

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Providing Access and
Opportunity to
Lake County Employers
and Job Seekers

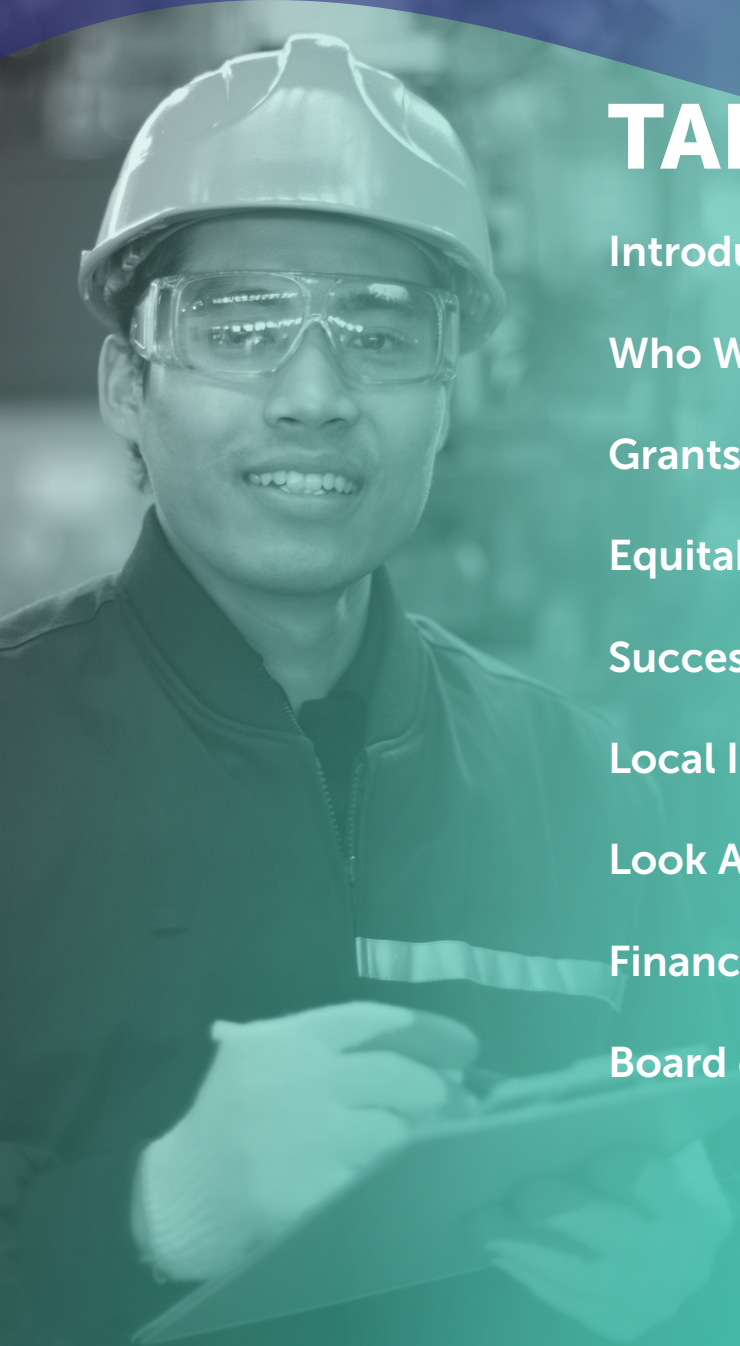
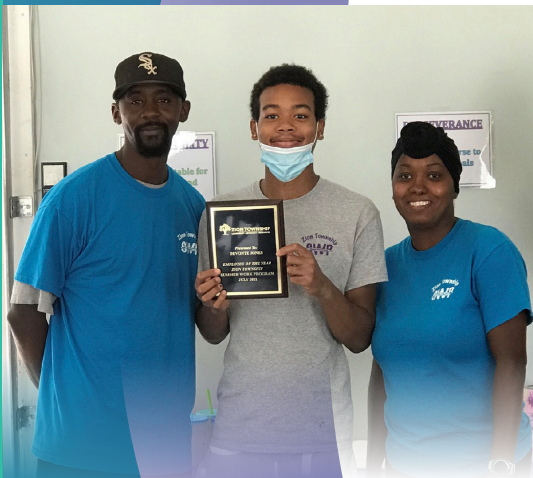


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Introduction From Board Chair

On behalf of the Lake County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB), I am honored to present the LCWDB 2021 Annual Report, a year-in-review of labor market intelligence, organizational success, and highlights from 2021 programs that impacted the workforce community, business, and education.

