

From:
To:
Bcc:

Subject: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 4:11:00 PM
Date: [WIOA Board Membership TEGL 27-14 Attachment III Acc.pdf](#)
Attachments: [image003.png](#)

Welcome to Workforce Wednesday

In an effort to have a more informed Northern Middle Workforce Board, I will be sending out a weekly snippet of pertinent board information. This will prepare us to be certified by the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services as a high performing workforce board. Today's focus will be an outline of the program and topics which will be covered during this series.

Workforce Board Outline:

1. Structure and Roles
2. Relationship, Partners and Terminology
3. Board Responsibilities
4. Governance System
5. Strategic Insight
6. Performance Management
7. Legal & Ethical Behavior

Structure:

The composition of workforce boards, including the Northern Middle Board is defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The Board has to be represented by a majority of private sector business representatives. The Northern Middle Board has 24 members of which 14 are business representatives totaling 58%.

Twenty percent of the Board must be representatives of the workforce including labor unions and apprenticeships, community based organizations and youth providers. Currently Northern Middle has ~21% in this category.

The balance of the board is made up of an adult education provider, higher education, economic development, Wagner Peyser and Vocational Rehabilitation representatives.

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development has certified the Northern Middle Board as compliant. Below you will find a list of current members. In addition, I have attached a copy of the WIOA regulations on board composition.

Board Members

Business Representation

Mary Lear - AO Smith

Dan Caldwell - Nissan

Kelly Tyler - Accurate Energetic Systems

James Harper - Hensel Phelps

Mark Peed - Peed Family Trucking

Tony Adams - Benefits Inc.

Paul Webb - Paul Webb CPA

Kristi Spurgeon - Graphic Packaging International

Shoshana Samuels - Dell Technologies

Seth Thurman - Wilson Bank and Trust

Christopher West - National Healthcare Corp

John Zabl - A to Z Consulting (Board Chair)

Jordan Osborne - Robertson County Chamber of Commerce

Robin Baldree - Marcoma Realty Inc.

Labor Representation

Billy Givens - IAMAW District Lodge 1888

Anne Fugate - Fort Campbell / Veterans

George "Bo" Callis - Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 572

David Rutledge - Central Labor Council of Nashville/Middle TN

Greg Jones - Rutherford Works

Education Representation

Nathan Garrett - TCAT President

Freda Herndon - TDLWD Adult Education

Government Representation

Corey Johns - Joint Economic & Community board of Wilson County

Sellittia Johnson - Tennessee Department of Human Services

Ryan Jolley - Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development

(Edition 1-2024)

Marla W. Rye

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From:
To:
Bcc:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, December 4, 2024 1:43:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

In this issue, we will continue to learn about the Structure, Roles and Relationships of the Northern Middle TN Workforce Board. Last week, we learned about the mandated composition of workforce boards under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). If you are not familiar with the [Northern Middle website](#), there is a world of workforce information published for public consumption. From mandated agreements with local elected officials to infrastructure funding arrangements, you can find all compliance documents on the site including the Board's bylaws. The bylaws have to be reviewed and renewed every two years. The current [By-laws](#) are for the period July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026.

The purpose of the Board is defined below and taken directly from the bylaws.

§ 3.1 Purpose: The purpose of this body is to provide policy guidance and exercise oversight with respect to activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) Section 107

(a) in partnership with the units of local government for the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA).

The Board is organized and shall be operated for charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes

by assisting to increase the employment opportunities, job retention, occupational skills attainment and

earnings of eligible individuals, and as a result, improve the quality of the local and area wide workforce,

reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the LWDA listed in

the following paragraph. The board oversees job training and placement programs within Tennessee's

Workforce Development System.

The Board is established in accordance with WIOA Section 107(b)(2) and the Tennessee Workforce Development Act of 1999. The Board intends to operate in the LWDA, established by the Governor of

the State of Tennessee, encompassing Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Stewart, Trousdale, Williamson, and Wilson counties of Tennessee.

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development provided guidance on the development of the bylaws in order to be compliant with WIOA regulations.

One interesting aspect of the bylaws is that a quorum is comprised of 1/3 of the voting members as opposed to the typical 51% majority. However, to amend the bylaws, it takes a 2/3 of the members approval.

In order to make sure that the private sector is sufficiently represented, the board has to be 51% employer based and the chair has to be from the private sector, as well. There are no term limits on board members as they can be reappointed every two years.

I hope these snippets of information are helpful to you.

Links:

NMWB Website- <https://nm-wb.com/>

Board Bylaws-https://nm-wb.com/images/PDFs/_Bylaws_Final.pdf

Upcoming: NMTWB Member's Roles and Responsibilities

Edition 2024-2

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From:
Bcc:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2024 4:19:22 PM
Attachments: [NMTWB Eligible Providers as of Dec 2024.pdf](#)
[Federal Performance Targets.pdf](#)
[ETPL Search Process.pdf](#)
[Outlook-yc5jerd1.png](#)

In this week's Workforce Wednesday, we will focus on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Northern Middle Workforce Board members. These are consistent with WIOA section 107(d) and Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) requirements in partnership with the Local Elected Officials (LEOs). The roles and responsibilities of the functions of the local board shall include the following:

A. LOCAL PLAN– Develop and submit a Strategic Plan in partnership with the Local Elected Officials ([Found here](#)).

B. WORKFORCE RESEARCH AND REGIONAL LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS– In order to assist in the development and implementation of the local plan, the Board shall carry out analyses of the economic conditions in the region, the needed knowledge and skills for the region, the workforce in the region, and workforce development activities.

C. CONVENING, BROKERING, LEVERAGING– The Board shall convene local workforce development system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan and in identifying non-Federal expertise and resources.

D. EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT– The Board shall lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of employers to promote business representation (particularly representatives with optimal policymaking or hiring authority from employers whose employment opportunities reflect existing and emerging employment opportunities in the region) on the Board.

E. CAREER PATHWAYS DEVELOPMENT– The Board, with representatives of secondary and postsecondary education programs, shall lead efforts in the local area to develop and implement career pathways within the local area by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers to employment. Attached is a guide to search for current Eligible Training Providers through Jobs4TN.

F. PROVEN AND PROMISING PRACTICES– The Board shall lead efforts to identify and promote proven and promising strategies and initiatives for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers (including individuals with barriers to employment) in the local workforce development system, including providing physical and programmatic accessibility.

G. TECHNOLOGY— The local board shall develop strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, workers, and jobseekers by facilitating connections among the intake and case management information systems of the one-stop partner programs to support a comprehensive workforce development system in the local area.

H. PROGRAM OVERSIGHT— The local board, in partnership with the local elected officials for the local area, shall conduct oversight of the One-Stop System, including all WIOA activities.

- MHRA (Mid-Cumberland Human Resource Agency) is the One-Stop Operator for all 13 counties.

I. NEGOTIATION OF LOCAL PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES AND SELECTION OF PROVIDERS— The local board, the local elected officials, and the Governor shall negotiate and reach agreement on local performance accountability measures and select providers. [Click here](#) to see the Six Primary Indicators of Performance. Additionally, the Federal Performance targets have been attached.

- MAC (Metro Action Commission) is the provider for all youth services in Davidson County.
- EDSI (Educational Data Systems, Inc) is the provider for services in Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Robertson, Rutherford, Stewart, Trousdale, Williamson, and Wilson Counties.
- Workforce Essentials is the provider for services in Montgomery County.
- The State is the provider for services in Sumner County.

J. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION PROVIDERS— The local board shall coordinate activities with education and training providers in the local area, including providers of workforce investment activities, providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II, and providers of career and technical education.

K. BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION— The local board shall develop a budget, with input from the LEOs.

L. ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES— The local board shall annually assess the physical and programmatic accessibility.

Upcoming: The Northern Middle WIOA Plan

Edition 2024-3

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From:
Bcc:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, December 18, 2024 4:25:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Northern Middle Economic Overview 2024.pdf](#)

Good afternoon and welcome to another edition of Workforce Wednesday. This week we are going to talk briefly about the [Northern Middle WIOA Plan](#). The current four year plan has been approved for the period 2024-2027. The Tennessee Department of Labor outlines the plan requirements from guidance received from the US Department of Labor. The plan requires an analysis of the local labor market which identifies the industry sectors that we will be targeting including Construction, Education, Healthcare, Information Technology, Logistics and Manufacturing. It also addresses how we serve target populations such as individuals with disabilities, offenders and low income individuals. Building career pathways for individuals in the designated sector strategies ties the workflow together. Opportunities such as apprenticeships, on-the-job training and individual scholarships are offered to qualifying participants to transition them to employment in a growth industry. Support services are also outlined to help individuals remove barriers such as transportation, childcare, food and clothing. Two of the most important sections of the plan provide information on how we will serve youth and employers. The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is in the process of rolling out a new plan to more effectively serve employers. More information on that in 2025. In upcoming issues, we will talk about partners and how they impact the work in the American Job Center. For your reading enjoyment over the holidays, I have attached an Economic Overview of the Northern Middle Workforce Area which is well over 2 million in population! It takes a deep dive into the unemployment picture and occupational outlook.

