corrections have formally partnered in the Kansas Offender Risk Reduction and Reentry Plan which includes various strategies to provide risk reductions and reentry programs, services, and interventions. The Workforce Alliance provides an Offender Workforce Development Specialist to assist with job readiness and to provide services to justice involved individuals who are job seeking and available for employment within the area.

## Outcomes:

- 238 Direct Referrals
- 223 Employment Lab Attendees
- 305 Entered Employment
- 85% Employment Retention Rate at 6 months
- 76% Employment Retention Rate at 12 months
- Average wage at 6 months is \$15.60 per hour
- Average wage at 12 months is \$14.77 per hour

## Business Services

The Workforce Centers Business Services Division provides no cost solutions to employers for workforce development needs, including services for recruitment and hiring, training, credits and bonding, and business closings and layoffs. Business Services provided 2,561 services to 559 employers in the region. There were 56 job fairs that served 4,007 job seekers with 550 employers represented. The Business Services Division listed 7,358 job postings and received 356 applications/pre-employment screens from 344 customers. 2,805 pre-employment assessments were administered to 964 participants. Rapid Response services were provided to 28 employers and 1,432 individuals this year.

## Building You

The “Building You” partnership with local news station KWCH and the Workforce Alliance continues. Building You is an ongoing series where a daily job is featured on the 4 pm newscast. The job posting is also highlighted the following morning on the KWCH website, along with other available jobs through the Workforce Center and KANSASWORKS.com. Over the past year there were 261 jobs featured on KWCH through Building You with an average wage of \$20.88. Additionally, KWCH runs a monthly segment on Morning Newstalk about employment opportunities and the local economy. The Workforce Alliance provides ideas and content for the segment.

## Building You



### ▶ Week of October 7: Job of the Day

Updated: Oct. 7, 2024 at 5:37 AM CDT | By KWCH Staff

This week, the Workforce Centers of South Central Kansas is highlighting Directors, Managers, and Supervisor Positions.



### ▶ Week of September 30: Job of the Day

Updated: Sep. 30, 2024 at 5:14 AM CDT | By KWCH Staff

This week, the Workforce Centers of South Central Kansas is highlighting Transportation and Logistics Positions.



## Youth Services

The WIOA Youth program assists young adults in overcoming barriers that stand between them and their education and career goals. 451 youth elements were provided to 112 participants to assist them in achieving their goals.

The Youth Employment Project served 5,732 young adults and engaged 435 employers. Camp HYPE is a week of career exploration that combines Essential Skills Certificates workshops with tours to local employers by industry. Eight camps were held with the assistance of four staff from USD 259. Employers and Industries represented include Trade Skills, Textron Aviation, Healthcare sponsored by Ascension Via Christi, Spirit AeroSystems, Information Technology sponsored by FlagshipKansas.Tech, Financial Services sponsored by Bank of America and Meritrust Credit Union, Public Safety sponsored by the Wichita Crime Commission, and Camp McConnell sponsored by McConnell Air Force Base.

|                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Young Adults Served                  | 5,732 |
| Workshop Participation               | 858   |
| Badges Awarded                       | 1,545 |
| Essential Skills Certificated Earned | 515   |
| Total Employment                     | 2,392 |
| Participating Employers              | 435   |
| Job Fairs                            | 20    |
| Job Fair Attendance by Youth Adults  | 2,653 |
| Job Fair Attendance by Employers     | 248   |
| Outreach Sessions                    | 115   |
| Schools Engaged                      | 27    |
| Counties Engaged                     | 6     |

## Digital Skills

The Digital Skills Initiative provides the opportunity to prepare and upskill Kansans for competitive and high-demand technology careers in the region. The Workforce Alliance was selected as one of five recipients nationwide by Jobs for the Future (JFF) for the Public Sector Digital Jobs Innovation Project, aimed at expanding access to digital skills, leading to IT employment within the local community. The initiative allows participating Workforce Boards to develop or expand work with a focus on creating equitable pathways into high-quality tech careers, through either developing comprehensive digital jobs strategies for their region or implementing training solutions to upskill and/or reskill local residents. The project is directly supported by JFF, Google.org and IBM. The Workforce Alliance was awarded \$210,000 to implement both Google Career Certificates and IBM SkillsBuild learning platforms and operate a Digital Skills eLearning lab to assist individuals to enroll and provide digital access and support staff.



### Success Stories

Jaden reached out to the Workforce Center for assistance to move into a different industry, as she had been employed in food service since her teens. She worked closely with her WIOA Youth Case Manager and Work Experience Coordinator to narrow down her interests, revamp her resume and practice her interview skills. Jaden interviewed with Dondlinger Construction. She nailed the interview and is now earning \$17 per hour with employer paid health and dental coverage as a full-time laborer in Dondlinger's Facilities Service Division.

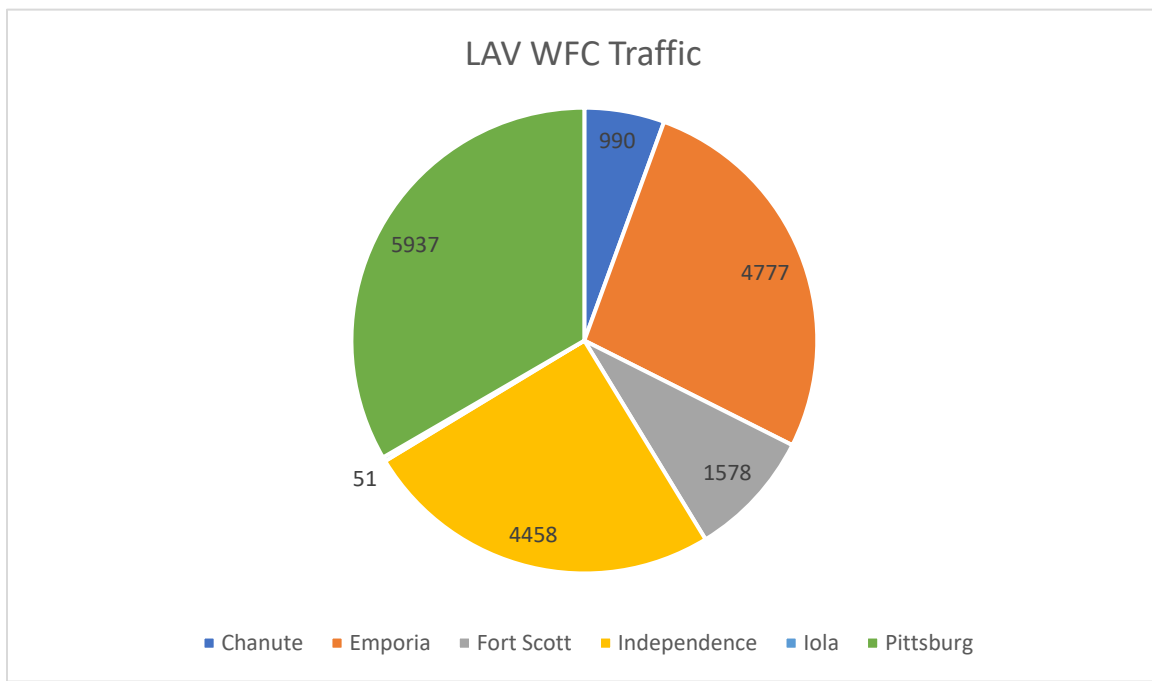
Andrew enrolled in the Industrial Electrical Technology program through the One Workforce Grant after being laid off and seeking new employment. While in training, Andrew utilized fuel, utility, and housing assistance through supportive services, providing him the financial stability he needed to focus on training. After successfully completing his degree from Hutchinson Community College he now works for Northern Natural Gas as a Controls Measurement Technician, earning \$32.00/hour.

# Southeast KANSASWORKS PY2023 Annual Report

Southeast KANSASWORKS Inc (SEKWORKS) operates the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs in Region V of Kansas. Southeast KANSASWORKS serves 17 counties: Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Coffey, Crawford, Elk, Greenwood, Labette, Linn, Lyon, Miami, Montgomery, Neosho, Wilson, and Woodson.

## One Stop Operations

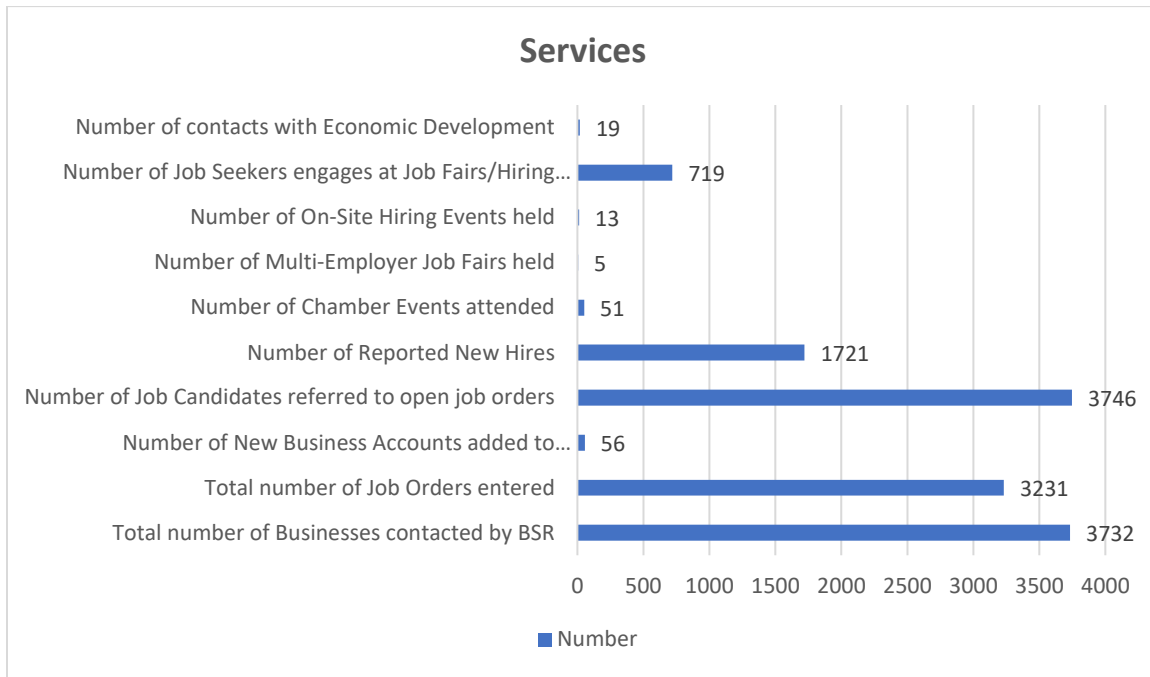
Workforce Center Traffic for Program Year 2023



## Partner Collaboration

Partner Collaboration Meetings are key gatherings designed to promote coordination among partners in the workforce system. These local office meetings facilitate communication, resource sharing, and joint planning among various stakeholders, including workforce development agencies, education providers, and community organizations. The goal is to ensure seamless service delivery for job seekers and employers, optimize program outcomes, and enhance overall efficiency by addressing operational challenges and aligning strategies across different WIOA programs. There were over 15 different regular partner meetings conducted in PY2023.

## Business Services



### Hill's Pet Nutrition - Emporia Hiring Event

Hill's Pet Nutrition partnered with **KANSASWORKS** Southeast's Emporia Workforce Center to host a Hiring Event on May 16<sup>th</sup> for the (Manufacturing) Operations Assistant position which they had multiple openings for. This event offered open interviews and same day job offers!

**KANSASWORKS** was able to provide support by creating a flyer, a banner, managing event registration, applicant recruitment/support, follow-up for registered participants, and coordinated day-of logistics such as assisting with job applications and guiding applicants to the next step of their interview process.