While the past few years have proven challenging in many ways, the Board remains true to our mission of supporting job seekers, businesses, partners, and the community. The Board recognizes and sincerely appreciates the hard work and resiliency of the Lake County Workforce Development Department professionals, Lake County Board Chairwoman, Sandy Hart, and the Job Center of Lake County partners. Through access to jobs, training, and support services we continue to provide Lake County with the valuable resources and services to successfully grow our community.

By partnering with the education and business community, the Board continues to provide innovative programs and resources for job seekers and workers to upskill or reskill. With this in mind, it has become increasingly important to assist employers in retraining their staff and helping them identify and recruit qualified job seekers. The Board, under new leadership of Kimberly Wimer, looks forward to continuing our service to Lake County tomorrow and for years to come.

Thank you and God bless,



Karen Stoneman, Chairwoman
Lake County Workforce Development Board

Who We Are

The Lake County Workforce Development Board leads workforce development growth throughout the county, region, and state. The Workforce Board collaborates with partners, stakeholders, and industries to drive progress through innovative strategies resulting in a high performing and inclusive workforce development system.

The Workforce Board invests in programs and service delivery to prepare a more inclusive workforce to meet the talent needs of Lake County employers and industry talent needs of the future.

In order to better inform the public at large, including employers, job seekers, and community partners throughout Lake County, about the Workforce Board itself as well as the many available services offered, a comprehensive outreach and communications program has been put in place.

Mission

To ensure a workforce ready for today and prepared for tomorrow.

Vision

To be the leader of the Lake County workforce development system that produces a highly skilled workforce and powers the region's economic vitality and quality of life.

Purpose

The Lake County Workforce Development Board shall ensure the integration of services to prepare individuals to meet the needs of business and industry. The Board shall take a leadership role in advocating, planning, evaluating, and developing local workforce resources to enable individuals and businesses to reach their full potential in a changing global marketplace.



The Lake County Workforce Development Board 2020-2024 Strategic Plan emphasizes the business-led board’s oversight in developing and investing in programs and services customized to the needs of the communities, constituents, and businesses throughout Lake County.

KEY IMPERATIVES	OBJECTIVES	INITIATIVES
Increasing Industry-Led Workforce Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase manufacturing and healthcare businesses’ involvement in creating workforce development solutions ✓ Identify industry ambassadors ✓ Collaborate with education and economic development to build solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Build industry relationship through a Business Engagement Continuum ✓ Collaborate with local and regional partners and stakeholders ✓ Support a plan to improve integration with economic development, education, and workforce development ✓ Foster a data-driven culture
Create a Culture of Equitable Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase access to services for the underserved ✓ Facilitate greater collaboration among and between Job Center partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Execute the Service Integration Action Plan ✓ Create a greater number of access points for customers ✓ Increase awareness and navigation of resources
Develop Solutions Through Career Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deploy career pathway frameworks, resources, and tools ✓ Invest in training and talent development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Collaborate with high schools on STEM related careers and internships ✓ Partner with educators, providers, and businesses on short term training programs ✓ Support and market apprenticeship programs
Continue to be the Workforce Innovative Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase the Workforce Board’s commitment in regional, state, and national discussions ✓ Emphasize continuous resiliency ✓ Increase board member engagement in meetings and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Set and share best practices around current and future workforce needs and trends ✓ Create opportunities to be more interactive and engaging



Grants and Initiatives

CAREER Dislocated Worker Grant – Job Center on the Move

Access to services, as part of a Comprehensive And Accessible Reemployment Through Equitable Employment Recovery (CAREER) Dislocated Worker Grant, allowed Lake County Workforce Development to establish and deploy a mobile job center concept. The mobile job center allows members of historically marginalized communities to access Job Center services, applications, resume writing, connection to employers, job searching, training, interviewing, and workshops, all without having to travel to physical Job Center location. This is accomplished by bringing the Job Center services directly into the communities most in need.

More than \$528,000 in funding was secured to assist up to 33 individuals. As of June 30, 2022, 27 participants had enrolled, 18 of which received paid work experience. The grant program runs through August 2023.

