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The Workforce Connection Annual Report

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Serving Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties

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This report was designed by M. Gould, Region 1 Planning Council. August 2022



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Thank you to our sponsor:



2021 Reflections

Our Mission:

The Workforce Connection is committed to providing a workforce that meets the needs of the business community now and in the future.

Our Vision:

The Workforce Connection provides a fully integrated and accessible workforce development system that balances the needs of individuals and businesses to ensure our region has a skilled workforce to effectively compete in the global economy.



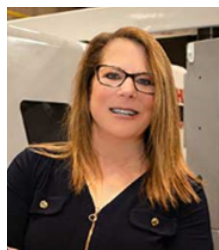
Frank Rotello, TWC Board Chair and CEO of Alpha Controls & Services, LLC

The Workforce Connection (TWC) like all organizations and companies faced similar challenges as we exited the COVID-19 pandemic working hard to address the changing workforce needs of individuals and employers. I have been on the TWC board since 2015 and served as the Board Chair for the last four years.

During my tenure as a Board Member, TWC had to lead the implementation of new legislation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Darcy Bucholz, Executive Director was the right leader at the time to leverage her knowledge and expertise to successfully implement WIOA and the introduction of the TWC brand and tagline "Get Connected." Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones succeeded Darcy as Executive Director and helped establish credibility for the TWC brand locally, regionally, and nationally. Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones also led the development of our five-year strategic plan, and restructured the organization to be able to implement the vision and mission of TWC while navigating the COVID-19 environment. Our current Executive Director Gina Caronna-Marvin started in April of 2022 and is committed to the vision and mission of TWC. Gina's initial focus has been to get out and meet with the various stakeholders and partners to listen and gain an understanding of the needs and status of our local workforce area.

The seamless transition of leadership at the Executive Director level and the evolution of TWC as a more entrepreneurial and client-driven organization were successful because of the strength of the organization and the dedication and commitment of the Chief Elected Officials, TWC staff, and Board Members especially the Officers and Committee Chairs. Goodwill, the One Stop Operator working with TWC partner organizations has also been instrumental in our success implementing programs and services supporting TWC dual mandate serving individuals and employers.

As I complete my term as Board Chair, I would like to thank everyone for your support, commitment, and efforts to move TWC forward and make a positive impact on our workforce area. We need to thank the current Board Members whose terms are expiring for their service and dedication. Effective October 1st, Michelle Cassaro will become the new Board Chair, and we will also be welcoming new Board Members. TWC is well positioned with new leadership and a strong Board to meet the workforce development challenges of our region. We can have a significant impact by staying focused, collaborating, and working together.



Gina Caronna, Executive Director

Looking out to the end of this year and onto 2023, the region's workforce is faced with unique challenges. We are dealing with the effects of the confluence of the great resignation, baby boomer retirement, and COVID. Additionally, technological advances enable people from all over the globe to work differently from as little as three years ago. Businesses across the region are reinventing their workplaces in unique and enterprising ways.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is up for reauthorization in 2023, widely reported to feature more support for business growth. I believe we are poised to harness WIOA for our region and to move forward with unprecedented growth. As my tenure as TWC Executive Director begins, I pledge stay at the forefront of innovative and positive workforce solutions. Thank you for choosing me to assist you with this vital work.

Our Board



Officers

Chair

Frank Rotello, CEO

Alpha Controls & Services LLC

Vice-Chair

Michelle Cassaro, Chief Financial Officer

Chicago Rockford International Airport

Secretary/Treasurer

Amy M. Ott, President

Boylan Catholic High School

Immediate Past Chair

Karen Brown, Director, Human Resources

Highland Community College

Chief Elected Officials

Chair

Mayor Thomas P. McNamara

City of Rockford

Chairman Joseph Chiarelli

Winnebago County Board

Chairman Karl Johnson

Boone County Board

Chairman William Hadley

Stephenson County Board

Board Members

Kevin Bauer, CEO

Berner Food & Beverage, LLC

Ben Bernsten, President

Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois

Scott Bloomquist, Superintendent

Boone/Winnebago Regional Office of Education

Todd Cagnoni, City Administrator

City of Rockford

Len Carter, Chief Human Resources Officer

FHN

Kathy Crandall, Human Resources/Co-Owner

Crandall Stats & Sensors, Inc.

