



Workforce Alliance (WA)
LWDB Strategic Planning Session #1
Current Labor Market Needs & Trends
Wednesday, August 13, 2025
Executive Summary

The purpose of this session was to begin the process of updating the Workforce Alliance 2026 – 2028 strategic plan. A series of five sessions are scheduled to engage WA Board members, community partners, elected officials, economic development agencies and philanthropic organizations in the planning process. This first session, Current Labor Market Needs and Trends, focused on hearing directly from employers about hiring needs and skills gaps in order to identify themes and patterns in the regional economy.

Employer Panel:

- Advanced Manufacturing: Cheryl Childers, Cox Machine
 - Cox Machine specializes in manufacturing precision parts, components and assemblies for the aerospace, deep space and semiconductor industries.
- Healthcare, Marilou Mewborn, Ascension Via Christi
 - Ascension Via Christi is a not for profit healthcare system with special attention to serving the poor and vulnerable.
- Data / IT: Chris Wyant, FlagshipKansas
 - Flagship Kansas.Tech represents the IT/Data Tech field and represents professionals across Kansas who, though often small in number within individual companies, form a crucial backbone for business operations.
- Construction / Skilled Trades: Owen Shigley, Shigley Construction and Wichita Area Builders Association (WABA)
 - WABA is an industry association of home builders and remodelers that advocates for its members on local, state and national issues related to the construction industry.

Challenges:

Construction -

- Labor shortages are a factor in decreased home production
- Aging workforce, average age of 41, and the need to transfer knowledge before retirements
- Evolving materials, regulatory changes
- Labor competition from economic development in different regions

Healthcare -

- Ascension Via Christi is the fifth largest employer in town with 5,400-5,500 core staff, they face staffing challenges for nurses and allied health positions, with many workers approaching retirement in the next 4-5 years.
- Losing the knowledge of those retiring (Who is going to train new staff?)
- Needing to outsource some services/3rd party contractors
- Concerns about AI replacing jobs
- Challenges in attracting talent to Wichita, Kansas, even for high-level healthcare positions like COO and CNO roles, despite offering competitive salaries and benefits. (Candidates from coastal areas have misconceptions about the Midwest and salary expectations.)

- Recruitment challenges extend to entry-level positions, jobs like PCTs or CNAs that were once highly sought after now face competition from retail and remote work opportunities offering comparable pay.

Manufacturing Industry -

- Industry is very cyclical
- Labor shortages
- Many skilled machinists retiring
- Difficult to recruit - Misconception that manufacturing is a difficult and dirty job.
- Introducing more robotics and technology, and bridging the gap between highly skilled machinists and operators.
- AI will impact Cox Machine, particularly in the semiconductor side. They will continue to need skilled workers who possess both technological and manual skills.
- Strong industry demand due to aging machines and airplanes.

IT/Data Tech -

- Kansas' labor force has grown steadily at about 4% annually for the past decade, while businesses increasingly need to address cybersecurity, cloud computing, data efficiency, and digital tools to remain competitive.
- Tech changes in the next 10 years will change the way business competes
- Develop technology training that bridges business context with technical skills.
- The concept of technology maturity curve was explained, noting that companies have different IT needs based on their development stage, and there is a growing importance of AI with predictions of billion-dollar single-person companies emerging within 2-3 years.
- AI has limitations as a generative system that may not work well for deterministic business needs, and recommends finding employees who can continuously learn as technology evolves while also understanding specific business requirements.
- Importance of understanding the fundamentals of problem-solving while acknowledging that technology needs differ across industries, suggesting investment in shared infrastructure.