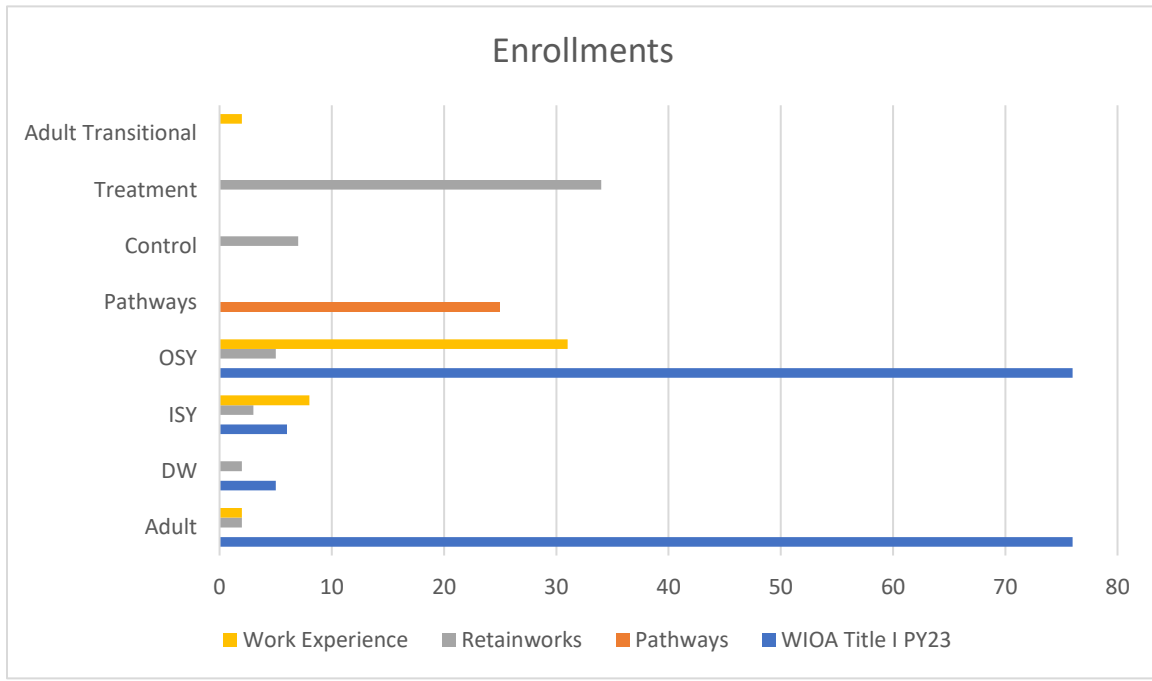
As applicants arrived, **KANSASWORKS** ensured that all checked-in candidates completed the job application prior to being interviewed - as they were also required to go through basic pre-screening before being interviewed once the application was completed (a three-step process). After applicants completed their interviews, they were given very generous gift bags courtesy of Hill's Pet Nutrition and asked to return later in the afternoon for job offers.

Of the 26 registered participants, 11 attended the Hiring Event, and 4 were offered employment and granted a tour of the facility (NDAs were required to tour) that very afternoon - thanks to this collaboration, Hill's Pet Nutrition was able to fill all of their (Manufacturing) Operations Assistant positions with quality workforce talent!



## WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Specialized Grant Programs

### Enrollment Numbers – WIOA and Specialized Grants



### Adult Program Success Stories

#### *CDL Success Story*

When Tyler Bailey first stepped into the Pittsburg Workforce Center, he had a big dream but faced even bigger challenges. His long-term goal was to become a journeyman lineman, but the road ahead seemed daunting. Working two part-time jobs and still earning below the poverty line, Tyler found himself in need of financial assistance to pursue the Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) training required for his career path. Not only did he lack the funds for the training, but he also needed help with transportation to and from Fort Scott Community College (FSCC) where the CDL program was offered.

At the workforce center, Tyler connected with his Career Advisor, who saw the determination Tyler had. After completing intake, the advisor conducted a thorough interest assessment to ensure the CDL training aligned with Tyler's goals. The results were clear: Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Driving was a perfect match for Tyler’s aspirations. Thanks to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I funding, Tyler was able to receive the financial assistance he needed—not only for the training but for transportation as well.

With an employment plan in place, Tyler embarked on his training at FSCC on June 3, 2024. He wasted no time in working hard and meeting every milestone outlined in the employment plan. His drive and commitment were unwavering,

and it wasn't long before FSCC itself took notice, highlighting Tyler's progress as part of a success story on their website, listed here: <https://fortscott.edu/news/fsc-ccd-success-story-meet-eli-meyers-and-tyler-bailey/>

Tyler's achievements didn't stop at completing his CDL training in just five weeks—an impressive feat in itself. His newfound qualifications opened doors to higher-paying opportunities that would have otherwise been out of reach. Starting out, Tyler secured a local CDL driving position at Barnes Millwork, earning \$23.28 per hour. But Tyler's story of success didn't end there. With his sights set on bigger goals, Tyler recently accepted a new position as a groundman with JS Construction, where he now earns \$28.50 per hour. This role as a groundman, assisting with the construction and maintenance of powerlines, is the perfect steppingstone toward his ultimate goal of becoming a journeyman lineman.

Tyler is now well on his way to achieving that goal. He has already lined up an interview for a lineman apprentice position in Oklahoma, where demand for skilled workers is high. This opportunity brings him one step closer to making his dream a reality. Thanks to the support and guidance from the Pittsburg Workforce Center, Tyler has transformed his future. What began as a financial obstacle has now blossomed into a thriving career path.

Tyler shared, "I really appreciate all that you guys did for me. I'm close to achieving my goal of becoming an apprentice lineman, and I have you to thank for that, because they don't help with CDL training, so I was on my own for that, and I couldn't afford it. You guys are awesome."

### ***Health Care Success Story***

Nallely, a single parent, came into the Pittsburg Workforce Center seeking assistance with training. She had voluntarily left her previous employment to pursue a career in healthcare. While she had already completed her general education requirements, she needed additional support to complete her Registered Nursing degree at Fort Scott Community College (FSCC). Nallely expressed to her Career Advisor that she required assistance with tuition, fees, books, scrubs, and transportation, as she regularly commuted from Pittsburg to Fort Scott. Without these services, she was at risk of leaving college and might not have been able to achieve her long-term goal.

After completing intake, Nallely's Career Advisor conducted an interest assessment to confirm that nursing and allied health were fields that aligned with her interests. Together, they reviewed the assessment and found that several allied health careers, including Registered Nursing, were a strong match. After Nallely was deemed eligible for WIOA Title I funding during the enrollment process, she and her Career Advisor created an employment plan focused on helping her achieve her goal of becoming a Registered Nurse. Nallely began her training at FSCC but was later accepted into Labette Community College (LCC) and was very excited about this move forward due to LCC being a very a



reputable institution, to complete her program.

Nallely maintained regular contact with her Career Advisor, consistently submitting her grades and meeting the milestones outlined in her employment plan. She received assistance with tuition, scrubs, and transportation, both during her time at FSCC and later at LCC. After two years, Nallely successfully completed her Registered Nursing program, earned her license, and graduated debt-free. During her final semester, she gained real-world experience at the hospital where she was ultimately offered a job. Upon graduation, Nallely accepted a position at Mercy Hospital, where she now earns a self-sustaining wage of \$27.28 per hour, enabling her to support both herself and her dependent.

Nallely shared, “I can’t thank you all enough! I don’t know what my life would look like right now had I not heard about you all, but I’m so grateful for the financial and emotional support provided while I worked toward getting my license. I love my job and everything I do

### **Out of School Youth – Work Experience**

When Chance Eckler first came into the workforce center, he was facing significant challenges. At 23 years old, with a documented disability and no clear career path, Chance was struggling to find stable employment. His ultimate goal was to attend post-secondary education, but he wasn’t sure where to start. With limited work experience and no formal education at the time, he sought guidance to help him take his next steps toward self-sufficiency.

Because Chance wasn’t currently in school, he was referred to Adult Education for the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) pre-test, which revealed that he was basic skills deficient in both reading and math. Despite these obstacles, Chance remained determined to improve his situation, and that’s where the workforce center’s support came in.

At the workforce center, Chance connected with his Career Advisor, who took the time to discuss his long-term goals for both employment and education. Together, they completed a thorough interest assessment and conducted career exploration to determine the best path forward.

Chance was eligible for WIOA funding, and this opened the door to his first opportunity—a Work Experience as a Maintenance Technician at Dotson Auto Sales, earning \$13 per hour. This job not only gave Chance his first taste of meaningful employment but also helped him build the skills and experience he needed to advance his career.

In addition to gaining on-the-job experience, Chance’s Career Advisor enrolled him in Lifeworks, a skills-based workshop



designed to help him improve his resume, interview techniques, and soft skills. He also participated in the Future Ready app, which further supported his soft skills development. For completing these assignments, Chance earned a \$100 incentive. He also took the TABE post-test and improved his math scores to the point where he was no longer considered Basic Skills Deficient, earning an additional \$75 for his Educational Functioning Level Gain (EFL).

Although Chance excelled in his role at Dotson Auto Sales, the position wasn't a permanent, full-time opportunity. However, his hard work and dedication didn't go unnoticed. His supervisor, recognizing Chance's potential, reached out to the workforce center to help him find a more stable, long-term position.

This led to a promising connection with Southeast Kansas High School, where a custodial position was available. After conversations between the Career Advisor and the school's superintendent, the school offered Chance another Work Experience, with the potential for the position to transition into permanent employment through On-the-Job Training (OJT).

Now, Chance works a full 40-hour week, and his path toward permanent employment looks brighter than ever. He is well on his way to becoming self-sufficient, and he continues to work with Southeast **KANSASWORKS** to pursue his post-secondary education and career goals. With the work both Chance and Southeast **KANSASWORKS** has done together, he has transformed his challenges into opportunities for growth and success.

Chance shared, "You all have been super helpful since I walked into your place. You helped me become more confident and helped me make a great resume so I can get a good job. Thank you for everything so far!"

### ***In School Youth Success Story – Work Experience***

Jonathan Harvey's path to success is a testament to the power of perseverance and personalized support. At 17 years old, Jonathan, a junior at Neodesha High School, faced several challenges. With an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and a referral from the PreETS program, he qualified for the WIOA ISY program due to his disability and low-income status. Jonathan had a passion for plants and initially expressed interest in working in a greenhouse. But as life often goes, the first placement at TLC Nursery didn't turn out to be the right fit.

Undeterred, Jonathan's Career Advisor quickly found a new Work Experience at the Neodesha After-School Program, where Jonathan truly thrived. Here, Jonathan became a mentor to younger students, assisting them with homework and activities. Described as a "big jolly teddy bear," he earned the admiration of both the teachers and the students, proving his ability to connect with others and rise to the occasion.

In May 2024, Jonathan graduated from high school and participated in a summer work experience as a Construction Laborer/Maintenance Helper at Neodesha School District 461. Throughout the summer, he handled a variety of hands-on tasks like maintenance, cleaning, and parking lot repairs. His commitment never wavered, Jonathan was punctual, hardworking, and eager to prove himself.

Jonathan's success wasn't just about his work experiences—it was also about the comprehensive support he received from the workforce center. His Career Advisor assigned him courses such as FDIC: How Money Smart Are You?, Bring Your A-Game Anywhere, and Pathful Explore to build his financial literacy and job readiness. Jonathan also completed the in-person Lifeworks program, where he honed his soft skills.

Recognizing that Jonathan struggled with anxiety, particularly around speaking to others, his Career Advisor took a personalized approach. They worked together to practice interview skills, helping Jonathan feel more confident in expressing his strengths to potential employers. This tailored guidance helped Jonathan overcome his social barriers, preparing him for future job opportunities.

After completing his summer work experience at Neodesha School District, Jonathan didn't slow down. He applied for a Custodial position at Wilson County Medical Hospital in Neodesha, KS. Thanks to his hard work, preparation, and the skills he developed through the workforce programs, Jonathan secured the full-time role, earning \$14.00 per hour on a day shift with alternating weekends.

This achievement was the culmination of Jonathan's efforts and the support he received from the workforce center. From Resume Writing to Mock Interviews and Job Application Completion, every step of the way was designed to help Jonathan succeed—and he did just that.

Jonathan's story is one of hard work, resilience, and the impact of personalized support. His journey from high school challenges to securing full-time employment illustrates how powerful the right combination of opportunity, guidance, and determination can be.

Jonathan shared, "You all have done a lot for me. I don't think I'd have my current job if it wasn't for you. You guys really worked with me a lot to get me to this point. Thank you!"

### ***In School Youth and Incumbent Worker Success Story***

In Program Year 2020, Skyler Bigley was just a 16-year-old high school student with no prior work experience and the challenges of a documented disability. He wasn't sure how to get his foot in the door of the working world, but he knew he wanted to build a future. Little did anyone know at the time that Skyler's journey with Southeast **KANSASWORKS** would span years and evolve into an incredible success story—one that began with entry-level work and culminated in a high-demand welding career.

Skyler came to the Independence Workforce Center looking for help. He was set to graduate high school in May 2023 but





had never been employed. His lack of experience and disability posed barriers, yet his determination to make something of himself was clear. The Youth Career Advisor quickly recognized that Skyler was eligible for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) In-School Youth Program, and the wheels were set in motion to equip him with the tools and experiences he needed.

Skyler's first breakthrough came when Southeast **KANSASWORKS** helped him secure a Work Experience at Neodesha School District USD 461, where he started working as a construction laborer earning \$10 per hour. This wasn't just a job—it was the beginning of a new chapter. Under the guidance of his Youth Career Advisor, Skyler developed an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), completed the Lifeworks skills workshop, and built his resume, wrote a cover letter, and participated in mock interviews. His dedication earned him multiple incentives, including a \$100 reward for completing Lifeworks and another \$100 for completing his work experience.

Skyler performed so well that Neodesha School District brought him back for another year of Work Experience, allowing him to gain even more skills while still in school. Through it all, Skyler stayed focused on his long-term goal—he told his Career Advisor that one day, he wanted to become a welder.

After graduating high school and achieving the goals set in his ISS, Skyler exited the Youth Program, having built a solid foundation for his future career. But this wasn't the last time Southeast **KANSASWORKS** would cross paths with Skyler.

In Program Year 2023, Southeast **KANSASWORKS** was approached by Tindle Construction, where Skyler had been working full-time. The company was facing significant challenges due to a downturn in the boat industry and feared layoffs in their workforce. Skyler, who had developed his skills at Tindle, was now at risk of losing his job.

Tindle Construction reached out for help with Incumbent Worker funds to retrain employees and avert layoffs. The solution was Carbon material welding—a high-demand skill that would allow employees to shift into a more critical role at the company.

Thanks to Southeast **KANSASWORKS**' quick action, Tindle Construction secured the funding necessary to retrain its employees, including Skyler. The Incumbent Worker Program funded Skyler's training at a total cost of \$8,311.11 per employee, transforming Skyler into a carbon material welder earning \$22 per hour, more than double what he had earned during his initial work experience.

Skyler's story came full circle. Back in 2020, he had expressed his dream of becoming a welder, and that dream became a reality. Skyler not only secured his position at Tindle Construction but also gained valuable, specialized skills that made him a highly sought-after employee in a critical industry.

Looking back, Skyler is a testament to the power of perseverance and the life-changing support of programs like WIOA and the Incumbent Worker Program. Skyler gained experience through Southeast **KANSASWORKS** initially, where he went from a high school student with no work experience to receiving assistance again a few short years later through a completely different program at Southeast **KANSASWORKS**, being retraining by his employer to become a full-time

carbon material welder making \$22 per hour.

### ***KEYS Youth Program Summit***

The KEYS Summit is a one-day event designed to help young adults, ages 16-24 develop skills and motivation needed for success in today's workforce. The event will consist of a keynote speaker, various workshops and panels, and networking opportunities with industry professionals.

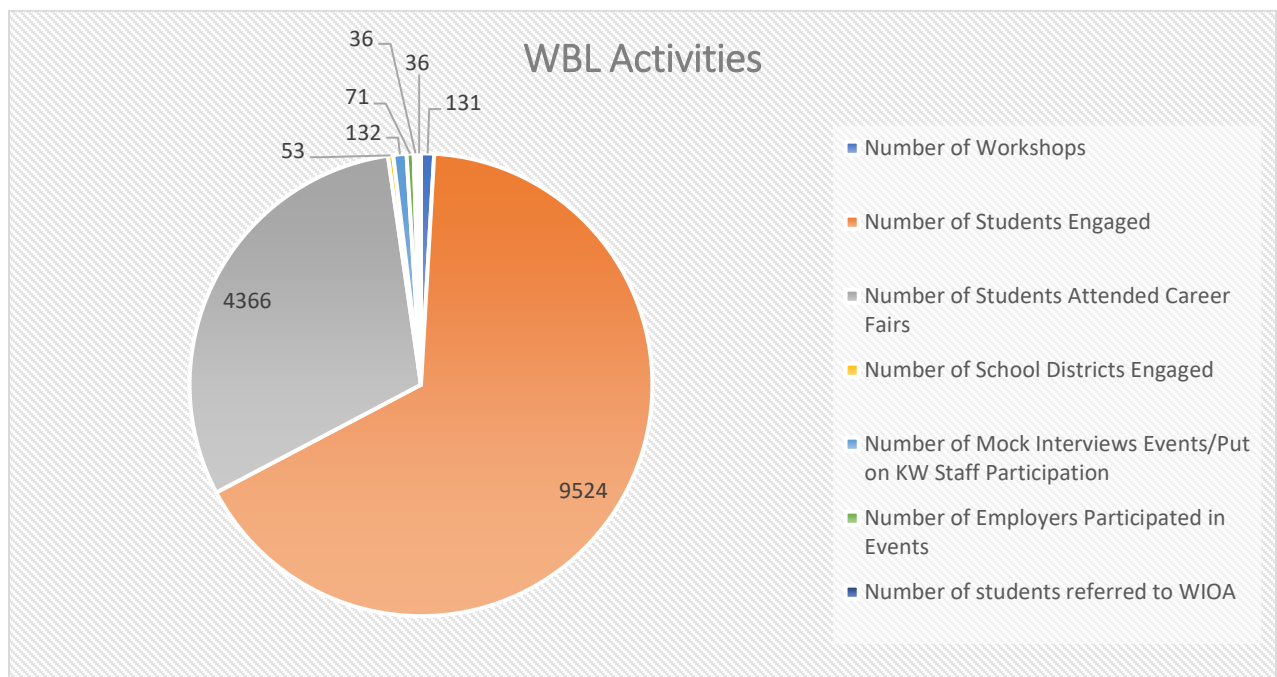
Participants will have the chance to learn about various career paths, hear from successful individuals in their respective fields, and gain valuable insights to opportunities available locally.

In previous years, Southeast **KANSASWORKS** would host one summit per year with the location rotating between regions of our local area. In Program Year 2023 Southeast **KANSASWORKS** hosted three summits in Chanute, Emporia, and Pittsburg serving 320 young adults.



## Work Based Learning Grant PY2023

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Number of Workshops  | 131  |
| Number of Students Engaged                                     | 9524 |
| Number of Students Attended Career Fairs                       | 4366 |
| Number of School Districts Engaged                             | 53   |
| Number of Mock Interviews Events Put on/KW Staff Participation | 132  |
| Number of Employers Participated in Events                     | 71   |
| Number of students referred to WIOA                            | 36   |
| Number of Resulting Student Job Shadows/Internships/Placements | 36   |



### ***Success Story- PrairieLand Partners***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4MNvPVziQ0&t=29s>

Over the summer, the Emporia Workforce Center in partnership with Flint Hills Technical College's Adult Education began a collaborative tour series, "Career Curiosities" to showcase Emporia's various career pathways, opportunities, and to engage with career changers, or, "Career Curious" in the community while providing employers with a new, unique long-term recruitment strategy.

Emporia High School reached out at the end of the summer to join in this partnership to provide Career Curiosities tours that are targeted to High School students enrolled in Career & Technical Education (CTE) Pathways to learn about real-world opportunities in their areas of interest. At the Emporia Workforce Center, the Work-Based Learning and Business

Services Teams worked diligently together to engage relevant employers to host one Career Curiosities Tour a month that aligns with Emporia High School's CTE Pathways and pique students' curiosities about local opportunities. Since these tours are already curated to appeal to student interests, we've also opened registration for these events to surrounding High Schools in Lyon, Coffey, and Greenwood Counties.

In the second quarter, we've hosted two Career Curiosities Tours with four more scheduled for the Spring 2024 semester. We started with Health and Biological Science Pathways with Flint Hills Technical College's Health and Human Services

Department to learn more about careers and training opportunities. The most recent tour was held at PrairieLand Partners LLC with a total of 7 students and one instructor who attended. We had students from Emporia and Waverly High Schools that were able to learn more about career and growth opportunities in an Agricultural and Natural Resource Pathway: learning about necessary skills, training, and the future of agriculture. The tour group displayed excellent engagement with the hosts and asked lots of relevant questions. At one point, a student asked how to communicate his interest with the hosts, took out his phone, and made a

note about how to apply for opportunities with PrairieLand Partners LLC in Emporia, including taking down the names of our hosts. At the end of the tour, our hosts at PrairieLand Partners LLC informed our students that they were so impressed, that if any of them applied, they'd ALL be promised at least an interview.



## **Attachment B**

### **State Board: Goal 3 Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system**

#### **Metrics:**

- **Increase Jobseekers utilizing:**

This goal is to expand outreach and engagement efforts to attract more jobseekers to utilizing **KANSASWORKS**. By enhancing awareness, streamlining access to resources, and providing targeted support, we aim to increase the number of individuals who leverage services to advance their career opportunities. This effort will contribute to addressing workforce gaps and supporting economic growth in Kansas.

- **Increase Employers Utilizing the System:**

The goal is to grow the number of employers using **KANSASWORKS** by enhancing outreach, providing tailored support, and promoting the system's benefits. This will help employers connect with qualified jobseekers more efficiently, ultimately strengthening the state's workforce, support economic development, and foster stronger partnerships with industry organizations.

- **Increase Followings on Social Media Platforms by 50%:**

Followership across all social media platforms is increasing every month, expanding the reach of workforce services information to a wider audience. This growth was driven by strategic content development, regular updates on job fairs, success stories, and targeted social media campaigns designed to engage both job seekers and employers.

To achieve these metrics, **KANSASWORKS** has implemented a variety of strategies, including the following:

**In-Person Job Fairs:** **KANSASWORKS** is utilizing in-person job fairs onsite as a key strategy to boost both jobseeker and employer engagement with the system. These events provide a direct platform for employers to connect with a wide range of qualified candidates, while jobseekers gain immediate access to potential employers and career opportunities. By facilitating these face-to-face interactions, **KANSASWORKS** helps raise awareness of its services, encouraging more individuals to register on the platform and more businesses to use it for recruitment. The success of these job fairs plays a crucial role in increasing utilization of **KANSASWORKS** across the state.

**Virtual Job Fairs:** For PY2023, **KANSASWORKS** hosted Virtual Statewide Job Fairs open for all Kansas employers and jobseekers in August, October, and December of 2023 and February, April, and June of 2024. Those events averaged 63 employers participating and 312 job seekers attending. **KANSASWORKS** also hosted Virtual State Agency Job Fairs in July, September, and November of 2023 and January, March, and May of 2024. These events averaged 243 job seekers



and 10 state agencies. TV and Radio Commercials: **KANSASWORKS** developed TV and radio ads to increase awareness and drive both jobseekers and employers to utilize its services. These ads target a wide audience across the state, promoting the benefits of the **KANSASWORKS** system and will run the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the calendar year of 2024.

Social Media: social media plays a vital role in boosting both jobseeker and employer engagement with **KANSASWORKS**. By using platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and X (formally known as Twitter), **KANSASWORKS** promotes resources, job opportunities, highlight success stories, and share valuable resources. Targeted ads, regular updates, and interactive content increase visibility and attract more jobseekers to register for services. Additionally, social media offers employers a space to showcase their openings and connect directly with qualified candidates. This increased online presence drives greater utilization of the **KANSASWORKS** system.

**EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS**

**Attachment C**

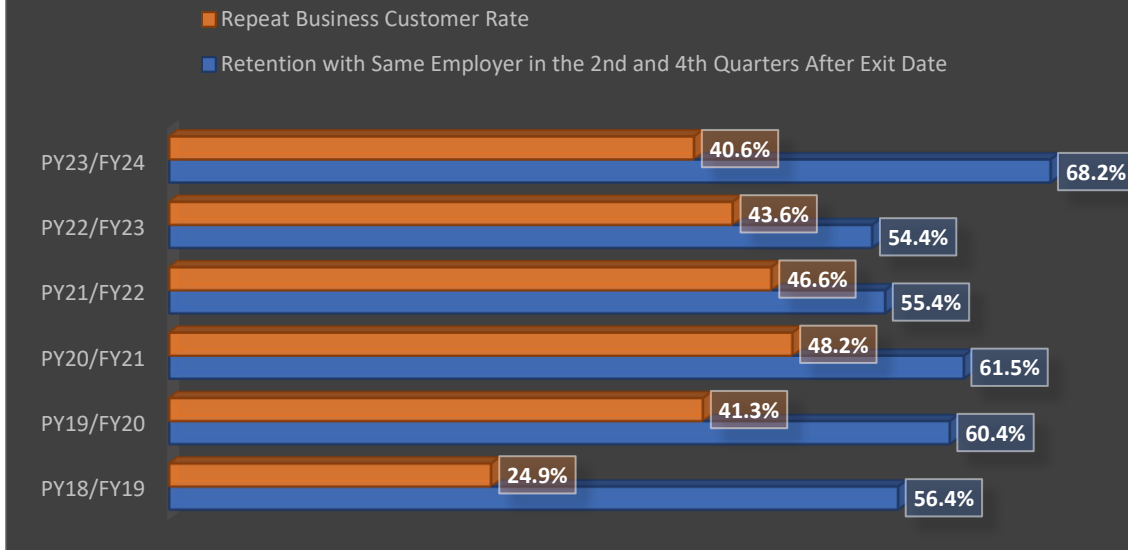
Collaborative efforts between these partners ensured all data for each of the core programs collected during PY2023/FY2024 are combined and reported to USDOL as one set of data. As baseline reporting continues, the Effectiveness of Serving Employers performance indicators reported in the PY2023/FY2024 include the following primary indicators:

1. Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Date
2. Repeat Business Customer Rate

WIOA effectiveness serving employers data shown below.

| <b>WIOA - EFFECTIVENESS SERVING EMPLOYERS</b>  |                           |   |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| <b>STATE:</b> Kansas   | <b>PROGRAM YEAR:</b> 2023 | Certified in WIPS: 9/30/2024 4:42 PM ED |
| <b>PERIOD COVERED</b>  |                           |   |
| From ( mm/dd/yyyy ) : 7/1/2023 8:00 AM EDT To ( mm/dd/yyyy ) : 6/30/2024 8:00 AM EDT |                           |   |
| <b>REPORTING AGENCY:</b>   |                           |   |
| Kansas Department of Commerce  |                           |   |
| <b>EFFECTIVENESS SERVING EMPLOYERS</b>   |                           |   |
| Employer Services  | Establishment Count       |   |
| Employer Information and Support Services  | 2,731                     |   |
| Workforce Recruitment Assistance   | 3,812                     |   |
| Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development                                   | 13                        |   |
| Accessing Untapped Labor Pools   | 97                        |   |
| Training Services  | 139                       |   |
| Incumbent Worker Training Services   | 15                        |   |
| Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance  | 47                        |   |
| Planning Layoff Response   | 32                        |   |
| Pilot Approaches   | Numerator                 | Rate                                    |
| Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Rate             | 15,938                    | 68.2%                                   |
|  | 23,374                    |   |
| Employer Penetration Rate  | 5,725                     | 5.7%                                    |
|  | 100,062                   |   |
| Repeat Business Customers Rate   | 4,484                     | 40.6%                                   |
|  | 11,034                    |   |
| State Established Measure  |                           |   |
| <b>REPORT CERTIFICATION</b>  |                           |   |
| <b>Report Comments:</b>  |                           |   |
| See PY23 Annual Narrative Report for details.  |                           |   |
| <b>Name of Certifying Official/Title:</b>  | <b>Telephone Number:</b>  | <b>Email Address:</b>                   |
| Trent Howerton-Policy Manager  | (785) 230-8094            | trent.howerton@ks.gov                   |

## EMPLOYER EFFECTIVENESS PY2018 - PY2023



As depicted in the charts above, Kansas has experienced a 13.8% increase in retention rates for 2nd and 4th quarters and a 3.0% decrease in repeat business customers over the course of the last program year. As in past years, employers have been reported the need for services such as including supportive services, recruitment assistance, and training services.

Kansas employers continue to receive business services, however, overall progress for the measures of retention and repeat business customers has decreased slightly for PY2023/FY2024. Commerce business service teams expect to expand outreach efforts to promote continuous improvement in the upcoming program year. Albeit slight, the decline of these measures is attributed to system changes, lack of staff resources utilized for outreach efforts across the state, and employer adaptation to the next generation of the state job board, **KANSASWORKS.com**.

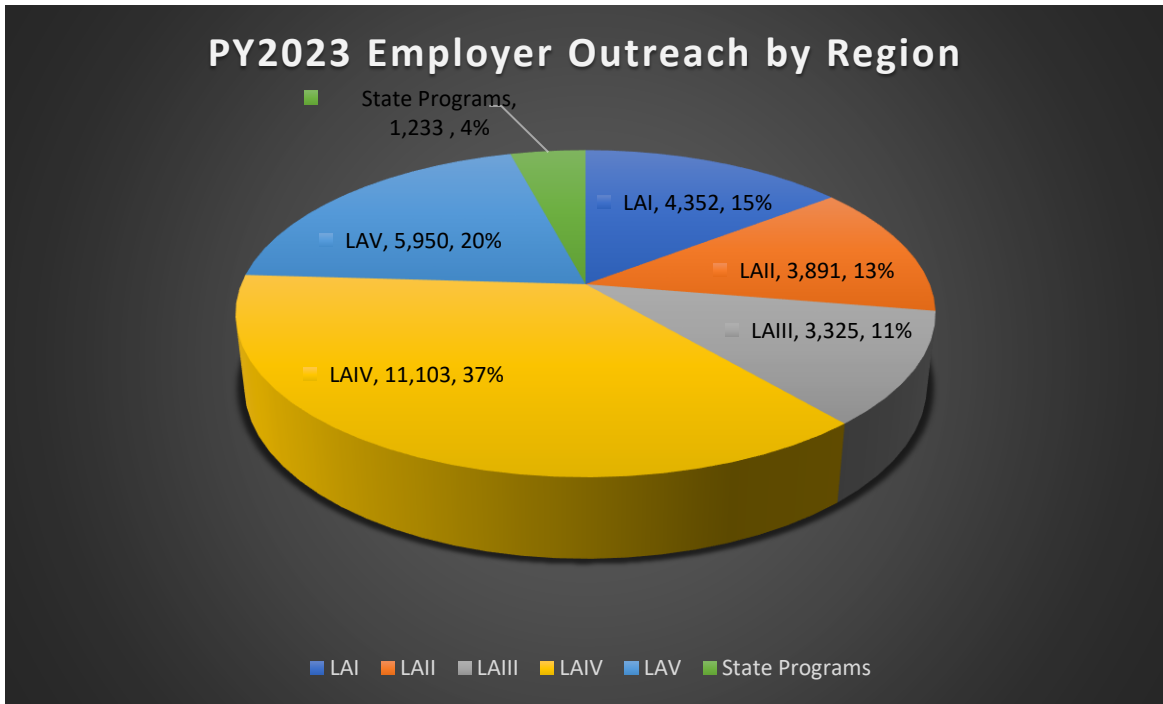
Of the 23,374 employers actively utilizing the **KANSASWORKS.com** system, a reported 46,803 job postings were available as of 6/30/2023. In addition to job postings, repeat business customers received a total of 4,484 services over the course of the PY2023/FY2024. The services to the right represent the activities most utilized by these repeat business customers.

\*The number of employers receiving service in the “Other<sup>1</sup>” row includes activities such as: Available Training Services,

| Service                        | # Employers Receiving Service |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Available One-Stop Services    | 230                           |
| General Outreach Information   | 1,083                         |
| Job Fairs                      | 652                           |
| Job Order                      | 110,214                       |
| Job Order Activities           | 3,565                         |
| Job Order Referral             | 3,835                         |
| Job Placement                  | 5,377                         |
| Job Seeker Outreach Activities | 100                           |
| Job Service Activities         | 341                           |
| Other <sup>1</sup>             | 384                           |
| Recruitment Assistance         | 561                           |
| Registered Apprenticeship      | 104                           |
| RETAINWORKS Outreach           | 652                           |
| Veteran's Employment Services  | 406                           |
| <b>Grand Total</b>             | <b>127,504</b>                |

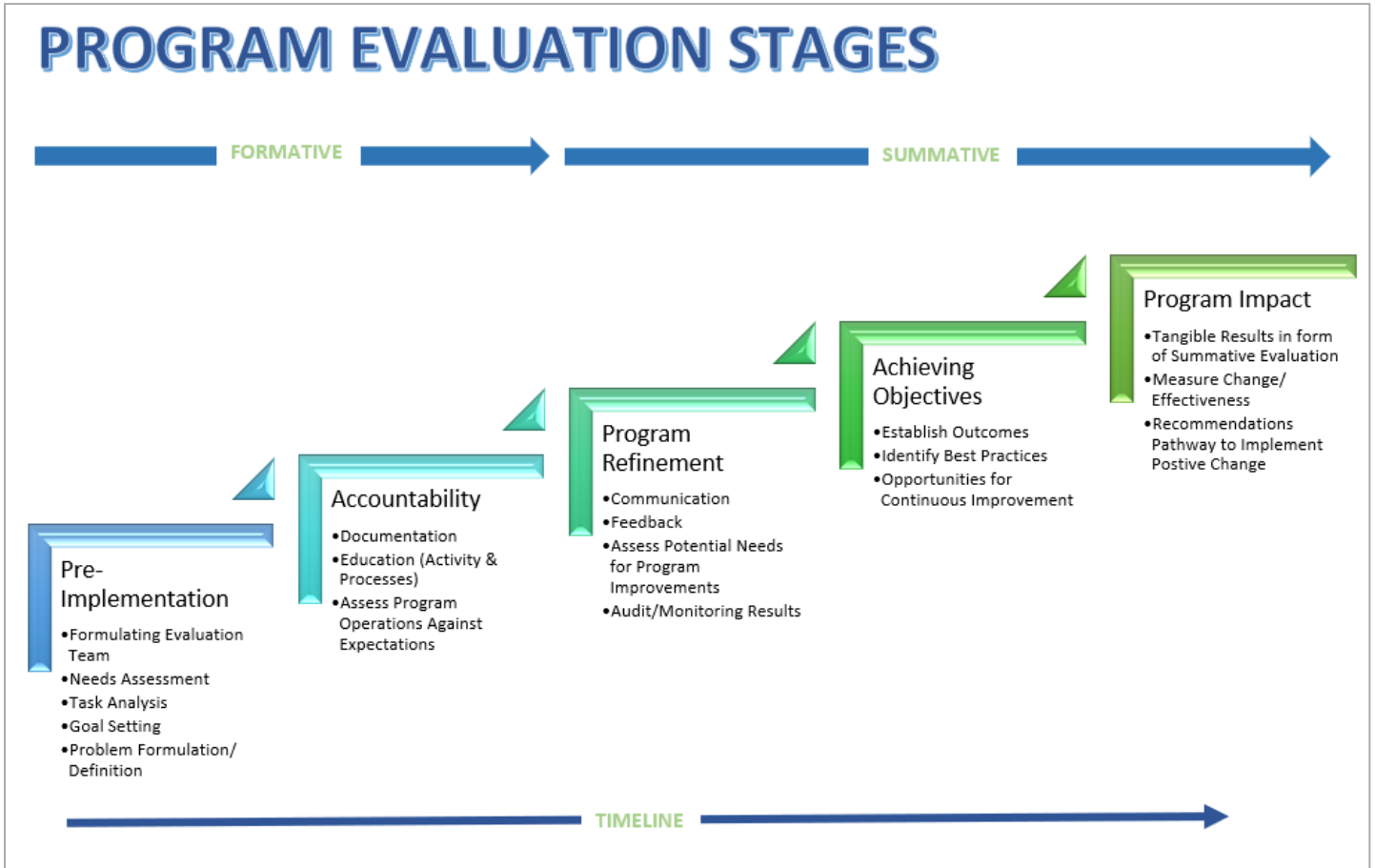
Federal Contract Contact, H2A Activities, Incumbent Worker Training/Services, Job Development, Layoff Planning Assistance, On-the-Job Training Opportunities, Placement Follow-Up, Rapid Response Assistance, RETAINWORKS Provider, Strategic Planning Activities, Virtual Contact, and Work Experience Activities.