Please note that due to the holidays, Workforce Wednesday will not be issued until January 8, 2025. I wish everyone a blessed and Merry Christmas.

Marla

Edition 2024-4

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From:
To:
Bcc:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:09:00 PM
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[image002.png](#)

Happy New Year and welcome back to Workforce Wednesday. Starting off the new year, I think it is important to talk about fiscal accountability. Did you know that the local county mayors have fiscal responsibility for the WIOA funds that we expend? This means that if the Board should have a disallowed cost, then the county mayors have agreed to be responsible for the misuse and will do so by allocating the cost to each county based upon their proportion of the population. The following snippet is taken from the Mayor's agreement:

The LEOs retain responsibility for appropriate use and distribution of any and all funds allocated to the area through WIOA and shall be liable for any misuse of the funds in proportion to their representation. The current census population of the NMTWDA will be used for distribution of misuse of funds prorated based on those population estimates by county.

The population percentages are as follows:

Cheatham	2%
Davidson	34.3%
Dickson	2.6%
Houston	.4%
Humphreys	.9%
Montgomery	10.5%
Robertson	3.5%
Rutherford	16.3%
Stewart	.7%
Sumner	9.4%
Trousdale	.5%
Williamson	11.9%
Wilson	7.1%

I'm proud to say in the 36 years that I have been in workforce development, we have never had any questioned costs which had to be paid back by our counties. This is a track record that I hope is not broken any time soon! Saying that, it is important for you to know that the Board is covered by Director and Officers insurance which covers errors and omissions.

In addition, we have a cyber-insurance policy that protects us from cyber-crimes. If you recall, the LWDA in Memphis fell victim to an elaborate cyber scam, costing thousands of dollars.

At our next board meeting you will receive a copy of our annual audit which was just completed in December. I'm happy to report there were no findings.

Edition: 2025-1

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Subject: Workforce Wednesday
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Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Good afternoon. In this Workforce Wednesday we are going to talk about the structure of the American Job Center System (AJC). Are you aware that we have multiple types of AJCs?

The following centers and services are available in Northern Middle:

1. **Comprehensive Center- Davidson, Montgomery, Sumner and Rutherford**

Comprehensive Centers provide a full array of workforce services for job seekers and employers. These locations have all mandated partners: WIOA Title I Career Service Providers (CSP) providers, Title II Adult Education Providers, Title III State Programs including Wagner Peyser, Reentry, Veterans, SNAP and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation. Comprehensive Centers may have additional partners such as community based organizations or Job Corps.

2. **Affiliate Centers: Cheatham, Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Robertson, Stewart, Trousdale, Williamson and Wilson**

Affiliate Centers provides limited workforce development services and do not include all partners. Typically, the Title I CSPs and some adult education programs operate out of affiliate centers.

3. **Specialized Center: Fort Campbell**

Specialized centers focus on specific populations such as transitioning soldiers, military spouses or justice involved.

4. **Access Points-Multiple in Northern Middle**

Access points are locations where staff visit to outreach to the community. A formal lease is not required and infrastructure funds are not required. (Free space) We have several outreach sites in Nashville.

5. **Mobile AJC:**

Mobile units are available to go on-site to various locations, including employers to provide similar services that brick and mortar centers offer.



American Job Centers (AJC)



Make plans to visit your [American Job Center](#) soon!

Edition 2025-2

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From:
To:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 4:34:02 PM
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This week we will take a break from our learning series to share good new news in Workforce Wednesday. As many of you know Governor Lee and the Tennessee Department of Labor have created a [rural workforce initiative](#) to address health care issues in Tennessee. Rural communities in Tennessee often struggle to access quality healthcare due to factors like limited facilities, long travel distances, workforce shortages, and high costs. The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) is leading efforts to address workforce shortages across various industries by soliciting grant proposals to address priority issues. The Governor made available 5.6 million to local communities. I'm excited to announce that the Northern Middle Workforce Board received just under \$250,000 in grant funds and another \$100,000 in seed funding for program development. The program will focus on Cheatham, Dickson, Robertson and Stewart Counties. Specifically, we will be developing an apprenticeship program to upgrade the skills of EMTs to paramedics. Working closely with the County Mayors and Emergency Medical Agencies, the proposal was developed in partnership with Volunteer State Community College. We are excited to develop the first paramedic apprenticeship program in the State.

This is all a part of the exciting and innovative work of the Board. More information at our February 12th meeting. Congratulations to the other Middle TN Awardees. I have copied the list of grantees below:

1. Align9
2. Baptist Memorial Hospital
3. Bethel University
4. Cleveland State Community College Adult Education
5. Covenant Health
6. Dyersburg Health dba West Tennessee Healthcare
7. Family Scholar House
8. Free Medical Clinic of Oak Ridge
9. Huntsville Hospital Lincoln County
10. Lewis County Schools
11. Lipscomb University School of Nursing
12. Macon County Community Hospital
13. Meharry Medical

14. Mountain People's Health Councils, Inc
15. Nashville State Community College
16. Northeast State Community College
17. Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board
18. Roane Medical Center
19. Signature Healthcare LLC
20. South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance
21. Southeast Tennessee Development District
22. Southern Tennessee Regional Health System
23. Sweetwater Hospital Association
24. Tennessee Board of Regents
25. Tennessee College of Applied Technology - Dickson
26. Tennessee College of Applied Technology Athens
27. Tennessee College of Applied Technology Jacksboro
28. Tennessee College of Applied Technology Knoxville
29. Tennessee College of Applied Technology Upper Cumberland
30. Tennessee Hospital Association
31. Tennessee Wesleyan University
32. TriStar Health
33. University of Tennessee Health Science Center
34. Upper Cumberland Local Workforce Development Board
35. Walters State Community College
36. Williamson Health
37. Workforce Innovations, Inc.
38. South Central Tennessee Development District/Southern Middle Local Workforce Board

Marla

Edition 2025-3

From:
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Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 4:09:52 PM
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Do you know what a One-Stop-Operator (OSO) is? In this edition of Workforce Wednesday, we are going to learn about the roles and responsibilities of the OSO.

Under the direction of local workforce board, the OSO is required to coordinate the delivery of partner program services in the AJCs, ensuring that AJCs can provide customers with career services, training services, and other employment related services. Boards may also task One-Stop Operators with the role of coordinating services across multiple AJCs or entire workforce areas and managing the day-to-day operations of their AJCs.

In more simplistic terms, a one stop operator's role is:

1. Manage daily AJC Operations (including control of the thermostat)
2. Ensure coordination between partner programs in the AJC system
3. Evaluate customer experiences
4. Measure and evaluate key performance indicators
5. Act as the primary functional leader for the AJC System

The Northern Middle Board is required to procure the services of the OSO. Mid-Cumberland Human Resources Agency was selected as a result of a competitive procurement. Mr. George Phillips serves as the One-Stop-Operator.

Edition 2025-4

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From:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
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Attachments: [Outlook-w1rdfbgo.png](#)

In this edition of Workforce Wednesday, we will talk about state funding for workforce development.

As most of you know, a large percentage of the Board's funding comes from the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Federal funding comes with many strings attached, including eligibility. Income and barriers to employment are examples of eligibility criteria. Program requirements often present challenges to enrolling individuals who may really need our services. In addition, performance standards often fail to align with target populations and realistic goal achievement.

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Deniece Thomas has shown visionary leadership by outlining the demand for workforce development. She has successfully worked with Governor Lee and the state legislature to obtain State funding. While State funding mandates performance accountability, it is often free of restrictive eligibility and bureaucratic regulations. Successful state initiatives include the Tennessee Youth Employment Program, the Office of Reentry, and, most recently, the Rural Healthcare grants. Northern Middle has been aggressively applying for and administering these state programs to the tune of over \$2 million in the last two years. This allows us to leverage both state and federal dollars to provide flexible and efficient workforce programs. We anxiously await following Monday's State of the State address by Governor Bill Lee to see what new and expanding programs might be in play for 2025!

Edition 2025-5

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From:
To:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:23:10 PM
Attachments: [Northern Middle 2024 Corporate Gov Letter.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)

Good afternoon. Thanks for attending the Northern Middle Board Meeting today. You heard me present about our June 30, 2024 audit by Stone Rudolph & Henry (SRH).

Ginger and team were outstanding as they obtained another “clean” audit report. I have attached the Governance letter directed to the Board members as issued by SRH. This is a compliance requirement.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Edition 2025-6

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From:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 2:30:10 PM
Attachments: [TN WFD Academy Agenda 2.18.25-2.20.25 \(003\).pdf](#)
[Outlook-vvyg544s.png](#)

Good Afternoon,

During this Workforce Wednesday, I will be in Knoxville participating as a panelist for the inaugural class of the TN Workforce Development Academy, hosted by the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services. As part of this academy, my panel is explaining how the Public Workforce System Framework operates and its role in supporting workforce development across the state. Throughout the academy, participants are exploring key workforce topics, including trends and challenges in a changing economy and potential solutions to impact Labor Force Participation. Additional discussion will focus on strengthening partnerships, addressing barriers to education and employment, and understanding workforce needs across Tennessee's business and industry sectors.