General:

- Potential for creating hands-on summer programs with employer partnerships, similar to the "future ready" model, to engage young people with financial incentives while meeting them where their interests lie.
- More employees now prioritize work-life balance issues like childcare. And this must be factored into employment.
- Collaborate with educational institutions to ensure training programs align with evolving industry needs.
- Explore how AI and technology can improve operational efficiencies while addressing employee concerns about job displacement.
- Challenges in staffing rural areas like Cox Machine in Harper, Kansas location, where they draw employees from 38 different communities
- Importance of recognizing changing workforce needs, partnering with organizations like Workforce Alliance, and making the local community attractive to talent

Attendees:

- Cheryl Childers, Cox Machine
- Dr. Tamara Daniel, Butler Community College
- Robyn Heinz, Vornado
- Eric Hunt, DCF
- Kathy Jewett, WA
- Pat Jonas, CPRF
- Jill Kuehny, Kanokla via Zoom
- Alan McNary, WA Board Chair/PEC
- Marilou Mewborn, Ascension
- Alex Munoz, Creekstone Farms via Zoom
- Erica Ramos, KDC
- Luis Rodriguez, TEC Systems via Zoom
- Chip Schellhorn, CMJ Manufacturing
- Dr. Michelle Schoon, Cowley College via Zoom
- Peter Bodyk, DCF
- Suzi Finn, FlagshipKansas.Tech
- Megan Harper, Twin Valley/Flagship via Zoom
- Stacia Kaylor, Textron
- Jeff Longwell, Gilley's Cares
- Andrew Nave, GWP
- Lindsay McWilliams, Goodwill
- Jennifer Mueller, Harvey County Econ. Dev.
- Johanna Pfaff, Gilley's
- Emily Rugg, Textron
- Owen Shigley, Shigley Construction
- Chris Wyant, FlagshipKS.Tech

Staff -

- Marcy Aycock, REAP
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- Alison Lakey
- Keith Lawing
- Shirley Lindhorst
- Chad Pettera



Workforce Alliance (WA)
LWDB Strategic Planning Session #2
Labor Market Data & Community Partnerships
Wednesday, August 26, 2025
Executive Summary

The purpose of this session was to continue the process of updating the Workforce Alliance 2026 – 2028 strategic plan. A series of five sessions are scheduled to engage WA Board members, community partners, elected officials, economic development agencies and philanthropic organizations in the planning process. This second session focused on labor market data and community partnerships.

Workforce Economic Trends

Data was reviewed on various economic trends and workforce challenges in the Wichita area, focusing on key area employment sectors: aviation, healthcare, construction & trades and IT. Wichita area data was compared to data for the State of Kansas. The presentation included current and projected working population, employment and unemployment information as well as reviewed how the data related to last session's employer panel.

- Unemployment runs higher in this region than the state ie., cyclical nature of aviation industry
- This region is projected to have slower population growth than the state overall.
- Continual decline of rural populations and build-up of urban areas.
- Construction Data -
 - Lower wages in the region compared to the state.
 - Industry losing workforce recruited to other areas of the state
- Advanced Manufacturing –
 - Wages much higher than the state and not much projected growth.
 - There are many unknowns and staff will need to continue monitoring Boeing/Spirit transition and potential production increases in the aviation sector in the future. Will affect need for workers.
- Healthcare –
 - Many openings particularly in nursing; difficult to recruit to fill these positions.
 - Address wage gap and geographical challenges in healthcare recruitment to retain local talent.
 - Continued growth in the industry; need to address employment shortages.
 - Monitor developments/impact of the new Bio Health Science campus partnership between Wichita State University, University of Kansas, and WSU Tech.
- IT/Data -
 - Technology skills needs across industries despite projected employment decline in the sector.
 - There is a need to consider market projections with caution, noting uncertainties and the importance of technology advancements, particularly in cybersecurity.
 - Many jobs posted are no longer relevant – Change in actual reduction in technology or change in the way technology is classified across jobs? If the latter, then data is off.
- Logistics and Distribution –
 - Another industry to look at as a key sector is due to projected employment needs and growth of populations.

Community Partner Panel Discussion:

The panelists discussed employment trends, technology impacts, and the importance of community partnerships in addressing workforce needs. Key comments are summarized below.

