



Annual Report

July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023
Program Year 2022

Serving Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties
303 N. Main Street, