



COLORADO PY 22

WIOA ANNUAL REPORT

PROGRAM YEAR 2022 REPORT
ON TALENT DEVELOPMENT
ACTIVITIES FUNDED THROUGH
THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT



Colorado Workforce
Development Council

Table of Contents

A Letter from the Colorado Workforce Development Council	3
In Colorado	4
Overview	5
Goal A: Align state policies and flexible resources to ensure all Coloradans have equitable access to opportunities for quality, life-long education and training connected to the future of work.	5
Goal B: Increase the awareness of the TalentFOUND network so more individuals and businesses utilize the available resources to succeed in the wake of the pandemic.	9
Goal C: Promote career agility for all Coloradans.	11
Goal D: Strengthen partnerships to address job quality as well as individual and community level issues impacting economic mobility.	13
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility	14
Waivers	15
State Evaluation Activities	16
All Workforce Programs (Including Wagner-Peyser & WIOA)	19
WIOA Adult	20
WIOA Dislocated Worker	20
WIOA Youth	20
Customer Satisfaction	24
Performance Accountability System	25
Exhibit A - Local Workforce Area Highlights	26
Exhibit B - Workforce Development Programs Strategic Initiatives	44

A Letter from the Colorado Workforce Development Council

Partners across the State of Colorado work to establish a bold direction for our talent development network when developing Colorado's Combined State Plan. Partners set aspirations that catalyze collaboration, create systems innovation, and establish avenues for a host of partners to engage and align in order to achieve collective goals and ambitions. In Program Year 2022 we have built on the work of previous years to further enhance collaboration and strengthen our system to better serve all Coloradans.

Our work is grounded by federal support, and augmented through state and local initiatives to best meet the needs of all of our customers and stakeholders. Therefore this annual report on activities funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is one component of the Colorado Talent Pipeline Report, which offers an in-depth look at the current demand for and supply of talent in the state.

During PY22, Colorado worked toward the goal in the modified Combined State Plan, which was modified in PY21 to better account for the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with rapidly evolving conditions that impacted Colorado's infrastructure, partnerships and programs put in place by our previous system.

The vision of our network is that every Colorado employer has access to a skilled workforce and every Coloradan has the opportunity for meaningful employment, resulting in individual and statewide economic prosperity. We must continue to lean into that vision, together, in order to achieve the success that Coloradans deserve and demand.

In order to be grounded on where we are today, this report contains:

- An update on the strategic section of Colorado's state plan with a summary of results from all core programs;
- Highlights from Colorado's 10 local workforce areas, emphasizing the innovative practices that have been developed (Exhibit A); and
- A synopsis of results driven at the state level by Workforce Development Programs within the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (Exhibit B).

We are excited to share the successes of the third year of our 2020-2023 Combined State Plan under WIOA, and look forward to continued partnership in the years ahead.



Jonathan Liebert, Chair



Lee Wheeler-Berliner, Managing Director



162,500

**JOB SEEKERS UTILIZED
THE PUBLIC WORKFORCE
SYSTEM IN PY2022**



**60% OF JOB SEEKERS FROM
THE PRIOR YEAR WERE
SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED
SIX MONTHS AFTER
ACCESSING SERVICES**



7,175

**BUSINESSES WERE SERVED
BY THE PUBLIC WORKFORCE
SYSTEM IN PY2022**

966,622

JOBS POSTED



54,567

**IN-PERSON SERVICES
THROUGH OUR STATEWIDE
NETWORK OF WORKFORCE
CENTERS, SUCH AS RESUME
ASSISTANCE AND INTERVIEW
SKILLS IN PY2022**



6,674

**INDIVIDUALS WERE
ENROLLED IN MORE
EXTENSIVE TRAINING
PROGRAMS IN PY2022**



**75% EMPLOYMENT RATE
FOR INDIVIDUALS
ENROLLED IN
WIOA PROGRAMS
IN PY2022**

Overview

Colorado's 2020-2023 State Plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) went into effect on July 1, 2020. This report provides an update on the strategic work outlined within each of Colorado's four state plan goals between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, as well as updates on additional items requested via TEGL 5-18. The report includes information from each of the core WIOA programs: Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker, Adult Education, Wagner Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation. The Colorado State Plan was modified in PY22 based on input from partners and the public and in accordance with USDOL rules and requirements, going into effect July 1, 2022. [View the modified WIOA State Plan.](#)

Strategic Goals for the Talent Development Network

Colorado is focused on four goals through the 2020-2023 WIOA Combined State Plan.

- **Goal A:** Align state policies and flexible resources to ensure all Coloradans have equitable access to opportunities for quality, life-long education and training connected to the future of work.
- **Goal B:** Increase the awareness of the TalentFOUND network so more individuals and businesses utilize the available resources to succeed in the wake of the pandemic.
- **Goal C:** Promote career agility for all Coloradans.
- **Goal D:** Strengthen partnerships to address job quality as well as individual and community level issues impacting economic mobility.

Goal A: Align state policies and flexible resources to ensure all Coloradans have equitable access to opportunities for quality, life-long education and training connected to the future of work.

Strategy 1: Formulate, test, and scale the braiding and blending of funding across Programs.

The Colorado Department of Labor & Employment (CDLE) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Employment & Training have built on their successful Disability Program Navigator pilot to support individuals with disabilities to access appropriate programming and supports from both programs. More details are included in the Equity section of this report.

Strategy 2: Promote collaboration models to align and streamline the delivery of stimulus dollars, SNAP 50/50, Colorado Works, and other benefits.

The SNAP E&T Program (SNAP 50/50) served over 3,000 SNAP clients in employment and training services from October 2022 through September 2023, spending the remaining \$800,000 of the \$6 million stimulus dollars. SNAP clients were co-enrolled with workforce center programs and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program to strengthen services and receive wrap-around Services.

Strategy 3: Develop and strengthen programming to support targeted populations.

Promote credential attainment by providing program outcomes data and elevating multiple pathways to different education and training opportunities such as quality non-degree credentials, apprenticeships, and other workforce or work-based learning (WBL) credentials.

As Colorado collaborates with our federal and local partners to build a more equitable registered apprenticeship (RA) system, Colorado is investing significant resources in the public workforce and education system to support employers to build inclusive programs and diversify their talent pipeline.

Following adoption of [HB21-1007](#) in June of 2021, Colorado [received recognition as a State Apprenticeship Agency](#) (SAA) by the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship effective July 1, 2023. On March 23, 2023 Governor Polis signed [SB23-051 Conforming Workforce Development Statutes](#) directing SAA to establish the State Apprenticeship Council (SAC) to provide professional and technical expertise and advise the SAA on registered apprenticeship standards, rules, and performance. The apprenticeship model creates multiple career pathways that connect people to paid work experience, educational instruction, and a nationally-recognized credential. Employers also benefit from these programs, as registered apprenticeships help them strengthen their talent pipelines. Given that many Coloradans cannot afford to quit working in order to pursue training or education, apprenticeships also serve as a powerful tool to help address inequities in the labor market. In PY22, SAA provided a second round of “Scale-Up” grants, following up on the first round of Scale Up Grants awarded in PY21 that are intended to do just that, by allowing employers to invest in building a sustainable system that prioritizes diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. In PY22, 51 new RAPs were developed or expanded with the SAEEI award, representing 78 employers.

Developing inclusive programming with clear career pathways.

Programs designed in PY22 threaded through a combination of state and local strategies. CDLE provided trained staff to simplify the registered apprenticeship program (RAP) requirements for sponsors and partners, and serve as the final point of contact prior to registration with USDOL for all grant-funded activity. Apprenticeship Specialists provide direct support to sponsors, employers, and related instruction providers on program design (29 CFR 29) and a new Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Specialist supports sponsors and Equal Employment Opportunity partners on EEO in apprenticeship (29 CFR 30).

Additional employer supports to develop an equity-driven system.

Two supplemental strategies were leveraged to raise awareness and provide resources to employers and sponsors. The first employer strategy included a second round of competitive “Scale Up” grants issued from CDLE. In May 2023, Apprenticeship Colorado at the Office of the Future of Work awarded over \$699,670 in Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation (SAEEI) grants to 14 organizations across the state to develop, scale and expand Registered Apprenticeship programs. As a result of these grants, 17 employers will adopt the registered apprenticeship model, 12 new apprenticeship programs will be registered, and two current programs will be expanded. Programs will be created and expanded in 16 different industries across the state. Five of these grantees are located in rural regions. Together, these grantees are anticipated to create almost 275 new jobs across the state by June 2025.

The State of Colorado launched an “Apprenticeship Hub” for its second employer strategy to provide statewide coordination of and technical assistance to locally-driven apprenticeship business services and career services. Through a collaboration with the local workforce centers, the Hub provides employers a direct pipeline to the talent they need and funding and services, increases workforce areas’ understanding of the RA model, and maximizes resources through leveraging other investments. Apprenticeship Consultants and Navigators support local business services and help provide technical support to workforce centers and their partners for business services, add capacity for program development and employer outreach in local communities, and coordinate business services across workforce areas. The Consultants and Navigators complement apprenticeship development with both apprenticeship grant funds and existing leveraged resources from other workforce investments.

Diversifying apprentices within occupations where they are currently underrepresented.

The Apprenticeship Hub is the primary strategy within the SAEI grant to support sponsors and employers in implementing an equity-driven recruitment strategy. Building on the work of a prior investment (the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grant), the SAEI grant increases the total amount of discretionary funds allowable per participant to support related instruction, supportives services, and on-the-job learning, and pairs with increasing system-wide support for career seeker-facing roles. In PY21, the SAEI grant coordinator and Apprenticeship Hub worked to conduct a landscape review of gaps in local understanding, engage in strategic planning efforts, hire Apprenticeship Navigators to build local expertise in career supports, and build out the infrastructure for funding job seekers statewide. The SAEI grant coordinator and the Apprenticeship Hub implemented the changes resulting from strategic planning sessions conducted in PY22 in order to build out a sustainable infrastructure between the local workforce system and the new State Apprenticeship Agency. The Apprenticeship Hub employs Apprenticeship Consultants and Apprenticeship Navigators under the SAEI grant to execute and accelerate grant progress. These roles allow the Apprenticeship Hub to better meet the different needs of businesses and career seekers in each local area.

The Hub and CDLE have conducted analysis of data to understand the demographics of individuals served statewide. In PY22, the workforce system served 672 apprentices and 175 pre-apprentices from targeted populations. Of the apprentices served in PY22, 4.3% were individuals with disabilities, 6.3% were veterans, 34% were youth, 2.8% were mature workers, 12.4% were from rural counties, and 45.7% were women. Forty-seven percent identified as BIPOC (4.8% American Indian, 3.9% Asian, 7.1% Black/African American, 0.9% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 30.7% Hispanic). Of the pre-apprentices served in PY22, 32.6% were individuals with disabilities, 6.9% were veterans, 43.4% were youth, 0.6% were mature workers, 2.9% were from rural counties, and 17.1% were women. Seventy-two percent identified as BIPOC (8.6% American Indian, 3.4% Asian, 25.1% Black/African American, 2.9% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 32% Hispanic). This data comes from our system Connecting Colorado. In PY22,

CDLE further explored the apprenticeship data available in Connecting Colorado and in the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS). Using this data, CDLE developed data dashboards in Tableau and launched an Apprenticeship Data website (apprenticeship.colorado.gov/data) to explore the diversity of apprenticeship.

