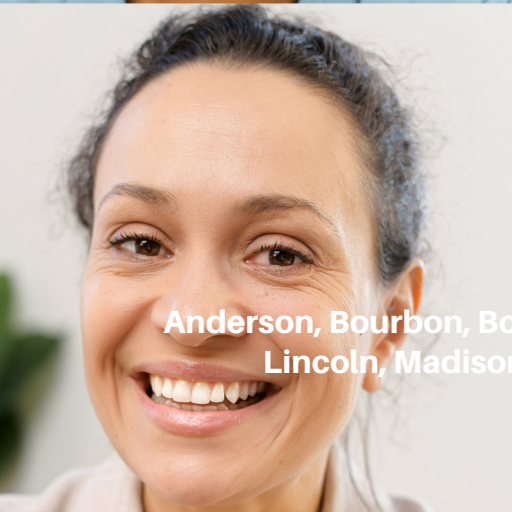


2026 Annual Report



Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine,
Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, and Woodford Counties

Welcome to Our Annual Report

What we learned this year...

This year reinforced that workforce development is evolving faster than ever. As employer needs continue to shift locally and nationally, traditional workforce strategies alone are no longer enough. Businesses are increasingly looking for flexible, industry-driven solutions that build talent from within, making apprenticeships, work-based learning, and other earn-and-learn models more important than ever. These approaches not only help employers develop skilled workers but also provide job seekers with meaningful career pathways that lead to long-term success.

We also learned that no single organization can meet today's workforce challenges alone. The strongest outcomes occurred when workforce, education, economic development, government, businesses, and community organizations worked together to address shared needs. Whether responding to layoffs, expanding childcare opportunities, supporting youth employment, or creating new apprenticeship pathways, collaboration allowed us to leverage resources, reduce barriers, and reach more individuals than any one partner could accomplish independently.

Perhaps most importantly, this year demonstrated that innovation is rooted in partnership. By listening to employers, adapting to emerging workforce trends, and strengthening relationships across our region and beyond, we are building a workforce system that is more responsive, resilient, and prepared for the future. The lessons we've learned will continue to shape our strategies as we expand apprenticeship opportunities, strengthen regional partnerships, and create workforce solutions that benefit both employers and job seekers throughout the Bluegrass.

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Recognizing our current and former Executive Committee Governing Board members, our current Workforce Innovation Board members, and special comments from the Workforce Chair and Director of Workforce.

Our Year in Names and Numbers (7 - 21)

Words from our partners. Financial highlights, program outcome numbers, and information on the events that make it all possible.

Our Year in Action (22 - 33)

Highlights of how staff exemplify the core values set by the BGWIB in the strategic plan, as well as, other key values our staff embody, and success stories from our clients, showing real results.

Our Strategic Plan Progress (34 - 39)

Our strategic plan is our guide for success. In these pages you will see how our actions translate to achieving these goals for the betterment of job seekers and employers in the Bluegrass.

Our Supportive Partners (40 - 43)

None of this could be possible without our business and community partners, from training initiatives, cohorts, recruitment, to work-based learning placement, and hiring events our partners are the how we work smarter.

Our Boards

2026 Governing Board of Local Elected Officials

Executive Committee



LINDA GORTON

Mayor
Lexington-Fayette



SARAH STEELE

Judge Executive
Mercer County



WOODS ADAMS, III

Judge Executive
Lincoln County



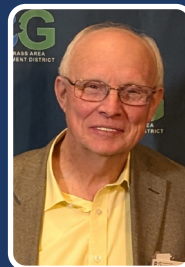
EDDIE BARNES

Judge Executive
Powell County



TRILLE BOTTOM

Judge Executive
Boyle County



DONNIE WATSON

Judge Executive
Estill County



MICHAEL R. WILLIAMS

Judge Executive
Bourbon County

REMAINING GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS:

Anderson County: Orbrey Gritton

Garrard County: Chris Elleman

Nicholas County: Steve Hamilton

Woodford County: James Kay

Clark County: RJ Palmer

Harrison County: Jason Marshall

Madison County: Reagan Taylor

Franklin County: Michael Mueller

Jessamine County: David West

Scott County: Joe Pat Covington

2026 Workforce Innovation Board

Executive Committee



JON DOUGHERTY

Amteck
Chair



DOLLY HOLLAN

LifePoint Health
Vice Chair



DONNA ANGEL

City of Berea,
Economic
Development
Treasurer



MICAH DRAKE

Carhartt
Secretary

REMAINING WORKFORCE BOARD MEMBERS:

Business Representation:

Stacey Thurman, Campari
Paula Noland, Hyster-Yale Materials

Garry Allen, Plastivaloire America
Chris Jones, A Book Company, LLC

Pam Hatcher, Trilogy Health Services
Johnny Pittman, Oxmoor Automotive Group

Workforce Members:

Shena Link, LiUNA
Christian Wellmann, IKORCC

Debbie Link, Child Care Council of KY

Darlene Thomas, Greenhouse 17

Education:

Erin Tipton, EDD, BCTC

David Sturgill, M.A., BCTC

Government & Economic Development

Katie Houghlin, Career Development Office

Michelle Cobb, Vocational Rehabilitation

Remembering Jon Dougherty: Board Chair

The Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board (BGWIB) lost one of its most dedicated leaders in 2026 with the unexpected passing of Board Chair Jon Dougherty. A respected workforce advocate, Jon was the Education Director and License Manager at Amteck. He devoted more than a decade to strengthening workforce development across Kentucky and creating opportunities for individuals to build meaningful careers. Jon joined the Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board in 2016 during a pivotal period of growth and transformation for the region's workforce system. His thoughtful leadership, collaborative approach, and unwavering commitment to serving others quickly earned the trust and respect of fellow board members, leading him to serve on the Executive Committee and ultimately as Board Chair, which he held unopposed for multiple terms.

Throughout his tenure, Jon championed innovative workforce strategies, strengthened partnerships between education and industry, and passionately promoted careers

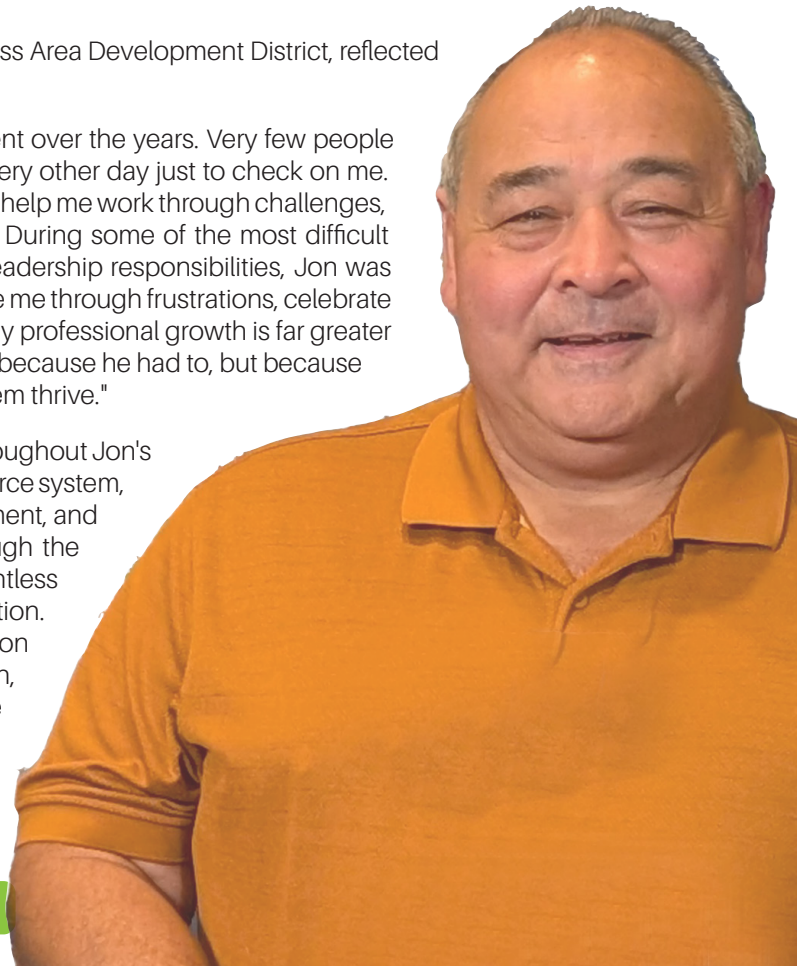
in the skilled trades. He believed every individual deserved the opportunity to succeed and worked tirelessly to expand career pathways that would help Kentuckians achieve long-term success. Under his leadership, the BGWIB continued to grow as a recognized leader in workforce innovation, collaboration, and service.

While Jon's professional accomplishments were significant, those who knew him best remember him for the way he invested in people. He was a trusted mentor, an encouraging leader, and a steadfast advocate who generously shared his knowledge and experience with colleagues, staff, and future leaders. His willingness to truly listen, offering guidance or encouragement where needed and to celebrate the success of others left a lasting impression on everyone fortunate enough to work alongside him.