A second TN Workforce Development Academy course will be held in Middle Tennessee later this year. If you're interested in attending this professional development opportunity, let me know. The attached agenda provides more information about the three-day course.

Edition 2025-7

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From:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 3:00:07 PM
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In this edition of Workforce Wednesday, we will discuss Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Title II is the adult education component of workforce development. Some may refer to it as the GED Program. However, Tennessee has expanded opportunities for individuals to be successful. Tennessee's "New Pathways" initiative, which offers adult learners multiple routes to earn their High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma, caters to diverse needs and learning styles.

The table below provides a description of the different exams that can be taken and applied toward HSE Diploma attainment. Students must pass Math, Reading, Writing/Language, Social Studies, and Science through any of the pathways listed. Allowing students to combine different assessments ensures that individuals from any educational background or learning style have a pathway to success. This flexibility helps learners focus on their strengths while improving in other areas, making graduation more attainable for all.

TABE	HiSet	GED	ACT WorkKeys	CASAS GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math• Reading• Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math• Reading• Writing• Science• Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math• Language Arts• Science• Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applied Math• Workplace Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math• Reading
Administered upon entry into an Adult Education program; retake available after 40 hours of instruction in the specific subject	Up to three attempts per subtest annually	Up to three attempts per subtest before a mandatory 60-day waiting period for additional retakes	No limit on retake attempts	Retake is available after 40 hours of instruction in the specific subject

Graduates come from all walks of life and ages, proving that education has no expiration date. One inspiring example is Alvin, who earned his diploma at the young age of 70. He fully committed himself to the program, attending classes every day and putting in 28 hours of study per week. Initially hesitant, he soon found joy in learning and remained motivated by a clear goal—to return to work. His commitment not only transformed his own life but also inspired his classmates, including the younger students who looked up to him. Alvin's story is a powerful reminder that hard work and a positive attitude always pay off.



Edition 2025-8

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From:
To:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
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Attachments: [image001.png](#)

During our recent Board meeting, there was a lot of discussion about the **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)**. This is a list of training providers and programs that have been approved to receive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding and is designed to help individuals, including unemployed and underemployed workers, access high-quality training for in-demand careers. The ETPL supplies useful information on training providers, the services they provide, and the quality of their programs. To maximize customer choice and assure that all population groups are served, a comprehensive process must ensure that a significant number of qualified Eligible Training Providers (ETPs) are available to customers. Only approved programs listed on the State's ETPL are authorized for referral and enrollment of a WIOA participant. The ETPL provides consumers with an option, which also supports increased performance accountability.

Types of Entities Eligible To Apply to be Eligible Training Providers

Potential Eligible Training Providers must be authorized to offer training services in Tennessee. Entities eligible to apply to become Eligible Training Providers (ETPs) are:

- A postsecondary educational institution that provides a program that leads to an associate degree, baccalaureate degree, diploma or certificate;
- Apprenticeship programs, including Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) registered under the National Apprenticeship Act.
- Other public or private providers that provide training services, which may include Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and joint labor-management organizations
- Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II if such activities are provided in combination with training services described in 20 CFR 680.350
- Other groups as determined by the Governor.

As a member of the Northern Middle Workforce Board, it is your responsibility to approve programs to the list. Likewise, when a school is not performing, the Board is responsible for removing them.

The State ETPL is maintained [here](#).

Edition 2025-9

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From:
To:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 4:23:11 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-cvzsqbqs.png](#)

In this edition of Workforce Wednesday, we will discuss one of the many AJC partner programs that comprise the workforce system. The **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** is a program designed specifically for older adults who want to re-enter the workforce.

What is SCSEP?

SCSEP helps people **aged 55 and older** who are low income and unemployed. It gives them **part-time, paid work experience** at nonprofit organizations and public agencies. This helps them learn new skills while also serving their communities. People in the program work approximately **20 hours a week** in community service jobs, earning minimum wage while gaining valuable work experience. The goal is to help them find **permanent jobs** after training concludes.

To qualify for SCSEP, you must be:

- **55 years or older**
- **Unemployed**
- Have a **low income** (not more than 125% of the federal poverty level)

The program gives priority to veterans, people with disabilities, and those facing other challenges like homelessness or language barriers.

How Is SCSEP Funded?

SCSEP is **funded by the U.S. Department of Labor**. The government provides money to organizations, including the **National Council on Aging (NCOA)**, to run the program across the country. This funding helps cover wages for participants, training costs, and other program expenses.

SCSEP in Northern Middle

Workforce Essentials, the CSP for SCSEP in Northern Middle, has a **14-County service area**. These counties are: **Montgomery, Robertson, Sumner, Dickson, Davidson, Wilson, Smith, Hickman, Williamson, Rutherford, Cannon, Warren, and Van Buren**.

Section	Details
Reporting Period	Second Quarter of FY 2024-2025
Enrollment and Participant	Enrollment Goal: 156 Participants Total Participants Served: 164 unduplicated individuals

Status	<p>Current Active Participants: 129</p> <p>New Enrollments: 39 participants since July 1</p> <p>Exits from Program: 43 exits since beginning of July</p>
Participant Age Distribution	<p>55-59 Years: 22%</p> <p>60-64 Years: 54%</p> <p>65-69 Years: 32%</p> <p>70-74 Years: 20%</p> <p>75 Years & Over: 7%</p>

Edition 2025-10

Marla W. Rye

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**Northern Middle Tennessee
Workforce Board Inc.**



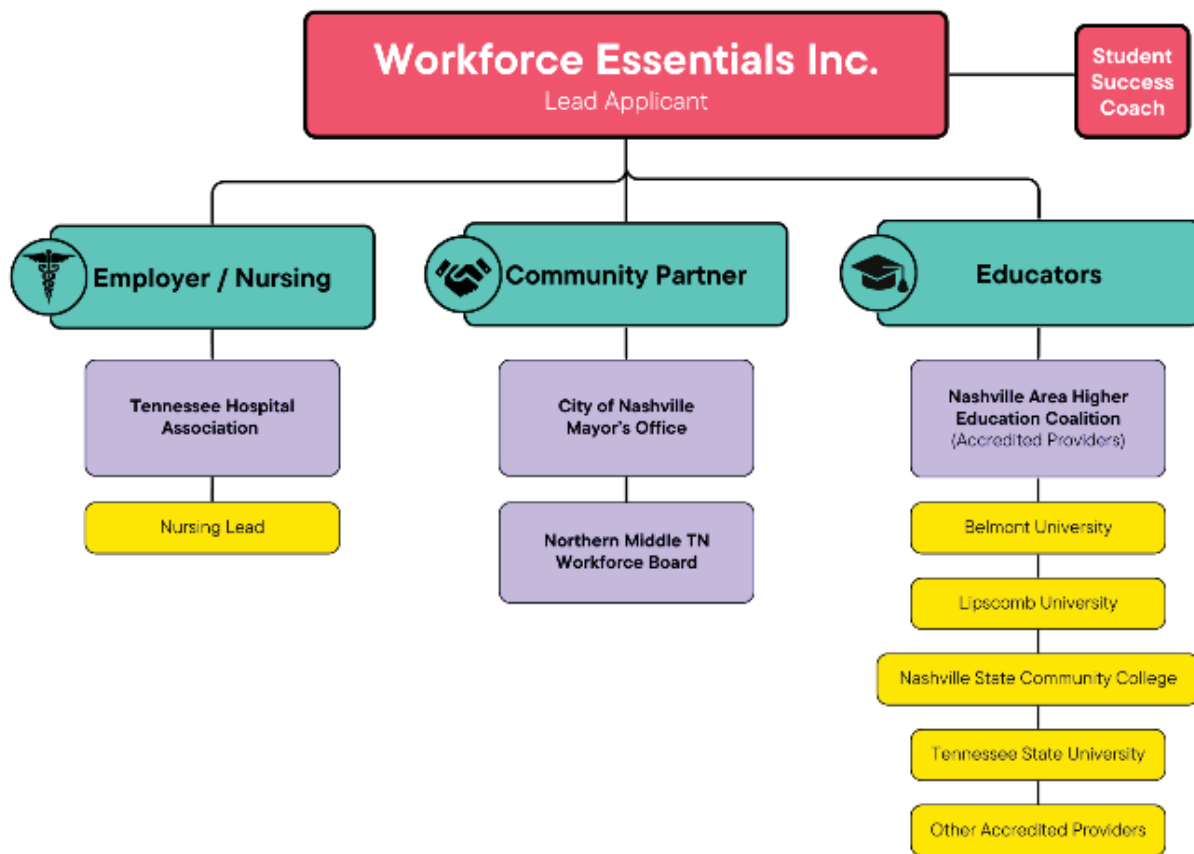
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Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 3:52:30 PM
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In this week's edition of Workforce Wednesday, we're highlighting a recent collaborative effort to strengthen our nursing workforce. The Northern Middle TN Workforce Board has partnered with the Davidson County Mayor's Office and the Tennessee Hospital Association to apply for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Nursing Workforce Diversity (NWD) Grant. This opportunity aligns with one of our key responsibilities—securing funding to support workforce development—and focuses on one of our priority sectors: healthcare.