To coincide with these employer services, 15,938 participants who gained employment retained employment at 68.2%. Geographically, statewide success was experienced with retaining employees as a result of service delivery and pinpointed job matching between job seekers and employers. The below shows a breakout employer outreach efforts by region intended to increase business engagement in workforce services:



**Attachment D**

Program evaluation stages sheet, as referenced on page 5 of this report.



Program evaluations cited on page 8 of the report have been included in the following two pages.



# Adult Program Evaluation

- This Program Evaluation is based on data from PY21-PY23 for Adult
- For this Program Evaluation of Adult, we will determine the effects supportive services and training have on outcomes for participants.

## The Program Evaluation Objectives Were:

| Sr. No. | Objectives  |
|---------|---|
| 1.      | Evaluate performance and identify best practices across local areas.              |
| 2.      | Determine the effects supportive services have on outcomes for the Adult program. |
| 3.      | Determine the outcome effects from receiving training through the Adult program.  |

## Key Findings of the Program Evaluation – Supportive Services

### Performance Details

- Supportive Services have a positive effect on wages compared to participants that did not receive Supportive Services – although the difference is not very big.
- Participants who receive Supportive Services are more likely to attain employment after exiting the Adult program than participants that do not receive Supportive Services.

## Supportive Services Effect on Wages



## Supportive Services Effect on Employment and Wage Increase



# Adult Program Evaluation

- This Program Evaluation is based on data from PY21-PY23 for Adult
- For this Program Evaluation of Adult, we will determine the effects supportive services and training have on outcomes for participants.

## Training Duration



## Key Findings of the Program Evaluation - Training

### Performance Details

- The average time period for participants receiving training was 316 days.
- Training through the Adult program has a very positive effect on wages for participants compared to participants that do not receive training.
- Participants who receive training through the Adult program are more likely to attain employment after exit than participants who do not receive training.

## Training Effect on Wages



## Training Effect on Employment and Wage Increase



Revised, July 10, 2024

**Evaluation of the Kansas RESEA Program:  
Proposed Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) Design**

The overall objective of this study is to examine the impacts of the Kansas RESEA program on participants' UI reciprocity and employment outcomes. This memorandum summarizes the current structure of the Kansas RESEA program and outlines considerations and requirements for conducting an RCT impact study to evaluate its impacts.

In addition, this memorandum describes the administrative data sources required for this evaluation and the schedule for data collection activities.

**A. The Kansas RESEA Program**

The Kansas RESEA program provides UI claimants with intensive job search services designed to help them return to employment and exit UI quickly. In particular, the program requires service-eligible UI claimants to attend an in-person meeting with trained workforce staff at a **KANSASWORKS** Center. During this meeting, claimants undergo an eligibility review to confirm their compliance with UI work-search requirements and receive reemployment services. In addition to RESEA, Kansas operates the My Reemployment Plan (MRP) program, which requires claimants who do not participate in RESEA to complete online training designed to aid their job search and provide information about available services provided by the State job service.

The two programs are administered as follows. All claimants are eligible for services, except those on temporary layoff, those conducting their search through a union hiring hall, and those enrolled in approved training. Claimants who are not eligible for services may be required to participate in the MRP program after collecting 8 weeks of benefits.

Each week, service-eligible claimants who collect their first UI payment within 5 weeks of filing their UI claim are profiled for participation in the RESEA program. The profiling score, calculated from information provided by claimants in their UI application, has a potential range from 0.000 to 1.000, capturing the probability that the claimants will exhaust their benefit entitlements. Claimants who collect their first UI payment more than 5 weeks after filing their UI claims are excluded from profiling and RESEA participation. These claimants may be required to participate in the MRP program once they collect 3 weeks of benefits.

The Kansas RESEA program does not have the capacity to serve all profiled claimants, so claimants are selected for RESEA participation based on their profiling scores. In particular, claimants with profiling scores of 0.400 or higher are scheduled into available RESEA slots at their **KANSASWORKS** Center, subject to Center capacity. In contrast, claimants with profiling scores below 0.400 are not assigned an RESEA slot but may be required to participate in MRP after collecting 3 weeks of benefits.

The Kansas Department of Commerce (KDC) reports that, in the first 20 weeks of 2024, an average of 279 claimants per week had profiling scores of 0.400 or higher. On average, 201 of these claimants were assigned to an RESEA slot each week.

## **B. RCT Impact Study Requirements**

The primary objective of the evaluation is to conduct an RCT impact study to estimate the effects of the RESEA program on participants' UI spells, benefits collected, employment, and earnings. Following discussions with KDC, it was decided that the study would be designed to estimate both the impacts of the RESEA program and the impacts of the MRP program. Here we propose a random assignment design and implementation procedures.

***Random assignment design.*** The study sample for the RCT impact study will include all UI claimants eligible for profiling, including both those with profiling scores less than 0.400 and those with profiling scores 0.400 or higher. In this context, an RCT study requires a selection system where, each week, these claimants are randomly assigned to one of three groups:

- *RESEA group* – Required to participate in the RESEA program. These claimants will be assigned to an RESEA slot and will be expected to meet program requirements, as usual.
- *MRP group* – Required to participate in the MRP program. Once they collect 3 weeks of benefits, these claimants will be required to meet MRP requirements, consistent with the current practice.
- *Control group* – No requirement to participate in MRP or RESEA. These claimants will be exempted from both the RESEA and the MRP programs and will not be assigned to either program at any point during their UI claims.

If claimants are randomly assigned as above, this study can measure the impacts of the RESEA program by comparing UI receipt and employment outcomes of individuals in the RESEA group with the outcomes of individuals in the control group. The study can also estimate the impacts of the MRP program by comparing the outcomes of the MRP group and the control group. Further, the study can estimate the additional impact of the RESEA program over and above the impact of MRP by comparing outcomes between the RESEA and the MRP groups.

***Random assignment implementation.*** To accommodate the study, each week, the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) and KDC will use their usual process of identifying claimants who are eligible for reemployment services and then, among these, claimants eligible for profiling and participation in the RESEA program. *The study sample will include all claimants who are subject to profiling.*

KDC will forfeit the use of profiling scores for selecting which claimants participate in RESEA. Instead, KDC will use random assignment procedures to assign each claimant to one of the three study groups (RESEA, MRP, and control). Below, we outline the proposed approach for implementing random assignment, ensuring: 1) at least 20% of eligible claimants are assigned to the MRP group; 2) at least 20% of eligible claimants are assigned to the control group; and 3) KDC fills all available RESEA slots at **KANSASWORKS** Centers.<sup>1</sup>

The proposed random assignment procedure is illustrated in Figure 1. This procedure consists of the following steps:

**Step 1:** Each week, KDOL will identify which new UI claimants are eligible for reemployment services. Excluded are claimants on temporary layoff, those conducting their search through a union hiring hall, those participating in approved training, and claimants classified as out of state. Claimants who are not service-eligible will be excluded from the study.

**Step 2:** Service-eligible UI claimants who collect their first benefit payment within 5 weeks of the start of their UI claim will be subject to profiling. KDC will calculate the profiling score for each of these claimants, as usual. The population of claimants subject to profiling is exactly the same as under the pre-study RESEA program.

*All claimants who are subject to profiling will be included in the study sample.* In contrast, claimants not subject to profiling, including those who collect their first payment more than 5 weeks after the start of their claim, will be excluded.

**Step 3:** KDC will begin the random assignment process by assigning each profiled claimant in the study sample a random number ranging from 0.000 to 1.000 based on the uniform distribution. KDC will forfeit the use of profiling scores for selecting claimants for the RESEA program. Instead, KDC will use this random number as described in Steps 4-6 below.

**Step 4:** KDC will automatically place claimants with random numbers equal to or lower than 0.200 in the MRP group. These claimants will be subject to the usual MRP requirements once they collect 3 weeks of benefits. Importantly, these claimants will not be subject to RESEA requirements at any point during their UI claims. The system will generate a flag indicating that these claimants are assigned to the “MRP group.”

**Step 5:** KDC will assign claimants with the highest random numbers within each **KANSASWORKS** Centers to the RESEA group. These claimants will be scheduled for an RESEA slot at their local Center, subject to availability. For example, if Center A has 20 available slots in a given week, KDC will schedule the claimants with the top 20 random numbers into those slots in that week. In particular, KDC will first schedule the claimant with the top random number and then continue to schedule claimants in descending order based on their random numbers, until the slots are filled. The number of claimants assigned to RESEA slots will vary from week to week based on Center capacity.

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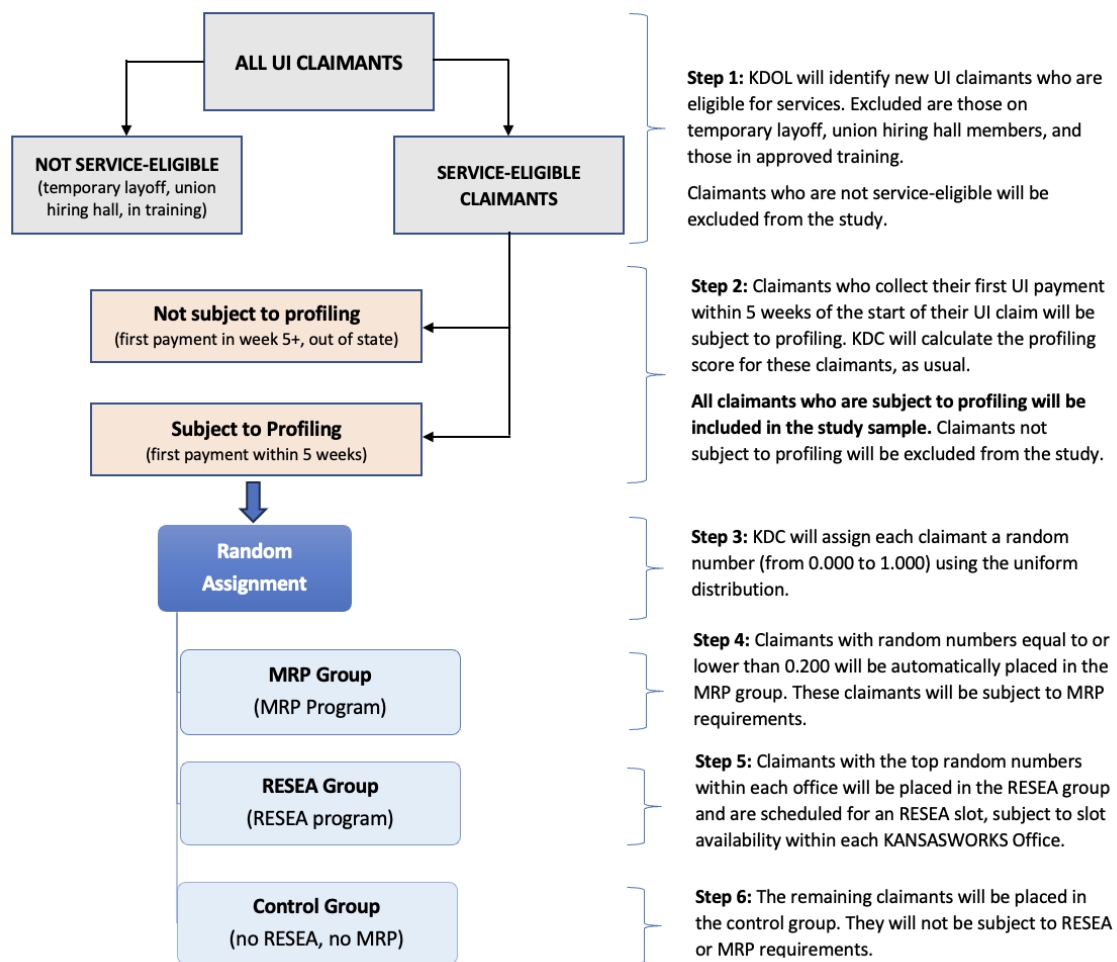
<sup>1</sup> At this point, it is not known what proportion of profiled claimants are scheduled into an RESEA slot. Once we receive this information, we will update these percentages accordingly.