\$528,000
Available Funding

27
Participants Enrolled by
June 30, 2022

33
Individuals
to be Assisted

18
Participants Receiving Paid Work
Experience by June 30, 2022

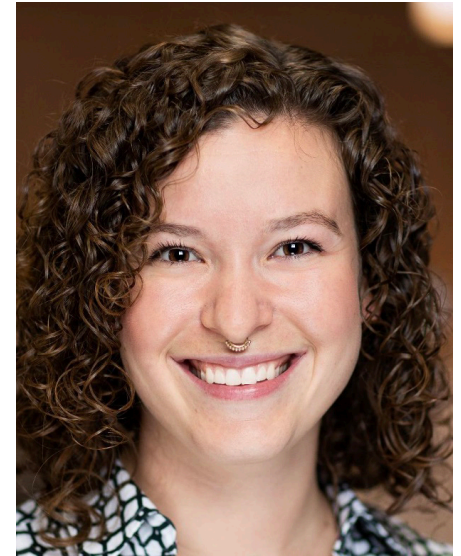
"The financial stability afforded by this position has allowed me to move into my own apartment. Most importantly, I genuinely enjoy my job. I am able to work with a diverse team, while fulfilling my passion for direct service in community health."

Contract Tracer Grant

Lake County Workforce Development invested in being part of the solution to the COVID-19 health crisis. Beginning in June 2020, Lake County Workforce Development received funding for a Contract Tracer Grant as part of the Disaster Relief Employment program. The Lake County Health Department assessed the need for additional contact tracers to conduct contact tracing for the large number of COVID-19 cases the County was experiencing. Timely identification, case investigation, contact tracing, and interventions are critical aspects of controlling outbreaks.

The grant program addresses the workforce and health impacts associated with the COVID-19 crisis, supports communities and individuals impacted by the health epidemic, and creates temporary employment that addresses the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

The original goals were to place 29 Contract Tracers into temporary employment at a rate of \$18 per hour and four Contract Tracer Leads at a rate of \$22 per hour. As of June 30, 2022, 34 individuals had enrolled, 29 of which received paid work experience.



\$18

**Hourly Rate of
Contract Tracers**

34

**Participants Enrolled by
June 30, 2022**

\$22

**Hourly Rate of Contract
Tracer Leads**

29

**Participants Receiving Paid Work
Experience by June 30, 2022**

17

Targeted Number of Participants

15

Participants Enrolled by March 31, 2022

11

Participants Receiving Training by March 31, 2022

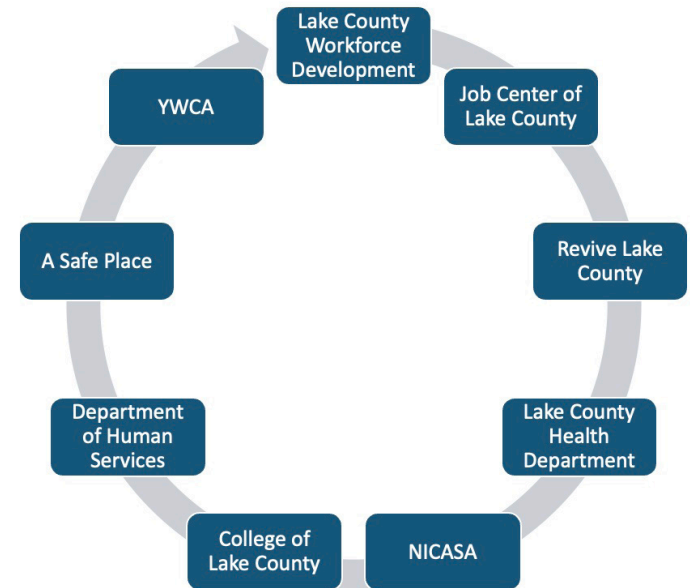
10

Participants Entering Employment by March 31, 2022

National Health Emergency Opioid Crisis Dislocated Worker Grant

A major player in working to address barriers to good jobs, in 2019, Lake County Workforce Development received funding for a National Health Emergency Opioid Crisis Dislocated Worker Grant, focusing on facilitating community partnerships that are central to dealing with this complex public health crisis; providing training to eligible clients that builds the skilled workforce in professions that could impact the causes and treatment of the opioid crisis; and creating temporary employment that addresses the impacts of the opioid crisis in affected communities.