Expanding access to apprenticeships to more individuals with disabilities.

DVR and the CDLE Apprenticeship Team deepened their collaboration in PY22 to provide ongoing, system-wide training. A DVR representative is permanently represented on the Monthly Apprenticeship Expansion call, a statewide convening of apprenticeship partners. Ten percent of the apprentices served through Colorado's workforce centers reported having a disability, which is higher than the USDOL goal of 7%.

Expanding apprenticeships within the state government.

CDLE collaborated with the Department of Personnel and Administration to review policies and co-promote the use of registered apprenticeships within the state government. Governor Polis issued an executive order to further stimulate adoption. In PY22, two additional agencies either expanded or adopted registered apprenticeships: Office of Information Technology (OIT); Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC). The Colorado Energy Office was awarded a Scale Up Grant through SAEI from CDLE to build an apprenticeship program over PY23.

Goal B: Increase the awareness of the TalentFOUND network so more individuals and businesses utilize the available resources to succeed in the wake of the pandemic.

Strategy 1: Educate Coloradans on targeted in demand career pathways and recovery opportunities through the enhancement of My Colorado Journey.

Prepare Partners to Promote My Colorado Journey

The digital tools consultant continued their focus on the management and promotion of My Colorado Journey, including enhancing relationships with partner organizations, providing overviews of the platform to potential partners, planning and executing an outreach campaign, and releasing two new career pathways (Construction and Infrastructure, and Agricultural and Natural Resources), and a communications toolkit for use by state and local government partners, schools, and community-based organizations to spread awareness across multiple stakeholders about these new career pathways as well as the My Colorado Journey platform overall.

Strategy 2: Map and promote in-demand industries in a future-ready way with embedded opportunities for work-based learning and apprenticeships in partnership with businesses and employers.

Additional in-demand career pathways added to the My Colorado Journey platform. During PY22, new career pathways in Construction and Infrastructure, and Agriculture and Natural Resources were developed by the CWDC, CCCS, and partners. In June 2023, they were published on My Colorado Journey. The addition of the new career pathways bring the total number of industries published to 13.

Work-based Learning for CTE Students

For the 21-22 academic year, Colorado realized higher than 27% participation in work-based learning by secondary CTE students who had participated in CTE for two or more years. Participation for two or more years in CTE programming increases the opportunities learners have to access work-based learning. Students who did not participate in CTE programming for two or more years at the high school level had a work-based learning participation rate of less than 15%. Academic year 20-21 was the first year the state measured performance on this indicator and Colorado exceeded the established performance target, even during the pandemic. As CTE programs continue to move forward, we anticipate work-based learning participation to increase and we have worked with partners across the WIOA network to provide technical assistance, playbooks, and other resources to CTE programs and school districts and we will continue to do so. CTE will have finalized 22-23 data at the end of January 2024 to report to USDOE and use to inform work moving forward.

Strategy 4: Tell the story of the public workforce system.

Telling the story of the public workforce system continues to be a priority. In addition to the collateral and content of the Ready to Rise campaign (executed in PY22 and reported on in the previous Annual Report), impacts of the system were highlighted in the 2022 Colorado Talent Pipeline Report and will again be highlighted in 2023. Over 500 attendees registered to attend the virtual launch event in PY22, and over 30 presentations were provided following the event to various stakeholders across the state, highlighting the demand for and supply of talent in Colorado and impacts the public workforce system has on the talent pipeline.

Additionally, in September 2022 CDLE and the TalentFOUND network celebrated Workforce Development Month, providing weekly themes and activities along with resources to boost public awareness of Colorado's workforce system and the ways in which it supports businesses and job seekers. Weekly themes included Workforce Services Spotlight (including staff appreciation); Key Industry Week: Healthcare, Behavioral Health, Education; Key Industry Week: Cyber Security, Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation; and Upskill/Reskill and Apprenticeships.

Career Coaching Collaborative Campaign

In PY22, an online campaign was launched to raise awareness of coaching services and opportunities provided by the Career Coaching Navigation and Collaborative and open access to Colorado's universe of education and training resources. A website and social media campaign were launched to drive online traffic to signup/schedule career coaching services provided in-person at the local workforce centers or via a virtual service for rural Coloradans with transportation barriers. Additional details are provided in the report below.

Goal C: Promote career agility for all Coloradans.

Strategy 1: Focus on career attachment strategies with a path to prosperity.

Resources to advance economic mobility for frontline workers.

This strategy was executed in PY22 and reported on in the previous Annual Report. The website EmpowermentScore.org continues to measure indicators of economic mobility for Colorado's frontline workforce. The Empowerment Score aims to measure individual, community, and economic characteristics that lead to greater employment stability and increased wages for Colorado workers, and empower state and local decision makers to increase opportunities for individuals to improve their economic status.

Strategy 2: Streamline processes to access lifelong upskilling, next-skilling, and reskilling opportunities that do not create undue financial burden.

Deploy innovative financing options to expand access to training opportunities.

During PY22 the CWDC applied to participate in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Talent Finance Design Workshop to help identify concrete next steps in relation to advancing innovating talent finance solutions for Colorado. The CWDC also launched a Talent Finance Design Workshop for 12 project teams with participants across the state representing employers, public workforce, educational institutions and training providers, and nonprofits. Project teams developed plans for using different talent finance tools in order to make training and education more accessible to resource-constrained Coloradans and to address employer talent shortages in various industries. As of November 2023, several project teams continue to advance towards implementation.

Bridging the Talent Gap Survey

Due to the results of the employer-focused survey from the previous year, an employee-focused survey was administered in June 2022 with the goal of increasing understanding and utilization of employer-provided education benefits among Colorado workers.

Strategy 3: Provide supports to businesses and employers to enhance job quality and implement skills-based practices that support individuals.

During PY22, job quality and equity conversations have strongly focused on what employers can do to increase job quality features that can improve recruitment and retention in a tight labor market. These improvements will have the concurrent effect of improving equity and quality in the workplace. The CWDC Employer Coach continues to meet with and present the Job Quality Framework to Workforce Centers and Chambers of Commerce to increase training and conversations on individualized job quality improvement plans for Colorado employers.

During the current project year, focus has expanded to include the employee in the conversations and training of job quality and equity. The Employer Coach presented to over 100 Career Coaches at the Colorado Career Services Symposium with training on incorporating the Colorado Job Quality Framework into their work with job seekers. Career Coaches will have the opportunity in the winter of 2023 to participate in a Technical Assistance module to explore a new Learner Outcome in My Colorado Journey to help job seekers understand and use job quality to their advantage when looking for and applying for new careers.

The Employer Coach has been working with the Business Services Leadership Team in creating a job quality toolkit, based on the Colorado Job Quality Framework for the use of other BSRs and individual employers. This toolkit will include checklists and videos that explain the importance of job quality and equity as well as steps to improve a business' job quality.

Strategy 4: Enhance the delivery of career advising and navigation through technology and staff-delivered services across all system partners.

My Colorado Journey

In PY22, My Colorado Journey (MCJ) prioritized platform enhancements based on a spring 2023 user survey answered by 266 respondents. Users reported they enjoy using the platform as it centralizes different resources, is local to Colorado and is free. Users also reported that MCJ outperforms similar career, education, and individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) platforms, with nearly half of professionals surveyed interested in using MCJ for ICAP. Based on feedback, there is significant potential to further clarify MCJ's purpose and value, as well as expand MCJ to meet the expressed needs of its users with prioritized features.

Further improvements were made to the load speed when searching for programs in the Program finder, and a redesign of the Professional portal was made to improve navigation and ease of use. MCJ increased the number of registered users by 11%, , and increased the average monthly number of page views by 15%, from 20,980 to 24,250. Outcomes completed by users increased 15%. Group training and demonstrations were given to nearly 300 potential professional users.

Career Coaching Collaborative Campaign

In PY22, an online campaign was launched to raise awareness of coaching services and opportunities provided by the Career Coaching Navigation and Collaborative. A website was launched to drive online traffic to signup/schedule career coaching services provided in-person at the local workforce centers or via a virtual service for rural Coloradans with transportation barriers. During PY22, the landing page garnered over 18,311 page views, engaging 12,410 new users, and generating nearly 36,000 events (clicks, downloads, scrolls, etc.). A social media campaign also promoted services in both English and Spanish from March through June of 2023. The campaign generated 4,381 clicks with 636,475 impressions with an overall engagement rate of 3.36% on the Meta/Facebook platform.

Goal D: Strengthen partnerships to address job quality as well as individual and community level issues impacting economic mobility.

Strategy 1: Better serve all individuals in need of support by strengthening the alignment and information sharing across programs, in-person and virtually.

PY22 Encountered multiple technological setbacks in this area, but also saw a substantive amount of time spent aligning partners in-person, especially through the Businesses Services Summit and the Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Association Conference.

Strategy 2: Support local boards in engaging businesses and key employers to address community issues including childcare, transportation, and affordable housing.

As discussed previously, partners in the TalentFOUND network collaborated to produce the Colorado Job Quality Framework to outline features of a quality job and lay out practical steps local communities, employers, and leaders can take to improve job quality in Colorado.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Adult Priority of Service and Additional Underserved Populations

Colorado has implemented a robust [Adult priority of service policy](#) with local service providers seeking to achieve 100% of participants meeting the statutory categories.

Statutory Adult Priority of Service Categories for PY22: 1875/2252 (83.26%) - unique participants

48.31%	1088	Public assistance recipient
62.61%	1410	Individual/Family income
6.08%	137	Homeless
1.02%	23	Foster Child
12.79%	288	Individual with disability - single income
4.13%	93	Free Lunch Recipient
15.10%	340	Basic skills deficient

8.08% 182 Underemployed
(some participants are counted in multiple categories)

Local service providers are actively pursuing outreach to individuals with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA. During PY22 they achieved the following outcome:

Served with Barriers to Employment	94.88%
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Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Program

Colorado's participation in the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI, which ended March 2021) built the foundation for the Disability Program Navigator (DPN) program by establishing working relationships between the workforce system and key disability-focused employment organizations, including Vocational Rehabilitation. Upon close-out of the final round of the DEI, CDLE's Workforce Development Programs (WDP) realized the need to continue the highly successful work of the Disability Resource Coordinators (DRC) from the DEI Grant Round VIII and the importance of leading a statewide focus on serving people with disabilities through the state's local workforce areas.

WDP has been able to expand its operations and take advantage of additional resources by collaborating with other agencies and organizations. In the previous year, WDP established partnerships with CDLE's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and local workforce areas, to initiate the [Disability Program Navigators](#) (DPNs). The DPNs help job seekers with disabilities by referring them to workforce centers and vocational rehabilitation programs for employment and other services. This collaboration has increased client services funding for the disability community, thereby enabling them to achieve competitive integrated employment with a liveable wage. Since the inception of the DPN program, the local workforce areas have assisted over 700 job seekers with disabilities.

Disability Awareness Training: Using the Programmatic Accessibility Course and Toolkit and HB21-1110 Colorado Laws for Persons with Disabilities

In partnership with the Colorado Department of Education, The Rocky Mountain ADA Center (RMADAC), WDP developed the second annual Disability Awareness Training focusing on HB21-1110. After completing the training, participants receive a certificate of completion provided by RMADAC and can earn continuing education units for credentialing purposes. This training is designed to ensure that participants comply with HB21-1110. Through this state legislation, Colorado is the first state to require both state and local governments to meet web accessibility standards ([House Bill 21-1110](#).)