Claimants scheduled for RESEA meetings will receive the RESEA notification and will be expected to complete RESEA requirements, as usual. The system will generate a flag indicating that these claimants were assigned to the “RESEA group.”

**Step 6:** All remaining claimants – i.e., excluding claimants who were assigned to MRP in Step 4 and claimants assigned to RESEA in Step 5 – will be placed in the control group. The system will generate a flag indicating that these claimants were assigned to the “control group.” These claimants will not be subject to MRP or RESEA requirements at any point during their UI claims, regardless of the number of benefit weeks collected.

Finally, subject to sample size considerations, the random assignment procedure will be implemented for 52 weeks, starting in January 2025, and continuing through December 2025.



## C. Data Sources

The RCT impact study will rely on Kansas administrative data, as described below. An Appendix at the end of this document provides a sample list of variables requested for each dataset.

***Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims data.*** These data provide claimants' *baseline UI claim information* and *UI payment information*, as follows:

Baseline UI claim information. Provide claimant characteristics (such as gender, race/ethnicity, age, and education), the workforce region and KANSASWORK Center to which the individual was assigned, the week when the UI claim was submitted, and benefit entitlements. These data also provide the week of random assignment, individual profiling score, random number used for selection, and a flag indicating study assignment (RESEA, MRP, control).

UI payment information. Provide information on all weekly UI payments collected on the claim associated with random assignment, including the date the payment was made, the compensated week, and the benefit amount.

We will ask the State to provide baseline UI claims data for all claimants in the study sample. Moreover, we will ask the State to provide all UI payments collected by claimants in the study sample during their claims associated with random assignment. These data will cover all payments for the period from January 2025 through December 2026.

***UI wage records.*** These data provide quarterly information on earnings from UI-covered jobs within the State of Kansas, including year, quarter, employer industry, and earnings. We will ask the State to provide these data from quarter 1, 2023 through quarter 3, 2027 for all claimants in the study sample.

***RESEA and MRP program data.*** We will ask the State to provide RESEA program data for all UI claimants in the study sample, including: 1) scheduled dates of RESEA sessions, as applicable; 2) completion status of RESEA sessions; and 3) benefit suspensions and disqualifications and reason(s) for suspension/disqualification.

We will also ask the State to provide available MRP program data, providing information on MRP-related activities, including the MRP notification date and all MRP-related activities (e.g., upload resume in the system, complete reemployment plan).

***Employment service data.*** We will ask the State to provide data on the services received by UI claimants in the RESEA, MRP, and control groups from January 2025 through December 2026. These data will include the specific services (orientation, job counseling, job referrals, job-search workshops, etc.) and dates when these services were received.

## **D. Data Collection Activities**

### **1. Develop Data-Sharing Agreement**

Actus will work with the State to develop a data-sharing agreement (DSA) to allow us to access the data needed for the evaluation. The DSA will specify the data that will be transferred to Actus and the conditions for using the data for this evaluation.

## 2. Data Collection

Data collection activities will take place throughout the project’s period of performance. During the RCT intake period (January 2025 through December 2025), we will ask the State to provide the baseline UI claims data on a weekly basis for all UI claimants assigned to the RESEA, MRP, and control groups.

The UI claims baseline data will include individual identifier (ID) that uniquely identifies each individual in the data and other information available at the time of random assignment (see the Appendix for a list of variables). These baseline data will be provided weekly throughout the RCT intake period, with each weekly file including the claimants assigned in that week. These data will enable us to monitor the RCT process and ensure random assignment yields treatment and control samples that are balanced in observed factors.

In addition to the weekly transfer of baseline data, we anticipate six (6) rounds of data collection, starting in July 2025 and at six months thereafter through January 2028. In each round, the research team will obtain available UI payment data, UI wage records, RESEA and MRP program data, and services data. See the Appendix for a list of variables for each of these data sources.

Table 1 presents the data collection schedule and the data that will be transferred at each round.

**Table 1: Schedule of Data Collection Activities**

|  | Sample based on month of assignment                                    | UI wage records     | UI payments, RESEA and MRP program, employment service data |
|--|--|---------------------|---|
| Weekly UI baseline data (Jan – Dec 2025) | All claimants randomly assigned in the selection week                  | --                  | --  |
| Round 1 (July 2025)                      | All claimants randomly assigned between Jan – June 2025                | Q1, 2023 – Q1, 2025 | Jan – June 2025   |
| Round 2 (Jan 2026)                       | All claimants randomly assigned between Jan – Dec 2025 (Entire sample) | Q1, 2023 – Q3, 2025 | July – Dec 2025   |
| Round 3 (July 2026)                      | Entire sample  | Q4, 2025 – Q1, 2026 | Jan – June 2026   |
| Round 4 (Jan 2027)                       | Entire sample  | Q2, 2026 – Q3, 2026 | July – Dec 2026   |
| Round 5 (July 2027)                      | Entire sample  | Q4, 2026 – Q1, 2027 | --  |
| Round 6 (Jan 2028)                       | Entire sample  | Q2, 2027 – Q3, 2027 | --  |

For example, the round 1 data transfer in July 2025 will include information on all UI claimants assigned to RESEA, MRP, and the control group from January through June 2025. The data transfer will provide: 1) UI wage records from quarter 1, 2023 through quarter 1, 2025; 2) UI payments made through June 2025 for the claims associated with random assignment; and 3) RESEA, MRP, and employment service data through June 2025. As these data are likely to come from different data systems, each data file should include individual IDs to allow merging each of these data with the baseline UI data.

Similarly, the round 2 data transfer will occur in January 2026 and will provide data for the entire study sample, i.e., all claimants assigned from January 2025 through December 2025. Round 2 data provide updated data for those assigned from January to June 2025 (who were also included in the round 1 data) and available data for those assigned from July to December 2025. Data transfers in subsequent rounds will provide updated data for the entire study sample, as listed in Table 1.

## Appendix: Data Elements

| UI CLAIMS DATA                 |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Baseline UI claim information† |  |
| Variable name                  | Description  |
| Individual ID                  | Unique individual identifier created by the State                                |
| Claim ID                       | Claim ID number  |
| Date of claim                  | Date the claim was filed   |
| Weekly benefit amount          | Weekly benefit amount allowed on the claim                                       |
| Maximum benefit amount         | Maximum benefit amount allowed on the claim                                      |
| Zip code                       | Zip code of residence (or full address)  |
| Workforce region               | Workforce region   |
| <b>KANSASWORKS</b> Center      | American Job Center code and name  |
| Profiling score                | Individual profiling score   |
| Random number                  | Random number used for assignment  |
| Program flag                   | A flag indicating if individual was assigned in the RESEA, MRP, or control group |
| Date of birth                  | Date of birth  |
| Sex                            | Individual sex (male, female, other)   |
| Race                           | Race (white, black, Asian, Native American, etc.)                                |
| Ethnicity                      | Ethnicity (Hispanic, non-Hispanic)   |
| Education                      | Educational attainment   |
| Veteran                        | Veteran status   |
| Disabled                       | Disability status  |

Note: † = The dataset will include a single record per claimant.



| UI CLAIMS DATA                       |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| UI payment information <sup>++</sup> |   |
| Variable name                        | Description                                       |
| Individual ID                        | Unique individual identifier created by the State |
| Claim ID                             | Claim ID number                                   |
| Date of benefit payment              | Date of benefit payment                           |
| Compensated week                     | The week compensated by the benefit payment       |
| Benefit payment amount               | Benefit payment amount                            |

Note: ++ = The dataset will include one record per claimant per benefit payment. For example, a claimant who collected 10 payments will have 10 records in the dataset, one for each payment.

| UI WAGE RECORDS <sup>+++</sup> |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Variable name                  | Description                                       |
| Individual ID                  | Unique individual identifier created by the State |
| Year                           | Year  |
| Quarter                        | Quarter   |
| Employer ID                    | Unique employer identifier created by the State   |
| Employer ZIP code              | Employer ZIP code (if available)                  |
| Employer NAICS code            | Employer NAICS code (if available)                |
| Earnings amount                | Earnings amount                                   |

Note: +++ = The dataset will include separate records per claimant per quarter per employer. For example, claimants with earnings from two employers in a quarter will have two earnings records in that quarter, one for each employer. Claimants with earnings from one employer in a quarter will have one earnings record in that quarter.

| RESEA PROGRAM DATA*               |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Variable name                     | Description  |
| Individual ID                     | Unique individual identifier created by the State  |
| RESEA meeting date                | Date when the RESEA meeting was scheduled to occur   |
| RESEA completion date             | Date the RESEA meeting was completed (if applicable)   |
| Rescheduled RESEA date            | Date the rescheduled RESEA meeting was scheduled to occur (if initial date was rescheduled)            |
| Rescheduled RESEA completion date | Date the rescheduled RESEA was completed (if applicable)   |
| Date of benefit suspension        | Date benefits were suspended (if applicable)   |
| Benefit suspension reason         | Reason for benefit suspension (e.g., did not attend RESEA, able and available issue, or other reasons) |

Note: \* = The dataset may include separate records per claimant per RESEA activity. Alternatively, the dataset may include a single record for each claimant, with each record including all the RESEA activities.

| MRP PROGRAM DATA**    |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Variable name         | Description  |
| Individual ID         | Unique individual identifier created by the State          |
| MRP notification date | Date when the claimant was notified about MRP requirements |
| MRP activity          | MRP activity completed                                     |
| Date of activity      | Date the activity was completed                            |

Note: \*\* = The dataset may include separate records per claimant per MRP activity. Alternatively, the dataset may include a single record for each claimant, with each record including all the available MRP activities.