Grant Abstract:

The Nursing Career2Care program will be dedicated to improving health outcomes within Nashville, Tennessee. This program focuses on addressing two critical areas affecting the nursing workforce: development and training for incumbent workers within healthcare organizations, and recruitment and training for clinical faculty. These two elements focus on engaging with diverse and disadvantaged populations with customized needs to improve learner outcomes. Nashville, Tennessee, home to over seven hundred thousand residents, is the fourth-largest city in the southeastern United States. The city's healthcare industry includes more than 46 major healthcare companies (public and private) that provide over 500,000 jobs (Nashville Health Care Council, n.d., U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). The healthcare and social assistance sector is projected to add an estimated 80,570 new jobs in Tennessee, with one in every five jobs expected to be in healthcare by 2030. To meet these employment needs, middle Tennessee and the surrounding areas have numerous healthcare-related training programs provided by our extensive college and university systems. To support students pursuing a degree in registered nursing, our state is home to over ninety-six nationally accredited nursing programs.

Below, you'll find an organizational chart outlining how responsibilities will be shared among the three partners, with Workforce Essentials serving as the lead applicant. If awarded, this grant will allow us to take accepted participants and upskill them into nursing careers—helping to meet the critical demand for healthcare workers.



Edition 2025-11

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Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 3:00:18 PM
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When discussing workforce development, we often focus on programs, training providers, and employer partnerships. However, for this Workforce Wednesday, I want to focus on one of the foundational pillars of WIOA Title III—the Wagner-Peyser Act. This nearly century-old law continues to shape how we connect job seekers with employers.

What Is the Wagner-Peyser Act

Enacted in 1933, the Wagner-Peyser Act established the Employment Service, a national network **designed to help workers find jobs and businesses find talent**. It was created to make the labor market more efficient by providing **free** employment services to job seekers and employers. Wagner-Peyser funding plays a crucial role in the operations of American Job Centers (AJCs), the primary access points for workforce services nationwide. These centers serve as a bridge between job seekers and employers, providing essential employment-related assistance.

Through AJCs, Wagner-Peyser services include:

- **Job Search Assistance** – Connecting individuals with available job opportunities
- **Resume and Interview Support** – Helping job seekers present themselves effectively
- **Career Counseling** – Offering guidance on career paths and training opportunities
- **Recruitment Assistance** – Supporting employers with job postings, candidate screening, and hiring events
- **Labor Market Information** – Providing insights on job trends, wages, and industry needs

Because AJCs integrate Wagner-Peyser services with other workforce programs under the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**, they offer a **one-stop shop** for employment and training needs. This collaboration ensures that individuals, whether they require immediate employment or long-term career development, have access to the resources necessary to succeed.

Edition 2025-12

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From:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
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Welcome to this week's Workforce Wednesday! I have just returned from the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) 2025 Forum, where workforce leaders from across the country gathered to share ideas, discuss policy, and explore ways to strengthen our workforce system. This week, I would like to highlight NAWB's mission and advocacy efforts, as their work directly impacts how workforce boards, including ours, operate and serve our communities.

What is NAWB?

The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) represents over 590 local workforce development boards (WDBs) across the country. Their goal is to ensure that workforce boards have the necessary funding, policies, and partnerships to help businesses find skilled workers and support job seekers in building strong careers.

NAWB's Legislative Priorities

NAWB works to push for policies that help workers, businesses, and communities. Their key priorities include:

- **More Federal Funding:** NAWB advocates for more investment in workforce programs under the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**. They highlight that every federal dollar spent on workforce development **generates over \$15 in economic impact**.
- **Local Flexibility:** They want workforce boards to have the ability to **tailor services to fit local job markets**, rather than adhering to strict federal rules that may not be suitable for every community.
- **Removing Barriers to Employment:** NAWB supports policies that expand **access to job training, assist underserved communities, and create career pathways through apprenticeships and hands-on learning experiences**.
- **Stronger Employer Partnerships:** They believe **businesses should have a bigger role in workforce development**, ensuring that training programs teach the skills employers actually need.

Why This Matters

NAWB's work helps workforce boards—like ours—get the resources we need to **support job seekers, businesses, and our local economy**. Their advocacy shapes policies that create opportunities for people to find good jobs and for businesses to grow.

Attending—and presenting at—the NAWB 2025 Forum was a valuable reminder of the importance of collaboration. When we share ideas and advocate for smart workforce policies,

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As part of our ongoing effort to spotlight the many moving parts of the workforce system in **Workforce Wednesday**, this week we're taking a closer look at Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) — the section that governs Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services.

What is Vocational Rehabilitation?

Vocational Rehabilitation is a federally funded program designed to help people with disabilities achieve their employment goals. **VR programs provide individualized, person-centered services that support job seekers in preparing for, finding, and maintaining meaningful employment, with a focus on abilities, not limitations.** Services can include career counseling, job training, education support, assistive technology, work-based learning opportunities, and more.

Who does Vocational Rehabilitation assist?

VR services are available to a wide range of individuals, including:

- People with physical, intellectual, sensory, or mental health disabilities that create barriers to employment
- Students with disabilities transitioning from high school to higher education or the workforce
- Adults seeking to reenter the workforce or advance in their careers
- Individuals receiving SSI or SSDI who want to work
- Veterans with service-connected disabilities
- People recovering from substance use disorders or mental health conditions

Who administers these services, and where can they be found?

Under WIOA, Title IV directs state VR agencies to operate as part of the broader workforce ecosystem, ensuring individuals with disabilities have a coordinated and supported path to employment. In Tennessee, VR services are administered by the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. As a required partner in our American Job Centers, the TDHS VR program ensures that job seekers with disabilities can access the supports they need, right alongside other WIOA programs — in an inclusive, integrated setting. Click [here](#) to learn more about VR in Tennessee.

Edition 2025-14

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From: Workforce Wednesday
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, April 16, 2025 3:30:05 PM
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Welcome to this week's edition of *Workforce Wednesday*! This time, we're tackling a tough but important question: **What happens when a company has to close or lay off employees?** It's a situation that can deeply affect both businesses and workers across Tennessee. Fortunately, two key resources—the WARN Act and Rapid Response services, led locally by Natalie McLimore, are in place to provide timely support and help ease the transition for everyone involved.

What Is the WARN Act?

The **Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act** is a **federal law** that requires most employers with 100 or more full-time workers to provide at least 60 days' advance notice before a plant closing or mass layoff. This lead time helps workers prepare for the change and gives workforce development professionals time to step in with support.

In Tennessee, the WARN process is reinforced by state-level guidance: employers planning to lay off 50 or more full-time employees are required to file a WARN notice with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD). Once submitted, TDLWD alerts our Rapid Response team so we can quickly mobilize assistance.

Even when a layoff doesn't legally require a WARN notice, many Tennessee employers still choose to notify the state and partner with us voluntarily, because it's the right thing to do for their employees and the community.

How do Rapid Response Services Work?

Once a WARN notice is received or any time a layoff or closure is announced, our team coordinates closely with the employer and affected workers to minimize the disruption.

- For Employers:

We help businesses through the layoff/closure process and offer direct, on-the-ground support. One of the most effective tools we use is coordinating job fairs that match the outgoing workforce with Tennessee employers who are hiring right now. These job fairs are often held at or near the closing site, making them convenient for employees and beneficial for local companies looking for skilled workers. This kind of early coordination helps businesses exit responsibly while preserving talent within our regional labor market.