Tiffanie Reeves, Director of Workforce Services for the Bluegrass Area Development District, reflected on the profound impact Jon had on her career:

"Jon played such a tremendous role in workforce development over the years. Very few people know this, but when I first became Director, Jon called me every other day just to check on me. He would ask how I was doing, offer words of encouragement, help me work through challenges, and share advice that only comes from years of experience. During some of the most difficult moments of learning how to manage people and navigate leadership responsibilities, Jon was there as a sounding board, mentor, and friend. He helped guide me through frustrations, celebrate successes, and gain confidence in my role. His influence on my professional growth is far greater than most people will ever realize. Jon invested in people, not because he had to, but because he genuinely cared about their success and wanted to see them thrive."

Those words reflect what so many colleagues experienced throughout Jon's years of service. His leadership helped shape a stronger workforce system, but his greatest contribution was the confidence, encouragement, and opportunities he gave to others. His influence lives on through the partnerships he cultivated, the leaders he mentored, and the countless individuals whose lives were changed because of his dedication. The Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board honors Jon Dougherty with deep gratitude for his years of service, his vision, and his unwavering commitment to the mission of workforce development. His legacy will continue to inspire our work for years to come.



A Message from the Director



Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient workforce, one that creates opportunity, supports growth, and drives long-term prosperity for the Bluegrass.

Dear Board Members, Partners, and Community Stakeholders,

It is my privilege to share with you the remarkable progress and continued momentum of Workforce Services across the Bluegrass region. Over the past year, our work has been guided by a shared commitment to strengthening our workforce, supporting our communities, and aligning our efforts with the evolving needs of both job seekers and employers.

This year has been defined by action, adaptability, and collaboration. Through quarterly regional job fairs and the launch of a targeted childcare initiative, we have taken meaningful steps to reduce barriers to employment and create more accessible pathways to opportunity. Our expansion of work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities, alongside thoughtful revisions to our On-the-Job Training policies, reflects a forward-thinking approach that puts both participants and employers at the center of our strategy.

We are especially proud of the strong partnerships that continue to drive our success. Collaborations with local school systems, workforce partners, and programs like Jobs for America's Graduates have strengthened career awareness and opened doors to high-demand, high-wage career pathways. At the same time, our engagement with employers—from healthcare providers to skilled trades and entrepreneurship programs—has ensured that training investments are closely aligned with real workforce needs.

While we celebrate many accomplishments, we also recognize the challenges that have shaped this year's work. Regional layoffs and industry closures have impacted many of our communities and participants, increasing demand for services and reinforcing the importance of responsive, data-driven workforce strategies. In the face of these challenges, our team has remained steadfast—delivering services in accessible community locations, maintaining a strong focus on equity, and ensuring that individuals and families have the support they need to move forward.

Our ability to expand services and respond effectively has been strengthened by diversified funding, including significant investments through initiatives like Putting Young Kentuckians First and National Dislocated Worker Grants. These resources, combined with strong fiscal oversight and compliance practices, have allowed us to innovate while maintaining accountability.

Looking ahead, we are energized by the opportunities before us. We are committed to expanding work-based learning and apprenticeship programs, revitalizing the Transition 2 Transformation initiative, and continuing to build strong, responsive partnerships across the region. The future of our workforce depends on our collective ability to think creatively, act collaboratively, and remain focused on the people we serve.

None of this work would be possible without the dedication of the staff, our Direct Service Provider, the leadership of the Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board, and the commitment of our partners throughout the region. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient workforce, one that creates opportunity, supports growth, and drives long-term prosperity for the Bluegrass.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.



“

KY Career Centers (Bluegrass/American Job Center), always, stands poised to take the lead on job creation & workforce data for our City, Industrial Parks, and Small Business entrepreneurs.

*Donna Angel,
City of Berea
Business & Economic Development*



If you need assistance with finding a job, you need to contact Tamara Finch (with the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass/American Job Center). Tamara ALWAYS goes above and beyond to assist the clients that I have and is always willing to help people get on their feet. She is a genuine and very professional person and is willing to help in any way that she can!

*Angela Davis,
kynector
Kentucky River Foothills Development Council, Inc.*

Kentucky River Foothills
Development Council, Inc.



The Kentucky Career Center (Bluegrass/American Job Center) has been a valuable community partner in helping connect individuals in recovery and transition with employment resources, job readiness support, and opportunities for long-term stability. Their willingness to work alongside organizations like ours makes a real difference in the lives of the people we serve.

*Tammy Goldy
CEO/Owner
Pain to Purpose LLC*



"The Kentucky Career Center (Bluegrass/American Job Center) has been a valued partner of the Paul Sawyer Public Library for many years. Month after month, our patrons continue to benefit from the services they provide. We are grateful to KCC for helping fill a critical need in our community by equipping job seekers with the tools, guidance, and support they need to build skills, discover career pathways, and achieve success."

*Dalton Bennett,
Digital Services Specialist
Paul Sawyer Public Library*

"Community is not just about being together, it's about providing the tools to be successful together." Thanks to the staff of Kentucky Career Center (Bluegrass/American Job Center) for continuing to support the Housing Authority of Cynthiana, Kentucky.

*Betsy Lebus Haley,
Housing Authority of Cynthiana*



Our Partners Are Saying

Our Numbers

The Fiscal Agent reports to the Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board (BGWIB) as well as its Executive and Finance Committees at each meeting. This ensures BGWIB

members are kept well-informed of funding and purchases for each funding stream.



Adult Individualized Training
Accounts:

\$309,625



Adult

An individual who is ...

- 18 years of age or older
- a citizen or non-citizen authorized to work in the US.
- registered with Selective Service requirements (*males only*)



Adult Supportive Services
Expended:

\$37,003



Adult Work-Based Learning
Expended:

\$16,972

* The descriptions provided are abridged. For a full outline of the qualifications of each category please refer to 20 CFR § 680.120 for Adults, 20 CFR § 680.130 for Dislocated Workers, and 20 CFR § 681.320 for Youth.

Dislocated Worker

An individual who . . .

- was terminated, laid-off, or received notice
- is eligible for or has exhausted UI benefits.
- was sufficiently employed but not eligible for UI
- was self-employed
- is a displaced homemaker
- is spouse of an armed forces member



Dislocated Worker Individualized Training Accounts Expended:

\$137,774



Dislocated Worker Supportive Services Expended:

\$6,463

Transitional

An individual who is . . .

- long-term unemployed
- an Ex-offender
- currently receiving TANF
- identified as an individual with disabilities



Dislocated Worker Work-Based Learning Expended:

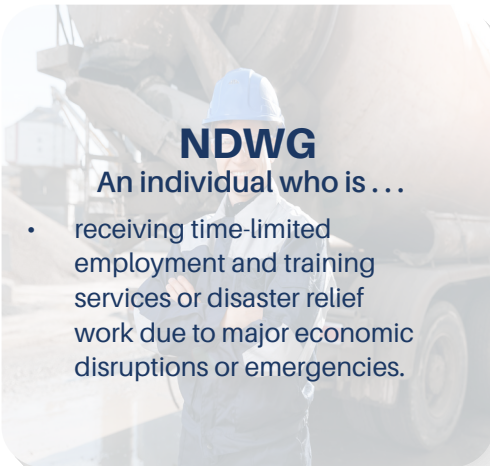
\$1,330



Transitional Funding Expended:

\$13,545





NDWG

An individual who is...

- receiving time-limited employment and training services or disaster relief work due to major economic disruptions or emergencies.



NDWG Individual Training
Accounts Expended:

\$296,237



NDWG On-the-Job Training
Expended:

\$10,378



NDWG Supportive Services
Expended:

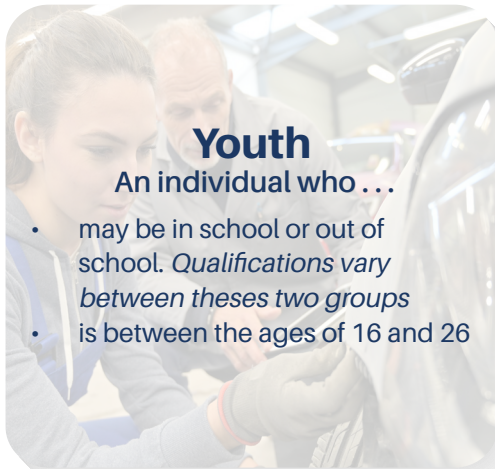
\$18,669



NDWG Work-Based Learning
Expended:

\$140,382

* Specific criteria for NDWG clients can vary between grants.



Youth

An individual who ...

- may be in school or out of school. *Qualifications vary between these two groups*
- is between the ages of 16 and 26



Youth Individual Training
Accounts Expended:

\$11,270



Youth On-the-Job Training
Expended:

\$2,474



Youth Supportive Services
Expended:

\$2,558



Youth Work-Based Learning
Expended:

\$46,285

Putting Young Kentuckians to Work

An individual who ...

- is 18-24 years of age seeking short-term training work experience, on-the-job training, and other services to secure full-time employment that provides a livable wage.