Waivers

Active Waivers

The following waiver was approved in PY20 through June 30, 2023:

- Ability to change youth expenditures from 75% out-of-school/25% in-school to 50% out-of-school/50% in-school for PY20 funds at the state and local levels

Projected Outcomes and Actual Results

The Tri-County local area implemented this waiver in PY22 to target in-school youth (ISY) with drop-out prevention services. Through partnerships with Arvada and Littleton NEXT, Project Search, School to Work Alliance Program, Jefferson County Human Services and Jefferson County Public Schools, Tri-County engaged and supported 56 young adults to continue and complete their education goals while supporting work readiness prep activities.

Tri-County set the following goals in PY22 and exceeded both.

- PY22 Goal: 82% of in-school participants will succeed in dropout prevention by staying enrolled in school and/or graduating high school
 - Outcome: 96.43%
- PY22 Goal: Increase credential attainment rate for all Youth participants from 69% (PY21 goal) to 71%
 - Outcome: 72.22%

In addition to Tri-County, four additional local areas (Adams, Arapahoe/Douglas, Mesa, and the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium) plan to utilize this waiver in PY23. All participating local areas will track and report on the dropout prevention rate for participants on a quarterly basis to CDLE. CDLE will monitor credential attainment rate for the participating local areas.

Active Waivers that were not Utilized

In PY22, the following waiver was approved by USDOL through June 30, 2023:

- Allow local areas to reserve more than 20 percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for incumbent worker training (IWT)

Since this waiver was not approved until December 9, 2022, no local areas utilized the waiver in PY22.

Through its active participation on workforce committees within the National Governors' Association and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, Colorado has taken a leadership role to shape and align waiver initiatives across multiple states and effect workforce policies at the national level.

State Evaluation Activities

Evaluation Initiative with Northern Illinois University (NIU)

WIOA requires WDP to conduct formal evaluations of WIOA program activities to research and test innovative services and strategies and achieve high levels of performance and outcomes. Working with Northern Illinois University (NIU), WDP established a model for WIOA program evaluation using the [Training Placement and Outcomes in Colorado Workforce Areas](#). WDP and NIU continued to provide technical assistance and training for a cohort of local area staff, the WIOA Evaluation Team, to build their capacity to employ a mixed-method evaluation approach involving quantitative and qualitative strategies. Each local workforce area completed a quantitative analysis in the area and is performing a qualitative analysis to understand the “why” behind the numbers. The evaluation team identified best practices in each local area and incorporated recommendations to improve outcomes for the WIOA participants.

The local areas use various tools, including [The Evaluation Tool](#), to independently evaluate outcomes of WIOA programs with an increased emphasis on serving marginalized populations and improving program service delivery. This work has dramatically improved the capacity of state and local workforce area staff to improve yearly program planning to produce equitable access to high-wage employment and to conduct independent program evaluations to make data-driven recommendations that maximize program performance for all customers. Colorado presented the evaluation work at three webinars and the 2023 National Performance Accountability and Reporting Convening hosted by the U.S. Department of Labor. The following tactics were and are being employed by NIU to improve and enhance Colorado’s use of quantitative and qualitative evaluation:

Program Year 2022 Evaluation:

1. Provided state and local training and technical assistance on evaluation processes to enable consistent application of evaluation processes with an emphasis on training-related outcomes, especially for disadvantaged populations. In conjunction with statewide local area evaluation teams, performed a sequential mixed method evaluation of training related outcomes, incorporating an impact study to evaluate training related placement and workforce services for disadvantaged populations.
2. Submitted a final report focusing on performance outcomes and equity in Colorado’s WIOA Programs. The final report identified recommendations and best practices from the 10 local workforce areas.

3. This is the summarized version of the finalized PY21 evaluation report: [Training Placement and Outcomes in Colorado Workforce Areas](#)

Program Year 2023 Planned Evaluation:

1. Provide technical assistance and training for the local areas' evaluation leads for the year's evaluation efforts
2. Conduct a survey of the WIOA Title I participants to gain a better understanding of why some of the disproportionate impacts in outcomes might be occurring among race/ethnicity groups
3. Assist with the design of state and local evaluation reports and provided training to both the WDP Evaluation Coordinator and statewide evaluation team. This report writing will further use, at the state and local area level, of results for planning and performance improvement purposes.
4. The Evaluation team (state and local members) will continue to meet and hone evaluation skills. This investment will support local area evaluation given the costs for contracting such services is prohibitive to do on each program yearly. This team developed tools and created reports using the evaluation tools on the federal and state grants under WDP which will further quality investments and enhance service outcomes.
5. Complete participation in USDOL's Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort - Colorado was selected to participate in the Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC) to learn from experienced evaluators, and state and national subject matter experts to build upon its developed and tested process for conducting WIOA Title I program evaluation. The primary goal was to build research and evaluation capacity and alignment across all four core WIOA programs and other critical workforce partners. Colorado's EvalPLC state team representing core WIOA programs collaborated to develop a capstone project that tests innovative strategies to achieve significant improvements in services impacting education, employment, housing, justice involved and foster youth, as well as all other groups of disconnected youth. This project further built upon the work Colorado is doing to effectively reach youth in the disability community through cross-agency Disability Awareness Training and Disability Program Navigators positioned in workforce centers.

Colorado will participate in and align its current evaluation efforts with those of USDOL, when requested (to date this has not occurred). By providing training to local workforce area staff to employ a mixed-method evaluation approach, Colorado will identify best practices and incorporate recommendations to further evaluate outcomes of WIOA programs. It is anticipated that this increased emphasis on serving barriered populations will increase enrollments and expand service delivery.

Re-Envisioning the Workforce System through Appreciative Inquiry

CDLE's Workforce Development Programs (WDP) conducts a strategic planning process every 3-5 years using Appreciative Inquiry to ensure that its priorities are aligned with the current needs of its stakeholders. WDP issued the [Preparing Colorado's Workforce System for the Future through Appreciative Inquiry](#) report, which documents the themes identified in the PY21 interviews with

120 state and local stakeholders. In PY22, The Division of Employment & Training developed a strategic framework to support local and state planning, inform legislation and policy, guide grant applications, enhance programs in alignment with evaluation recommendations, and enable stronger partnership development. The strategic framework focuses on six Key Results, with goals and strategies for WDP tied to each one:

1. Build a pipeline of skilled talent and quality jobs for Colorado workers to prosper.
2. Innovate and advance strategies to educate stakeholders of the talent and workforce development ecosystem in Colorado and nationally.
3. Return on investment of public funds is realized and demonstrated throughout the public workforce system.
4. Create a seamless customer experience, regardless of the channel of engagement.
5. Increase our reach and brand awareness of the public workforce system, through data driven strategies which lead to higher program success rates and outcomes.
6. Provide tailored, efficient, and effective services that meet the workforce needs of business/industry, resulting in increased job placements, improved employee skills and retention, while fostering partnerships with chambers and economic development.

Colorado Workforce Development Council - Continuous Improvement Process

The State Council has developed a policy that includes a set of standards for awarding Performance Incentive Funds. This Policy Guidance Letter (PGL) can be accessed at the following link: [GRT-2023-01: PY22 Performance Incentive Funds](#) and includes the following:

- Rating Scale
- Reporting Template
- Application Guidelines
- Best Practices Form

PY22 Performance Incentive Funds were issued in the Fall of 2022.

Adult Education Evaluation Efforts and Outcomes

The Office of Adult Education initiatives (AEI) offered opportunities for all Title II Adult Education programs to gather, share best-practices, learn about current state data trends, and ask questions. These in-person and virtual “Office Hours” provided space to dig further into state data and demographic information. Additionally, the Adult Education Program Coordinators and our Data Coordinator met routinely with Title II Adult Education providers to assess program specific data and talk through areas of success while offering suggestions on ways to improve learner retention and credential access. Other evaluation efforts regarding grant compliance also took place throughout the year.

Workforce Intelligence Data Expert Workgroup (WIDE)

During the implementation of WIOA in 2015, local workforce directors designated their local staff to participate in a statewide data expert group to ensure consistency of workforce-related data. As a result of the partnership, which is a collaboration of Colorado’s Workforce Center System and the Colorado Workforce Development Council, the WIDE group has created systematic changes in how all

federally funded workforce programs utilize data as a decision-making tool for program evaluation and design.

WIDE worked closely with directors, State MIS, and other stakeholders to create a data system that provides actual wage data for WIOA Title I and Title III workforce programs to evaluate the effectiveness of programming through earnings outcomes for any program year back to 2010. In this report, the WIDE group is able to evaluate outcomes utilizing actual median earnings data for any exit cohort based on the following data points: 2 Quarters Prior to Program Registration; Entry Quarter Registration; 2 Quarters Post Exit; 4 Quarters Post Exit; Year 2 Post Exit; Year 3 Post Exit; Year 4 Post Exit.

Based on the methodology, the following measures were found for the Colorado Workforce System after WIOA implementation:

- Colorado statewide cost per participant for individuals receiving career services through any Title I or III programs.
- Colorado statewide cost per participant for individuals receiving training services through any Title I or III programs.
- In addition, WIDE has compiled the Return on Investment (ROI) for all programs in the previous two bullet points that are outlined in the charts below.

Please note a data lag in PY data due to the time required to report longitudinal wage data and Unemployment insurance wage reporting periods. This lag is generally 1 program year.

All Workforce Programs (Including WP & WIOA)

Year	Number of Participants	Allocation	Expense	Cost per Participant	Total ROI
PY17	203,913	\$32,448,365	\$33,971,235	\$166.60	\$374,652,444
PY18	191,774	\$30,802,813	\$33,572,679	\$175.06	\$373,115,445
PY19	313,327	\$29,681,120	\$32,570,428	\$103.95	\$285,873,575
PY20	376,582	\$28,869,434	\$30,836,570	\$81.89	\$600,102,850
PY 21	144,304	\$34,625,353	\$35,323,951	\$244.79	\$335,744,721
5-year ROI Total	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	\$1,969,489,035

WIOA Adult

Year	Number of Participants	Allocation	Expense	Cost per Participant	Total ROI
PY17	3,191	\$7,893,417	\$11,476,864	\$3,596.64	\$19,346,216

Year	Number of Participants	Allocation	Expense	Cost per Participant	Total ROI
PY18	3,099	\$7,397,094	\$10,649,881	\$3,436.55	\$19,392,975
PY19	2,328	\$6,664,946	\$9,321,861	\$4,004.24	\$9,253,206
PY 20	2,296	\$6,159,846	\$9,184,641	\$4,000.28	\$13,455,679
PY 21	2,942	\$8,065,914	\$11,239,786	\$3,820.46	\$21,572,982
5-year ROI Total	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	\$83,021,058

WIOA Dislocated Worker

Year	Number of Participants	Allocation	Expense	Cost per Participant	Total ROI
PY17	1,469	\$6,621,207	\$4,202,883	\$2,861.05	\$16,969,281
PY18	1,243	\$6,102,421	\$4,455,415	\$3,584.40	\$17,087,589
PY19	1,096	\$6,026,154	\$4,764,265	\$4,346.96	\$11,262,111
PY20	1,284	\$5,991,897	\$5,656,628	\$4,405.47	\$14,630,460
PY 21	1,338	\$7,295,993	\$5,037,820	\$3,765.19	\$17,423,276
5-year ROI Total	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	\$59,949,441

WIOA Youth

Year	Number of Participants	Allocation	Expense	Cost per Participant	Total ROI
PY17	2,605	\$8,511,996	\$8,431,623	\$3,236.71	\$2,692,217
PY18	2,626	\$7,952,674	\$8,828,866	\$3,362.10	\$2,582,678
PY19	1,909	\$7,167,065	\$7,907,015	\$4,141.97	\$868,865
PY20	1,464	\$6,773,853	\$6,461,918	\$4,413.88	\$2,204,282
PY 21	1,719	\$8,860,712	\$7,749,981	\$4,508.42	\$3,335,899
5-year ROI Total	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	\$11,683,941

In addition to state and local area ROI reporting, the WIDE group has accomplished many other items during PY 21 and PY 22. There is significant overlap and coordination between the WIDE team and the statewide WIOA evaluation workgroup completing needed evaluation activities. WIDE has also supported the CWDC on grant and funding requests including data needed for the Tech Hub application requests that were awarded in fall of 2023, data on Colorado’s behavioral health industry, data for OEDIT and their regional roadmap planning efforts for the EDA, and more. WIDE is also currently working on the development of a white paper on clean vehicle fleets to support CDOT, and development of a tool to identify the value of and return on investment of business services efforts. WIDE continues to work to share best practices among local regions as well as providing the CWDC with additional labor market and economic data support as needed.