- For Employees:

Rapid Response sessions ensure that laid-off employees are informed, prepared, and connected to help right away. Our teams go on-site to hold informational sessions that educate workers about the following services that their local AJCs offer for free:

- Guidance on filing for Tennessee Unemployment Insurance
- Job search assistance, resume help, and interview coaching
- Connections to career training and certification programs
- Other supportive services, such as transportation or childcare referrals

2025 WARN Notices

Date of Posting	Company	County	Affected Workers	Closure/Layoff Date
4/4/2025	Bunzl Distribution USA Inc.	Shelby	106	6/30/2025
3/31/2025	Wellpath Healthcare	Davidson	64	4/30/2025
3/31/2025	SHG Inc	Davidson	100	5/5/2025
3/31/2025	SSC Services	Hamilton	296	5/31/2025
3/31/2025	FedEx	Wilson	217	5/9/2025
2/27/2025	WWI Vehicle Services Americas, Inc.	Rutherford	40	4/15/2025
2/7/2025	Rambo 1, LLC	Paulding and Polk counties, Georgia	7	1/31/2025
2/5/2025	UPS Athens Facility	McMinn	150	1/10/2025
2/5/2025	Orchid Orthopedic Solutions	Shelby	62	6/30/2025
2/5/2025	Federal Express Corporation	Sullivan	88	3/31/2025
2/5/2025	S&B Engineers and Constructors, Ltd.	Sullivan	112	3/28/2025
2/5/2025	Modine Manufacturing	Lawrence	162	4/1/2025 to 7/31/2025
1/23/2025	Essex Technology Group, LLC dba Bargain Hunt Stores	Davidson	294	1/22/2025 to 3/14/2025
1/21/2025	Perdue Farms	Putnam	433	3/28/2025
		Total Affected Workers in Northern Middle	715	
		Total Affected Workers in Tennessee	2131	

Edition 2025-15

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From:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
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This Workforce Wednesday, we're highlighting two programs that support an essential yet often overlooked part of Tennessee's workforce: the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) Program and the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), run by Tennessee Opportunity Programs (TOPS). These programs provide critical services that help farmworkers find stable, long-term employment. Recently, the state has renewed its focus on these programs, recognizing that supporting farmworkers is a key part of creating opportunity for all Tennesseans.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) Program

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) Program is designed to empower individuals working in agriculture—many of whom face seasonal instability, language barriers, and limited access to resources. Its mission is to ensure farmworkers receive fair treatment, access to quality employment opportunities, and the support needed to overcome the unique challenges of their work and lifestyle. Through targeted career services, job training, and connections to community resources, the MSFW Program helps participants build skills, achieve financial stability, and pursue long-term, sustainable employment. In addition to fostering economic mobility, the program promotes awareness of worker rights and protections, ensuring that farmworkers are treated with the dignity they deserve.

Tennessee Opportunity Programs / National Farmworker Jobs Program (TOPS/NFJP)

Tennessee Opportunity Programs (TOPS) administers the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), a federally funded initiative through the U.S. Department of Labor that provides comprehensive support to farmworkers and their families. The program's goal is to help individuals achieve economic self-sufficiency by expanding access to education, training, and meaningful employment. NFJP offers a range of services tailored to the unique needs of agricultural workers, including job training, high school equivalency preparation, English language instruction, and career counseling. It also provides support for those seeking to transition from seasonal farm work into stable, long-term careers. Each participant receives personalized case management to ensure they have the guidance and resources needed for long-term success. Through NFJP, eligible individuals can train for in-demand careers in fields such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and more.

What's the Difference Between the MSFW and NFJP Programs?

While both programs serve farmworkers and aim to improve their access to employment opportunities, the **MSFW** and **NFJP** programs have distinct roles within the workforce system:

- **Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) Program**

The MSFW Program is a *compliance- and equity-focused* initiative that ensures farmworkers have equal access to basic employment services. It works to protect worker rights, promote fair labor practices, and connect individuals to core workforce services like job search assistance, referrals, and information about worker protections. It also conducts outreach to ensure services reach farmworkers in rural

and remote areas.

- **National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)**

Administered in Tennessee by **Tennessee Opportunity Programs (TOPS)**, NFJP is a *training and career development program*. It provides farmworkers and their dependents with intensive, individualized support—including education, skills training, career counseling, and supportive services—to help them transition into stable, higher-wage employment outside of seasonal agriculture.

In short:

- **MSFW ensures access and equity** in workforce services.
- **NFJP provides deeper support** through education, training, and career transition assistance.

Together, they form a coordinated effort to uplift Tennessee's farmworker community and support long-term career growth.

Edition 2025-16

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For this Workforce Wednesday, I would like to discuss the **Tennessee Youth Employment Program (TYEP)**—a statewide initiative designed to equip youth ages 14–24 with valuable, paid work experiences that foster career readiness, skill development, and confidence. TYEP empowers local communities to create youth employment opportunities, while also giving employers access to emerging talent and future workforce leaders.

I am excited to share that the Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Development Board has been awarded an additional \$500,000 in TYEP funding, to be fully expended by June 30, 2025. This mid-year expansion is enabling us to place even more youth in meaningful summer job opportunities across the region. At the same time, we've submitted our proposal for the upcoming program year, beginning July 1, to ensure continued momentum and growth into 2026.

One of the season's highlights is our partnership with Wilson Works and the Joint Economic & Community Development Board (JECDB) of Wilson County, to whom we've awarded \$50,000 to support their local summer youth employment program. This exciting expansion brings TYEP funding directly into Wilson County, creating job opportunities for youth while deepening our regional impact. Please note that this program is expanding and will cover all counties in the Northern Middle workforce area.



As we enter this new TYEP season, we are grateful to our partners—across state agencies, local organizations, and private employers—who continue to work with us to provide young Tennesseans with pathways to success. Together, we are preparing the next generation to thrive in Tennessee's workforce.

To learn more or get involved, visit www.YEPTN.com.

Edition 2025-17

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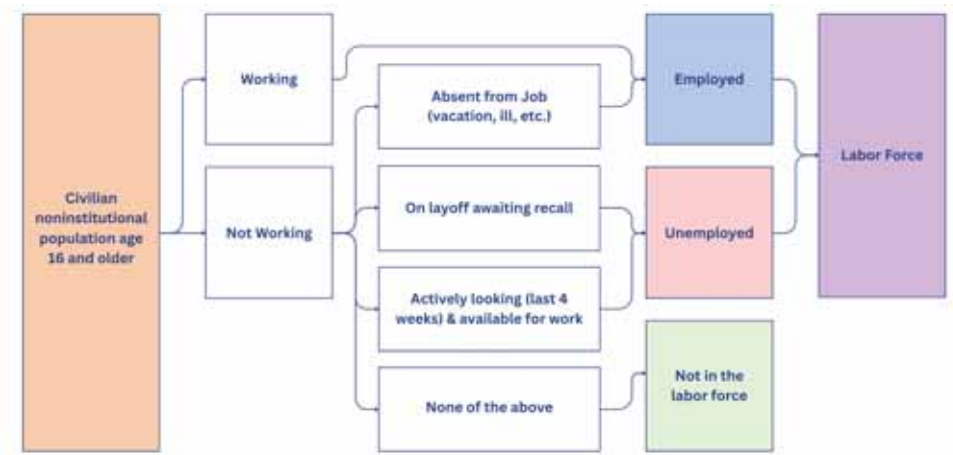
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During this Workforce Wednesday, we're taking a closer look at a key workforce indicator: the **Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)**.

What is the LFPR?

The LFPR measures the percentage of the population that is working or actively looking for work. Specifically, it's calculated by dividing the labor force by the civilian noninstitutional population age 16 and older:

LFPR = (Labor Force ÷ Civilian Noninstitutional Population 16+) × 100



Who is *counted* in the labor force?

- Employed Individuals
- Unemployed individuals who:
 - Are on layoff awaiting recall
 - Actively looking (last 4 weeks) and available for work

Who is *not* counted in the labor force?

- Unemployed individuals such as:
 - Retirees
 - Full-time students not looking for work
 - Stay-at-home parents
 - Individuals with disabilities or health conditions preventing work

How Are We Performing?

As of March 2025:

- U.S. LFPR: 62.5%
- Tennessee LFPR: 59.9%
- Northern Middle LFPR: 67.7%

LFPR Comparison			
US	TN	NM	
62.5	59.9	67.7	

LFPR Comparison By Region			
LWDA	LFPR		
Northern Middle	67.7		
East	58.8		
Southwest	58.6		
Southern Middle	57.2		
Greater Memphis	56.5		
Northeast	53.3		
Southwest	53.3		
Northwest	52.8		
Upper Cumberland	52.2		

LFPR in NM			
County	LFPR		
Trousdale	76.0		
Davidson	75.8		
Rutherford	70.4		
Wilson	67.9		
Sumner	67.6		
Cheatham	66.9		
Williamson	66.8		
Robertson	66		
Clackson	65.7		
Montgomery	67.4		
Madison	62.6		
Humphreys	62.7		
Sevier	61.7		

Largest LFPR Increased			
Rank	County	LFPR	Change from Feb
1	Sevier	64.5	1.9
2	Haywood	76.1	0.9
3	Clackson	64.9	0.8
4	Trousdale	76.3	0.6
5	Wilson	67.9	0.8
6	Davidson	75.8	0.7
7	Rutherford	70.4	0.7
8	Cannon	67.8	0.6
9	Cheatham	66.9	0.6
10	Knox	63.4	0.6

Largest LFPR Decreased			
Rank	County	LFPR	Change from Feb
1	Blount	66.3	-1
2	Lewis	55.4	-0.8
3	Marshall	56.3	-0.6
4	Bedford	56.9	-0.6
5	Giles	61.3	-0.4
6	Lawrence	53.8	-0.3
7	Madison	62.8	-0.2
8	Wayne	62.6	-0.1
9	Morgan	47.2	-0.1
10	Henderson	61.3	-0.1

The Northern Middle Tennessee Local WorkForce Development Area (LWDA) is outperforming both the state and national averages — a sign of strong regional engagement in the labor market. While Tennessee overall continues to lag behind the national LFPR, our region is a bright spot, with a participation rate nearly 8 percentage points higher than the U.S. and state averages.