Panelists:

- Steve Shepelwich, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
- Laura Ritterbush, Goodwill of Kansas
- Dr. Tamara Daniel, Butler County Community College
- John Buckley, Textron Aviation/Veteran's Advocacy Board
- Jaime Nix, Wichita Public Libraries

Federal Reserve's Workforce Development Focus

- Community Development for economic growth to work needs to be opportunity for everyone to participate and benefit. Focus low and moderate economic income communities – affordable housing, small business development, skills training
- Community Reinvestment Act - Banks looking to reinvest in a local community to support economic mobility. Possible partnerships with workforce development boards.
- Themes heard from traveling to seven states in region to keep informed on employment trends to inform leadership so decisions such as interest rates, monetary policy, etc.
 - Non-degree credentials are increasingly respected as viable career paths, contrary to previous beliefs of needing a four-year degree.
 - Funding uncertainties are significantly affecting workforce development organizations and their partners. Many workforce boards are merging. Not being as aggressive or innovative.
 - Shift in training demand, with more emphasis on incumbent worker training over new hire training.
 - Technological and process disruptions are affecting middle workers' career advancement opportunities.
 - Every area has concerns about workers moving out of the area. Where are they moving to? Need to really focus on people you have.

Veteran Advocacy Board Initiatives

- Many challenges and issues with transitioning military return to civilian employment.
- VAB supports Home Base Wichita to assist helps military personnel and spouses find employment. Recruiting these individuals from areas outside Wichita and the state to find employment here.
- Initiatives -
 - Successfully obtained legislation to allow military spouses to use their licenses in Kansas without the time, effort and cost of re-certification.
 - Collaboration with WSU Tech and American Manufacturing Institute to provide A&P license training for transitioning service members paid for by the WA's One Workforce Grant.
- There is a great need for continued funding and business participation particularly from those that benefit from these programs, to sustain these programs.

Community College Workforce Development

- Community colleges play important role in workforce development and economic mobility.
- Community colleges are more nimble than universities in addressing the changing workforce needs of student and employers.
- Goals -

- Important to build relationships with businesses and industries with regular face to face visits with the appropriate staff to discover their needs and be able to show how those needs can be addressed.
- There is a continuous need everywhere to address soft skills in students. Create a role-playing model program to address issues that was paid by businesses who then participated at the end of the program to observe students and select those that they wanted to interview.
- Apprenticeship programs – Scale up these programs
 - German model - 10th grade must choose apprenticeship or university Out on floor and then in small rooms to the side for instruction.
 - Important to focus on the 40% of students who are not engaged in education or career paths early on and do not yet have a passion for anything.
 - Pre-apprenticeships – Challenges with the different cultures of the schools.

Wichita Library's Community Support Initiatives

- Depend on alternative funding to provide service beyond core functions.
- Focus on early learning support, family engagement, and modern library services, connected invested in human development addressing social isolation, parental stress, etc.
- Strategic shift towards providing free meeting spaces for nonprofits and educational groups that are mission aligned.
- Plans to expand digital literacy programs and research – Currently, can book an appointment with a librarian for a fee, but goal is to partner with other organizations such as Lead For America and those with tech skills to assist in this way. Mentorship opportunities and connections with education programs to broaden skills.
- Creating a collective impact cafe at the Advanced Learning Library to support job readiness and mentorship. Furthers the mission of Connect, Discover, Learn, and Thrive.