PYKW Individual Training
Accounts Expended:

\$11,270



PYKW On-the-Job Training
Expended:

\$2,474



PYKW Supportive Services
Expended:

\$2,558



PYKW Work-Based Learning
Expended:

\$225,619



Our Services

Over the course of the fiscal year, the workforce development team enrolled a total of **838** individuals into workforce programs, including **151** Adults, **70** Dislocated Workers (DW), **172** National Dislocated Workers, and **445** Youth across two funding streams.

Quarterly Enrollment Trends for Adults & Dislocated Workers:

- Q1 (July–September): Enrolled 66 participants, including 52 Adults and 14 Dislocated Workers (DWs), making it the strongest quarter for Adult enrollments.
- Q2 (October–December): Enrolled 60 participants, consisting of 45 Adults and 15 DWs.
- Q3 (January–March): Enrolled 61 participants, including 27 Adults and 34 DWs, showing renewed growth and increased engagement among Dislocated Workers.
- Q4 (April–June): Enrolled 44 participants, consisting of 27 Adults and 7 DWs, reflecting a slowdown in overall enrollment activity as the program year ends.
- Annual Total: A total of 231 participants were enrolled during the program year, including 148 Adults and 70 Dislocated Workers, a significant increase in both areas over the previous year.

Quarterly Enrollment Trends for WIOA Youth and Putting Young Kentuckians First:

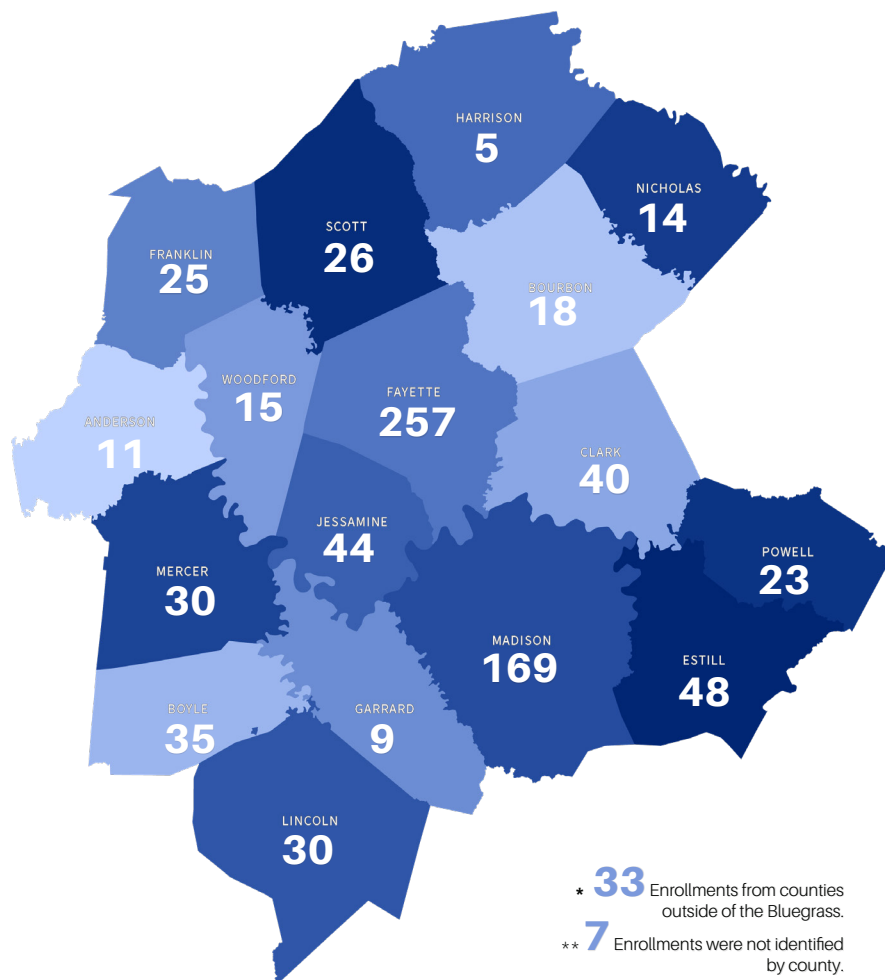
- Q1 (July–September): Enrolled 62 Youth participants, with enrollment activity in the first quarter coming from 13 of the 17 counties.
- Q2 (October–December): Enrolled 117 Youth between both programs, with 16 of the 17 counties now having youth enrolled.
- Q3 (January–March): Enrolled 130 youth participants, across the 17 counties, including four enrollments of youth in neighboring counties.
- Q4 (April–June): The final quarter saw another 123 youth participants enrolled, ending the year with all counties having multiple youth enrolled.
- Annual Total: A total of 40 WIOA Youth and 405 PYKF participants enrolled during the program year from all 17 counties and 23 additional youth from surrounding counties.

County Highlights for Youth Program Enrollments:

- Fayette County led the region with 283 enrollments (63.6%), followed by Jessamine County with 146 (32.8%) enrollments.
- Other counties with notable participation included: Clark County (63 enrollments), Estill County (56 enrollments), and Boyle County (51 enrollments).

Referral Sources

- Government Organizations contributed 184 (47.9%) referrals a significant increase over the 24% from the previous year.
- Business referrals accounted for 62 referrals or 16.1%, while Walk-Ins and Recovery Houses held consistently over the previous year.



Enrollment by County

- Fayette County accounted for the largest number of enrollments across all programs with 257 participants (30.6%), followed by Madison County with 169 enrollments (20.1%). The next three highest county enrollments, Estill County (48), Jessamine County (44) and Clark County (40) combined made up the 15.7%. All counties are reflected in the overall numbers including 33 enrollments from surrounding counties, reflecting continued demand for workforce services in both urban and rural communities.
- The geographic diversity of enrollments highlights the Workforce system's commitment to serving individuals throughout the Bluegrass region by connecting job seekers with employment, training, and career advancement opportunities that support both individual success and regional economic growth.

Enrollments Summary

Enrollments remained steady for PY26, ninety-seven (97) exits to employment were officially recorded during this reporting period. We are pleased to show representation from all counties.

Adults, Dislocated Worker, and Trade Credentials



National Dislocated Worker Grant Credentials



Youth Credentials & Putting Young Kentuckians First



Business Services



Business Services Summary

Business Services continued to strengthen partnerships with employers across the Bluegrass region, significantly expanding workforce solutions and business engagement throughout the year. The team served 1,115 employers, an increase of 376 over the previous year, while executing 76 Master Agreements, including 55 new agreements—a significant increase over the year before.

Demand for work-based learning opportunities also grew substantially, with 31 On-the-Job Training contracts, 36 internship contracts, 48 Transitional Employment contracts, and 23 National Dislocated Worker Grant worker contracts

supporting employers and job seekers. Business Services coordinated 58 hiring and job fair events and 21 resource fairs, connecting 995 employers with 6,840 job seekers. In addition, the team expanded its online recruitment efforts by promoting 288 job opportunities through social media, helping employers reach qualified candidates across the region. These results demonstrate Business Services' continued commitment to addressing workforce needs and strengthening the regional talent pipeline.

Business Services - Measuring Employer Satisfaction

The Business Services team conducted post-event employer surveys as part of its ongoing gap analysis efforts to better understand the workforce needs of businesses throughout the Bluegrass region. Employers consistently reported positive experiences while also providing valuable feedback on recruitment challenges, candidate preparedness, event logistics, and future workforce needs.

Survey responses identified opportunities to strengthen employer engagement through enhanced recruitment events, customized training, internships, job postings, and other workforce solutions. Feedback also revealed minor

logistical improvements that can further enhance future events. This employer-driven approach helps ensure Business Services continues to align its programs and resources with the evolving needs of regional businesses while addressing workforce gaps and supporting long-term economic growth.

Please note: Our interest in partner satisfaction is not limited to this GAP survey, we also request post event survey responses from partner participants in hopes of building relationships with additional partners to better meet their needs in the future.

Summary

The Employer Satisfaction Survey demonstrates a high level of employer satisfaction with the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center. Most respondents currently partner with the organization, report positive interactions with Business Services Consultants, and have successfully interviewed or hired candidates referred through the Career Center.

Employers consistently praised:

- Professionalism of staff

- Responsiveness and communication
- Quality of customer service
- Ease of working with Business Services staff
- Value of work-based learning and recruitment services

The survey also identified opportunities to increase the number of qualified candidates available for referral and to continue expanding employer engagement.