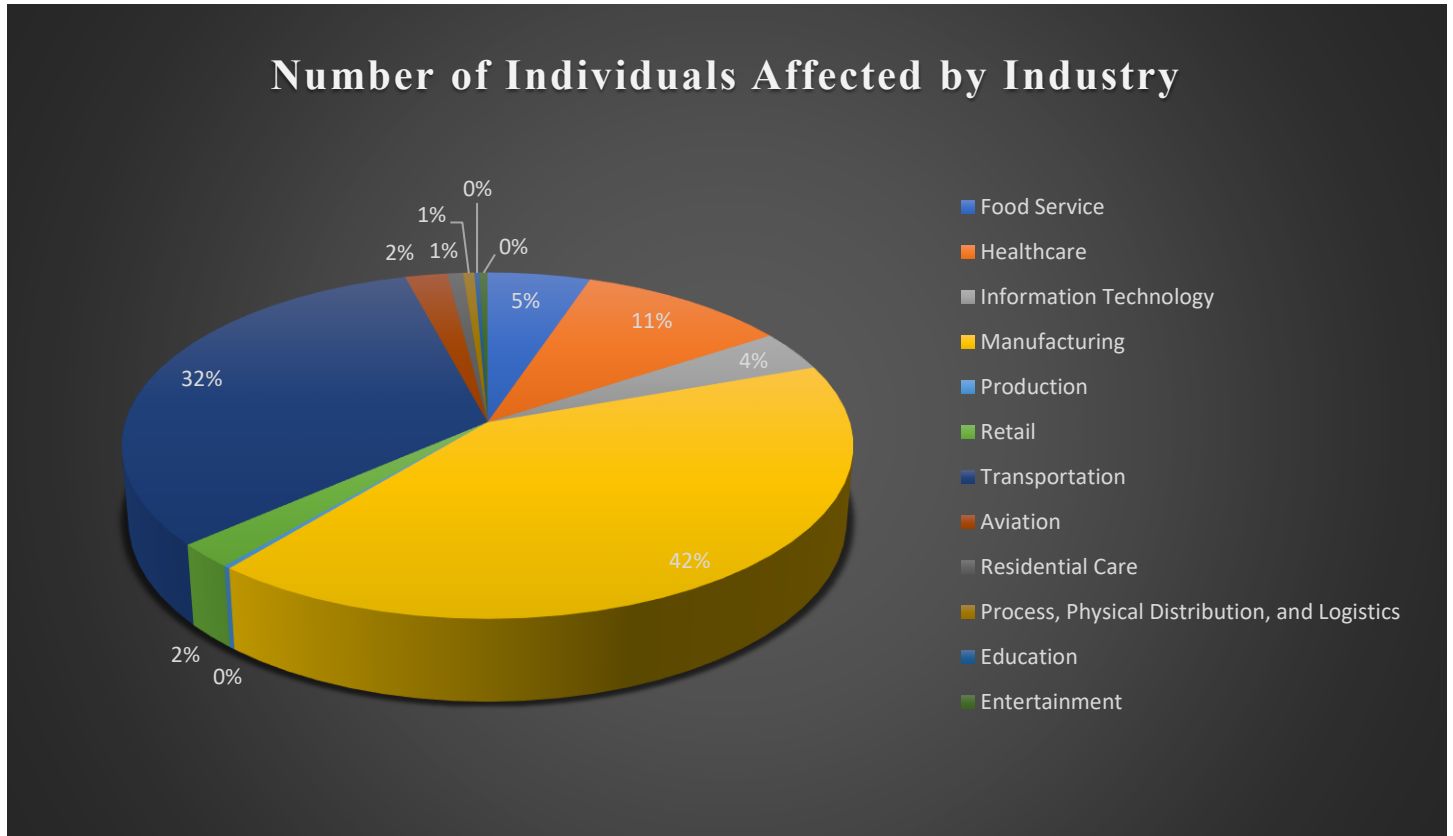
| EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DATA*** |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Variable name              | Description                                       |
| Individual ID              | Unique individual identifier created by the State |
| Service received†          | Type of service received                          |
| Date of service            | Date of service receipt                           |

Note: \*\*\* = The dataset will include separate records per claimant per employment service activity. Alternatively, the dataset may include a single record for each claimant, with each record including all the employment service activities.

### Attachment E

#### Layoff Aversions

Chart below demonstrates PY2023 industries with individuals affected by a layoff in both WARN and Non-WARN categories, as referenced on page 8 of this report.



## **Attachment F**

### **Kansas Apprenticeship Act**

Signed on July 1, 2023, the Kansas Apprenticeship Act allocates \$13M annually to support employers hiring apprentices. To date, the KOA has promised over \$1.6 million in tax and grant incentives to employers, supporting almost 1,000 apprentices and over 100 employers.

### **MeadowLARK Grant**

Over the past year, KOA and its partners leveraged MeadowLARK, State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF-competitive) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, to lay the foundation for aggressive expansion of apprenticeship programs. These programs are expanding access apprenticeship across the state while emphasizing populations with barriers to employment while engaging employers in high-demand and high-wage occupations in each of the local workforce development boards. Our direct partners including Kansas WorkforceONE, Southeast **KANSASWORKS**, Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas, and Workforce Partnership.

Total amount awarded: \$5,916,920

Period of performance: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026

### **The State Apprenticeship Equity, Expansion, and Innovation Grant (SAEEI)**

The SAEEI grant has had some serious momentum within the last year and the seven Multi-Employer Intermediaries are working hard to expand RAP in new occupations. The KOA hosted multiple events this year to convene partnerships between the Local Workforce Boards, the KOA, and business and industry partners. These events were important to increase the number of apprentices and to enhance the number of WIOA co-enrollments. SAEEI Intermediaries are working diligently to create pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship and opportunities for justice involved individuals in Kansas. This funding has helped Kansas expand RAPs into traditional and non-traditional occupations like healthcare and information technology focusing on diversification of RAPs.

Grant award: \$5,681,403

Period of Performance: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2025

### **SAEF Base Funding**

The KOA is using the SAEF Base formula funding to enhance operations and ensure federal compliance for our state apprenticeship agency status. Specifically, the KOA used round 1 funding to integrate modernizations into the established system, including third party program reviews, development of a statewide Equal Employment Opportunity plan, and data integration. However, the KOA is ready to launch enhancement opportunities to engage an even larger audience by creating outreach materials to attract new opportunities to Registered Apprenticeship growth in Kansas, update the website, and

partner with a technical assistance provider to expand 4-year university apprenticeship programs.

Grant Formula Funding Awards:

Round 1/2023 – \$414,927

Round 2/2024 – \$534,340

Period of Performance: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025

### **Registered Apprentices**

4,479 Kansas residents active in a Registered Apprenticeship program

2,854 Registered Apprenticeships associated with the KAC

### **Recognized programs**

183 recognized Apprenticeship sponsors operating in the state of Kansas

585 Active Employers

### **Gender**

Male – 77.77%

Female – 19.85%

### **Ethnicity**

Hispanic – 15.51%

Black – 7.06%

American Indian/Alaskan Native – 2.3%

Asian – 1.47%

Hawaiian/Pacific Islander – 0.57%

White – 79.08%

Did not self-identify – 11.38%

Veteran – 11.22%

Disabled – 2.04%

Unknown disability – 25.45%

| <b>Age</b>  | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent of Total</b> |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 16 – 24     | 1488          | 47.58%                  |
| 25 – 34     | 908           | 29.03%                  |
| 35 and Over | 730           | 23.34%                  |



| <b>Industry</b>                            | <b>Sum of 2024</b> |
|--|--------------------|
| Engineering, Architecture and Construction | 44.06%             |
| Energy and Natural Resources               | 13.95%             |
| Advanced Manufacturing                     | 9.80%              |
| Education                                  | 9.45%              |
| Corporate and Professional Services        | 8.64%              |
| Health Care                                | 7.87%              |
| Agriculture and Animal Health              | 2.54%              |
| Aerospace and Defense                      | 2.28%              |
| IT   | 1.03%              |
| Logistics and Distribution                 | 0.39%              |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                         | <b>100.00%</b>     |

**Kansas Only**

| <b>Top 15 apprentices by the numbers</b>                                 | <b>Count of Program Sponsor Name</b> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Plumbers and Pipefitters Apprentice Training of Kansas                   | 337                                  |
| Hamilton-Ryker TalentGro   | 229                                  |
| Army Corrections Command   | 201                                  |
| Wichita Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee               | 146                                  |
| Western Missouri & Kansas Laborers District Council JAC                  | 126                                  |
| Johnson County Community College (JCCC) Hospitality and Culinary Academy | 103                                  |
| Kansas State Department of Education                                     | 95                                   |
| Topeka Electrical JATC   | 93                                   |
| InterHab Innovation Fund   | 79                                   |
| Independent Electrical Contractors Association of Kansas, Inc.           | 74                                   |
| Dwayne Peaslee Technical Training Center                                 | 64                                   |
| Washburn University Institute of Technology                              | 64                                   |
| Evergy, Inc.   | 59                                   |
| Hutchinson Community College   | 58                                   |
| Spirit Aerosystems Inc.  | 57                                   |

## Attachment G

### ReSpECTWORKS

#### Success Story for program during PY2023:

**Logan T.:** Logan was referred to the ReSpECTWORKS program in January 2023. He was released from facility in February 2023 to the LAII area (Topeka). He was a high school graduate and had some college credit hours from a local Community College. His focus of study was on welding, with hopes of transferring those college credits to the University of Kansas and furthering his education while also working as a welder. Besides welding, Logan had other transferrable skills to include plumbing and construction. He reported having stable housing upon his release (residing with his father). However, his immediate concern, and one he viewed as a huge barrier, was that he was required to register as an offender for his offense. He was certain this would have an impact on his ability to find employment.

Right away, Logan showed initiative in applying for employment. He also completed the Conover workplace readiness curriculum. Within a short period of time, and to his surprise, he was offered two jobs in his area of interest. After consideration, Logan decided to accept a local job with PTMW. The facility was closer to where he resides, and it was within his area of interest (a welding position). In preparation, Logan requested and received supportive services in work-related equipment and clothing needs. Due to some vehicle problems, Logan also received supportive services to assist with his vehicle repair needs to assure he could get to/from work. Logan was able to start this full-time job in mid-March 2023 with initial earnings of \$22.15 per hour. By late April 2023, Logan was promoted within the company of PTMW.

In early January 2024, Logan expressed interest in exploring other employment opportunities. He knew he needed to maintain his current employment but wanted to start his job search efforts through the Topeka Workforce Center in hopes of landing a better job.

With the assistance of the Employment Training Specialist, Logan updated his resume. He also outlined some future goals to include either a career with the railroad or to open his own welding business. In mid-April 2024, Logan shared that he had secured a job with the Pacific Union Railroad. He expressed a great deal of enthusiasm and started the new job with the railroad in early May 2024. His initial earnings were \$28.00 per hour while in training. Upon completion of his training, Logan shared his official position will be as a railroad conductor and he will average an annual salary of \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year. Logan also shared that by securing this job, he has since been able to move out on his own and live independently.

One last goal that Logan wanted to share surrounded his requirement to be on “post-release supervision” (parole) for the remainder of his lifetime and register as an offender for the next 15 years. Logan shared that he is working with a legislative representative to negotiate a decrease in his parole and registry requirements as he, in his words said, “I am no longer that guy.”

As Logan's time with the **ReSpECTWORKS** program came to an end, he was able to express gratitude for the support and services he received during his transition from facility to community. He recognized how he was able to secure the job he wanted and that by helping him with supportive services in the form of tools, work-related clothing, vehicle repair needs, etc, he was able to focus on employment and not stress about barriers. Now, he is looking forward to a promising career that provides a secure income for many years to come.

## Attachment H

### Veteran Services

#### Success Story 1:

Adam, a recently unemployed US Army veteran with no income, was referred to DVOP on September 13th after, completing his RESEA initial orientation at the Workforce Center with a Wagner Peyser staff member. Adam was initially seeking employment as a truck driver but preferred not to go over the road that would take him days away from home.

Adam and DVOP conducted a comprehensive assessment to determine any additional barriers, justify his employment goal and appropriate needed services. DVOP and Adam edited his RESEA employment plan that included additional job readiness responsibilities and actions required from him and DVOP. While under DVOP case management, Adam obtained two temporary driver positions that were not favorable. After taking an employer-mandated drug test with one of those positions, Adam informed DVOP that he had failed the drug test and could not figure out why. In the meantime, DVOP alerted Adam to another driver position with Schwan's Global Manufacturing and Adam attended a Schwan's job fair held at the Salina Workforce Center. Adam had acquired a medication list given to him at the local VA clinic which showed a medication that could affect his drug test. Adam needed to submit his drug test appeal through the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. DVOP assisted Adam in gaining access and spoke with the site's help desk.