Goodwill Comprehensive Community Programs

- Programs and services include retail stores, manufacturing facilities, education initiatives, and community centers.
- Retail stores provides funds to operate several of their other programs in workforce development and employ and support individuals with disabilities and criminal records.
- Manufacturing facility includes repackage and assembly and employ those not quite ready for traditional employment – justice involved etc. These are transitional opportunities and support is provided to assist them in moving beyond
- Adult education includes English language learning, high school diploma 1,300 students last year
- Digital skills and literacy services – Mobile lab
- Opportunity Center is a place to meet needs of an area or neighborhood either thru Goodwill or by another partner. Centers provide resume assistance, interview skills, job search digital literacy, etc. high school diploma, English learning, tax prep expungement clinic. Meets needs and helps with transportation barrier.
- Help employers engage untapped workforce. Example - Partnership with THRIVE restaurant group using a success coach not Human resources representative of the organization. Help manage roadblocks so they don't just quit. Stay engaged in the workforce and build confidence.
- Exploring ways to improve partnerships, continue to scale services effectively without decreasing quality of service

Next Steps:

The Workforce Alliance strategic planning process will continue with upcoming sessions on September 17th, October 7th and October 22nd. All attendees were encouraged to attend as many sessions as they are able.

Attendees:

1. Pete Bodyk, DCF
2. John Buckley, Textron Aviation/Veterans Advocacy Board
3. Cheryl Childers, Cox Machine/WA Board
4. Jerome Crawford, Machinists Union
5. Dr. Tamara Daniel, Butler Community College
6. Suzy Finn, FlagshipKS.Tech
7. Kathy Jewett, WA Board
8. Pat Jonas, CPRF/WA Board via Zoom
9. Stacia Kaylor, Textron Aviation
10. Jill Kuehny, Kanokla/WA Board Member via Zoom
11. Alana McNary, PEC/WA Board Chair
12. Lindsay McWilliams, Goodwill
13. Alex Munoz, Creekstone Farms/WA Board via Zoom
14. Jaime Nix, Wichita Library
15. Erica Ramos, Kansas Department of Commerce
16. Laura Ritterbush, Goodwill
17. Chip Schellhorn, CMJ Manufacturing
18. Dr. Michelle Schoon, Cowley College via Zoom
19. Steve Shepelwich, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
20. Jeff Usher, Kansas Health Foundation
21. Lindsay Wilke, Kansas Health Foundation
22. Chris Wyant, FlagshipKS.Tech
23. Jimmy Yeager, Machinists Union

Staff -

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**Workforce Alliance
LWDB Strategic Planning Session #3
Workforce Development Policy Roundtable
Wednesday, September 17, 2025**

The purpose of this session was to continue the process of updating the Workforce Alliance 2026 – 2028 strategic plan. A series of five sessions are scheduled to engage WA Board members, community partners, elected officials, economic development agencies and philanthropic organizations in the planning process. This third session focused on workforce development policy on federal, state and local levels.

A summary of the conversations with key points from the speakers is below.

Overview of Current Federal Policy Landscape and Local Impact

- Pending reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act WIOA which is the primary federal funding piece that drives WA operations as well as adult education and other one-stop partners. (Bill passed House in 2024, no hearing from Senate as of yet)
- Multiple Executive Orders in 202
- Federal funding challenges and potential policy changes could impact program operations and partnerships.
- Potential \$3.1 million budget reduction to Workforce Alliance in 2026 if proposed cuts are enacted
 - Eliminate the WIOA Youth program \$1.5 million a year to serve out-of-school youth, ages 16 to 24 years old
 - Adult and Dislocated Worker programs being combined into a reduced single stream.
 - Eliminate the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Other programs being discussing for cuts and/or elimination are Adult Education Title II programs as well as reducing Jobs Corps and Pell grants.
- Study by FutureWorks \$1 invest = \$15.03 in wages earned
- Emphasized the importance of federal funding in maximizing local and state dollars and the need to leverage partnerships with businesses and community organizations to create economic mobility for job seekers.
- Continue pursuing alternative funding sources to mitigate potential budget cuts

Guest Speakers

- John Rolfe, President & CEO, Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Kelly Bielefeld, Superintendent, Wichita Public Schools
- Brad Turner-Little, President and CEO, National Association of Workforce Boards

Workforce Development and Advocacy – John Rolfe

An overview of the annual Kansas/Wichita Regional Chamber DC fly-in was provided. Business and community leaders from across the state met with all six congressional delegates and various organizations and associations to talk about issues impacting business.