Survey Overview

- Total Responses: 36 Employers
- Current Business Partners: 34 (94%)
- Not Currently Partnering: 2 (6%)

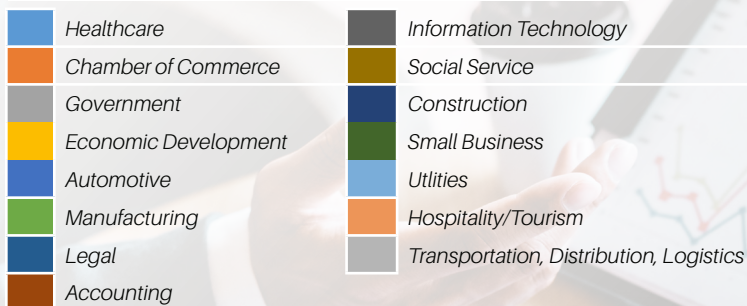
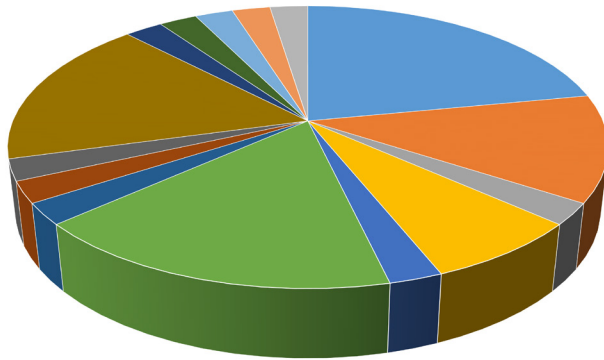
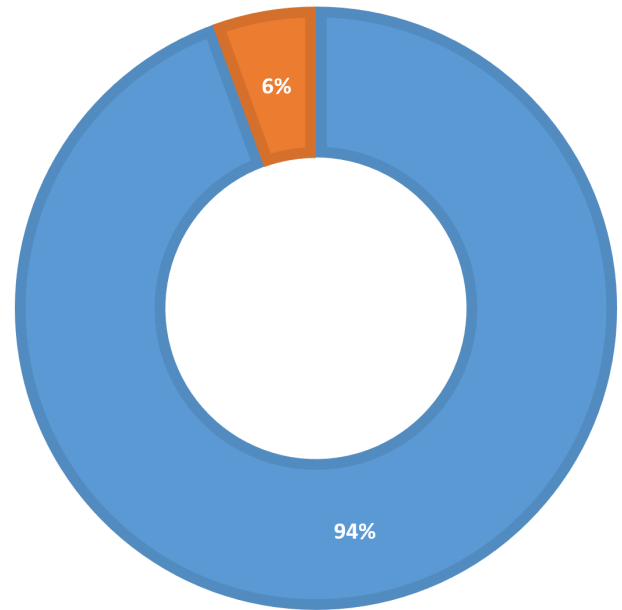
Employer Partnership

Employer responses regarding current partnership status.



Employer Sectors

Most high demand sectors were represented in the analysis, in addition, several public organizations who share needs with private sector employers such as recruitment, staffing, and training.



Key Findings

1. Strong Employer Engagement

Nearly every responding employer is currently utilizing Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass/American Job Center services.

This demonstrates:

- Strong community relationships
- Continued employer confidence
- High retention among business customers

2. Services Most Frequently Used

Employers reported using numerous Business Services including:

- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- Internships
- Customized Training
- Candidate Recruitment
- Computer Testing
- Application Administration
- Work Experience
- Hiring Events

These responses indicate employers value both hiring assistance and workforce development programs.

3. Candidate Referrals

Most employers indicated they have received candidate referrals. Feedback regarding candidates generally indicated:

Strengths

- Motivated applicants
- Qualified candidates
- Good communication
- Easy referral process

Areas for Improvement

- Larger applicant pools
- More applicants with industry experience
- Additional soft skills training
- Continued follow-up after referrals

4. Candidate Engagement Ratings

Employers generally rated candidate engagement as Good to Very Good. Common comments included:

- Candidates were interested
- Most arrived prepared
- Good professionalism
- Positive attitudes

A small number noted that some applicants required stronger interviewing skills or additional preparation.

5. Interviews and Hiring

A significant number of employers reported interviewing Career Center candidates.

Several employers reported:

- Follow-up interviews
- Multiple hires
- Successful placements

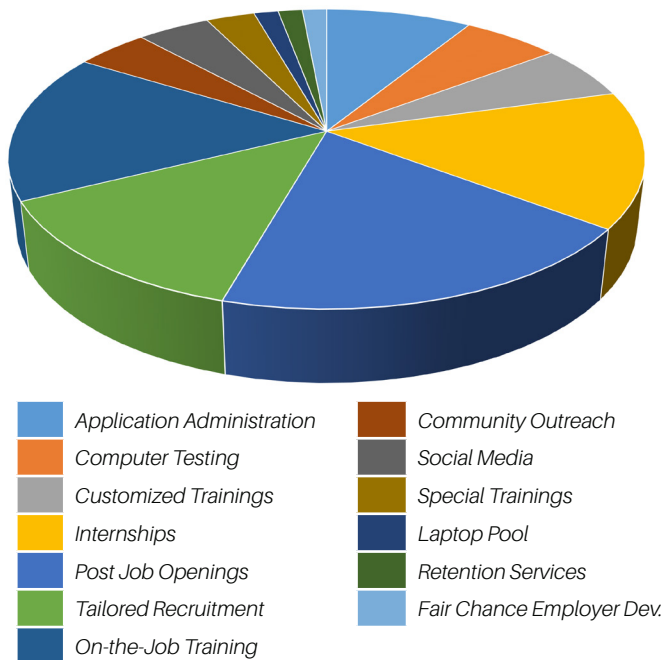
This demonstrates measurable hiring outcomes resulting from Business Services efforts.

6. Business Services Consultant Ratings

This was one of the strongest sections of the survey.

Employers consistently ranked their Business Services Consultant as:

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good



The comments repeatedly referenced:

- Quick responses
- Professional communication
- Helpful staff
- Knowledgeable consultants
- Easy to work with
- Dependable follow-up

This reflects exceptionally strong customer service.

Employer Comments

Several common themes emerged from open-ended responses with many respondents specifically complimenting individual Business Services staff for their responsiveness and willingness to assist. The suggestions for improvement focus primarily on growth rather than correcting deficiencies.

<u>What Employers Say the Career Center Does Well</u>	<u>Suggestions for Improvement</u>
The most frequently mentioned strengths included: • Excellent customer service • Prompt communication • Friendly staff • Professionalism • Strong partnerships • Reliable follow-up • Knowledge of workforce programs • Helpful recruitment assistance	Most employers indicated no major improvements were needed. Suggestions that were offered included: • Continue expanding outreach • Increase the number of available candidates • Offer additional hiring events • Continue promoting workforce programs • Increase employer awareness of available services

Overall Assessment

Based on the survey responses, the Business Services demonstrates:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent employer satisfaction• Strong customer relationships• Effective communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-quality staff interactions• Successful workforce partnerships• Positive hiring outcomes |
|---|--|

The overwhelming majority of comments indicate employers value the partnership and intend to continue working with the Career Center.

Conclusion

The Employer Satisfaction Survey reflects a highly successful Business Services program. Employers overwhelmingly expressed confidence in the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center and its staff, citing professionalism, responsiveness, and effective workforce solutions as key strengths.

The survey also highlights opportunities for continued growth by expanding candidate pipelines, increasing employer outreach, and further promoting available workforce services. Overall, the responses demonstrate that Business Services is providing meaningful value to regional employers while strengthening workforce development across the Bluegrass region.

This feedback supports the conclusion that the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center continues to be viewed as a trusted workforce partner that effectively connects businesses with talent, training resources, and workforce solutions.

Our Outreach

Events & Workshops ~ 2,241 Attendees

All Together Recovery
Anderson County High School
BCTC Healthcare Summer Camp
Berea Community High School
Bourbon County High School
Bourbon County Public Library
Boyle County Job Fair
Boyle County High School
Boyle County Public Library
Central Bank
Clark County High School
Clark County Public Library
Danville Bluegrass Community & Technical College
Develop Danville
Dunbar High School
East Jessamine High School
East Kentucky Scholar House
Estill County Area Technology Center
Estill County High School
Estill County Public Library
Fayette County Public Schools
Franklin County High School
Frederick Douglas High School
Fresh Start: Frankfort
Garrard County High School
Garrard County Public Library
Garrard County Homeless Shelter
George Rogers Clark High School
Hope Center
Ignite Academy
Isaiah House
Jessamine County High School
Jessamine County Public Library
Kentucky Career Center/American Job Center
King Middle School
Lafayette High School
Lexington Rescue Mission
Lincoln County High School
Madison Central High School
Madison County Board of Education
Madison Southern High School
Mercer County High School
Mercer Youth Leaders
Madison County Public Library
Mercer County High School
Mercer County Public Library



Nicholas County High School
Nicholas County Public Library
Powell County Public Library
Powell County High School
Scott County Public Library
Scott County High School
Paul B Sawyer Public Library
Phoenix Academy
Recovery Life
Robert D. Campbell JrHigh School
Royal Springs Middle School
The Learning Center
The Stables
UK at The Hill
Virtual
Waypoint Center
West Jessamine High School
Women's Hope Center
Woodford County High School
Woodford County Public Library

VIRTUAL REALITY EVENTS	COUNTY	ATTENDEE #'S
Anderson County High School	Anderson	32
BCTC Healthcare Summer Camp	Anderson	25
Boyle County Job Fair	Boyle	18
Develop Danville	Boyle	10
George Rogers Clark	Clark	28
Robert D. Campbell Jr. High School	Clark	70
BCTC Healthcare Summer Camp	Fayette	43
Dunbar High School	Fayette	15
Fredrick Douglass High School	Fayette	138
KY Career Coaching Event	Fayette	14
Lafayette High School	Fayette	7
The Learning Center	Fayette	127
Mercer Youth Leaders	Fayette	5
The Stables	Fayette	41
UK at The Hill	Fayette	8
Franklin County High School	Franklin	109
Garrard County High School	Garrard	31
West Jessamine High School	Jessamine	20
East Jessamine High School	Jessamine	16
Lincoln County High School	Lincoln	42
Madison County Board of Education	Madison	12
Madison Southern High School	Madison	26
Berea Community High School	Madison	57
Madison Central High School	Madison	39
King Middle School	Mercer	13
Mercer County High School	Mercer	15
Royal Springs Middle School	Scott	17
Woodford County HS	Woodford	67
	Total:	1042

** Note that several of these events were held mutiple times over the past year.*

Our Community Highlights

Bluegrass Workforce Staff focuses on incorporating our core values in everything we do. Here are some highlights that show the BGWIB's core values in action.