Workforce Development has targeted enrolling 13 eligible participants in training services and four eligible participants in a 6-12-month temporary employment assignment, for a total of 17 estimated participants. As of March 31, 2022, a total of 15 participants had enrolled, with 11 receiving training and 10 entering employment.



Summer Youth Employment Program

A first job, a paycheck, essential work skills, mentoring, and teamwork are the meaningful experiences more than 200 high school students get a chance to experience through the Lake County Summer Youth Employment Program. Beginning in 2000, and running every summer since, the 2021 Lake County Summer Youth Employment Program offered more than 191 youth the opportunity to gain meaningful work experience while earning a paycheck. To qualify for employment, youth must be age 14 to 18 or age 14 to 22 with an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP). Funded by the Lake County Board, this program was offered in a hybrid format with an option for youth participants to participate in the traditional model working at a physical location or to participate in an online Work Readiness Bootcamp.



A total of 85 student workers were placed at 10 sites, including a mix of nonprofit organizations, local municipalities, and private or community-based organizations throughout Lake County. Participating youth worked in a variety of areas including office support, day camp programs, and indoor/outdoor maintenance, and each participant earned \$9 per hour for 25 hours per week.

85

Student Workers Placed

\$9

Hourly Wage Paid to Participants

10

Worksites in Lake County

25

Hours of Work per Week



Women of Color Grant

Data shows women of color are more likely to work in jobs that have lower wages and few benefits and protections. Statewide Rapid Response funding allowed for the availability of this grant program to reach women of color who have been the primary caregiver for their children during the past year and were unable to reenter the workforce on a career path. Workforce Development Project Navigator connects the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participants to employment and training services available at the Job Center. The participants work with the Project Navigator to receive planning and financial assistance with childcare, transportation, and technology, and enroll in occupational training through an Individual Training Account (ITA).

The projected outcomes were to enroll 15 participants with the expectation that at least 11 secure employment with an average hiring wage of \$18/hour or more. The priority communities were identified as Waukegan, North Chicago, Zion, Round Lake Beach, and Gurnee. As of June 30, 2022, 18 participants had enrolled.

15

Targeted Number of Participants

18

**Participants Enrolled by
June 30, 2022**

\$18

Average Hourly Wage

Equitable Prosperity Activities

Background

Governor Pritzker has a strong agenda for ensuring that economic prosperity reaches underserved communities and creates opportunities across the state for all citizens by removing barriers for economically disadvantaged populations. Two avenues exist to move these priorities forward; the response to Governor Pritzker's Executive Order 2019-03 – An Action Agenda for Workforce Development and Job Creation and the priorities within A Plan to Revitalize the Illinois Economy and Build the Workforce of the Future. Both rely on data-driven approaches to establish goals and inform policy that will reduce equity gaps. Building on this direction, the WIOA Unified, Regional, and Local Plans, along with the Perkins State Plan, all have guiding principles for equitable access and opportunity for all populations.

Implementation

As equitable access is a fundamental principle within the Plans as well as a high priority of the Governor, a Task Force made up of Lake County Workforce Development Board members and partners has come together to develop a framework of recommendations within Lake County's workforce system to establish goals and improve inequality for the populations we serve. The taskforce shall be in place for one year unless requested by the board to be extended further.

Ways in which a Task Force under the direction of the Lake County Workforce Development Board will address equity and inform policy, include:

- creating shared definitions for a set of key terms addressing equity;
- developing education and workforce tools that can track program access and outcomes, and that disaggregate data by race, gender, and target population to reveal disparities in policies and programs;
- examining programs, policies, and practices and then infuse issues of equity and inclusion into these programs, policies, and practices;
- establishing equity goals; and
- making recommendations regarding inclusive and diverse approaches including professional development of staff to ensure they use an equity lens in serving their diverse populations.



Goals

The Lake County Workforce Development Board's Equity Task Force Action Plan is a driving force to embody a forward-looking workforce network where all can belong, contribute, and thrive.

Goal: Strengthen understanding of the interrelationship between diversity, inclusion, and equity through education and training.

Actions:

- Sponsor workshops and forums to educate and promote discussion on topics that impact today's workforce system, such as the business case for diversity and inclusion, applying an equity lens in policy review and generational and cultural differences.
- Partner with organizations such as but not limited to NAWB and IWIB to integrate D&I education and training at the state and national level.
- Strengthen D&I and EEO knowledge, understanding, and awareness by making available tools and resources on the Job Centers of Lake County's web page.