Michael Dunn, Executive Director

Region 1 Planning Council

Jeff Fahrenwald, VP of Strategic Development & Education

SupplyCore

Pamela Fettes, Executive Director

Growth Dimensions of Belvidere and Boone County

Suzanne K. Fischer, Vice President

OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center

Einar Forsman, President & CEO

Greater Rockford Growth Partnership

George Gaulrapp, External Affairs Manager

ComEd, An Excelon Company

Alan Golden, President

Northwestern Illinois Building & Construction Trades

Jessica Greenberg, Sr. Advisor-Community Banking

First National Bank

Dr. Daniel Grohens, Rehab. Services Supervisor

IL DHS-DRS Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Bob Guirl, Community Member

Greg Harle, President/Training Director

Plumbers & Pipefitters LU 23

Dr. Sheila Hill, President/CEO

Hill & Hill Enterprises, Inc.

Vanessa Hughes, President

Hughes Resources

Dr. Brant Hulsebus, Owner

Hulsebus Rockford Chiropractic

James Knutson, Risk Manager & HR Director

Aircraft Gear Corporation

Eva Kretschmar, Owner/President

RBG Janitorial, LLC

Kimberly Kuborn, Director, Organization Development

Kuborn Consulting

Kris L. Machajewski, President & CEO

YMCA Literacy Council

Matt Montalbano, Senior Vice President-Branch Director

RBG Wealth Management

Amy Nord, Executive Director

Belvidere Area Chamber of Commerce

James Pirages, Attorney at Law

Allen, Galuzzo Hevrin Leake, LLC

Jamie Proctor, General Manager

Americold Logistics, LLC.

Dan Ross, President

Community Foundation of Northern Illinois

Casey Schwebke, Operations Manager

Swebco Manufacturing Inc. and **President**

Rock River Valley Tooling & Machining Assoc. (RRVTMA)

Dr. Howard J. Spearman, President

Rock Valley College

Todd Wells, Director of Operations

Bourn & Koch Inc.

Mark Williams, Executive Director

Greater Freeport Partnership

Jeff Zeal, Local Office Manager

Illinois Department of Employment Security

Get Connected!