Cooperative

Fall Regional Job Fair & Expo

In September, Fall Regional Job Fair & Expo in Danville showcased the power of partnership and shared commitment. We joined forces with the City of Danville and many others to create an event that connected 51 vendors with 650 students and job seekers. By working together, these organizations helped strengthen workforce connections, expand opportunities, and create a lasting impact across the region.



Caring

Networking with the Community

We believe that meaningful workforce connections begin with meeting people where they are. Staff participated in the Look Good Feel Good event in Lexington, engaging with more than 350 community members while helping connect job seekers with resources, support, and opportunities. Through partnerships with local vendors and sponsors, the event provided essential services, including more than 90 free haircuts and 125 pairs of work boots, demonstrating the power of collaboration and compassion in strengthening our community.



Meaningful Results

Veterans Stand Down Event

In May, we hosted the our second Veterans Stand Down Job & Resource Fair, connecting those who have served with meaningful employment opportunities and vital community resources. The event brought together veteran-friendly employers and service providers dedicated to supporting veterans' successful transition to civilian careers. The event also drew the attention of Rhonda Epps with the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), who recognized it as a model of success and highlighted it as an example of effective workforce collaboration for workforce areas across the nation.



Effectiveness

United Way Women's Summit

Staff attended the United Way Women's Summit in Lexington, strengthening connections with community leaders dedicated to improving the lives of those facing hardship. The event provided valuable opportunities to collaborate, share ideas, and reaffirm our commitment to serving individuals and families across the Bluegrass region. As one staff member reflected, "These are powerful women in our community trying to help our less fortunate folks."



Innovation

Sharing Best Practices Regionally

We attended the 2026 NAWDP Conference, highlighting the region's innovative response to the closure of Bluegrass Army Depot in Richmond, Kentucky. The presentation showcased the success of the Dislocated Worker Grant in supporting impacted workers, strengthening economic resilience, and providing critical workforce services during a significant economic transition.

More Highlights



Collaboration

Addressing Community Needs

Recognizing that quality childcare is essential to a strong workforce, we partnered with the Child Care Council of Kentucky to address regional staffing shortages. Together, we launched a dedicated childcare recruitment initiative connecting licensed providers with job seekers interested in early childhood education. This collaboration strengthens the childcare workforce while supporting working families, employers, and the Bluegrass economy.



Engagement

Building Stronger Partnerships

In February, we hosted a Lunch & Learn event titled "Strengthen Your Talent Pipeline: Apprenticeships Made Simple", bringing together 16 employers and workforce partners from across the 17-county Bluegrass region. Featuring guest speaker Jon Dougherty of Amteck, the session highlighted how apprenticeship, work-based learning, and On-the-Job Training programs can help employers develop skilled talent, strengthen retention, and support long-term workforce growth.



Appreciation

Our Board

Our success is made possible by the dedicated professionals who generously volunteer their time, expertise, and leadership to strengthen workforce development across our 17-county region. Matt Montgomery, who concluded eight years of service on the Board in spring of this year, exemplified the caliber of leadership and service that makes our Board so effective.



High Demand

Providing Business Services to Employers

We partnered with Strategic BPO Solutions to support one of the region's largest workforce expansion efforts. Staff coordinated multiple hiring events, including an in-person recruitment event, to help the Winchester-based customer service center connect with qualified local talent. Staff assisted Strategic BPO Solutions as it expanded operations to create up to 400 new jobs in Clark County.



Driven

The Strategic Plan is Our Roadmap

Planning for the next five-year Strategic Plan began with direct service staff, whose firsthand experience provided valuable insight into the evolving needs of job seekers, employers, and community partners. Their recommendations were followed by input from Board Support Staff and will continue through joint workforce board planning sessions. This collaborative, multi-stage approach ensures the Strategic Plan reflects diverse perspectives, addresses emerging workforce challenges, and remains aligned with the requirements and priorities of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).



Expertise

Ensuring a Knowledgeable Staff

In November 2025, the Quality Control Manager attended the Kentucky Hospital Associate (KHA) 2025 Fall Workforce Summit to stay informed on emerging trends and challenges within one of the Bluegrass region's most in-demand industries. Participation in events such as this helps ensure staff remain knowledgeable about workforce needs across the sectors, strengthening the organization's ability to support employers, job seekers, and regional workforce development efforts.



Involvement

Trusted Relationships

Staff assisted with and participated in the Pain to Purpose Job Fair, connecting individuals in recovery with employment opportunities and vital community resources. As a long-standing partner in our Transitions 2 Transformation initiative, Pain to Purpose continues to play an important role in helping participants build stable, meaningful futures through workforce development and support services.



Learning

Expanding Our County Knowledge

Understanding the unique strengths and challenges of each community is essential to building an effective workforce system. Local elected officials are invited to share an overview of their county's history, demographics, economy, workforce, and community priorities. These presentations deepen the Board's understanding of the diverse needs across the region and help inform workforce strategies that are responsive, collaborative, and locally driven.



Supportive

Providing Rapid Response Services

In October, Rapid Response Services were provided to employees affected by layoffs at Leggett & Platt with two sessions serving a total of 73 individuals alongside 15 workforce and community partners. To further assist impacted workers, the resume workshops held on October 28 and 29 provided approximately 25 individuals with personalized career-readiness support and resources to help them pursue new employment opportunities.



Skills

Increasing Skilled Labor Based on Demand

We partnered with the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's (LFUCG) Work-Lexington to provide a free Forklift Certification Training Program for young adults ages 18-24 in Fayette County. Held in April in Lexington, the program equipped participants with valuable industry-recognized skills, hands-on training, and employment support to help strengthen career pathways and connect individuals with future job opportunities.



Outreach

Informing the Community

In December, the Business Services Manager participated in the Berea Community Forum, serving as one of 12 panelists representing organizations dedicated to supporting local residents. During the event, information about workforce and career services was shared through both a panel discussion and a resident question-and-answer session. Following the forum, attendees had the opportunity to connect directly with staff, ask additional questions, and access valuable information.



Dedication

Long-term partnerships

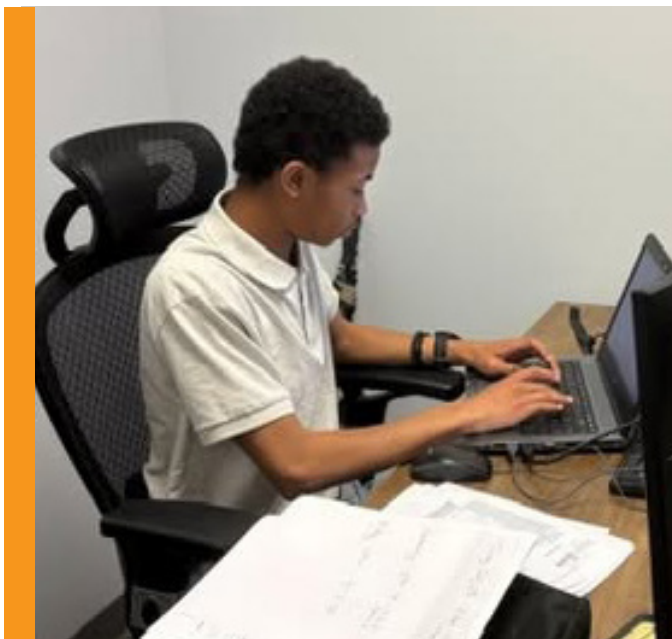
We continue to build strong, long-term partnerships with local school systems to connect students with career opportunities and prepare the next generation of workers. In March, we supported the Scott County High School Job Fair, bringing together approximately 300 students and 40 employers to explore career pathways and workforce opportunities.



Networking

Southeastern Employment & Training Conference

Throughout the year, staff represented the Bluegrass at the Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Conference, delivering multiple presentations that showcased innovative workforce strategies and best practices. Presentation topics ranged from quality assurance and program compliance to the region's successful childcare workforce initiative, providing valuable insights while highlighting the region's commitment to collaboration, continuous improvement, and workforce innovation.



Commitment

Supporting Youth Work Experience

Investing in the next generation of leaders is an important part of our mission. Through the Fayette County Summer Youth Job Training Program, Demetrius gained valuable workplace experience while learning firsthand about leadership, public service, and the role of workforce development by participating in board meetings and daily operations at BGADD. We are proud to support opportunities that equip young people with the skills, confidence, and experience they need to succeed in their future careers.