Key topics included:

- Uncertainty around tariffs and the goals of how to benefit US – number of farmers supportive, but concern voiced by some small business and manufacturing industry.

- Importance of a trained and highly skilled workforce is important for the future.
- WIOA
 - For Fiscal Year 2026 budget-
 - The House proposal under Make America Skilled Again (MASA) is for a 35% cut to DOL and consolidate 11 federal workforce development programs into a new MASA block grant and will replace several WIOA programs to just under \$3 billion.
 - Senate rejected this consolidation in favor of maintaining separate funding streams with funding levels remaining mostly stable with slight reductions to WIOA Adult Program.
 - WIOA reauthorization remains stalled despite bipartisan interest
 - Some key debates
 - Mandate 50% formula funding for narrowly defined training
 - Shifting 10% from local boards to statewide activities
 - Redesignation of Local Workforce Development Boards

Wichita Public Schools Partnership – Kelly Bielefeld

- Wichita Public Schools - the largest talent development pipeline in the region, very focused on career readiness and applied learning models
- Wichita Public Schools have aligned career pathway opportunities for high school students with regional economic sectors defined by the Greater Wichita Partnership, establishing Future Ready Centers (FRCs) in aviation manufacturing, healthcare, and IT/cyber/data technology.
- Opportunities for students to go directly into the workforce and be skilled or professional level career option through post-secondary education. Entry level, technical level and professional level - Talent pipeline design and strategy needed to attract or keep those students in the region after graduation.
- FRC has had successful impacts on preparing students for the workforce, particularly benefiting first-generation graduates and underrepresented groups.
- FRCs are great example of how community investment provides opportunities for economic development and growth. Increases the opportunities for students to be productive and successful, which benefits all of us.
- Partnerships with local businesses is critical for work-based learning and internship opportunities.
- Important for workforce development programs to collaborate with Wichita Public Schools on career readiness initiatives.

Federal Workforce Development Policy - Brad Turner-Little, President and CEO, National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB)

- NAWB represents and advocates for 570 WFC boards.
- Important for community partners to gather to think about how business is evolving in the region and how talent can be better prepared to most effectively to take advantage of opportunities.
- MASA block grant was in the president's budget proposal – rejected by House and Senate
- Senate Appropriations Committee passed a bill funding WIOA programs; passed 26-3 indicates bi-partisan support for WIOA

- The House proposed significant cuts to these programs. Elimination of Adult and Youth with slight uptick in DW. Cut Job Corps in half and eliminates SCSEP among other programs.
- Not unlike previous administrations, there is a possibility of a government shutdown or a continuing resolution as the September 30 deadline approaches.
- Congress may not prioritize WIOA reauthorization in 2025 due to other legislative priorities.
- Release of a federal report *“AI for America”* on artificial intelligence related to workforce development. Expectations for Department of Labor to establish a research hub for AI workforce development to keep informed on supporting career opportunities in AI.
- Joint report from Commerce, Labor, and Education departments *“America's Talent Strategy”* for a more unified strategy around workforce development that includes a block grant proposal.
 - Emphasizes the need for better workforce data predictability and interoperability as it pertains to workforce strategy.
 - Need to lean into skills-oriented talent acquisition and development economy, which shifts conversation from emphasis on degrees and more to competency. Away from traditional education models and open more doors for people.
 - Reduce compliance and bureaucracy
- Creation of Workforce Pell, which will provide funding for shorter-term credentialing programs; it is important to prepare for this change. Implementation target date July 1, 2026. Laying groundwork now is very important.