Goal: Communicate the workforce system's diversity, inclusion, and equitable ideals.

Actions:

- Develop and implement an ongoing, comprehensive D&I communications strategy.
- Evaluate current methods to communication (meetings, print, web, social media, etc.) to make sure they are embracing D&I.

Goal: Demonstrate leadership commitment and accountability to promote a diverse and inclusive workforce system culture.

Actions:

- Encourage workforce system leaders to routinely discuss the importance of D&I as a core organizational strategy and provide consistent, visible leadership.
- Comply with applicable laws and rules related to EEO and diversity and train all employees regarding legal requirements.
- Attempt to always create inclusive environments – one that values differences, gives everyone a voice, and places importance on the whole system.
- Committed to being intentional about having crucial conversations to evaluate and develop programs to continually develop cultural competences.

Goal: Use data collection and reporting to assist in assessing workforce system D&I efforts.

Actions:

- Leverage both qualitative and quantitative metrics to manage D&I efforts, measure results, and refine strategies based on such data.

Success Stories

Employer: Lake County Health Department

The Lake County Health Department's (LCHD) mission of promoting the health and well-being of all who live, work, and play in Lake County was realized every moment of every day as LCHD led the county in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A key component in responding to the community and mitigating COVID-19 was and is the contact tracing work. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, LCHD's Communicable Disease (CD) Program immediately redirected groups of employees to begin this crucial work. Sara Zamor, Associate Director of Prevention for the LCHD CD Program, a program that provides disease surveillance to detect potential outbreaks of illness within Lake County, was responsible for standing up a fully functioning and staffed contract tracing unit. Ms. Zamor turned to the dedicated employees throughout LCHD to get trained in the contact tracing procedures for LCHD to carry out the required level of responsiveness in this unprecedented time.

Lake County Workforce Development Department (LCWD) joined the efforts to assist with the hiring needs. Recognizing the sense of urgency to identify, train, and deploy a team with the right skills and tools, LCWD worked with the LCHD CD to scope out the program and received a special WIOA grant of \$1.2M from the U.S. Department of Labor. LCWD set up a disaster relief employment program in partnership with LCHD, identifying unemployed workers impacted by COVID-19 to become contact tracers – the grant paid the wages, provided the tools and equipment, and supported the training through the Illinois Department of Public Health.

On a normal day, contact tracers would receive calls from those who had been affected by COVID-19 and would be provided instructions on how to navigate the disease. The LCWD team focused on finding the right people, individuals with the backgrounds and empathy that would enable them to earn the trust of the person on the other end of the line quickly. Sara noted one thing that all the contact tracers had in common was the passion to care for their own community.

The work of LCHD and the collaboration with LCWD brought in over \$6M to Lake County to address the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, collectively, there were over 150 Contact Tracers trained up that helped reduced the spread of COVID-19.

During the pandemic, LCHD responded, provided immediate information, deployed teams available to community residents and leaders, and continued to be a pillar in Lake County communities.



Job Seeker: Norman

Norman is a military veteran with a great passion for helping people. He has extensive experience in counseling veterans, the homeless, and other individuals in need of care. Over the past 20 years, he has had the opportunity to grow in the counseling profession and has gained a variety of experience with different types of counseling services.

Norman lost his job in February of 2021 and like others, found himself challenged with the complexities of a job search in the middle of a global pandemic. Norman felt that connecting with potential employers solely on Zoom or via telephone felt impersonal and that he disliked the fact that he didn't have a daily routine. "I've been working since I was 12. I'm used to getting up and going to my place of employment first thing in the morning."

Norman applied for unemployment insurance and was referred to Workforce Development by the Illinois Department of Employment Services (IDES). He was matched with an internship at Nicasa Behavioral Health Services. The internship allowed him to obtain more exposure in areas of counseling that he had not yet explored. After two-and-a-half months in his internship role, the Director of Nicasa offered Norman a full-time position at the organization. Hired as a Counselor in August 2021, Norman performs DUI evaluations, facilitates intensive outpatient groups online, and completes intakes and reports.

Norman is currently completing a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice. When he eventually retires, he says that he plans to set up a consultancy and to seek out advisory positions when he can give back to the community.



"I want to be a positive influence any way that I can. Someone helped me when I needed it. I feel responsible for giving back."