Our Client Successes

Shannon Akers was referred to Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass/American Job Center as a Dislocated Worker through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. She was looking for a new start after the death of her longtime partner and the loss of her job. Staff assisted her with funding for an Adult Peer Support Specialist course through Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) Workforce Solutions which she completed while working her new job as Residential Technician at Chrysalis House, an organization that works with women in recovery.

Samuel Stephens was laid off by the closure of Yokohama in Woodford County. He was able to transfer his skills on the assembly line to working as an Electrician's Helper and reached out to the career center for assistance with required tools to be successful in his job. Through supportive services, TDS N. Collier purchased for Mr. Stephens all the required tools that he needed to retain his employment. He was thankful for the assistance.

Mindy Wilkerson, a recently divorced single mother who came to the Lexington office for help building a better life for her children. She expressed interest in a phlebotomy certificate and staff assisted with her enrollment at BCTC. She completed her training in August 2025 and within the month had a job offer from LabCorp.

Harrodsburg Water

"I was struggling to find a career that was right for me when I had the opportunity to take a school field trip to the water plant. I really needed a job and a good career plan for when I finished school. As we were touring, I really thought this was something I could do for a career. I am not sure what I would be doing for work if I hadn't done this. I'm glad the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass/American Job Center and Burgin Independent Schools offered this opportunity."

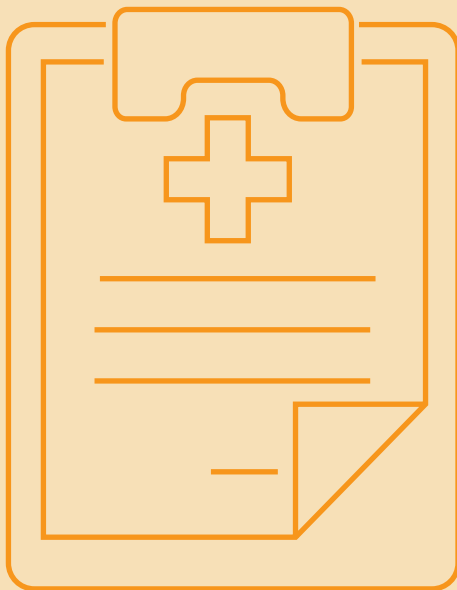
- Trinton Southers

"The partnership we have created with the school system and the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass/American Job Center is creating career opportunities for youth in an industry that needs people. They have made the whole process quick and smooth. And it definitely helps that we get a trial period with each person to make sure it is a good fit before going through the long hiring process."

- Elijah Stratton

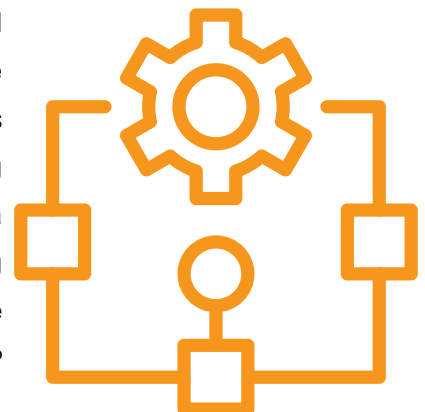


Navy Veteran **Charles Boswell** was referred to WIOA services through the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program after seeking a fresh start following incarceration, which ended his previous career in forestry. The Kentucky Career Center–Bluegrass/American Job Center provided tuition assistance for a coding program at Kable Academy while also helping him secure employment at Hotel Lex, allowing him to reenter the workforce as he builds new skills. With the support of these services, Charles is working toward his long-term goal of launching his own web development company.



In March 2025, **Cathy Stewart** was enrolled as a Quest participant and began a paid internship with The Wanda Joyce Foundation the following month. She had been struggling to find suitable employment that matched her career goals. She was working on her degree in social work and wanted to gain experience and knowledge working with the public, but had not had the opportunity with her current skill set. At Wanda Joyce, she was able to successfully complete administrative tasks and be involved in working one on one with clients. In September, Ms. Stewart completed her internship hours and was offered full-time employment with the Wanda Joyce Foundation. She has expressed gratitude for the opportunity through the career center and believes she is much closer to meeting her overall goal of becoming an LPN.

After losing his job in the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry, **Nathan R.** turned to the Kentucky Career Center–Bluegrass/American Job Center for guidance as he struggled to find new employment. Staff identified an opportunity to strengthen his qualifications by enrolling him in Project Management Professional (PMP) training through BCTC Workforce Solutions. Before completing the program, Nathan secured a position as a Quality Assurance Project Manager with a pharmaceutical manufacturing and compounding company, where he now combines his extensive quality assurance experience with his newly developed project management skills. He completed his PMP training and is now earning his certification, positioning him for continued career growth.



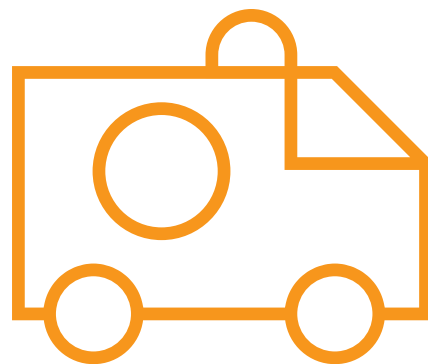
In thier own words... Ida Warren, Turning Caring into a Career

" When I came to the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass/American Job Center and was approved for training, they assisted me with everything I needed for my course. The staff always reached out to make sure I was doing well. They made me feel like family. They didn't pressure me; they wanted me to be myself, and that helped! Without their assistance, I don't know that I could have overcome the barriers to earning my certification. Now, I feel more fulfilled because taking that extra step allowed me to become a certified medication aide."



After experiencing personal life transitions that led to the expiration of his Class B CDL and the loss of his job in environmental services, **Taylor Sauer** turned to the Kentucky Career Center-Bluegrass/American Job Center for assistance in earning his Class A CDL and expanding his career opportunities. While maintaining part-time employment at Meijer during training, Taylor remained determined despite not passing his CDL exam on his first attempt. After being hired by Eagle as a delivery driver, the company provided additional behind-the-wheel practice that helped him build the skills and confidence needed to succeed. Taylor passed his CDL exam on his second attempt, earned his Class A CDL, and secured stable employment, demonstrating how perseverance and employer support can lead to lasting career success.

After the closure of his longtime employer during the COVID-19 pandemic, **Clinton Causey** turned to the Kentucky Career Center–Bluegrass/American Job Center for career guidance while working part-time and supplementing his income through DoorDash. With training assistance, he completed the CDL program at 160 Driving Academy, earned his commercial driver's license, and secured a full-time position with Clark Distribution Company. WIOA Supportive Services also provided essential work gear to help him succeed in his new outdoor role. Clinton shared, "It seems to be a very good job so far. I want to thank you again for all your help. I really do appreciate the help and getting me back on track."

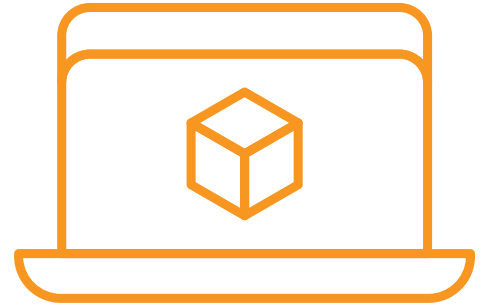


In their own words... **Allison Prewitt, Meeting Her Career Goals**

" The Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass (American Job Center) played an important role in helping me gain hands-on experience in a daycare classroom, which was essential for my goal of becoming a special education teacher. Their guidance made the process smooth and efficient, allowing me to begin earning valuable experience as quickly as possible. With their support and clear direction, I was able to step into a classroom setting, build practical skills, and gain confidence in running a classroom. I'm sharing my experience to show others that the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass truly helps remove barriers and supports individuals in reaching their career goals. "



After relocating to the United States in 2025 while his wife pursued her studies at the University of Kentucky, **Bayu Adi** sought assistance from the Kentucky Career Center-Bluegrass/American Job Center to continue his career in product design. Drawing on his extensive background in architecture, engineering, and product design in Indonesia, staff provided interview preparation and guidance on discussing workplace religious accommodations. With this support, Bayu secured a position as a Mechanical Designer with Audio Authority, allowing him to continue his professional career in the United States.



In their own words... **Anneliese Doty, Finding a Love for a Career in Childcare**

"The Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass (American Job Center) helped me take the steps I needed to get hired, and their guidance made the process easier and clearer. With their support, I was able to find a position working at a daycare center. The program gave me useful resources and direction and showed me the practical steps to move forward. I hope by sharing my experience others can see that this program works and can help them reach their goals as well."



After being laid off from a private caregiving position, **Samantha Lloyd** turned to the Kentucky Career Center-Bluegrass/American Job Center as a dislocated worker to pursue her lifelong dream of becoming a nurse. With support from the Career Center, she completed her State Registered Nurse Aide (SRNA) training through Kentucky Healthcare Training and secured a new caregiving position, taking an important step toward her long-term goal of attending nursing school. Samantha expressed her appreciation for the guidance and support she received throughout her journey.