Statewide Performance Measures

Measures are for PY22, July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Colorado met all statewide performance by at least 106.3%.

Title I PY22 - Adult

PY22 (unadjusted) data submitted to the National Reporting System in November 2023

Adult Measures	Statewide	Standards
Q2 Employment Rate	75.34%	75.0%
Q4 Employment Rate	73.27%	70.0%
Median Earnings	\$9,158.00	\$7,273.00
Credential Rate	73.66%	78.8%
Measurable Skills Gains	67.95%	63.5%

Title I PY22 - Dislocated worker

PY22 (unadjusted) data submitted to the National Reporting System in November 2023

Adult Measures	Statewide	Standards
Q2 Employment Rate	74.79%	74.0%
Q4 Employment Rate	78.32%	76.0%
Median Earnings	\$11,312.00	\$10,500.00
Credential Rate	81.96%	70.0%
Measurable Skills Gains	66.62%	65.0%

Title I PY22 - Youth

PY22 (unadjusted) data submitted to the National Reporting System in November 2023

Adult Measures	Statewide	Standards
Q2 Employment Rate	73.97%	68.2%
Q4 Employment Rate	72.72%	67.0%

Adult Measures	Statewide	Standards
Median Earnings	\$4,966.00	\$4,073.00
Credential Rate	60.39%	62.0%
Measurable Skills Gains	63.50%	55.0%

Title II PY22 - Adult Education

PY22 (unadjusted) data submitted to the National Reporting System in November 2023

Adult Measures	Statewide	Standards
Q2 Employment Rate	24.00%	21.60%
Q4 Employment Rate	15.15%	24.00%
Median Earnings	\$6,756.00	\$5,750.00
Credential Rate	16.55%	17.60%
Measurable Skills Gains	44.48%	40.00%

Title III PY22 - Wagner-Peyser

PY22 (unadjusted) data submitted to the National Reporting System in November 2023

Adult Measures	Statewide	Standards
Q2 Employment Rate	60.33%	55.0%
Q4 Employment Rate	56.83%	56.0%
Median Earnings	\$7,848.00	\$6,200.00

Title IV PY22 - Vocational Rehabilitation

PY22 data based on the final submitted RSA-911 and ETA-9169 reports

Common Performance Measures	Performance	Target
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	57.5%	51.8%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	53.8%	49.8%
Median Earnings	\$5,146	\$4413
Credential Rate	33.1%	25.5%
Measurable Skills Gains	25.37%	32.0%

Effectiveness In Serving Employers

Colorado has elected to track all three proposed employer measures as defined by USDOL. In addition, we have implemented an employer satisfaction measure that is described in the Customer Satisfaction section below.

- **Employee Retention Rate - PY22 Outcome: 63.82%**
 - Local business services staff have very little control over the employment choices of participants and the retention decisions of employers. Additionally, future labor

shortages predicted by LMI will create a labor market that encourages employees to switch employers for better wages, benefits, etc. However, this measure resulted in the highest outcomes of the three pilot measures.

- **Repeat Business Customer Rate - PY22 Outcome: 23.82%**
 - The listing of a job order is the most frequent service that occurs, but happens without staff assistance in most cases. Employers who list orders most frequently are those with high turnover and low paying jobs, which does not align with the purposes and intents of WIOA and this performance measure. Staff assisted and customized services should be the only ones that trigger outcomes for this measure.
 - This measure does not speak to effective service for small employers and for states where small employers represent the vast majority of businesses served. Even if excellent service has been provided, a small employer's need for additional services may not occur a second time during the period of performance. This measure discourages services to small businesses that may have the greatest need for assistance.

- **Employer Penetration Rate - PY22 Outcome: 1.91%**
 - In many cases there are multiple sites with the same FEIN, the key employer identifier, which can skew results. In addition, there is a seasonal pattern of additions of new businesses and losses of failed businesses in many states. As a result, using the final month or quarter of the reporting period does not work; this should be an average of some kind over the entire period of performance.
 - In general, this measure makes sense because it encourages expansion of services. But it may work better to measure the increase in additional businesses served rather than the actual penetration rate, given the differences between rural and urban communities. For example, an increase of three employers in an area with only 300 employers would be more significant than an increase of three employers in an area with 30,000 employers.
 - The tie to percentage of employers using core program services versus all employers in the local area is much less useful than penetration by the 3-digit NAICS sector. This would tie to WIOA's mandate to focus on sector strategies rather than simply increase the number of businesses served.

Customer Satisfaction

Employer Satisfaction Data

Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser – Workforce Development Programs, CDLE

Through the Statewide Business Services Alignment initiative, local business services staff identified 11 staff-assisted business services available to all business customers. Businesses receiving any of the core services are automatically emailed a customer satisfaction survey. The standardized questions asked on each survey result in metrics that provide staff with valuable information that can be utilized to address issues with their service provision, and create an open feedback loop that supports continuous improvement. A report of outcomes is available on

demand, and works in conjunction with a business services report that shows the volume of business activities and highlights the placement rate achieved by businesses in workforce center supported efforts. Employers receiving services were asked to rate the following statement: “My engagement with the workforce center helped me find the right number of employees with the skills and experience I need.” PY22 Outcome: 96.77% of employers were satisfied or very satisfied.

The Office of Adult Education Initiatives, CDE

Title II Adult Education programs did not collect employer satisfaction data in PY22 or prior years. The majority of allowable activities under Title II funds are customer-facing services rather than

employer-facing services. The Office of Adult Education Initiatives (AEI) shared employer name, address, and FEIN with Workforce Development Programs at CLDE for inclusion in statewide percentages for approaches 2 and 3, repeat business customer and employer penetration rate, of the effectiveness in serving employers measure on the WIOA Statewide and Local Performance Report.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, CDLE

As a means of measuring customer satisfaction among business customers, DVR's Business Relations Unit (BRU) has an established customer satisfaction process designed to gather feedback across five key satisfaction measures. The satisfaction ratings per key measure for PY22 include: 1) Timely and courteous service (96%); 2) Information or service met my needs (94.13%); 3) BRU staff member was knowledgeable on the topic (95.93%); 4) Overall satisfied (95%); and 5) How likely are you to seek services from the BRU again (91.13%). When combined, these measures resulted in an overall customer satisfaction rating of 94.44% for the period of PY22. The Business Relations Unit continues to lean into the hybrid business model of providing services to businesses both virtually as well as in-person, based on the preference of the business customer. This has allowed for the Business Relations Unit to be more creative in our service delivery model and meet a variety of business needs and requests. Through this continued adaptation, the Business Relations Unit continues to maintain a high customer satisfaction rating among our business customers.

Job Seeker/Customer Satisfaction Data

Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser – Workforce Development Programs, CDLE

During PY22 local areas in Colorado conducted independent job seeker customer satisfaction surveys through the use of locally determined survey questions and methodologies. Because of the closure of offices during the pandemic, the transition to virtual services, and the diversion of staff resources to assist customers with unemployment insurance claim issues out of the control of workforce centers, use of surveys was limited until offices reopened. Those that were used primarily focused on customer satisfaction with virtual workshops rather than overall program services or workforce center experiences. In addition, due to variations in methodologies, survey results were not comparable across local areas.

The Office of Adult Education Initiatives, CDE

Three Title II Adult Education programs piloted collection of learner satisfaction data in PY22. Learners were asked to identify their primary goals for participating in adult education and to then evaluate the extent to which their adult education classes helped them move toward or achieve those goals. 80% respondents indicated a goal of finding employment and 99% of those learners indicated that their adult education class helped them find a job or a better job. 51% of respondents indicated a goal of helping children at school and 89% of those learners indicated their adult education class was helpful for them in supporting their children in school. The survey will be rolled out with all Title II Adult Education programs in PY23.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, CDLE

DVR makes a customer satisfaction survey available to all customers, as well as employers, vendors, and other stakeholders interacting with DVR staff. DVR received 216 survey responses between July 2022 and June 2023. DVR leadership monitors survey responses and uses the information gathered to identify opportunities to improve the experience of all customers.

Results over this period of time demonstrate that 74%% of DVR customers are satisfied with the level of service they receive from DVR. This reflects an 8% drop in the level of satisfaction from the prior year. DVR continues to monitor survey results and seek opportunities to improve the customer experience through staff training and process improvement efforts. Additionally, DVR's State Rehabilitation Council completed a comprehensive customer satisfaction survey in the fall of 2020. 77% of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their overall experience with DVR. This SRC intends to repeat the survey annually to further support DVR's ability to focus on improving the customer experience.

Performance Accountability System

Monitoring System

CDLE's comprehensive monitoring system, recognized as a model by the US Department of Labor (USDOL), is the result of an on-going monitoring and technical assistance process that has built a strong working relationship between the State and the Local Workforce Areas. Quarterly, State Monitors from CDLE review the local areas they oversee to analyze client service levels, program expenditure rates, and performance outcome results. Through these reviews, staff identifies areas that may require additional technical assistance and training to rectify any deficiencies prior to the start of the annual state compliance monitoring. For the PY22 annual monitoring cycle, CDLE is in the third year of a Unified Monitoring Process with a team consisting of the CDLE Regional Services Unit (RSU), Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU), and Equal Opportunity Officer (EO). For more detailed information regarding the Unified Monitoring Process, please see the following Policy Guidance Letter: [ADM-2021-02: Unified Monitoring Process](#)

At-A-Glance Reports

A key support to these reviews are the quarterly At-A-Glance reports that capture critical performance indicators for each local area. This report contains data from the WIOA reporting

system and the state financial system; it paints a picture of the current progress toward program and fiscal performance goals.

Common Exit Policy And Data Validation

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

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

Exhibit A - Local Workforce Area Highlights

Adams County Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Mission: Create opportunities for success by connecting businesses to a quality workforce.