Job Seeker: Jose

Jose is a veteran who served in the U.S. Army and connected with the Job Center to help with his next career move. He worked two short-term positions but wanted to identify a long-term career. Initially interested in electrical and renewable energy, he pursued grants and scholarships that would help him reach his goal.

Jose worked with a Career Specialist who helped him identify appropriate training programs and he ultimately qualified for tuition assistance. Jose selected an electrical and heating/air conditioning program at the Chicago Professional Center. Workforce Development connected him to an internship opportunity at the Lake County Public Works Department that would align with his training and career goals.

Jose completed his internship and then applied for and was hired full-time as a Utility Worker for Lake County Public Works in January 2022. He also successfully completed his training at Chicago Professional Center and earned two certificates in National Electric Code Program and Residential & Commercial HVAC Technician/Electrician. Jose loves his new position and the team he works with and is pleased with the benefits provided by his employer.



Job Seeker: Karyn

Karyn was laid off in March 2021 after 20 years working in the field of information technology (IT). She wanted to continue working at the executive level in IT but had difficulty finding another job, so she decided to obtain network-related certifications to become more marketable and increase her career opportunities. She reviewed several different schools before selecting a Project Management Professional training with Microtrain. At the completion of the training, she passed exams to obtain certificates in Green Belt Lean Six Sigma and Scaled Agile Framework.

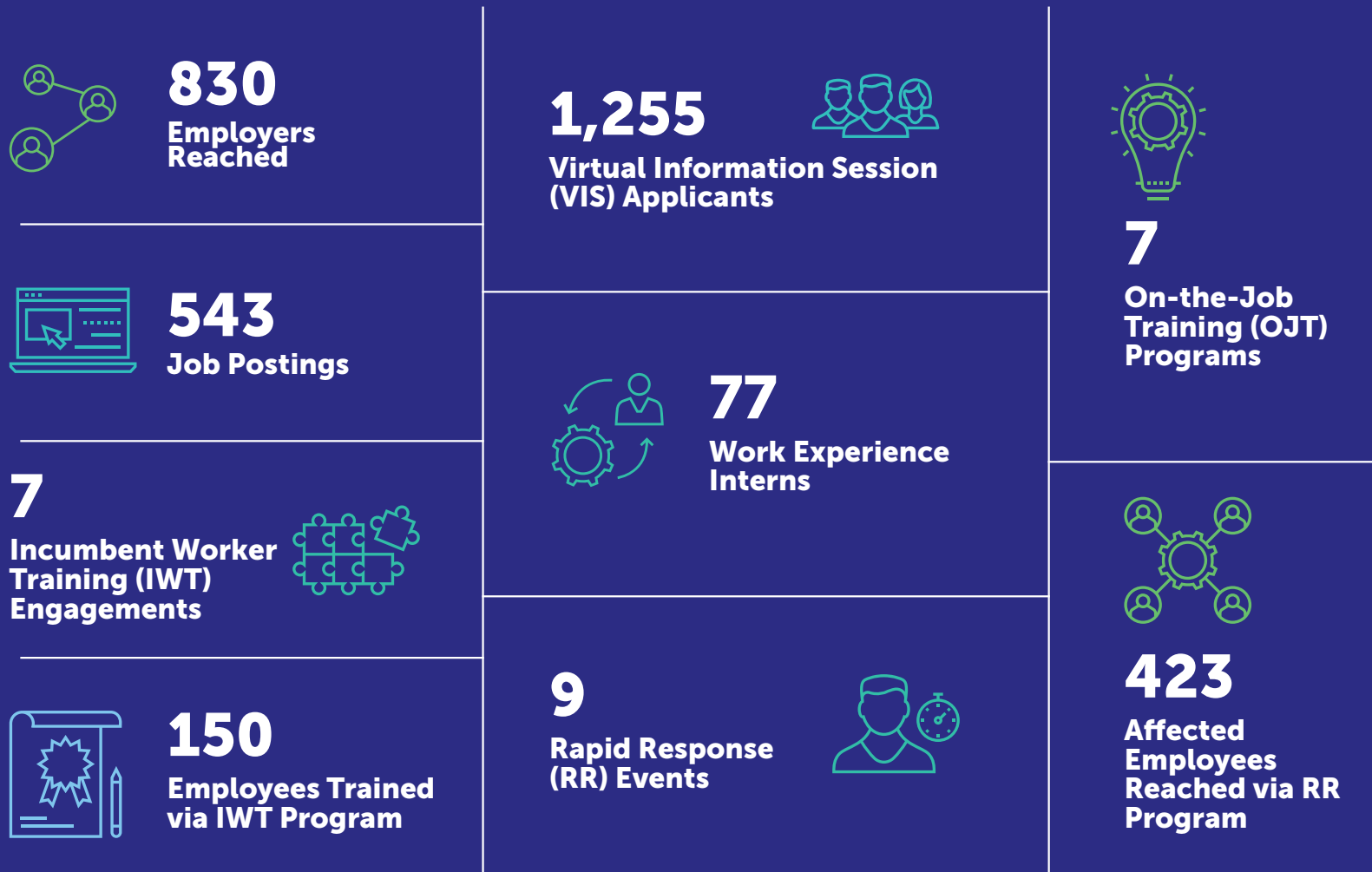
Karyn was hired in August 2021 as a Senior Program Manager at Walgreens Boots Alliance. In her new role, she manages a large transition program to help the company move and centralize data in the cloud to develop effective analytics and make better business decisions. Karyn says that she would not have been financially able to participate in training while laid off without the funding of Workforce Development. She wants to give back by mentoring others in the field of IT.