Three days after finally gaining access to his account, Adam was contacted by a Schwan's hiring manager who had received Adam's drug test clearance. Adam received a new company orientation and was hired on 2/7/2024 for a driver position that pays \$26.30 per hour. DVOP followed up with Adam over the course of three weeks and was informed that the job is going great. Adam informed DVOP, "Going well actually. Learning their lingo and nomenclature for trailer moves. They have made no bones about my driving skills being outstanding so, I am totally in."

#### Success Story 2:

Betsy is a Campaign Veteran who came to the Workforce Center after her last employer closed the doors with only a note on the door to notify employees. She had been working full-time at Walt's Klassics as a Cook earning \$13.00 per hour. Betsy had multiple barriers to employment: older worker, homelessness, low income, legal issues, and transportation. Betsy came into the Workforce Center in June of 2022 after being unsuccessful at obtaining employment. Betsy was looking for work as a cook or as a general laborer.

DVOP met with Betsy in the middle of June to discuss her employment goals moving forward and to address her barriers to employment. DVOP informed veteran she should accent his 30+ years of experience in interviews. DVOP also assisted her in writing her resume and cover letter. Betsy uploaded her resume to **KANSASWORKS.com**. DVOP shared interview tips with Betsy. Each week Betsy would come into the Workforce Center to search for jobs with DVOP, of

which Betsy would apply online or in person with her resume.

Betsy did not have a driver's license as she had a court fine that she had to pay to get it re-instated. Betsy took public transportation and her bicycle to apply for jobs. This limited her job search as the jobs had to be within the times the bus ran to get to work and get home. Betsy began to get interviews but was not getting any jobs. DVOP spoke to Betsy about doing a mock interview. DVOP inquired about the interviews she had been on. Betsy stated they were not going well. DVOP inquired about her attire. Betsy stated she did not have any good interview clothes. DVOP referred her to the VA - CWT director to get 3 outfits for interviewing. Betsy stated she was also running out of money quickly and needed any job at all.

## **Business Services**

### Success Story 1:

AT &T's Talent Acquisition Manager, Human Resources-Employee Experience, requested assistance in getting the word out and disseminating flyers for their Overland Park/Leavenworth/Kansas City Metro, Two-Day Retail Hiring Events at The Social Club, 6301A W. 135<sup>th</sup> Street, Overland Park. They were attempting to fill their local Retail Sales Consultants positions. LVER and the Workforce Partnership Expanded Business Services Team utilized social media and every resource possible to disseminate AT&T's request to the appropriate job seeking public, Veteran customers, TSMs (Transitioning Military personnel), Veteran families, partner agencies, including the Hot Jobs listing/Bulletin Board posting, and job posting on **KANSASWORKS.com** AT&T sent LVER and our Expanded Business Services Team a hearty Thank You for the "team's super awesome help" in getting the word out and disseminating the information.

They stated they hired more great jobseekers to join the company at the event and filled all openings, writing "Thanks again my friends. YOU ALL and YOUR TEAMS are one of THE BEST AND My Most Favorite!"

## **RESEA**

### Success Story 1:

Dwight came to the Wichita Workforce Center on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to complete his RESEA Orientation. He was having issues finding employment as he had a previous criminal record and did not have computer skills in order to apply for jobs online. Dwight also did not have a resume, nor did he know where to start with creating one. He was interested in painting positions; however, his previous 10 years of experience was in barbering. On November 15<sup>th</sup> Dwight attended a customized resume appointment, where staff highlighted not only his previous 10 years' experience on his resume, but also his painting experience. We were able to remove dates older than 10 years which helped by employers not being able to tell his age on his application, and there were no employment gaps present on his resume due to his previous convictions. On November 14<sup>th</sup>, Dwight attended the Get Hired job fair and was able to communicate with recruiters in aviation - which was his desired field.

As of January 29<sup>th</sup>, Dwight was able to secure full-time employment in an Aviation as a Class C Painter earning \$24.35 per hour. During his initial appointment Dwight reported his minimum acceptable wage as \$8.00 per hour. He is now



working in his desired field earning three times his originally desired wage.

#### Success Story 2:

Cory, a skilled worker faced an unexpected layoff in February and was selected for RESEA in March. Accustomed to traditional job search methods, he initially expressed reservations about utilizing a resume. Cory recognized the evolving job market and was very eager for assistance. His Reemployment Navigator assessed his situation and provided comprehensive job search resources, resume templates, and scheduled a customized resume appointment with Cory. Additionally, Cory's was interested in Aviation, and he registered for the WorkKeys assessment. Cory completed the WorkKeys assessment, achieving a gold certificate. With his certificate from Workkeys, along with his newly crafted resume, it significantly enhanced his job search efforts.

Cory was able to secure a new position with an Aerospace Company as a Machinist starting on April 15<sup>th</sup>. This role offers a competitive hourly wage of \$25, a 10% weekend differential, and a \$1,000 sign-on bonus.

**Attachment I**

**Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act  
Performance Levels  
PY2022 – PY2023**

**Kansas**

| <b><u>Adult Indicator</u></b>                      | <b><u>PY2022 &amp; PY2023</u></b> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit             | 76.0%                             |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit             | 71.9%                             |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit             | \$6,784                           |
| Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit | 76.5%                             |
| Measurable Skill Gains                             | 64.1%                             |

| <b><u>Dislocated Worker Indicator</u></b>          | <b><u>PY2022 &amp; PY2023</u></b> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit             | 77.0%                             |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit             | 78.0%                             |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit             | \$9,653                           |
| Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit | 86.9%                             |
| Measurable Skill Gains                             | 58.1%                             |

| <b><u>Youth Indicator</u></b>                      | <b><u>PY2022 &amp; PY2023</u></b> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit             | 72.3%                             |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit             | 69.4%                             |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit             | \$3,050                           |
| Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit | 66.3%                             |
| Measurable Skill Gains                             | 49.2%                             |

| <b><u>Wagner Peyser Indicator</u></b>  | <b><u>PY2022 &amp; PY2023</u></b> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit | 66.5%                             |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit | 64.9%                             |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit | \$5,653                           |

PY2023 Program to Date of 06/30/2024

|  | PY2022 -<br>PY2023<br>Final<br>Negotiated<br>Performance<br>Goals | Statewide | Outcome | LAI      | Outcome | LAIII    | Outcome | LAIIII   | Outcome | LAIIV    | Outcome | LAV      | Outcome |
|--|---|-----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| <b>Primary Indicators*</b>                         |   |           |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |
| <i>Adult</i>                                       |   |           |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit             | 76.0%   | 78.4%     | Exceed  | 91.8%    | Exceed  | 82.4%    | Exceed  | 77.3%    | Exceed  | 71.9%    | Meet    | 82.2%    | Exceed  |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit             | 71.9%   | 77.9%     | Exceed  | 86.9%    | Exceed  | 83.1%    | Exceed  | 77.6%    | Exceed  | 70.8%    | Meet    | 83.0%    | Exceed  |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit             | \$6,784   | \$8,510   | Exceed  | \$9,032  | Exceed  | \$9,565  | Exceed  | \$8,580  | Exceed  | \$7,711  | Exceed  | \$9,004  | Exceed  |
| Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit | 76.5%   | 77.1%     | Exceed  | 83.7%    | Exceed  | 73.8%    | Meet    | 81.3%    | Exceed  | 67.3%    | Meet    | 65.9%    | Meet    |
| Measurable Skill Gains                             | 64.1%   | 77.2%     | Exceed  | 85.3%    | Exceed  | 76.9%    | Exceed  | 83.5%    | Exceed  | 69.8%    | Exceed  | 63.6%    | Meet    |
| <i>Dislocated Worker</i>                           |   |           |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit             | 77.0%   | 86.9%     | Exceed  | 90.7%    | Exceed  | 75.0%    | Meet    | 80.6%    | Exceed  | 87.7%    | Exceed  | 84.6%    | Exceed  |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit             | 78.0%   | 87.4%     | Exceed  | 94.9%    | Exceed  | 69.6%    | Meet    | 81.3%    | Exceed  | 87.6%    | Exceed  | 95.5%    | Exceed  |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit             | \$9,653   | \$11,846  | Exceed  | \$11,308 | Exceed  | \$10,199 | Exceed  | \$12,810 | Exceed  | \$11,956 | Exceed  | \$10,786 | Exceed  |
| Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit | 86.9%   | 82.5%     | Exceed  | 95.0%    | Exceed  | 90.5%    | Exceed  | 93.1%    | Exceed  | 67.7%    | Meet    | 100.0%   | Exceed  |
| Measurable Skill Gains                             | 58.1%   | 84.0%     | Exceed  | 94.0%    | Exceed  | 96.5%    | Exceed  | 85.0%    | Exceed  | 52.6%    | Meet    | 67.9%    | Exceed  |
| <i>Youth</i>                                       |   |           |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit             | 72.3%   | 79.2%     | Exceed  | 92.1%    | Exceed  | 70.9%    | Meet    | 81.4%    | Exceed  | 83.3%    | Exceed  | 80.4%    | Exceed  |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit             | 69.4%   | 77.9%     | Exceed  | 93.9%    | Exceed  | 71.3%    | Exceed  | 81.4%    | Exceed  | 79.7%    | Exceed  | 76.2%    | Exceed  |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit             | \$3,050   | \$4,882   | Exceed  | \$6,348  | Exceed  | \$4,697  | Exceed  | \$5,914  | Exceed  | \$4,232  | Exceed  | \$4,181  | Exceed  |
| Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit | 66.3%   | 62.7%     | Exceed  | 66.7%    | Exceed  | 62.7%    | Meet    | 74.1%    | Exceed  | 80.0%    | Exceed  | 42.6%    | Meet    |
| Measurable Skill Gains                             | 49.2%   | 62.3%     | Exceed  | 68.6%    | Exceed  | 63.9%    | Exceed  | 59.3%    | Exceed  | 70.1%    | Exceed  | 56.9%    | Exceed  |
| <i>Wagner Peyser</i>                               |   |           |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit             | 66.5%   | 74.7%     | Exceed  | 74.0%    | Exceed  | 68.9%    | Exceed  | 76.7%    | Exceed  | 77.8%    | Exceed  | 71.6%    | Exceed  |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit             | 64.9%   | 73.9%     | Exceed  | 72.4%    | Exceed  | 67.3%    | Exceed  | 75.0%    | Exceed  | 77.2%    | Exceed  | 74.0%    | Exceed  |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit             | \$5,653   | \$8,564   | Exceed  | \$7,682  | Exceed  | \$7,724  | Exceed  | \$9,985  | Exceed  | \$8,951  | Exceed  | \$7,584  | Exceed  |

\*Primary Indicators are per TEGL 11-19 and approved by KANSASWORKS State Board in partnership with Title II and Title IV agencies for Combined YTD Performance

NR = No Participants Reported for this program measures by this LA.

Indicates value used from total current period vs total previous period

NR = No Participants Reported for this program measures by this LA.

Indicates the measure is failing and has dropped below 49% of goal

**Table N – Cost of Program Activities**

| <b>Program Activity</b>   |                                    | <b>Total Federal Spending</b> |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Local Adults</b>   |                                    | \$ 4,190,295                  |
| <b>Local Dislocated Workers</b>   |                                    | \$ 1,143,353                  |
| <b>Local Youth</b>  |                                    | \$ 4,548,176                  |
| <b>Rapid Response (up to 25%) WIA Section 134(a)(2)(B)</b>                |                                    | \$ 417,226                    |
| <b>Statewide Required Activities (up to 15%) WIA Section 134(a)(2)(B)</b> |                                    | \$ 2,076,676                  |
| <b>Statewide Allowable Activities WIA Section 134(a)(3)</b>               | Activities specified in §134(a)(3) | \$ 1,803,058                  |
|   | Local Area Incentives              | 0                             |
|   | Oversight and Monitoring           | \$ 273,618                    |
|   | Registered Apprenticeship          | 0                             |
|   | Workforce Summit                   | 0                             |
| <b>Total of All Federal Spending Listed Above</b>                         |                                    | <b>\$ 12,375,726</b>          |