In their own words... Carol Commodore, Appreciating Our Staff Support

"I really needed a job and without help I don't know what I would have done. Whitney at the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass (American Job Center) helped me with my job search, update my resume, submit applications, and stay motivated during the process. She encouraged me and helped get me a job. She is a kind person and will go the extra mile to help someone. I was sent an angel. Thank you Whitney and the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass!"



William Conder came to the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center (KCC-B/AJC) seeking stable employment. He was underemployed in a weather-dependent construction job, resulting in inconsistent hours and income. With only a high school diploma and no formal training, William worked with his Talent Development Specialist, S. Borens, to identify a career path that matched his interests and goals. Together, they determined lineman work was the right fit, and in May 2024, William enrolled in the Lineman/CDL A training program at Somerset Lineman Center. He successfully completed his training and continued his job search, ultimately securing a position with Davis Elliot in November 2024. William is now earning a strong wage in a career he's passionate about—proof that with guidance, training, and determination, long-term employment success is possible through the KCC-B/AJC.

After relocating to Kentucky in 2025, **Anthony Gonzalez** sought assistance from the Kentucky Career Center–Bluegrass/American Job Center after struggling to connect with local employers despite his extensive background in manufacturing and logistics. Through collaboration between the Talent Development and Business Services teams, Anthony was connected with an opportunity at Parker Hannifin O-Ring Division in Lexington and was hired through Randstad as a Production Team Member. His success demonstrates the value of coordinated workforce services in helping skilled individuals quickly reconnect with meaningful employment.



Our Strategic Plan



1. OUTREACH

Increase Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass services awareness through direct communications, public relations, and virtual outreach efforts to better serve our community.

Over the past year, the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center (KCC-B/AJC) has continued to expand awareness and access to workforce services through a comprehensive outreach strategy focused on direct communication, public engagement, and virtual innovation.

KCC-B/AJC strengthened its digital presence by enhancing online communication efforts and increasing customer engagement through multiple virtual platforms. Between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, the KCC-B/AJC website received more than 15,700 visitors, with 75% of users located in Kentucky, 8% from Southeastern Employment and Training Association states, and 17% from across the remaining United States. More than half of website visitors (56%) accessed the site directly, demonstrating increased brand recognition and intentional engagement with KCC-B/AJC resources. Online customer referrals also experienced significant growth, increasing from 942 in 2024 to more than 3,700 during the most recent program year—nearly four times the previous year's total.

The KCC-B/AJC monthly workforce newsletter continues to serve as an effective communication tool, connecting customers with employment opportunities, training resources, and workforce information. The newsletter achieved an average click-through rate of 33%, with nearly 10% of recipients visiting linked resources and opportunities throughout the region.

Recognizing the importance of accessible services, KCC-B/AJC continued to expand in-person outreach by standardizing staff availability at public libraries in counties without a dedicated brick-and-mortar Career Center location. These efforts ensure residents throughout the 17-county Bluegrass region have consistent access to career services, employment resources, and workforce support.

Partnership development remains a key component of KCC-B/AJC's outreach strategy. Throughout the year, the Career Center strengthened collaborations with community organizations, including Dream Flight Charities, Wings Flights, Stellar Behavioral Health, Lean Feast, and local fiscal courts. These partnerships have expanded the organization's reach, increased community awareness, and connected more individuals and businesses with valuable workforce resources.

Through continued investment in digital communication, community presence, and strategic partnerships, KCC-B/AJC continues to increase visibility, improve access to services, and ensure more individuals and employers across the Bluegrass region are connected to opportunities that support economic growth and workforce success.



2. EDUCATION EFFORTS

Provide up-to-date workforce information and best employment practices to maintain a healthy employer/employee relationship with less turnover.

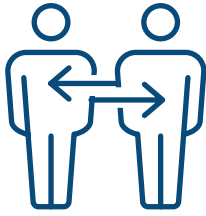
In alignment with its goal to maximize employer engagement and expand opportunities for job seekers, the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center (KCC-B/AJC) continued to strengthen relationships with employers, industry leaders, and workforce partners throughout the Bluegrass region. Through intentional outreach, strategic partnerships, and increased visibility of employer services, KCC-B/AJC continues to serve as a trusted workforce partner connecting businesses with qualified talent and helping job seekers access meaningful career opportunities.

Recognizing the growing importance of apprenticeships and work-based learning as effective workforce development strategies, KCC-B/AJC hosted *Strengthen Your Talent Pipeline: Apprenticeships Made Simple*, bringing together 16 employers and workforce partners from across the region. Featuring guest speaker Jon Dougherty of Amteck, the event highlighted how apprenticeship programs, work-based learning opportunities, and On-the-Job Training can help employers build skilled talent pipelines, improve employee retention, and support long-term workforce growth.

KCC-B/AJC also continued to expand employer engagement through participation in Kentucky Chamber committees and statewide workforce initiatives. Staff played an active role in advancing the Statewide Workforce and Talent Team (SWATT) initiative, which focuses on making Kentucky's workforce system easier for businesses to navigate by aligning state, education, workforce, and economic development partners around employer-driven solutions. These collaborative efforts help ensure workforce programs remain responsive to the evolving needs of businesses across the region.

KCC-B/AJC also demonstrated its commitment to rapid response and employer support when more than 120 Fayette County Public Schools employees experienced an unexpected layoff. The KCC-B/AJC Business Services team and board support staff partnered with Fayette County Public Schools and the City of Lexington to provide rapid response assistance and coordinate a targeted virtual job fair. The event connected impacted employees with employers seeking candidates whose skills, training, and professional experience aligned with available positions.

Through continued employer outreach, innovative engagement strategies, and strong partnerships with industry and community organizations, KCC-B/AJC continues to expand employer participation, strengthen workforce pipelines, and create greater employment opportunities for individuals throughout the Bluegrass region.



3. EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Maximize the number of employers who utilize services to increase opportunities for our clients.

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4. ADDRESS EMPLOYEE BARRIERS

Strengthen resources/partnerships at the state and local levels to advocate for solutions addressing job seekers' barriers.

The Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center (KCC-B/AJC) continues to prioritize education, communication, and resource-sharing efforts that support strong employer-employee relationships, improve workforce connections, and help reduce turnover throughout the Bluegrass region.

Through targeted communication strategies, KCC-B/AJC provides job seekers and employers with timely workforce information, employment resources, and best practices to support career advancement and workforce retention. The monthly workforce newsletter continues to serve as an important educational resource for job seekers, highlighting employment and training opportunities available throughout the region. Each edition features a “Hot Jobs” spotlight showcasing local employers and current openings, along with expanded coverage of the Careers in Childcare Initiative, including opportunities and resources available within the childcare industry. The newsletter also incorporates employer-focused content and videos promoting available positions, helping connect qualified candidates with in-demand career opportunities.

As part of an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, KCC-B/AJC completed comprehensive updates to its Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program Manual and Business Services Manual. These revisions are designed to strengthen internal processes, improve service delivery, and ensure staff have the tools necessary to provide efficient, responsive support to both employers and job seekers. The updated procedures emphasize streamlined operations, improved communication, and more effective workforce matching strategies.

KCC-B/AJC's Community Resource Minutes and Business Minutes continue to provide accessible education and workforce information to the public. During the past fiscal year, 220 segments were shared across Facebook and LinkedIn, covering workforce trends, employment resources, available programs, and best practices for employers and job seekers. These short-form videos have become a valuable component of KCC-B/AJC's outreach strategy, allowing the organization to provide consistent, relevant information to a broad audience.

Through continued education efforts, improved program resources, and innovative communication methods, KCC-B/AJC continues to equip employers and job seekers with the knowledge, tools, and resources needed to build stronger workplace relationships, support employee retention, and promote a thriving regional workforce.



5. INCREASE FUNDING

Create operational sustainability through diversified funding opportunities that align with the program's vision and goals.

The Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board (BGWIB) remains committed to building a sustainable workforce system by pursuing diversified funding opportunities that support innovation, strengthen regional partnerships, and address the evolving workforce needs of employers and job seekers. During the past year, these efforts resulted in significant new investments that expanded services and enhanced the region's capacity to respond to workforce challenges.

A key driver of this success has been the Board's strategic focus on grant development and stewardship. During the program year, the Compliance and Reporting Manager submitted five competitive grant applications, resulting in three grant awards totaling more than \$2 million in new workforce funding. These investments position the Bluegrass to remain competitive in an increasingly complex workforce development environment.

The largest award was a \$2 million National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG), secured in response to the closures of Yokohama Industries and the Bluegrass Army Depot. Since implementation began in July, BGWIB staff have worked closely with the U.S. Department of Labor to ensure full compliance with federal requirements and effective program delivery. The success of the initiative has received national recognition, with BGWIB staff presenting implementation strategies and best practices at the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals conference.

The BGWIB also secured funding through the Statewide Reserve Grant and the Stand Down Grant, which supported the region's second Veterans Job and Resource Fair. These grants provided employment opportunities and essential community resources for unemployed and unhoused veterans and their families. Funding supported the purchase of basic necessity items, meals, and other critical resources, helping remove barriers to employment while connecting veterans with employers and supportive services. The event received praise from representatives of the U.S. Department of Labor, further highlighting the effectiveness of this collaborative initiative.