"Make a decision on what you want your career and life to look like and stay the course until you get there. The road will not be easy...but you've got this!"

Business Services

The Business Service Team, led by Workforce Development, is an integrated team of Account Executives seeking to connect employers and the workforce. Workforce Development helps local businesses develop and implement training programs for current and potential employees. The program is governed by WIOA and offers workforce solutions and training via the Lake County Workforce Ecosystem.

Employer Reach



Job Center of Lake County – Access and Opportunity

The Job Center of Lake County cultivates and connects local employers and workforce to fuel economic growth and well-being throughout Lake County. The Job Center Team is comprised of dedicated individuals working as innovative and essential agents for economic growth in the region.

The Job Center serves all members of the public, offering resources for job seekers who may have a barrier to employment or a specialized situation including veterans, youth, seniors, ex-offenders, and individuals with disabilities. By providing access to services, meeting job seekers where they are at (virtual, in-person, etc.), the Job Center connects individuals to opportunities that may otherwise be unattainable.



12,000+
Job Center Participants



789
Virtual Workshops



4,785
Incoming Calls



1,255
VIS Applications for Training



3,734
Onsite Visitors



275
Credential Attainment



BRIGHT FUTURE



Looking Ahead

Lake County Workforce Development has received funding as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to implement a new project to enhance the ability of job seekers from historically marginalized communities to connect to employment through innovative work-based learning opportunities.

Workforce Development will work with the Job Center, partnering agencies, and stakeholders to recruit and enroll unemployed job seekers with a focus on the underserved geographic areas. Through this project, Workforce Development will work with local employers to successfully serve the unemployed job seekers to establish comprehensive employment and training plans to address the skills gaps through paid work-based learning experiences and occupational skills training.

The target population includes job seekers who are unemployed, have underutilized skills, or are seeking to move jobs for economic advancement; reside in underserved communities throughout Lake County; are 18 years of age or older; and reside in households in a qualified census tract, low-income, or moderate-income. Additionally, small businesses impacted by the pandemic or from industries experiencing employment loss due to the pandemic are part of the target population.