Discussion

- The Wichita region already has groundwork in place for short term credential opportunities and skills training opportunities like the FRCs. This story needs to be shared with elected officials so they want to invest resources.
- Concerns about the potential impact of block grants on specific populations; block grants could lead to reduced funding for targeted programs and lack of local control. Fewer resources to address barriers to labor force participation. Gives governor ability to design workforce system based on their perspective – needs may not be consistent across the state.
- Labor market trends and the impact of AI on employment. Need to better understand how employers and job seekers using, and what tools are available?
- Current labor shortages, particularly in healthcare, construction, and manufacturing, attributing them to factors like an aging workforce and wage competition with other regions.
- Labor shortages need to be addressed by programs for justice involved, veterans, seniors, etc. Programs exist, but need to be enhanced.
- Justice Involved – Need to provide for them being work ready pre-release. Businesses need to have better understanding where they are coming from and understand gaps.
- Emphasized the need for workforce boards to engage with small businesses together to understand AI's implications and develop relevant training programs. Importance of digital literacy and soft skills in the evolving job market. Dr. Daniel shared an example of a successful soft skills training program in Tennessee.
- Examine potential benefits of mental health support for workers seeking to reenter the workforce.
- Importance of communication and coordination between business, education, government, and community organizations to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize impact with limited resources.

Next Steps

The Workforce Alliance strategic planning process will continue with upcoming sessions on October 7th regarding economic mobility and community wealth building and on October 22nd a recap of all the strategic planning sessions is scheduled. All attendees were encouraged to attend the remaining sessions.

Attendees

1. Rep Brian Bergkamp, KS House of Representatives
2. Mike Pirner, Sen Ty Masterson's Office, KS State Senate
3. Rep Sandy Pickert, KS House of Representatives
4. Sen Mary Ware, KS State Senate
5. Jennifer Baysinger, Sen. Roger Marshall's Office
6. Mike Zamrzla, Sen. Jerry Moran's Office
7. Mayor Lily Wu, City of Wichita
8. Mayor Jim Benage, City of Bel Aire
9. Mayor Jim Toews, City of Inman
10. Council Member Becky Tuttle, City of Wichita
11. Tucky Allen, Workforce One, KS Local Area I
12. Kelly Bielefeld, Wichita Public Schools
13. Victoria Caro, Greater Wichita Partnership
14. Kylee Childs, Leading Age Kansas
15. Kevin Coccetella
16. Dr. Tamara Daniel, Butler Community College President
17. Sean Fox, City of Park City via Zoom
18. Rocky Genz, Bank of America
19. Michele Gifford, Workforce Alliance Board/Texttron Aviation
20. Nick Gregory, City of Maize via Zoom
21. Sarah Hoefgen, El Dorado, Inc.
22. Eric Hunt, KS Dept. of Children & Families
23. Kathy Jewett, Workforce Alliance Board
24. Ildo Martins, Wichita State University
25. Jason McAndrews, Wichita Chamber
26. Roman Millspaugh, Workforce One, KS Local Area I
27. Erica Ramos, Workforce Alliance Board / KS Dept. of Commerce
28. John Rolfe, Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce
29. Chip Schellhorn, Workforce Alliance Board, CMJ Manufacturing
30. Dana Shirer, WSU
31. Lisa Strunk, KS Dept. of Children & Families
32. Brad Turner-Little, NAWB via Zoom
33. Jeff Usher, Kansas Health Foundation
34. Lindsay Wilke, Kansas Health Foundation
35. James Williams, Black Hills Energy
36. Chris Wyant, FlagshipKansas.Tech

WA Staff -

1. Marcy Aycock, REAP via Zoom
2. Kaitlyn Downey
3. Amanda Duncan via Zoom
4. Keith Lawing
5. Shirley Lindhorst
6. Chad Pettera

Workforce Alliance (WA)
LWDB Strategic Planning Session #4

Economic Mobility to Build Community Wealth and Improve Community Health
Tuesday, October 7, 2025

The purpose of this session was to continue the process of developing the Workforce Alliance 2026 – 2028 strategic plan. A series of five sessions are scheduled to engage WA Board members, community partners, elected officials, economic development agencies and philanthropic organizations in the planning process. The fourth session focused on economic mobility and the connection to community health.