Regional Economic Impact - Program Year 2021

RN Training

Obtaining RN
Licensure

91 Participants

Will earn an average of
\$74,462

***For an impact of
\$6,766,042***

*Source 2022 EMSI
Lightcast economic data for
Rockford region

CDL A Training

Obtaining CDL A
Licensure

191 Participants

Will earn an average of
\$50,715

***For an impact of
\$9,686,565***

*Source 2022 EMSI
Lightcast economic data for
Rockford region

Welding Training

Obtaining Welding
Certificate

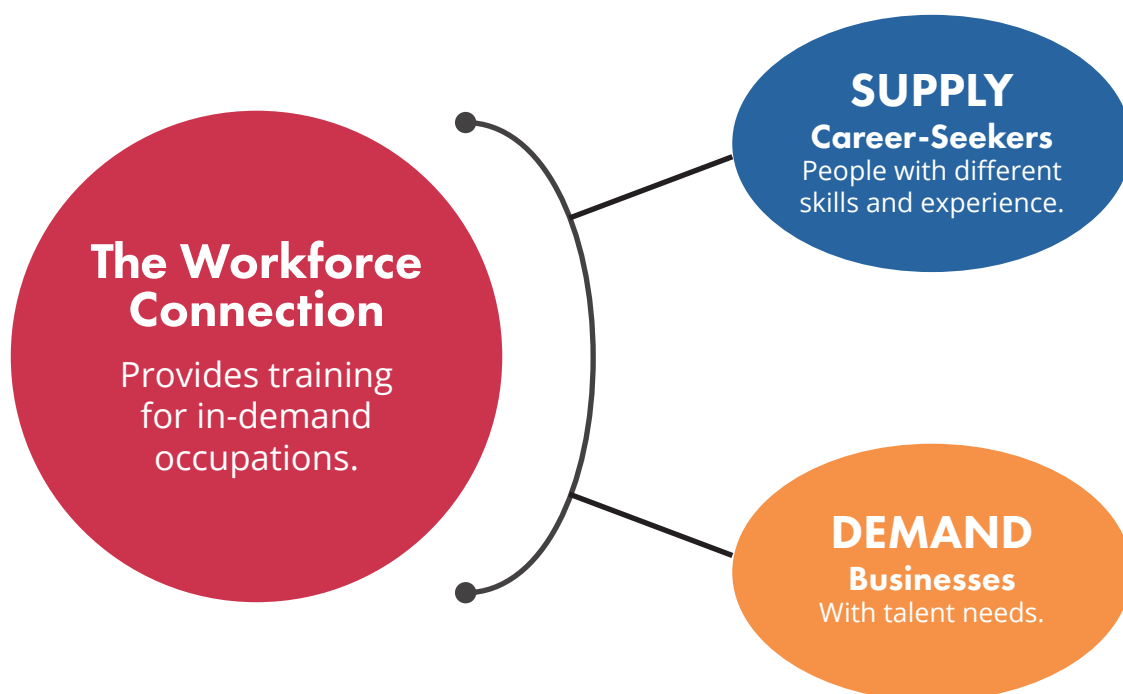
35 Participants

Will earn an average of
\$45,439

***For an impact of
\$1,590,365***

*Source 2022 EMSI
Lightcast economic data for
Rockford region

Your One Stop Connection



What We Do... By The Numbers



The Workforce Connection, the local public workforce development system, is the foundation for the implementation of WIOA in Boone, Stephenson and Winnebago Counties. The Workforce Connection is a network of organizations delivering employment, education and training services. The goal is to align and integrate services to increase cost-effectiveness and accessibility, helping individuals gain the skills necessary to meet the needs of our employers. We welcome your active participation as we move forward connecting employers with a highly skilled workforce.



\$1,974,644

Spent On
Participant-related
Training



\$727,433

Spent On Employer-related Training
which includes: On the Job Training,
Incumbent Worker Training, Work
Experience, and Apprenticeships.



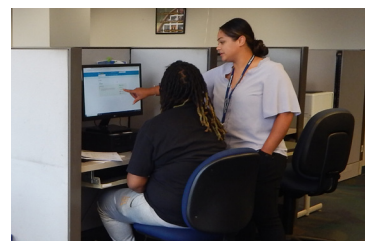
148

People earned their High
School Equivalency



47

Youth received their
High School Diploma



28,913

Visits made to One-
Stop Centers for Career
Services



421

People received training
in high-demand job
sectors



270

On-site hiring events
with local employers at
Career Centers



12

Large off-site hiring
events with local
employers

Employer Spotlight



Todd Wells,
Director of Operations

Bourn & Koch provides precision automated machine tool solutions for the global manufacturing community. We specialize in gear manufacturing equipment and precision grinding machines with the ability to specially engineer custom solutions for some of the most challenging manufacturing applications. We support 28 American Machine Tool Companies with repair parts, field service, retrofit & rebuild. Over 2500 years of engineering expertise in our archives allows us to engineer custom solutions for today's manufacturing market while keeping the machines that built American industry alive.