Vision: To effectively connect a world-class workforce that meets the needs and exceeds the expectations of our partners in the Adams County business community.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

The WIOA customer intake process for customers to be approved for training was taking approximately 80 days to be approved through the Management Information System/Quality Control (MIS/QC) review process. This was due to a number of factors such as proper documentation of eligibility and case manager accuracy. This delay was impacting the ability of ACWBC customers to be approved and enrolled in training in a timely manner which impacted their training plans and ultimately their ability to obtain employment.

The goal was to complete the WIOA customer intake process within 19 days from start to finish.

ACWBC held two Kaizen events facilitated by a member of the Adams County People and Culture team. Kaizen is an approach to creating continuous improvement based on the idea that small, ongoing positive changes can reap significant improvements and is a Lean Management

tool. Kaizen focuses on eliminating waste, improving productivity, and achieving sustained continual improvement in targeted activities and processes of an organization.

The first Kaizen event included WIOA and MIS/QC team members and the second event was with the MIS/QC team. During these events the teams reviewed the intake process to identify and eliminate unnecessary steps to reduce time wasted and identify efficiencies. Through this process there were also several technological challenges that were identified that required assistance from the Adams County IT department.

Through the Kaizen events ACWBC was able to create a process map to show each step of the intake process and set expectations for all WIOA case managers and MIS/QC staff. Developing this process map developed standard steps of the intake process reducing errors, eliminated time wasted and ultimately reduced the overall number of days to complete the intake process. The process map was utilized over the next few months with great success reducing the number of days of the intake process from 80 down to 16.

Innovation in PY22:

Utilizing the Kaizen Lean Management tool was valuable as it included the people who do the work to develop solutions to address the problem. Having everyone involved allows for a clearer picture of the current process, identifies waste, and is a collaboration of all voices to develop a solution. The collaboration of the team creates buy-in and a clearer understanding of expectations which improves the process. It is different than the old way of having management look at a problem and develop a solution without looking at all the factors that may be contributing to the problem. ACWBC focuses on continuous improvement strategies and utilizes Lean tools on a regular basis to improve processes, enhance services to customers, and meet the needs of those most needing our programs and services.

Arapahoe/Douglas Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Vision: To be a best-in-class workforce development organization responsive to the dynamic needs of job seekers and business/industry.

Mission: To strategically invest in human capital to contribute to regional economic vitality.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

The Arapahoe/Douglas Works! FutureU Young Adult team hosted a Summer Job Hunt Boot Camp

in-person event in June 2023 to assist young adults ages 14-18. This comprehensive event equipped 19 young adults with the knowledge and tools to succeed in finding summer jobs. Nineteen young adults attended all four days of the boot camp and engaged the presenters with some great questions. On the fifth day, A/D Works! hosted a youth job fair that was open to the public. The young adults who attended this boot camp received VIP status at the job fair. The topics of the Bootcamp included Emotional Intelligence, Career Assessments and Career Exploration, Labor Market Information, how to find job openings and how to identify job scams, resume building, and interviewing. BellCo Credit Union presented on budgeting and created practice budget sheets to see how the young adults' potential earnings lined up with their anticipated expenses. Dress for Success and ARC were present with a Success Bag containing professional work/interview clothes and ARC vouchers to be able to purchase items. Seeing the young adults arrive in job-ready attire at the job fair was rewarding. All 19 boot camp attendees came to the job fair, and there were 36 additional young adults who came to the job fair seeking employment opportunities. The biggest accomplishment of this event was that all 19 participants attended the in-person boot camp and stayed engaged throughout the entire series for all four days. There were no "drops-outs" at this event. Since the pandemic hit, putting on an event like this with consistent engagement from young adults has been challenging, so to see the engagement and retention was gratifying.

Additionally, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was named as the local area who would house the Colorado Apprenticeship Hub. The Colorado Apprenticeship Hub was given administrative duties for the SAE, ASE and IDEA grants, and was ultimately responsible for the successful administration of these grants. While the Hub model has had various success when used for other grants, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was able to make the hub model highly successful for the apprenticeship grants. In September 2022, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! hired a new Apprenticeship Manager to oversee the Colorado Apprenticeship Hub, and the Apprenticeship Manager created and implemented key changes to the structure of the Hub model and the Registered Apprenticeship Consultant role starting December 1, 2022. As a result of the changes made by the Apprenticeship Manager starting December 1st, 2022, as well as due to phenomenal efforts from the Registered Apprenticeship Consultants, the ASE grant was able to close out successfully meeting grant goals by March 31, 2023 and the IDEA grant was able to gain momentum. For the IDEA grant, there were 140 enrollments from July 1, 2021 to November 30, 2022; however, from December 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, there were 306 new enrollments into the IDEA grant. It is noted that this success would not be possible without the outstanding work by the Colorado Apprenticeship Hub Registered Apprenticeship Consultants, and the local area partnerships and staff statewide.

Moreover, as another notable accomplishment, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! had its first Workforce Development Professional Apprentice complete the apprenticeship program. The apprentice completed the program successfully and was immediately offered a position as a Workforce Specialist on the Career Services team within Arapahoe/Douglas Works! After only a few months in her new role, she applied and was promoted again to a Lead Worker on her team.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works! has hired a new apprentice that is also proving to be successful while training in this work-based learning model.

Innovation in PY22:

The Colorado Apprenticeship Hub, housed at Arapahoe/Douglas Works!, was able to make key innovations to the IDEA grant that has led to the grant being used more effectively across the state. The Colorado Apprenticeship Hub removed the state-wide cap on participant expenses and instead gave all local areas a set amount of IDEA money to use with an enrollment goal attached. The local areas goals were not put into MOUs, which is very typical. Instead, all of the agreements were left informal for the purpose of moving money quickly between regions to ensure programs could be funded in the timeframe they needed. This innovation regarding how to utilize a Hub model to administer a grant has resulted in a higher level of support for apprenticeship programs across the state. A notable success story from this is the support Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was able to provide to Apprenti, a national apprenticeship sponsor who specializes in IT apprenticeships and has connections to major employers including Microsoft. Apprenti was establishing their first apprenticeship program in Colorado to see how successful a program could be in the state, and they needed their first cohort of apprentices to be supported with more money than Arapahoe/Douglas Works! had available. Instead of having to tell the Apprenti that Arapahoe/Douglas Works! could only support a portion of the cost of the apprenticeship, the Colorado Apprenticeship Hub housed at Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was able to transfer funds from Denver County to Arapahoe/Douglas Works! with a single email, ensuring that all of the apprentices from Apprenti's first cohort were fully funded, making a great first impression with a valued partner.

Boulder County Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Vision: To promote workforce development through service integration and a flexible response to the changing needs of our clients and customers.

Mission: To provide comprehensive and effective employment, training, and supportive services

to Boulder County residents.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

Workforce Boulder County (WfBC) recognizes and understands the challenges of our local workforce system in providing equitable and accessible pathways to career success. Economic crises, including the 2008 recession and recent experience with the pandemic, can spur long periods of unemployment — a downturn that is particularly detrimental for young workers at the onset of their careers, according to a [blog post](#) from the nonpartisan think tank New America. These gaps can lead to depressed wages and increase a young person's risk of future unemployment.

Boulder County has a unique challenge in that we have a highly educated talent pipeline, with 95.5% of people as high school graduates or higher (for 25 years+) and 62.9% with a bachelor's degree or higher (for 25 years+) during the timeframe of 2017-2021 (Source: US State Census Bureau, July 1, 2021), which makes it more challenging for youth who have less education to enter the workforce. Research shows that when young people are connected to the workforce, it increases the likelihood that they will be employed and earn family-sustaining wages later in life. Work-force devel-op-ment and edu-ca-tion-al sys-tems and insti-tu-tions, as well as the com-mu-ni-ty orga-ni-za-tions that sup-port them, can respond by expos-ing young people, par-tic-u-lar-ly those of col-or, to work-force train-ing and ini-tia-tives that help young adults earn cre-den-tials, employ-ment expe-ri-ences and vital career con-nec-tions through appren-tice-ships, intern-ships, job opportunities and oth-er types of Work Based Learning opportunities. Young adults need access and exposure to career pathways, including opportunities for hands-on learning, and positive relationships with adults that support growth and development.

Investing in the educational needs and career development of youth can have long-term benefits for both the individual and for our community by promoting economic and societal justice, reducing inequality, and increasing career pathways. Workforce Boulder County (WfBC) created a vision for building and strengthening a youth service delivery system that aligns with the current economic landscape and the topics related to the Academy:

“To help young adults realize their full career potential
in an opportunistic local workforce system.”

WfBC crafted this vision to capture the needs of both ends of the career development continuum, the individual and the business. We aim to cultivate potential in youth from underrepresented backgrounds, while also shifting the culture of a variety of in-demand industry sectors across Boulder County. WfBC and our partners have strong interest and experience to explore and address this vision.

As with traditional pipelines, blockages, barriers, and holes can stop youth from entering and reaching this destination. As a result, it is crucial to design and implement an ecosystem of supports for youth in a way that reduces barriers. This is especially important for supporting youth of color, whose historically rooted disadvantages make it more difficult to overcome the barriers that affect all students and present special barriers unique to those communities. Simultaneously, it is important for WfBC and our partners to increase our understanding of and shift workforce systems toward equitable access to quality jobs and viable career pathways. Employers are a key part of our workforce ecosystem, and we aim, through support of the Academy, to include growing occupations and industries into our strategic planning to actualize our vision. Additionally, our educational partners, such as Front Range Community College, are an integral component to build workplace skills and employability for youth.

The priority topics we hope to explore are as follows:

- Increase awareness and access of WfBC and a network of partner agencies to youth in our community, particularly youth from underrepresented communities
- Increase equitable access to career pathways and quality jobs in growing industries
- Create, strengthen, and align data-tracking systems that measure holistic progress of youth, that includes their development of “human skills” (ex: increased confidence, understanding of their strengths and talents, growing career development skills, and more)
- Grow together, share with one another, and increase our own awareness as practitioners in learning how to meet the unique needs of youth
- Develop a coordinated system to include voices of youth in programmatic and system change

Innovation in PY22:

WfBC, Colorado Works, and CAP prioritize integration and collaboration to explore needs, generate solutions and implement strategic initiatives. Our implementation team (WfBC, Colorado Works (TANF), and Community Action Programs) collectively have decades of experience and training in serving underreported communities, people in poverty, and people with challenges in accessing gainful employment. The WfBC Young Adult team has deep knowledge of the aspects of career development, including career exploration and assessment, labor market trends and growing industries/occupations, career planning and coaching, resume creation and tailoring, job searching and networking, interview preparation support, life skills building, and helping youth recognize their unique career potential. Support from this several-month Academy will offer valued infrastructure and technical assistance for our primed implementation team. WfBC and our selected partners are brimming with wisdom, experiences, and ideas. We are excited and ready to bring these ideas to fruition and work in the community towards system-level change for our youth most in need.

Mission & Vision:

Vision: Every Colorado business has access to a skilled workforce and every Coloradan has access to meaningful employment, resulting in statewide economic vitality.

Mission: To foster business-focused workforce partnerships, effectively preparing rural Coloradans for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

The Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium (CRWC) is a consortium of 10 sub-areas comprised of 51 counties. The sub-areas include: Broomfield, Eastern, Pueblo, Rural Resort, Northwest, South Central, Southeast, Southwest, Upper Arkansas, and Western. Broomfield is county-run, while the remaining sub-areas are state-run. Four of the nine state-run sub-areas have contractors that deliver Title I-B services.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

The CRWC desired to host something Consortium-wide that would lead to an opportunity for professionals to connect and interact with one another. The CRWC had not held an in-person all staff retreat since pre-pandemic and we were gearing up to host this event in June 2023. We also were preparing for the next steps of the reorganization of our organizational structure. We explored opportunities that would lead to a co-purpose of employee engagement and brand visibility and a platform to showcase the CRWC services and expertise.