Panel Discussion:

Subject matter experts shared data and discussed best practices for collaborative strategies to address Economic Mobility and talked about current efforts underway by community partners.

Panelists:

- Amanda Duncan (moderator)
- Ed O'Malley, Kansas Health Foundation
- Ricki Ellison, Greater Wichita Partnership
- Yazmin Wood, Legacy Regional Community Foundation (Cowley County)

- Yazmin Wood, Legacy Regional Community Foundation
 - Located in Cowley County and there are 105 community foundations in Kansas
 - Led two year learning cohort for addressing sustainable development goals and creating essential tools for community sustainability.
 - Working to address poverty through community collaboration and data-driven initiatives, focusing on children in poverty and areas such as childcare, health, housing, and resource optimization.
 - The foundation is now leading conversations opportunities around economic mobility and social connectedness of community
 - Supports Families Gaining Ground initiative – Assists challenged working families become more stable housing, income and child care.

- Ricki Ellison, Greater Wichita Partnership
 - Economic development arm for 10 county region
 - Seek and create opportunities for jobs, quality of life and talent for the region
 - Work is on behalf of people as they are impacted by jobs and opportunities that are being brought into the community
 - Economic mobility plan being developed, strategic look focusing on workforce, policy and data, to create opportunities and infrastructure for community success.
 - Retention of talent in addition to attracting it – there is a need for more people
 - Create an infrastructure so it is the right culture to attract and retain people

- Ed O'Malley, Kansas Health Foundation
 - Foundation's strategic framework based on a three-part purpose
 - ❖ Help Kansas lead the nation in health every year.

- ❖ Eliminate barriers that prevent people live a full healthy life
- ❖ Become model for philanthropic impact
- Current focus is on addressing issues related to Kansas's declining health rankings, no state has fallen lower than over the past 30 years.
- Address “Health” rather than healthcare, emphasizing economic status is a key determinant of individual and community Health.
- Investment of targeted resources to spur more economic mobility
- What is the role of business and industry in an economic mobility strategy?
 - Quality of life connected to the workforce, good jobs and quality careers
 - Seek to invest in community in multiple ways to grow the workforce and increase opportunity
 - Businesses in transition should look to upskill workers for career advancement or retention.
 - Employers need to ensure creating economic mobility opportunities for their people. Should be prioritized more.
 - Organizations like GWP, Chamber, WIBA, etc.. need to find ways to help businesses do this.
 - Businesses need to expect more support from organizations and elected leaders for effective workforce development strategies.
 - We do not have ability to add geographic attractions to bring people in, but can make it a place have incredible opportunities for economic mobility, noted 40% in this area are struggling to meet a survival budget – workforce barriers need to be addressed
 - Be in the room and be part of the conversation. Provide perspectives and hear perspectives of others.
 - Collectively making decisions and working in same decision.
 - Make government hear business and industry perspective
- What is the role of government and the actions government can take in economic mobility?
 - Can provide direction and protect experimentation in addressing economic mobility challenges.
 - Transformation (improving and increasing pathways for economic mobility) requires government to create conditions for people to take risks. Allow for trying things that have not been tried before.
 - Need more collaboration between businesses, government, and community organizations to create more pathways for upward mobility in South Central Kansas.
 - Look at elements that government does control that plays a part in success; ie., Child care, housing and transit – government plays role in policymaking, allowing people to engage, providing incentives, knocking down barriers and allowing risks to be taken.
- What advice or recommendations do you have for the Workforce Alliance – policy, strategy, or actual programs and services?
 - Important to know who does what within the community – Attempt to not duplicate services of others.
 - Leverage resources and knowledge of multiple organizations working in partnerships; listen and be open to partnerships and new ideas.