The Bluegrass region also continued to benefit from funding through the Putting Young Kentuckians to Work (PYKW) initiative. This investment provides graduating high school seniors and disconnected young adults ages 18 to 24 with training opportunities in high-demand occupations. The initiative helps meet regional workforce demands while creating meaningful employment opportunities for young adults.

BGWIB recognizes that sustainable funding is built on strong partnerships. Throughout the year, the Board continued to strengthen collaborations with workforce, education, healthcare, economic development, and community organizations to pursue competitive funding opportunities and develop innovative workforce solutions on fourteen additional grants. These partnerships have enhanced the region's ability to respond to emerging challenges, expand service delivery, and leverage resources to maximize community impact.

As workforce funding grows increasingly competitive, the BGWIB remains committed to a proactive strategy focused on the region's success.



6. INNOVATION

Recognized nationally as an innovative workforce program that better serves our clients.

The Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board (BGWIB) continues to strengthen its reputation as an innovative leader in workforce development by fostering collaboration, implementing forward-thinking initiatives, and sharing successful practices with workforce professionals across the country. Innovation remains central to the Board's mission, driving improvements that better serve job seekers, employers, and communities throughout the Bluegrass region.

This commitment begins with strong internal collaboration. Quarterly meetings between Board support staff and direct service providers, monthly leadership meetings, and regular partner meetings with the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass/American Job Center, the Career Development Office, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation ensure services remain coordinated, responsive, and focused on continuous improvement.

Employer feedback also plays a critical role in shaping workforce strategies. Through ongoing business engagement and the annual Employer Gap Analysis Survey, BGWIB identifies emerging workforce needs and develops employer-driven solutions that strengthen the regional workforce.

Innovation was further demonstrated through continued partnerships with the Child Care Council of Kentucky. Together, the organizations expanded the careers in childcare initiatives, helping job seekers obtain the training, certifications, and connections needed to enter the childcare workforce while providing participating childcare providers with targeted marketing through social media, the Career Courier newsletter, and a dedicated childcare employment webpage. An additional entrepreneurial initiative supports individuals interested in opening childcare centers, helping address childcare shortages in underserved communities.

BGWIB staff also continued to share innovative practices on the national stage, delivering presentations at regional and national workforce conferences on quality assurance, special initiatives, and grant development. Most notably, staff presented at the 2026 National Association of Workforce Development Professionals Conference, highlighting the successful implementation of the region's \$2 million National Dislocated Worker Grant.

Looking ahead, BGWIB continues to develop innovative workforce solutions through partnerships that expand opportunities for underserved populations and high-demand industries. Emerging initiatives include a workforce training partnership with McLeod's Coffee House to prepare individuals with disabilities for careers in the service industry and a registered apprenticeship partnership with Oxmoor Motor Group and Bluegrass Community and Technical College to develop the next generation of skilled automotive technicians.

Through a culture of collaboration, continuous improvement, and innovation, BGWIB continues to strengthen its position as a nationally recognized workforce leader while creating new opportunities for employers, job seekers, and communities across the Bluegrass region.

Our Business Partners

Note

This is by no means a comprehensive list of employers we have worked with over the previous year, but a list of those employers who have signed Master Agreements

with us. These businesses are those we have worked most closely with to ensure that the job seekers who are ready to work are matched with these employers open positions.

ALL OR MULTIPLE COUNTIES

Goodwill
Kentucky Career Center

Isaiah House

ANDERSON COUNTY

Kyle's Corner Learning Center

BOURBON COUNTY

Bourbon County Fiscal Court

BOYLE COUNTY

All Together Recovery
Boyle Co Fiscal Court
Heal Together Counseling Center
Pioneer
Wings Flight Enterprises

Bluegrass News Media LLC
Haven Care Center
Recovery Life Centers
Vegetable Man Produce

CLARK COUNTY

Better Days Sober Living
Mended Heart Recovery

East Clark County Water District
Pain to Purpose

ESTILL COUNTY

Estill Board of Education
Estill County Public Library
Playtime Childcare

Estill County Fiscal Court
Helping Hands Outreach

FAYETTE COUNTY

Amteck
Bluegrass Area Development District
DV8 2 Kitchen
Hotel Lex
Lighthouse Ministries
Molly Maid
Primary Purpose
Shepherd's House
Stable Recovery
Tracy's Residential Reentry Center

Benchmark Heating and Air
Dv8 1 Kitchen
Growing Together Preschool
Lean Feast
Magnolia Springs
Precision Staffing
Sayre Christian Village
Signature Insurance
Stellar Behavioral Health
You've got Curls



FRANKLIN COUNTY

Boys and Girls Club of Frankfort
 Dream Flight Charities
 Franklin County Fiscal Court
 Thorn Hill Educational Center

City of Frankfort
 Franklin County Council on Aging
 Journey Early Education Center
 Wanda Joyce Robinson Foundation

GARRARD COUNTY

Bukulmez Legal PLLC

Vegetable Man Produce

JESSAMINE COUNTY

Acton Builders
 Taylor Made Sales

Revive
 Winner's Circle Painting

LINCOLN COUNTY

Allison Abrasives

MADISON COUNTY

Berea College
 Dominion Sr. Living Richmond
 KY Riverfoothills

Concrete Materials
 Hyster Yale
 Spring Arbor Living

MERCER COUNTY

Bishops Smash Burger
 Mercer County Fiscal Court

Mercer Chamber of Commerce
 Wren's Nest

NICHOLAS COUNTY

Harrison Harvesting and Processing
 Nicholas County Fiscal Court

Nicholas Co Board of Education
 Wendt Enterprises LLC

POWELL COUNTY

Spark Ministries

SCOTT COUNTY

Marys Safe Haven

WOODFORD COUNTY

City of Versailles PD

Our Community Partners

ALL OR MULTIPLE COUNTIES

Arbor Youth Services
AVOL Kentucky
Bluegrass Care Navigators
Bluegrass Community & Technical College
Bluegrass Community Action Council
Career Development Office
Community Ventures
County Fiscal Courts
County Public Libraries
County School Systems
Everybody Counts

Goodwill Industries of Kentucky
Isaiah House
Jobs for Americas Graduates (JAG)
Kentucky Career Center/American Job Center
Legal Aid of the Bluegrass
New Vista
Shepherd's House
Spark Ministries
United Way of the Bluegrass
Volunteers of American (VOA)
Vocational Rehabilitation

ANDERSON COUNTY

Anderson County Adult Education
Anderson County High School
Anderson Department for Community Based Services

Anderson County Public Library
Open Hands Community Food Pantry

BOURBON COUNTY

Bourbon County Fiscal Court

Bourbon County Public Library

BOYLE COUNTY

All Together Recovery
Boyle County Fiscal Court
Boyle County Public Library
Ephriam McDowell Hospital

Haven Care Center
Heal Together Counseling Center
Recovery Life Centers

CLARK COUNTY

Better Days Sober
Clark County Adult Education
Clark County Public Library
Living Mended Heart Recovery

East Clark County Water District
George Rogers Clark High School
Pain to Purpose

ESTILL COUNTY

Estill County Area Technology Center
Estill Board of Education
Estill County Fiscal Court
Estill County High School

Estill County Public Library
Mercy Health/ Project Home
Playtime Childcare
Helping Hands Outreach

FAYETTE COUNTY

Bluegrass Area Development District
Fayette County Adult Education
Green House 17
Hope Hill Youth Services
Lexington Fayette Health Department
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government
Lexington Public Library
Lexington Rescue Mission

Lighthouse Ministries
Partners for Youth
Primary Purpose
Shepherd's House
Stable Recovery
The Hill
The Learning Center



FRANKLIN COUNTY

City of Frankfort
Dream Flight Charities
Franklin County Council on Aging
Franklin County Fiscal Court
Franklin County Health Department

Franklin County High School
Journey Early Education Center
Paul Sawyer Library
Thorn Hill Educational Center
Wanda Joyce Robinson Foundation

GARRARD COUNTY

Garrard County Public Library
Garrard County Health Department

Quest Counseling
Salvation Army

HARRISON COUNTY

Edgemont Health

Harrison County Public Library

JESSAMINE COUNTY

Jessamine County Extension Office
Jessamine County Health Access Nurturing Development
Services (HANDS)
Jessamine County Health Department
Jessamine County Public Library

Level Up Recovery
Nicholasville Police Department
Revive
West Jessamine High School

LINCOLN COUNTY

Lincoln County Area Technical Center (ATC)
Lincoln County High School

Lincoln County Public library

MADISON COUNTY

Bluegrass Army Depot
Eastern Kentucky University - Kit Carson
Kentucky River Foothills Community Action

Stable Recovery
White House Clinic
Yonder Behavioral Health

MERCER COUNTY

Mercer County Fiscal Court
Mercer County Public Library

Mercer County School System
Mercer Transformation

NICHOLAS COUNTY

Nicholas County Public Library

POWELL COUNTY

Powell County High School
Powell County Public Library

Spark Ministries

SCOTT COUNTY

Amen House
Scott County Public Library

The Gathering Place
Transform Scott

WOODFORD COUNTY

Woodford County Public Library

Thank You

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