Edition 2025-18

From: Workforce Wednesday
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, May 14, 2025 3:00:15 PM
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For this **Workforce Wednesday**, I would like to examine how Tennessee's workforce development system operates through a structured network of boards at the state and local levels, each playing a pivotal role in aligning education, economic development, and employment services. This system is designed to ensure that workforce initiatives are tailored to the unique needs of various communities across the state.

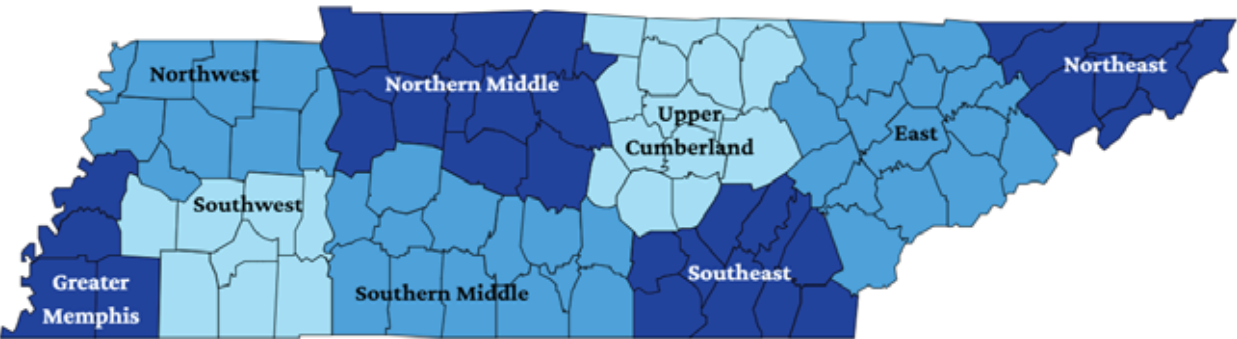
State Workforce Development Board

At the top of the structure is the Tennessee State Workforce Development Board, which provides strategic oversight, policy guidance, and coordination of workforce initiatives across the state. It ensures alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and collaborates with local boards to meet state-specific goals.

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs)

Tennessee is divided into nine LWDAs, each serving a specific collection of counties. These boards are responsible for implementing workforce programs, operating American Job Centers, and building partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions. The nine LWDAs are grouped into three main regions:

West Tennessee Region ~1.6 M	Middle Tennessee Region ~2.7M	East Tennessee Region ~2.1M
Northwest Tennessee LWDA – 9 Counties Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Obion, Weakley Estimated Population: ~300,000	Upper Cumberland LWDA – 14 Counties Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, White Estimated Population: ~400,000	Northeast Tennessee LWDA – 8 Counties Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, Washington Estimated Population: ~500,000
Southwest Tennessee LWDA – 8 Counties Chester, Decatur, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McNairy Estimated Population: ~300,000	Northern Middle Tennessee LWDA – 13 Counties Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery, Robertson, Rutherford, Stewart, Sumner, Trousdale, Williamson, Wilson Estimated Population: ~1,800,000	East Tennessee LWDA – 16 Counties Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, Monroe, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Sevier, Union Estimated Population: ~1,000,000
Greater Memphis LWDA – 4 Counties Fayette, Lauderdale, Shelby, Tipton Estimated Population: ~1,000,000	Southern Middle Tennessee LWDA – 13 Counties Bedford, Coffee, Franklin, Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Perry, Wayne Estimated Population: ~500,000	Southeast Tennessee LWDA – 10 Counties Bledsoe, Bradley, Grundy, Hamilton, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, Sequatchie Estimated Population: ~600,000



Edition 2025-19

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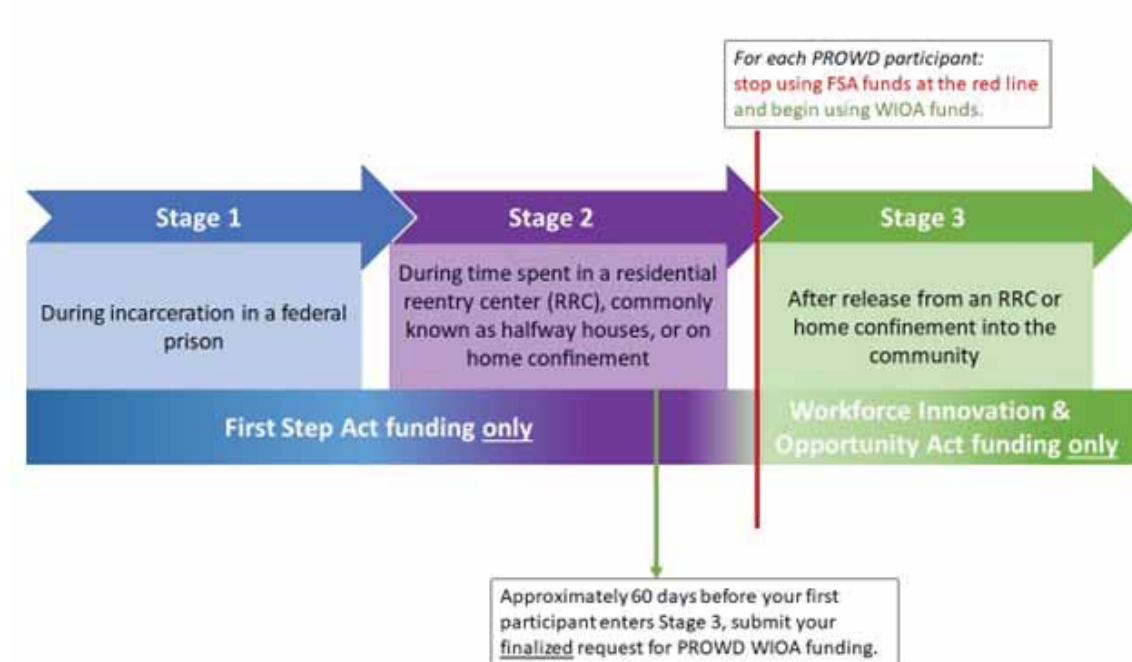
Workforce Wednesday: PROWD Grant

We are gearing up to implement the Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD) grant, a federally funded initiative designed to support justice-involved individuals through comprehensive reentry services. This program is set to commence on July 1, 2025, and a dedicated career coach was recently hired and will begin training to ensure readiness from day one.

What is the PROWD Grant?

The PROWD grant, awarded to Northern Middle for Davidson County, provides approximately \$968K from July 1, 2025, to September 30, 2027, to expand and strengthen reentry support services. The goal is to help individuals exiting the federal prison system overcome barriers to employment, reduce recidivism, and build pathways to long-term career success.

PROWD is designed to serve participants across **three critical stages**:



This multi-phase approach ensures continuity of care and support, allowing individuals to engage in job readiness training, access career navigation services, and connect with local employers. Services will include résumé assistance, soft skills development, vocational training, and supportive services tailored to the unique needs of the justice-involved population.

This initiative reflects NMTWB's commitment to fostering inclusive workforce development and supporting the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals into society. Through strategic partnerships and dedicated personnel, the program aims to create lasting positive impacts on

individuals and the broader community.

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Subject: Workforce Wednesday
Date: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 3:01:14 PM=
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Workforce Wednesday: Supporting Business Growth Through Workforce Development

One of the key responsibilities of American Job Centers (AJCs) and the Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board is to collaborate with businesses that are establishing or expanding operations in our region. This partnership ensures that companies have access to a skilled workforce, while residents benefit from new employment opportunities.

A prime example of this collaboration is our ongoing relationship with Hankook Tire. Since the company's initial decision to establish its U.S. manufacturing facility in Clarksville, Tennessee, in 2014, we have worked closely with them and the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) to support their workforce needs.

Recently, I had the opportunity to tour Hankook's existing Phase 1 facility and see the progress of their Phase 2 and Phase 3 expansions. These expansions represent a significant investment of \$1.6 billion, bringing Hankook's total investment in the area to \$2.2 billion. The projects are expected to create an additional 1,200 jobs in the Clarksville area, further solidifying Hankook's role as a major employer in the community.

The expansion will more than double the plant's production capacity, increasing annual output from 5.5 million to 12 million tires. Notably, Phase 3 will introduce the company's first U.S. production of Truck Bus and Radial (TBR) tires, marking a significant milestone in Hankook's North American operations.

As these expansions progress, AJCs and the Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board remain committed to supporting Hankook's workforce development efforts. This collaboration exemplifies how strategic partnerships between workforce development agencies and businesses can drive economic growth and improve the quality of life in our region.



Edition 2025-21

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Northern Middle Workforce Board | Executive Director

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Subject: Workforce Wednesday
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Workforce Wednesday: The Importance of Declaring Conflicts of Interest

Transparency and trust are essential to effective workforce development. One way we protect those values is by ensuring that board members and staff understand and disclose any conflicts of interest. Conflicts aren't always wrongdoing—they're about maintaining objectivity. This includes any personal or financial interest that could, or appear to, affect decision-making.