Our goals in PY22 included:

1. Brand Visibility and Promotion: Connect with local area business, partners and stakeholders in a more personal, fun setting while being able to showcase the CRWC business and job seeker services
2. Employee Engagement: Empower staff to interact with one another to build stronger relationships, and foster a sense of camaraderie among colleagues using a common theme to promote service delivery.

Offices across the sub-areas performed events, open houses, and other informational activities in celebration of "May the Workforce Be With You" month. Staff from the Alamosa Workforce Center were interviewed on May 2nd by the local radio station KGIW/KALQ/KZBR. During the interview staff provided information about "May the Workforce Be With You" during the month, and upcoming activities. An overview of business services offered by the Workforce, along with job seeker services was discussed during the interview. Outreach with other radio stations in the area was conducted in order to provide information of upcoming events. Staff also provided basic information to the local newspaper regarding an event held on May 4th.

On May 4, 2023, the Alamosa Workforce Center hosted a "May The Workforce Be With You" event. An open house and a resume/application workshop was held for job seekers during the morning, in which customers were assisted in creating and/or refining resumes. Application tips were also provided in preparation for the "Reverse Job Fair" which took place during the afternoon. Virtual job fairs can be difficult in the area, so a staff member came up with the idea of having a "Reverse Job Fair" in which job seekers would be sent to the employers, and the employers/businesses would have someone available to personally speak with and accept applications, or be available to personally talk to them and conduct virtual/phone interviews (this was helpful to businesses as many are short staffed, and those that couldn't travel to the business could contact them by phone). Approximately 30 individuals attended this event, with a total of 58 jobs available from participating employers.

The La Junta office held a "May the Workforce Be With You" Star Wars Themed Open House for the public and employers, complete with decorations and refreshments. A total of 23 total individuals attended, including representatives from three different companies/agencies as well as several job seekers who attended this event.

The Trinidad Workforce Center held a "May The Workforce Be With You" open house on May 17, 2023. Refreshments were served, and all attendees were invited to "Sign our Wall" Workforce information was shared during the open house, in which 34 individuals attended.

The Walsenburg Workforce Center held several events in honor of "May The Workforce Be With You" month. An employer's Workshop was held with six attending. The Senior 55+ Workshop had six that attended, and one attended the Veteran's Workshop. The Adult 25+ Workshop had two in attendance, and one attended the Youth Workshop. A gift card or prize was awarded through a drawing at each event.

The Sterling Workforce Center in partnership with the Community Economic Development of Sedgwick County Director assisted in the planning, recruiting and marketing of the Sedgwick County Job Fair held in Julesburg on May 9. Eleven employers in areas of agriculture, food service, corrections, production and health care participated in the Job Fair in addition to the Workforce Center and Economic Development. Unfortunately, job seeker attendance was disappointingly low. The event was marketed through Connecting Colorado and Social media avenues (Eastern Colorado Workforce Centers, Employ Northeastern Colorado, Sedgwick County Chamber of Commerce, Community Economic Development of Sedgwick County and Individual employer social media accounts). The marketing template for the CRWC's "May The Workforce Be With You" initiative was used to promote this Job Fair.

Overall, 27 events were held across the Rural Consortium including: job fairs, open houses, workshops, hiring events, presentations and video creation. Staff engaged in healthy competition, using creative approaches to promote the “May the Workforce Be With You” theme.

Innovation in PY22:

The “May the Workforce Be With You” events were a new, creative approach to highlighting the services available through the Colorado Workforce Centers. This was a fun way to bring together multiple generations, breaking the norms of our traditional way of doing things and introducing some new ways to highlight the services available to job seekers and businesses across the CRWC.

Denver Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Vision: Our economic strategy must be boldly ambitious, with innovative, forward-thinking policies that are intent upon delivering a world-class city where everyone matters. The Denver Workforce Development Board will be the sought-after partnership model of business, workforce, community, educational, and civic leaders that empowers all job seekers to learn and grow so they can contribute to and fulfill the needs of a vibrant business community.

Mission: Denver Economic Development and Opportunity will be a driving force that advances economic prosperity for the City of Denver, its businesses, neighborhoods, and residents through purposeful and intentional economic development that (1) broadens the tax base; (2) stimulates balanced economic growth through business assistance, neighborhood revitalization, and the development of a skilled workforce; and (3) focuses on innovation, sustainability, and education. The Denver WDB convenes key workforce partners including business leaders, education partners, and the Mayor’s economic and workforce development team who plan and oversee the use of federal, state, and local funds to deliver talent development solutions to Denver area businesses so they can generate employment opportunities for all job seekers and provide Denver citizens with a thriving economy.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

Grand opening of Webb Workforce Centers, our service delivery was limited to one location and virtual platforms due to the many reasons after the pandemic. The closure of physical locations restricted our ability to provide in-person services, which affected jobseekers' access to resources and employers seeking talent. Additionally, Montbello Workforce Center was recognized as a valuable community resource but lacked a distinctive brand identity that could effectively communicate its role as a jobseeker hub. It was also located at the back of the building, making it

less visible and accessible for visitors. The operations were structured around a five-day workweek, limiting flexibility and availability for virtual services and staff training.

The goal of this best practice was threefold:

1. Rebranding Montbello Workforce Center: To establish a new and impactful brand identity for Montbello Workforce Center that accurately represents its function as a jobseeker and employer hub, providing tailored support to both jobseekers and employers in talent acquisition, training, and workforce development. Our goal was to enhance customer experience and engagement by relocating the workforce center to the front of the building, providing a more welcoming approach. Additionally, we aimed to optimize virtual service delivery and staff training while ensuring consistent access to resources and support.
2. Open a new location at Webb and City and County of Denver Engagement: This engagement included communication, partnership, and alignment of goals of Denver Workforce with the City and County of Denver to ensure that the new location's services are well-integrated into the existing community ecosystem. It involves working closely with local authorities, organizations, businesses, educational institutions, and community leaders to understand the specific needs and requirements of the area, as well as to leverage existing resources and opportunities.
3. Reopening DEN Workforce Center at the airport: To resume in-person services at DEN Workforce Center, offering job seekers and employers a dynamic and accessible physical space for job search assistance, career coaching, employer connections, and training opportunities. To strengthen business engagement efforts and build sustainable partnerships with employers to foster workforce development and enhance the job market at the airport.

The opening of DEN and Webb Workforce Centers involved the collaborative efforts of the Workforce Center management team, the Employer Services team, and the Jobseeker Services team. Extensive preparations were made to ensure a safe and efficient return to in-person operations, adhering to all health and safety protocols.

For rebranding Montbello Workforce Center, we engaged with our DEDO marketing team. This guided the creation of a compelling brand identity that highlighted Montbello Workforce Center's role as a central hub for employers and jobseekers seeking workforce solutions. Relocated the workforce center to the front of the building to improve visibility and accessibility.

To enhance business engagement, the Employer Services team proactively reached out to local businesses, industry associations, and strategic partnerships and identify workforce needs. Specialized programs and incentives were designed to attract employers to participate actively in

hiring events, industry roundtables, and talent development initiatives for all three locations. We also Redesigned staffing structure to implement a four-day workweek (Monday to Thursday, 9 am to 4 pm) to accommodate virtual services and staff training on Fridays at all three centers. While establishing a unified phone number (one number for all three centers) and one email address for all centers to streamline communication and ensure consistent support.

We have already seen positive results in the few months from when we opened DEN and Webb Workforce Centers resulted in a 34% increase in total foot traffic at all three locations. We have also seen an increase of employers visiting our centers up 23% from this time last year with more options to have employer focused events.

- Job seekers expressed greater satisfaction with the personalized support and resources offered at the physical locations.
- Enhanced customer engagement and satisfaction due to the more visible and welcoming location of the workforce center.
- Increased virtual service availability and efficient staff training through the optimized four-day workweek.
- Improved communication with jobseekers and employers through the unified phone number and email approach.

Innovation in PY22:

This practice is considered innovative as it combines the strategic reopening of workforce centers with targeted branding and jobseeker and employer engagement efforts. The integration of physical locations, branded as employer hubs, with dynamic jobseeker engagement strategies creates a unique ecosystem that fosters symbiotic relationships between job seekers and employers, fostering workforce development and economic growth.

Larimer County Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Vision: We are a vital, energetic, recognized leader employing a deep understanding of economic and workforce trends to positively influence the Northern Colorado economy and to create better lives for all who live and work here.

Mission: Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development connects people to meaningful work and businesses to talent and resources, improving our community's economic well-being.

We care and our customers matter.

Values: Customer Focuses, Respect, Integrity, Collaboration, Culture of Innovation, Inclusivity

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

In March 2023, a company headquartered in the eastern United States contacted the Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development department (LCEWD) informing us that they would be closing a branch facility located in Loveland, Colorado. The Loveland facility had been in business for 30+ years. The company informed us that this layoff would impact approximately 45 individuals.

Our goal was two-fold. We wanted to provide as much accurate information about the public workforce services and programs available to the affected employees and we wanted to, if possible, help them connect to employment opportunities either before or shortly after the layoff had occurred.

Andrew Minor, Business Services Supervisor, worked with the Plant Manager to understand the occupations and skill sets of the impacted workers and then coordinate dates and times for meetings with the LCEWD team and the employees. The meeting would be held onsite at the facility.

The initial meeting was held on April 1, 2023, and included the information presented in a standard Rapid Response forum. In addition, the LCEWD team provided information about resume development and updating to better demonstrate the current skills each unique employee possessed. This team also offered the opportunity for these employees to schedule an individual appointment to review and update their resumes.

Throughout this period, Andrew had begun reaching out to employers that utilize the skills that the impacted employees had and invited these businesses to attend the second meeting, also held onsite at the facility.

On April 20, 2023, eleven businesses arrived onsite to the “hiring event” and met with the employees that attended. As Andrew was leaving that event, the Plant Manager who had attended both meetings, said he could not have asked for anything else to help lessen the blow of losing his and his employees’ jobs. It was later reported to Andrew that after that day, nearly a third of those in attendance had job offers that averted their layoff.

Andrew spoke by phone later with the Plant Manager to determine if the services had been

helpful to the impacted employees. The Plant Manager told Andrew that only 25% of the laid off employees had filed Unemployment Insurance claims, which indicated to him that most of those attending were hired elsewhere. Out of the eleven employers, all but one made an offer; nearly one-third of those attending received an immediate offer!

Innovation in PY22:

The innovation was wrapping services around these employees as soon as possible to avert unemployment and job loss. These services included more than the standard Rapid Response activities. At the first meeting, we had staff from both Business and Job Seeker Services, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title III, Wagner-Peyser, providing individualized time and attention to each interested employee. We provided a resume workshop and an opportunity to schedule additional time with staff later.

Most importantly, LCEWD was able to bring interested employers onsite to the work location the following week to connect with the employees that wanted this opportunity. This ability to wrap services around these employees while at the same time assisting our business community find talent during a skill and labor shortage is a best practice that we intend to do more often.