Program Snapshot

\$3.5M+
Grant Funding

**6/1/2022-
6/30/2025**
Grant Period

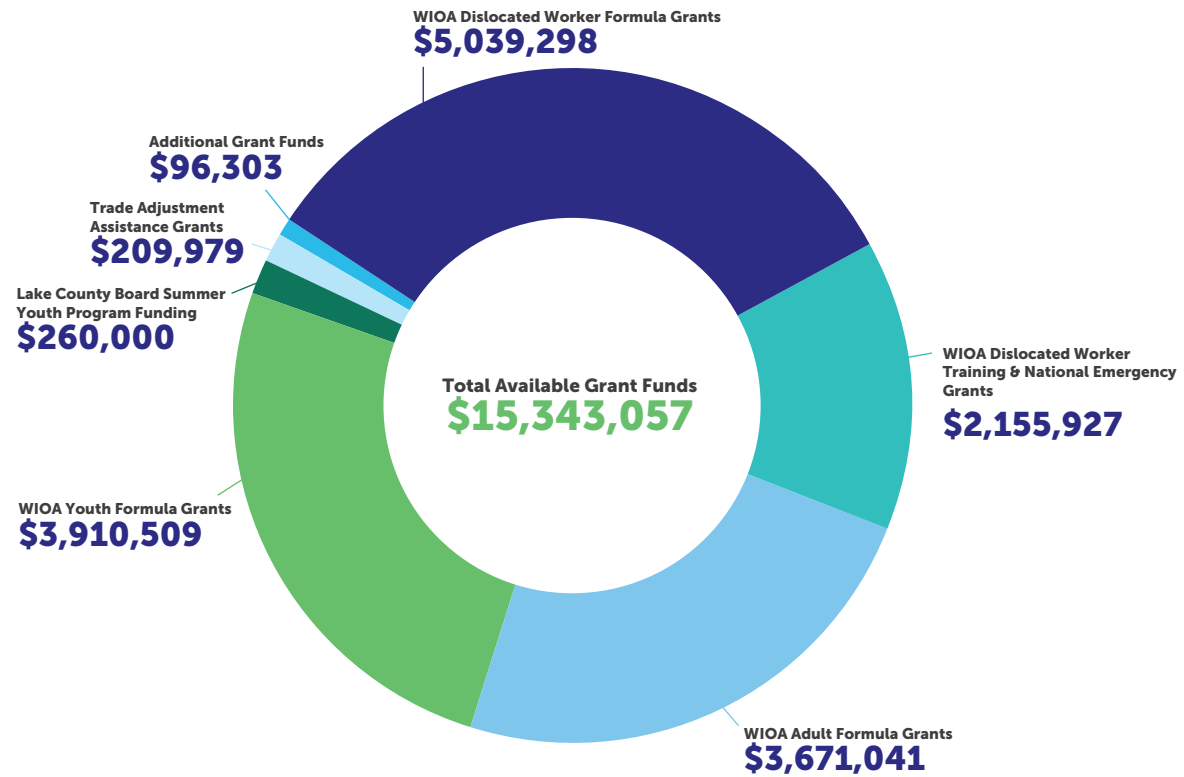
200
Individuals to
Receive Career
Services

150
Participants in Work-
Based Training



Financials

Available Grant Funds* FY 2021-22



*The main source of funding is through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) formula grants.

Board of Directors

Karen Stoneman, Chair

System America, Inc.
(retired in 2022)

Kimberly Wimer, Vice Chair

Laser Precision, LLC

Kevin Considine

Lake County Partners

Laura Crivlare-Maglio

Illinois Department of
Employment Security

Dane Morgan

Gurnee Community Bank

Michael Darling

Michael Darling Insurance
Agency of Farmers Insurance

Timothy Dempsey

The Dempsey Financial Group

Carrie Espinosa

Horizon Benefit Services

Josh Fischer

Fischer Paper Products

Emily Garrity

ConnectVETS

Pete Govorchin

Cancer Treatment Centers
of America

Christine Hammerlund

Assured Healthcare

Jennifer Harris

CR Search, Inc.

Kessler, Dennis

Midwest Family Business
Advisors

Michael Karner

Lake County Regional Office
of Education

Noelle Kischer-Lepper

City of Waukegan, Department
of Planning and Zoning

Kristi Long

United Way of Lake County

Ann Maine

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Troy McIntosh

IDEX

Kathy Nellis

Tawkify

Darryl Rader

IDES - Division of Rehabilitation

Pastor Eugene Roberson

First Corinthian Missionary
Baptist Church

Carlotta Roman, Ph.D.

Collective Career Consulting, LLC

Mary Ross-Cunningham

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Arlene Santos-George, Ph.D.

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Council, College of Lake
County

Julie Savitt

AMS Elite Solutions, Inc.

Carla Schroeder

Consumers Credit Union

Jennifer Serino

Lake County Workforce
Development Department

Steve Smart

IBEW Local 150

Patrick Statter

Northeastern Illinois Federation
of Labor, AFL-CIO

Lori Suddick, Ed.D.

College of Lake County

Sandra Tran

Medline Industries, LLP

Michele Vaughn, Ph.D.

Teen & Single Mother Resource
Center, Inc.

Andrew Warrington, Ph.D.

United Conveyor Corporation
Environmental

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