- Stay curious and understand different lived experiences and factor that in to decision making.
- Target barrier populations such as foster care and justice involved individuals. The odds of success for these populations are not good. Success for these populations impacts all of us.
- Make clear whether winning or losing; this can be difficult to know. How would you know? Importance of clearly measuring and communicating progress.
- Need for collaboration and simplicity in addressing community issues - stop the slide. GWP, United Way, WIBA Chamber KS Dept. of Commerce and others are focused on this issue building workforce, opportunity and economy all of which have their own projects. The Workforce Alliance is positioned to serve as a “bridger” among various groups working towards similar goals.
- Ensure that the “strategic framework” is "scary" for the Workforce Alliance (board and staff) and surprising for people outside the organization. Push beyond what is expected.

Discussion

- Overall, this region is very well-positioned to design and implement a workforce development strategy to support economic mobility outcomes.
- Investing in people and not fear losing that person/investment – data on outside migration? 740 people a year exiting this 10-county region for Johnson County. The data shows that the more an organization invests in their employees, retention increases.
- Need to address rural-urban disparities, and creating opportunities in underserved areas. What benefits, incentives, opportunities are available and what is needed? How to address these shortcomings.
- Economic mobility success translates to the success of future generations and is worth the effort. Much time, effort, coordination is needed.
- Leadership and the role of authority in improving health and economic mobility, emphasizing the need for bold visions, transformation and disruption.
- There is a need for fostering multi-generational leadership in communities.
- Challenges of coordinating efforts across organizations and the importance of marketing initiatives to build community trust and support. Share economic mobility plans with the community and show them what is attempting to be accomplished and let them see what is happening. Keep talking with consistent language across organizations about it and get buy-in from community.

Next Steps

The Workforce Alliance strategic planning process ends with the final recap session on October 22nd from 10:00 to 11:30 AM, where board members will discuss themes and develop a strategic framework to guide future work. All attendees were encouraged to attend the remaining session.

Attendees

1. Tyrone Baker, YMCA
2. Jennifer Baysinger, Sen. Roger Marshall's Office
3. Mayor Jim Benage, City of Bel Aire
4. Maria Bocco-Oyler, DCF
5. Pete Bodyk, DCF
6. Tanya Bulluck, Child Start
7. Cheryl Childers, WA Board Member/Cox Machine
8. Jerome Crawford, Machinists Union
9. Dr. Tamara Daniel, WA Board/Butler Community College
10. Ricki Ellison, Greater Wichita Partnership
11. Sarah Flick-Fernandez, City of Wichita
12. John Frederick, Boeing
13. Rocky Genz, Bank of America
14. Jodi Hearn, Ascension Via Christi via Zoom
15. Eric Hunt, WA Board Member/DCF via Zoom
16. Kathy Jewett, WA Board
17. Angeline Johnson, Greater Wichita Partnership
18. Jill Kuehny, Kanokla
19. Alana McNary, WA Board/Professional Engineering Consultants
20. Ed O'Malley, Kansas Health Foundation
21. Ildo Martins, WSU Tech
22. Jason McAndrews, Wichita Chamber
23. Pete Najera, United Way
24. Jaime Nix, Wichita Public Library
25. Eric Ramos, KS Dept. of Commerce
26. Dr. Michelle Schoon, WA Board/Cowley College via Zoom
27. Scott Stiles, WA Board/ Shaefer Architecture
28. Jeff Usher, Kansas Health Foundation
29. Shelly Westfall, LegacyWorks
30. Yazmin Wood, Legacy Regional Foundation
31. Jimmy Yeager, Machinists Union

Staff

1. Amanda Duncan
2. Keith Lawing
3. Chad Pettera
4. Denise Houston
5. Marcy Aycock
6. Kaitlyn Downey
7. John Costello
8. Edson Lopez-Melara