Mesa County Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Mission: To deliver the right service at the right time using a collaborative and people centered approach within a supportive culture, promoting safety, stability, and meaningful employment

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

Mesa County has been experiencing staff shortages in many helping professions since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic. We have seen there is a skill gap in this area resulting in unqualified or underqualified employees being unsuccessful in their employment, leading to high turnover rates.

Our goal in PY22 focused on building a continuum for employees to grow in these professions.

We have been working in collaboration with local businesses in healthcare, case management and other similar services, as well as our DHS director, our community college and various other community partners. Through this work, we identified and determined the most common skills needed to be successful in these types of positions, and built a comprehensive list of the most

common skills needed and have our community college working on building a curriculum to train individuals in these areas.

We are still in the process, but our anticipated result is that businesses will pay for this training and the participants will gain skills and certification to allow them to be successful in these industries. With success in an entry level position, we anticipate seeing an increase in participants taking steps to move up in the professions.

Innovation in PY22:

This project has brought in decision makers from all areas of our community to come together and build a program to address a community need. We have received buy-in at all levels and are excited to see the results of this collaboration.

Pikes Peak Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Vision: We promote the economic vitality of the Pikes Peak Area. We are agile at responding to emerging needs of the diverse and growing workforce. We change the lives of job seekers with proven training and employment opportunities. Our employer partners know and acknowledge the value we add to their bottom line. We are a model for the responsible use of federal funds and a leader in workforce development, organizational effectiveness, and collaborative partnerships. And, we are a great place to work!

Mission: To promote the economic vitality of the Pikes Peak Area by fulfilling its mission to connect vital businesses with work-ready job seekers and employer-driven services.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

The PPWFC has regularly held a large (150 or more employers) in-person job fair at a local event center each autumn. Over the past five years, the costs to rent the facility, tables and chairs, and launch appropriate media advertising beforehand have rapidly increased, making it impossible for the PPWFC to host the event on its own.

Our goal in PY22 focused on finding an employer to financially sponsor this large, annual event.

A Veterans Employment Representative, assigned to the PPWFC, approached the USAA office in Colorado Springs with the idea of having them sponsor a Community & Veterans Job Fair during the week of Veterans Day in November (which would take the place of our previous Fall job fair).

We sold them on the idea that it would be "their" event and our office would be in the background handling all of the details, staging the event, recruiting businesses to attend, and attracting job seekers to the event. They would attend and "Cut the opening ribbon," so to speak. They loved the idea and committed \$8,000 to the project.

The annual Colorado Springs Community & Veterans Job Fair sponsored by USAA was held in November. RVER Tim Amthor was able to secure the USAA's financial sponsorship of this event, which allowed the PPWFC to rent the Colorado Springs Event Center. RVER Amthor took the lead in recruiting over 160 employers for the event, taking care to ensure all industries were represented and that job seekers, regardless of their skill level, would have multiple opportunities to find employment suitable to them. PPWFC Communications Manager, Becca Tonn, conducted a Social Media campaign that was instrumental in getting 560 job seekers to the event – the largest in-person job seeker turn-out we have had since the pandemic.

Innovation in PY22:

These large, in-person job fairs held at community event centers can be expensive. So much so that hosting them is often cost-prohibitive to local AJCs. But employers love the opportunity to meet with hundreds of job seekers. We recommend that other workforce areas approach large local employers to sponsor a job fair – while highlighting what their return on investment would be, such as, their logo on marketing materials, potential media coverage, and including a public announcement at the job fair.

Tri-County Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Mission: To promote economic vitality by identifying, developing, and matching a talented workforce to business.

Vision: The vision is to ensure that all residents along the continuum of needs in these various areas have a streamlined ability to access the critical program options that best support their individual/family goals.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

We did not have adequate, reliable, trained internship sites to host interns with a variety of needs and goals. In order to successfully achieve WBL goals, we developed the P4 (passion, project, pipeline and paycheck) internship model.

The goal was to recruit and prepare businesses to have internship sites ready to go. The P4 model is effective in connecting the internship opportunities and job seekers, which leads to increased program enrollments and WBL placements.

The Tri-Co Business Services team hosted several P4 internship events, including one targeted to get youth engaged in work experiences. There were four events held in PY22. Over the four different events, there were 29 employers and 92 job seekers that were able to connect. The events allowed each employer to share their internship opportunities and why their company would be a great opportunity. The job seekers then had the opportunity to meet with the employers that they were interested in. The P4 events allow job seekers to connect with a variety of opportunities and maybe make a connection they were not even thinking of prior to the event. There are Career Specialists and Training Services staff in attendance that share what resources and services are available to support them and their career goals. Attendance continues to increase with each event.

The in-person events allow job seekers to connect with employers and learn more about the company's opportunities one-on-one. This is one of the strategies to help streamline the internship matching process. Since the events are marketed to all job-seekers, this has allowed the Business & Workforce Center to connect with individuals not currently enrolled in our programs. The P4 model has also increased business engagement and promotes additional services. The result was an increase in WBL sites and placements. In PY22 Q3 there were 48 successful intern placements and in Q4 that increased to 70.

Innovation in PY22:

It is an innovative approach to outreach and connect with job seekers not currently enrolled in programs or connected with a Career Specialist. This increases both enrollments and WBL placements, and supports businesses in creating a talent pipeline and developing leadership skills with their staff. The Business Services team developed a weekly Employer Connections Newsletter that highlights new WBL opportunities which are shared across all programs in the division and community partners.

Weld County Local Area

Mission & Vision:

Mission: To keep the workforce system responsive to employers, employees, and job seekers.

Vision: To direct the efforts of Employment Services of Weld County (ESWC) to operate an innovative, adaptive, and customer-driven workforce system which ensures:

- Customer services are based upon individual needs and choices;
- Services provided are competitive and valuable;
- Outcomes are measurable, and results-oriented;
- Responsiveness to changing labor market conditions, customer profiles, and program regulations; and
- Services are fiscally responsible.

Standout Accomplishments PY22:

Students enrolled at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC), specifically in the education and nursing programs, are required to participate in unpaid student teaching and clinical internships in order to complete their degree. Most of these students are unable to work in paid labor opportunities on top of their internships and studies, which results in accruing additional debt. By utilizing Colorado House Bill 21-1264 Reskill, Upskill, Next Skill (RUN) funding, Employment Services of Weld County (ESWC) was able to circumvent this issue and provide the students with an educational award.

Our goal in PY22 was to continue assisting students in unpaid internships beyond Colorado House Bill 21-1264 by updating the Weld County Workforce Development Board (WCWDB) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Supportive Services Policy.

The Weld County Workforce Development Board (WCWDB) reviewed and approved Employment Services of Weld County's (ESWC) recommendation to work with their Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) Liaison to update the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Supportive Services Policy.

ESWC's Deputy Director developed and interjected verbiage into the policy to provide WIOA-eligible students with an educational scholarship, similar to the educational award issued under the Reskill Upskill Next Skill (RUN) initiative. This revision was proposed to ESWC's CDLE Liaison who connected with the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Region IV Coordinator to ensure the language met all required WIOA rules and regulations.

Upon review with the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) Liaison informed Employment Services of Weld County's (ESWC) Deputy Director that the policy could not be written as broadly as initially proposed. The hope was to encompass numerous industries and align the scholarship closely as possible to that of other work-based learning opportunities. Unfortunately, USDOL determined that the policy needed to have strict parameters, which included:

- Exactly who is eligible. If this is for last-year nursing students doing their clinicals, and/or last- year teaching students in practicums.
- How the need for the assistance will be demonstrated/documented, and how the exact funding amount will be determined based on that need (in other words, not every student can just get the full \$5000)
- • How "on track to graduate" will be determined/documents, e.g., grade reports, a statement from the training provider, etc.

The Deputy Director worked closely with the Weld County Workforce Development Board (WCWDB) Executive Committee to draft and move forward revised language. After a few more emails, the WCWDB was able to implement the following language in its Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Supportive Services policy:

To graduate from a post-secondary institution, schools may require students to participate in an unpaid hands-on learning component. Post-secondary institutions and worksites have long-standing agreements for a set amount of unpaid hands-on learning based on the industry, so to circumvent additional barriers, WIOA-eligible students may receive an educational scholarship. The scholarship is 110% of the Colorado minimum wage for no more than 280 hours of unpaid hands-on learning. Not all WIOA-eligible students will utilize all 280 hours due to varying requirements set by the institution's program. Additionally, a comprehensive assessment is required to determine the WIOA-eligible student's monthly income and expenses to support the need for this supportive service.

WIOA-eligible students must be:

1. referred by a Northern Colorado post-secondary institution;
2. enrolled in an educational component related to Healthcare and Social Assistance (NAICS 62), Educational Services (NAICS 61), or Public Administration, specifically Justice, Public Order, and Safety Activities (92-21);
3. on track to graduate within twelve (12) months, which must be documented by grade reports or transcripts; and

4. willing to attest that they are currently unemployed or unable to work full-time due to their post-secondary education. Attestation occurs at the signing of the initial application, individual service strategy, or comprehensive assessment/individual employment plan.

To receive the educational scholarship, the WIOA-eligible student, worksite, or institution must provide verification of completed hours bi-weekly or monthly. The use of this supportive service requires written approval from the Workforce Director.

Innovation in PY22:

The Weld County Workforce Development Board is the first to implement an educational scholarship in its supportive services policy. Now those going to school to become our future educators and nurses are provided self-sustainability during a non-paid working portion of their degrees. With the demand in Weld County, and across the Nation, for those in Education and Healthcare fields this is seen as a win for Weld County jobseekers, businesses, and the public that they will serve in the long run.

Exhibit B - Workforce Development Programs Strategic Initiatives

Exhibit B in the following pages provides additional information on the outcomes and impact of Workforce Development Programs strategic initiatives through PY22.

CDLE Values: Accountability | Agility | Collaboration | Respect

WDP Vision: A working economy that elevates all of Colorado.

WDP Mission: Working together to promote a thriving employment environment with opportunity for every Coloradan to prosper.

Purpose

The Colorado Department of Labor (CDLE) Workforce Development Programs (WDP) is the grant recipient for the US Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs. In this capacity, WDP has responsibility for:

- Participating in national workforce policy development organizations and initiatives
- Disseminating funds to local workforce areas and other sub-recipients
- Overseeing the statewide one-stop delivery system
- Developing policies and providing training and technical assistance
- Monitoring local areas and sub-recipients for program and fiscal integrity

- Maintaining systems to allow reporting of activities and performance outcomes
- Developing virtual technologies and other innovative service delivery strategies
- Pursuing supplemental funding sources and administering discretionary grants
- Administering and operating statewide programs and initiatives, including those described in many sections of the annual report.

To accomplish this, the WDP team collaborates with a wide variety of workforce system partners, including [local workforce areas](#), businesses, educational institutions, economic development, human services, and community based organizations across the state to provide not only direct services, but also funding, guidance, technical support, and oversight to all of the critical services provided. We do it to create connections, to increase productivity and sustainability, and to support our state's diverse and talented workforce. We do it to keep Colorado working and the Colorado economy strong.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access

Workforce Development Programs supports the smooth fiscal and programmatic operation of the statewide locally delivered workforce service delivery system divided into ten local workforce areas to ensure the best use of public resources to support the success of Colorado job seekers and businesses. By embedding [equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility](#) in our culture and in our work, WDP promotes a similar approach among our partners to create equitable opportunities for all. In partnership with the Colorado Department of Education, The Rocky Mountain ADA Center (RMADAC), WDP developed the second annual Disability Awareness Training with a focus on content required to comply with HB21-1110 drafted to improve access to state agency digital content. After completing the training, participants received a certificate of completion provided by RMADAC and had the option to earn continuing education units for credentialing purposes.