"The Workforce Connection (TWC) has provided BKI with many services over the years, including incumbent worker training (IWT) services that have advanced BKI's manufacturing needs by developing the skills necessary to advance the careers of our team members. Very recently, the IWT program through TWC provided very useful mentoring skills to our leaders through an industry-standard train-the-trainer program, as well as apprenticeship support for our aspiring machinists." - Todd Wells, Director of Operations



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Partnering For Success



Ryan Goertzen,
Vice President
Workforce
Development, AAR



Illinois invested 2.6 million dollars in FY2021, in partnership with TWC, to help AAR scale to meet the strong demand for aviation maintenance technicians. This funding helped expand the aviation talent pipeline to accommodate growth at the Rockford Regional Airport, which is currently undergoing a multi-year expansion. AAR is also experiencing a significant increase in its workforce in Rockford, including plans to hire as many as 250 new aviation maintenance technicians due to a long-term contract with United Airlines. The \$2.6 million will train and upskill new and existing personnel and enhance AAR's partnership with Rock Valley College's Aviation Maintenance program. New aviation programming geared to high school students will be introduced throughout Rockford and Northern Illinois to support efforts to increase the number of students choosing an aviation maintenance career.

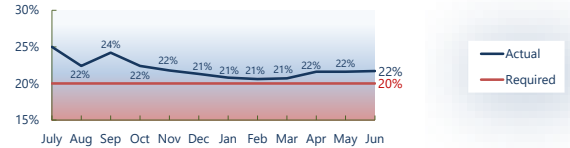
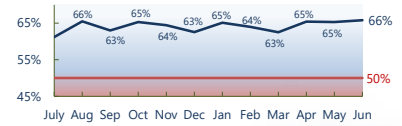
"This grant has and will continue to transform the aviation technician landscape in Rockford and, more importantly, the lives of those impacted by aviation maintenance careers. TWC has been a fantastic partner, and we could not have accomplished what we set out to do without their support and guidance", said Ryan Goertzen, VP Maintenance Workforce Development, AAR.

June 2022 Finance Report Summary



Adult & DW Minimum Training Expenditure = 66%

Youth Work-based Learning = 22%



Training Obligations

[More details](#)

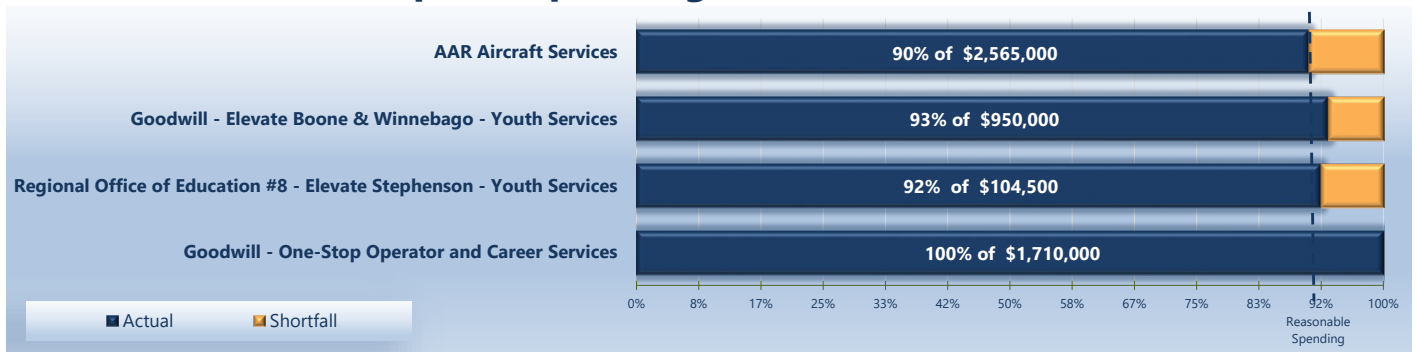


	Budget	Obligations	% Obligated	Balance
Adult Training	\$ 1,379,193	\$ 1,334,537	97%	\$ 44,656
Adult WEX/OJT	\$ 421,951	\$ 490,054	116%	\$ (68,103)
Dislocated Worker Training	\$ 174,302	\$ 187,309	107%	\$ (13,007)
Dislocated Worker WEX/OJT	\$ 48,524	\$ 574	1%	\$ 47,950
Trade Training	\$ 8,200	\$ 4,183	51%	\$ 4,017
National Emergency Grant Training	\$ 283,721	\$ 234,530	83%	\$ 49,191
National Emergency Grant WEX/OJT	\$ 60,079	\$ 26,474	44%	\$ 33,605
Incumbent Worker Training	\$ 170,000	\$ 104,067	61%	\$ 65,933
Youth Training	\$ 265,054	\$ 230,058	87%	\$ 34,996
Youth WEX/OJT	\$ 269,000	\$ 286,791	107%	\$ (17,791)