For example, if a board member's spouse works for a training provider being considered for funding, that relationship must be disclosed—even if the board member isn't directly involved in the decision. Transparency like this helps protect the integrity of our work.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that individuals or representatives of organizations entrusted with public funds will not personally or professionally benefit from the award or expenditure of such funds. It provides clear direction on how to conduct business within guidelines that will prevent actual, potential, or questionable conflicts of interest.

To promote accountability, we require board members to review and sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form on an annual basis. This ensures alignment with both our local Conflict of Interest Policy, [available here](#), and the State Workforce Development Board's policy, [available here](#).

Please note that the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form for July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 will be circulated via DocuSign shortly. Please review the policies and be ready to sign.

Edition 2025-22

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From: Workforce Wednesday
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Workforce Wednesday: Federal Budget Proposal & Its Potential Impact on Our System

This week, we're sharing an important message from Commissioner Deniece Thomas regarding the **proposed** changes in the President's FY 2026 budget request—and what they could mean for the workforce system in Tennessee and beyond. These potential changes were reported during our recent board meeting, and I wanted to follow up by sharing this additional context with everyone.

To be clear: **these changes are not yet finalized**. The President's budget is a proposal that still needs to go through several steps in the federal appropriations process. This includes Congressional review, potential amendments, and final passage—so while the suggestions are significant, they are not guaranteed outcomes.

Among the most notable proposals:

- A 34% cut to the Employment and Training Administration (ETA);
- The consolidation of 11 existing workforce programs into a new "Make America Skilled Again" (MASA) grant:
 - The elimination of key programs, including Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs;
- A proposed phased shutdown of Job Corps.
- The elimination of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

Commissioner Thomas outlines these developments in greater detail below. We encourage you to read her message carefully and stay engaged as we continue to track these developments.



June 2, 2025

Tennessee Workforce System Partners,

The Department has received the President's Fiscal Year 2026 budget request. I wanted to provide you with a high-level overview of the proposed changes:

- **USDOL & ETA Funding Levels:** The Department of Labor's Budget in Brief highlights a 33% cut to the Department's overall budget and a 34% cut to ETA.
- **Consolidation of Workforce Programs into a Single "MASA" Grant Program:** Notably, the Administration has proposed a new "Make America Skilled Again" (MASA) grant program that would effectively consolidate 11 employment and training programs—but with a significant reduction of overall funding and the elimination of funding for several existing workforce development programs, including the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs. I've included a key excerpt on the MASA proposal below:
 - *The FY 2026 President's Budget prioritizes more efficient administration and improved outcomes by consolidating 11 workforce development programs into a single Make America Skilled Again (MASA) grant program that would provide funding directly to States and localities. The Budget invests \$2,965,905,000 in the newly created MASA grant program to give States and localities the flexibility to respond to their workforce needs in a way that makes sense without having to apply for and manage multiple Federal programs. The current structure of formula and competitive programs, with their attendant programmatic and performance requirements, makes it administratively burdensome for States to respond to their workforce needs. The new MASA grant program will reduce the administrative burden on States by creating one workforce development program that will allow States and localities to determine how best to serve workers and employers in their areas, ensuring high performance by holding grantees accountable for the employment outcomes of the people they serve. The MASA grant maintains support for evidence-based programs by requiring that a minimum of 10 percent of MASA grantee expenditures are on Registered Apprenticeship activities, ensuring dedicated funding for this highly effective training model. The Budget eliminates discrete funding streams for the following programs in favor of the flexible, consolidated MASA grant: WIOA Adult; WIOA Dislocated Worker; WIOA Youth; Employment Service State Grants; Dislocated Worker National Reserve, including Strengthening Community Colleges, Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities, and other set-asides; Apprenticeship; YouthBuild; National Farmworker Jobs Program; Indian and Native American Programs; Reentry Employment Opportunities; and Workforce Data Quality Initiative. The Budget also proposes the elimination of the Job Corps program and requests funding for closeout costs to execute an orderly shutdown of the program.*
- **RESEA:** There would be a slight increase in funding for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments.
- **Job Corps:** The budget proposes to eliminate funding for the Job Corps program (note USDOL's announcement last week that "it will begin a phased pause in operations at contractor-operated Job Corps centers nationwide").
- **SCSEP:** The budget proposed to eliminate funding for the Senior Community Service Employment Program.
- **JVSG:** Funding for the Jobs for Veterans State Grants would remain unchanged.
- **BLS:** The Administration proposes to shift the Bureau of Labor Statistics from the Department of Labor to the Department of Commerce.

This represents a substantial change in funding levels and operational design within the public workforce infrastructure. Please know that we are working diligently to ensure that we can successfully navigate and implement all the necessary changes to ensure that Tennessee's workforce system remains viable and strong.

If you have any questions, please submit them to Workforce.Board@tn.gov.

Thank you for all you do to serve the State of Tennessee.

Best regards,

Deniece Thomas
Commissioner

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Workforce Wednesday: SCSEP Program Faces Possible Federal Funding Delays

Last week, we highlighted Commissioner Deniece Thomas's update regarding proposed federal budget changes and the uncertainty surrounding FY26 funding, including its potential impact on programs like SCSEP (Senior Community Service Employment Program).

This week, we've received a follow-up from our SCSEP grantee, the National Council on Aging (NCOA), confirming that the U.S. Department of Labor has not yet issued FY26 funding guidance. NCOA, of which we are a sub-grantee, is now considering furloughing participants effective July 1 if guidance or funding is not received in time.

This is a real-time example of the budget uncertainty discussed last week, and it impacts 128 active SCSEP participants in our region.

Summary of NCOA's Update:

- As of mid-June, no official guidance—known as the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL)—or funding has been issued by USDOL.
 1. Note: **The latest date the USDOL has released the TEGL in previous years is June 3.**
- Three possible scenarios have been outlined:
 1. **TEGL is issued before June 30**
 - Participants may still be furloughed temporarily until funding is awarded.
 2. **TEGL is issued after June 30**
 - Furloughs will begin July 1 until award notice is received.
 3. **TEGL is never issued by July 31**
 - Program closure steps would begin.

NCOA has requested that all sub-grantees send warning letters to participants and host agencies in anticipation of a potential pause.

We will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available, as we navigate this uncertain period together.

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Workforce Wednesday

Next Monday, June 30, 2025, wraps up the 2024–2025 program year, and it's all hands on deck across the region.

On the program side, teams are moving at top speed—gathering vendor forms, finalizing timesheets, submitting receipts, and closing out services for hundreds of customers across our AJCs. Meanwhile, the fiscal team is in their own race against the clock, working diligently to process every invoice and expense before the state's "blackout date" for grant closure, which is July 8th.

This time of year is always intense, but especially so for our fiscal team, who are racing against the clock to meet the "early" deadline established by TNDLWD for year-end closeout. Typically, we have until the 25th of the following month to submit reports. Every invoice must be finalized, every dollar spent must be correctly attributed to the appropriate grant and program year, and every detail must align with federal and state compliance requirements. It's a high-stakes process that requires precise accounting and a clear grasp of funding timelines. The fiscal team's work now shapes how our grants will be viewed during annual monitoring and audits for both Northern Middle and Workforce Essentials.

Hats off to Ginger Fussell and her team, including Cinthya Rodriguez, Debbie Holcomb, and Britni Rowlett. A special thanks to all of the team members who pitch in to help meet the tight deadlines. Their attention to detail, long hours, and commitment do not go unnoticed. We sincerely appreciate the care and dedication they bring to this process—it truly makes a difference.

End-of-Year Performance Highlights

Adult & Dislocated Worker Programs

- 1,875 customers served | 1,075 new enrollments | 927 exits
- 85% placement rate | \$21.27 average wage

Youth Programs

- 722 customers served | 226 new enrollments | 198 exits
- 86% placement rate | \$16.93 average wage
- 281 youth placed in paid work experience

Thank you to EDSI and Mac for their diligence this year—we look forward to 2025!

Edition 2025-25

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Workforce Wednesday: Happy New (Fiscal) Year!

We're kicking off Program Year 2025 with exciting changes! As of July 1, the Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board will officially bring Career Services Provider (CSP) responsibilities in-house—transitioning from our previous contractors, EDSI and MAC. This change marks a new chapter for our region, and we couldn't be more energized about what lies ahead.

Since receiving approval from the State, our team has been working diligently to ensure a seamless transition. From developing new KPIs to coordinating training sessions for AJC staff, every effort has been focused on ensuring a strong and successful start on July 1. We've also been reaching out to our employer partners across the region to keep them informed and connected throughout the transition.

We are especially pleased to have **Natalie McLimore** in charge of our American Job Centers. Natalie has been with the Workforce Essentials since 2004. Her extensive leadership overseeing TANF programs in 60 counties brings a wealth of experience, and we are confident that she will bring the same excellence to this new role.