Key Results

Workforce Development Programs secures and administers a broad range of funding that includes competitive discretionary grants in addition to formula funding at the state and federal levels to deliver a more robust ecosystem for Colorado. WDP's PY22 outcomes contributed to the following ongoing key results:

- Built a pipeline of skilled talent and quality jobs for Colorado workers to prosper
- Innovate and advance strategies to educate stakeholders of the talent and workforce development ecosystem in Colorado and nationally
- Return on investment of public funds is realized and demonstrated throughout the public workforce system
- Created a seamless customer experience, regardless of the channel of engagement
- Increased our reach and brand awareness of the public workforce system, through data driven strategies which led to higher program success rates and outcomes

- Provided tailored, efficient, and effective services that met the workforce needs of businesses, resulting in increased job placements, improved employee skills and retention, while fostering partnerships with chambers and economic development

Specifically:

- Provided employment services to 180,712 job seekers
- Served 19,064 businesses at no cost to businesses, along with the posting of 854,628 job openings
- Provided training services to 5,922 job seekers
- Served 39,732 youth through the Governor's Summer Job Hunt Program
- Certified \$89,170,400 in potential tax credits for Colorado businesses
- Brings in over \$60 million in new funding each year
- Brings in additional \$30 million plus in competitive, non-competitive, and discretionary funds each year

Policy Development

Through active participation on workforce committees at the federal, state, and local levels, WDP has taken a [leadership role](#) to shape and align initiatives across multiple states and affect workforce policies at the national level. Key among them is leading the collaborative effort across the workforce system to retain Colorado's Wagner-Peyser demonstration state status to allow the state to continue setting the standard for innovation and excellence in workforce service delivery. As one of three Wagner-Peyser demonstration states, Colorado has fully embraced the key principles of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to achieve total integration of WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, and Trade Act employment and training programs, and enhanced state and local partnerships with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other workforce partners. To implement this integration, WDP leads the development of [state policy](#) guidance. Staff in WDP serve the system through the following leadership positions:

- ❖ The National Governors Association ([NGA](#))
 - Center for Best Practices State Liaisons
 - State Liaisons Policy Subcommittee
- ❖ National Association of State Workforce Agencies ([NASWA](#))
 - WIOA Information Technology Steering Committee
 - Employment and Training Committee
 - Veterans Committee
 - Apprenticeship/Work-Based Learning Committee
 - Policy Subcommittee
- ❖ National Association of Workforce Development Professionals ([NAWDP](#))
 - Board of Directors
 - Executive Committee
- ❖ Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Association Executive Committee

- ❖ Colorado [Governor's Behavioral Mental Health Commission](#)
- ❖ Colorado [Governor's Education & Workforce Cabinet](#)
- ❖ Colorado [Governor's Rural Cabinet Working Group](#)
- ❖ Opportunity Now State Board
- ❖ Economic Development Council of Colorado
- ❖ Communications Committee Co-Chair for CREC Project
- ❖ Board Members on Colorado's Ten WIOA Local Workforce Areas Boards
- ❖ Arapahoe Douglas Workforce Development Board - Mental Health Taskforce
- ❖ Colorado Migrant and Rural Coalition Co-Chair
- ❖ Northern Area Migrant Coalition Co-Chair

Partnership Development

Workforce Development Programs has been able to expand its operations and take advantage of additional resources by collaborating with other agencies and organizations. In the previous year, WDP established partnerships with CDLE's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to establish [Disability Program Navigators](#) (DPNs) in each local workforce area. The DPNs help job seekers with disabilities by referring them to workforce centers and vocational rehabilitation offices for employment and other services. This collaboration has increased client services funding for the disability community to enable competitive integrated employment with a liveable wage. Since the inception of the DPN program, the local workforce areas have assisted over 700 job seekers with disabilities.

System Improvement

Workforce Development Programs (WDP) published the [Appreciative Inquiry Report](#) summarizing findings and recommendations from the Appreciative Inquiry interviews conducted with 118 state agency partners, local area directors, and local board members. This work anticipates the needs of future workers and businesses to inform strategic planning, local and state planning, legislation, policy, waivers, program administration, grant applications, and partnership development. Next steps include collaboration with partners to develop actionable plans to prepare the workforce system for the future.

[Connecting Colorado](#), the state's workforce case management and labor exchange system used to document participation and performance outcomes of workforce development programs, has served Coloradans well since 2002. After securing a vendor to modernize the system, implementation is underway.

WDP was awarded a \$2.9 million Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant by the US Department of Labor. The award will further expand the Statewide Longitudinal Data System by adding additional partner data to support agile and data driven decisions. The funding will allow

Colorado to advance evidence-based approaches to support workers that are essential to connecting jobseekers with the skills needed to obtain high quality jobs. And it will help Colorado enhance the capacity of workforce development programs by improving the quality and range of workforce data to benefit jobseekers, workers and employers.

Business Services Alignment

In Workforce Development Programs, the Colorado [Business Services](#) team focuses on a statewide approach to provide seamless business services in a way that maximizes business opportunity to employ qualified workers to ensure Colorado's economic success. The Business Services Leadership Team (BSLT), made up of leadership representatives from the ten local workforce areas work together to deliver a set of core services to businesses across the state. These [core services](#) focus on supporting businesses to Recruit, Train, Retain, and Access the talent and resources they need to thrive and grow. In the past year, a statewide business services summit was held in Colorado Springs, Business Services Leadership Team virtual meetings were held on a monthly basis, and four task forces worked to continue to focus on statewide work-based learning, business engagement, core service recommendations, and apprenticeship growth. This collaborative approach ensures a consistently high level of service to businesses.

Program Monitoring

WDP's unified [monitoring system](#), designed to maximize the effective use of public funds while addressing program performance, financial, and equal opportunity elements for each program, is recognized as a model by the US Department of Labor. It is the result of an ongoing monitoring, training, and technical assistance process that has fostered a collaborative relationship between the state and the local workforce areas. Monitors review WIOA, discretionary, and state grants in all ten local workforce areas to educate partners on funding eligibility requirements in order to leverage more participation and more resources that ensure the success of job seekers and employers statewide.

Program Evaluation

WIOA requires WDP to conduct formal evaluations of WIOA program activities to research and test innovative services and strategies to achieve high levels of performance outcomes. Working with Northern Illinois University, WDP established a model for WIOA program evaluation using the [Training Placement and Outcomes in Colorado Workforce Areas](#). WDP and NIU continued to provide technical assistance and training for a cohort of local area staff and the WIOA Evaluation Team to build their capacity to employ a mixed-method evaluation approach involving quantitative and qualitative strategies. Each local workforce area completed a quantitative analysis to understand what is driving the quantitative data.

The evaluation team identified best practices in each local workforce area and incorporated recommendations to improve outcomes for the WIOA participants. The local areas use various tools, including [The Evaluation Tool](#), to independently evaluate outcomes of WIOA programs with

an increased emphasis on serving marginalized populations and improving program service delivery. This work has dramatically improved the capacity of state and local workforce area staff to improve yearly program planning and to ensure equitable access to high-wage employment. Colorado presented the evaluation work at three webinars and the 2023 National Performance Accountability and Reporting Convening hosted by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Success Stories

SCOTT

Scott had been unemployed for about 9 months after working as a contract employee in the IT field for the last several years. Despite his experience and credentials, Scott was no longer getting contract job offers.

After working with a career coach, Scott decided to return to a Salesforce Administrator role in a company with salary and benefits. Scott used workforce center resources to prospect and network as part of his job search strategy. He attended an IT Job Fair organized by his local workforce center. To prepare, Scott practiced in mock interviews. He networked effectively during the job fair and afterward with participating businesses. Scott was interviewed by two companies, and using the new interview techniques, Scott received offers from both.

Scott selected a remote position with a company as a Sales Force Developer with a 6-figure salary and benefits. He credited his new interview techniques with building his confidence and focusing his responses to better express his skills aligned for the positions he was seeking.

BRENNA

Brenna was working as a project manager but the income was not adequate. She wanted to get training in back-end software engineering at Turing School of Software & Design, but the cost of the program was prohibitive. Brenna completed some online courses to prepare for the training. Her Career Support Specialist worked with her to identify appropriate job alignment with her interests, ability, and career goals, and he was able to enroll her into three grants that paid \$12,000 of the \$20,000 program.

Brenna completed 5 months of the 6 month program and was offered a job at a desirable company at twice the salary she had previously earned, with twice the vacation time, with more comprehensive benefits, a supportive, encouraging team, stating ... "and I get all of that doing something I love."

DUPPER ANALYTICS

Our students come to us with basic knowledge of Python, Java, HTML, and C++. We add to that by making them ready for industry—whether they pursue a college degree or wish to enter the software industry directly out of high school. The miniDwell Project evolved with a WBLI Program

partner who asked if we could improve their website (www.minidwell.com). The interesting part of this project is that we will be implementing a Revit plug-in that will give the website the ability for a user to create a custom model of a “mini home” and provide the ability to skew and rotate the image—much like we are accustomed to with auto websites. We will also redesign the website and rehost it. The current website is very standard and hosted by WIX. We believe and are confident that our new website will be a great improvement.

CABLENET AND ARAPAHOE/DOUGLAS WORKS!

Business Services worked to create a long-term talent pipeline solution through Work-Based Learning in 2021. An introduction to one of our region's education programs was done and students were invited for a tour of the CableNet facility. Four of those students were offered 12 week internships and Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was able to subsidize the wages of those interns while CableNet provided onboarding and on-site training and mentorship. Interns gained experience in cable harnessing and soldering, giving them a head start to their Aerospace Advanced Manufacturing careers. In 2022, an additional 3 participants went through the internship.

“During my employment at CableNet I have learned to solder, be more detail-oriented, think on my own and problem solve. I have also discovered that I enjoy smaller scale projects that require attention to detail, versus more repetitive, larger projects.” Sarah, WBL participant

Program Accomplishments

In addition to ensuring that the workforce system has the funding, policy, and technical resources it needs to ensure the success of all Coloradans, Workforce Development Programs administers a number of programs at the state level. Follow the links below to see a high-level performance report for each program.

- [Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth \(WIOA Title I\)](#)
- [Colorado Pathway Home](#)
- [CW STEP](#)
- [Disability Program Navigator](#)
- [Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant](#)
- [Displaced Homemaker Grant](#)
- [Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant](#)
- [Employment Support and Job Retention Program](#)
- [Federal Bonding](#)
- [Federal Bonding Demonstration Grant](#)
- [Foreign Labor Certification](#)
- [Governor's Summer Job Hunt](#)

- [Hospitality Grant Program](#)
- [Jobs for Veterans State Grant](#)
- [Monitor Advocate and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers](#)
- [Pathful Program](#)
- [Rapid Response Layoff Assistance and Aversion Services](#)
- [Trade Adjustment Assistance](#)
- [Veterans Service to Career Program](#)
- [Work-Based Learning Incentive \(WBLI\)](#)
- [Work Opportunity Tax Credit](#)
- [Wagner-Peyser Employment Services](#)