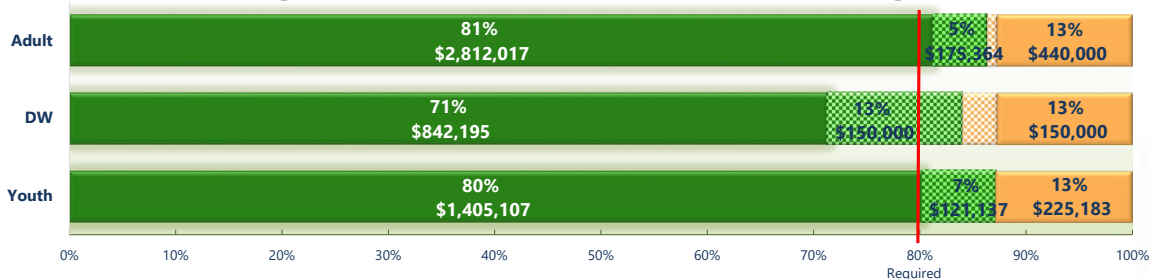
Combined Adult & DW Training Costs = 94%

Youth Training Costs = 97%

Subrecipient Spending - Percent of Subaward

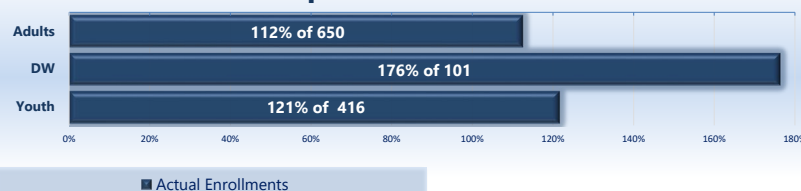


Budget: Overall Actual Costs & Obligations



■ Actual Spending
■ Obligations
■ Unobligated Balance
■ Planned Carryover

Participant Service Levels



The Workforce Connection Receives Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Community Partner Award from Rock Valley College



The Rock Valley College Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) hosted the inaugural Eagle Awards of Excellence. The Workforce Connection (TWC) was nominated and awarded as a community partner for “incorporating” DEI within its mission and practices.” They have a proven track record of partnering with RVC to identify barriers and create access and opportunities for all students. They are a key partner as we look at connecting with other organizations to spread the word about access and opportunity at RVC”.

“TWC recognizes the economic, societal, and organizational benefits of workforce diversity and inclusion. We are committed to advocating and supporting equitable access to career and employment opportunities and partnering with employers to create equity within their workplaces for all in our region. TWC is sincerely grateful for our partnership with RVC. We appreciate this recognition and thank the many people who do this important work every day,” said Karen Brown, Chair of TWC’s Human Resources committee who spearheaded equity efforts on behalf of the Board.

“The Workforce Connection is proud of this recognition and our work to engage individuals in the community and provide effective and equitable outcomes that improve and enhance our entire community. We are committed to continuing to learn, grow, and improve our efforts in this area,” stated Courtney Geiger, Director of Career Services for The Workforce Connection’s One-Stop Center.



Gina Caronna, Executive Director, expanded on TWC’s gratitude stating, “The Workforce Connection (TWC) will continue to advocate to businesses the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion practices, and collaborate with community partners to provide DEI resources. TWC congratulates all other nominees and award winners and extends gratitude to Rock Valley College for emphasizing this work for the Rockford region.



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