We are also proud to introduce our three Workforce Services Managers, each of whom brings strong experience from their previous workforce roles.

- **Middle Area (Cheatham, Davidson, Robertson):** *Betsy Foster*
- **West Area (Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery, Stewart):** *Joely Berg*
- **East Area (Rutherford, Sumner, Trousdale, Williamson, Wilson):** *Tracie Eversole*

This experienced leadership team is already making strides, and we're looking forward to a strong start and even stronger outcomes for the year ahead.

Here's to a fresh start and a fantastic 25-26 program year!

Edition 2025-26

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Workforce Wednesday: Supporting Employers through Incumbent Worker Training Grants

One of the services offered by the Northern Middle Workforce Board is the **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Grant**, a resource designed to help businesses strengthen their existing workforce. Funded through the Northern Middle Board's WIOA allocation, **this program supports employers in upskilling current employees, improving operations, and remaining competitive in an evolving economy**. This allows businesses to access funding for job-specific training that enhances employee skills, supports promotions or internal advancement, improves operational efficiency, or helps prevent potential layoffs. Training can be delivered by a public or private educational institution, a third-party provider, or even by the company's own staff. All training must have clearly defined start and end dates and fall within the terms of the grant contract.

To be eligible, a business must be a Tennessee-based for-profit (or a nonprofit in healthcare), have been in operation for at least one year, and employ a minimum of five full-time workers. The business must also be in good financial standing—current on all taxes, free of recent bankruptcy filings, and not listed on any state or federal debarment or suspension lists. Additionally, businesses are generally ineligible if they have received IWT funds in the past 12 months unless that requirement is waived.

Approved businesses can receive up to **\$25,000** in grant funding. There is an employer match requirement based on company size: 10% for employers with 50 or fewer employees, 25% for those with 51 to 100 employees, and 50% for companies with over 100 employees. While the grant covers many training-related costs—such as tuition, textbooks, materials, and instructor wages (capped at \$50/hour or actual cost, whichever is less)—it does not cover employee wages, travel, testing fees, or required/mandatory trainings.

To apply, businesses begin by completing a simple pre-application form available at tn.gov/workforce. Once submitted, a representative from the local workforce development area will reach out to assess eligibility, discuss training needs, and assist with completing the full application.

The IWT grant is one of several tools we use to serve local employers, providing customized support that benefits both the business and its workforce.

As always, our goal is to promote economic growth across the region by helping employers invest in their people.

Edition 2025-27

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Workforce Essentials is a 2024 Top
Workplace!
9 Years Running

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Workforce Wednesday: Workforce Development Starts in the Classroom

Workforce development doesn't just begin when you start looking for a job—it begins at home and in our local school systems.

Last week, I had the privilege of attending the **Uncharted Learning National Summit** in Chicago, Illinois, alongside the **Clarksville-Montgomery County School System (CMCSS)**. The summit brought together educators, school leaders, entrepreneurs, and workforce professionals from across the country to share ideas and strategies for preparing students to thrive in tomorrow's economy.

A central focus of the event was the INCubatoredu program, which empowers high school students to build real businesses with guidance from teachers, community mentors, and industry coaches. This nationally recognized **entrepreneurship curriculum** is already in place in Davidson and Williamson Counties and will launch in CMCSS schools in Fall 2026.

The summit also featured a national student shark-tank style pitch competition—one of the most inspiring parts of the conference. Finalist teams presented creative, market-ready solutions, showcasing what students can achieve when given the space to think big:

- **Hold Mate** – Barrington High School, IL: A MagSafe-compatible container for secure retainer and aligner storage.
- **Job-Z** – Westlake High School, TX: A job-matching platform tailored for teens and young adults.
- **Roam Travel LLC** – Naperville North High School, IL: A universal strap to secure bags to carry-ons, backed by 1,100+ testers.
- **Shimmer Shield** – Prospect High School, IL: A protective spray that prevents jewelry tarnish and rust.
- **Spikey LLC** – Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center, Franklin, TN: Discreet keychains with drug-detection strips to keep individuals safe in social settings.

We're proud to share that the national winning pitch came from the Williamson County School System, whose team developed *Spikey LLC*—a smart, safety-focused innovation with real-world impact. The student behind Spikey was awarded **\$25,000**, which she plans to use to purchase injection molding equipment—a significant step toward mass-producing the keychains and bringing her safety solution to market. Her success highlights the strength of

Tennessee's entrepreneurship education and the incredible potential of our students. ([WSMV 4 interview here](#))

Programs like INCubatoredu are building confident, capable young people who understand business, leadership, and creative problem-solving. These students aren't just preparing for the workforce—they're already shaping it.

Edition 2025-28

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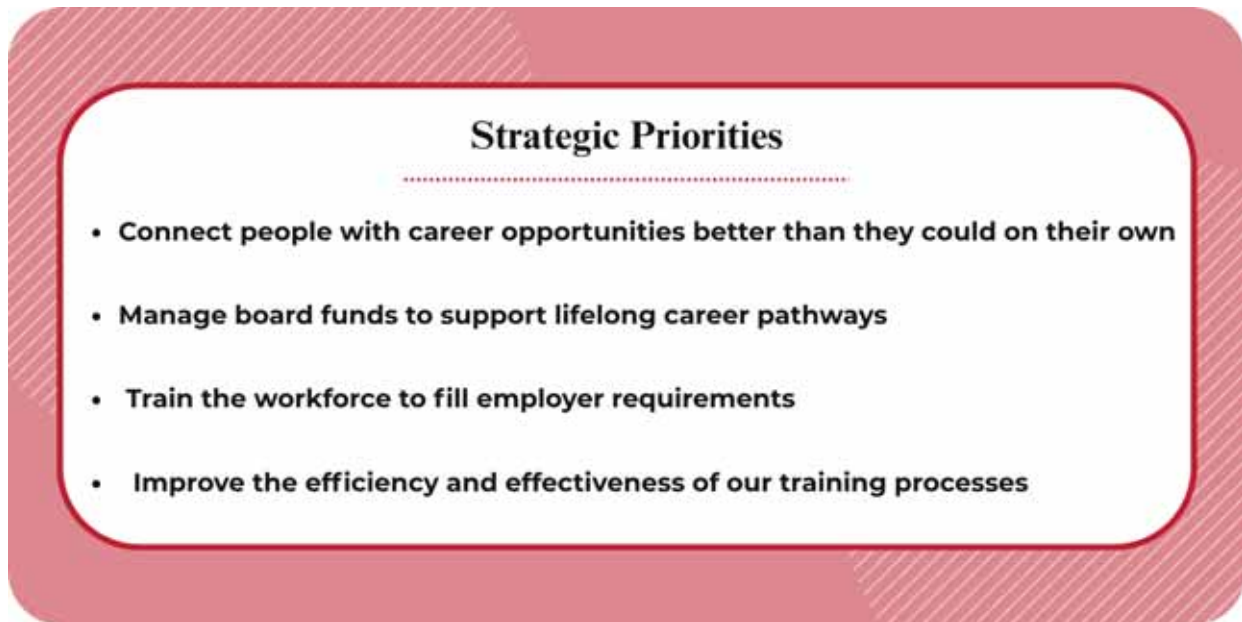
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Workforce Wednesday – 4 Strategic Priorities

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board operates under **four core strategies** that guide the operation of our American Job Centers and the delivery of workforce services across the region. These priorities, established by the Board, have shaped not only our daily work, but also the structure of every quarterly board meeting.



These priorities reflect our mission *to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and resources to succeed in the labor market — and to match employers with the skilled workers needed to compete in the global economy.*

They're not just strategic talking points. They're strategies that have been built into our agendas, embedded in our programming, and aligned with the state's workforce vision, keeping us focused on results that matter.

Edition 2025-29

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From:
Subject: Workforce Wednesday
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Workforce Wednesday: The Value of Our Additional AJC Partners

While the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) outlines required partners for American Job Centers (AJCs), many of our centers benefit greatly from additional community partners who bring valuable services, resources, and connections to the table. These partners aren't mandated, but their impact is undeniable. Below are just a few of the community partners across Northern Middle Tennessee that help make that impact every day.

Montgomery County AJC – Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities utilizes space inside the Montgomery County AJC to operate a food bank, helping meet the immediate needs of community members facing food insecurity. Their goal is to provide compassionate support to individuals and families in crisis, addressing basic needs like food as a foundation for long-term stability and success in the workforce.

Sumner County AJC – Forward Sumner

Forward Sumner, the county's economic development organization, brings employers and business opportunities into the center through its presence at the Sumner County AJC. Their mission is to strengthen the local economy by connecting businesses, educators, and job seekers to create sustainable employment opportunities and drive regional growth.

Dickson County AJC – TCAT Dickson

In Dickson, the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) operates part of its manufacturing campus within the AJC parameters, allowing students to train onsite for in-demand careers. Their goal is to prepare students for high-wage, high-demand jobs by delivering hands-on technical training and offering seamless pathways into the local workforce.

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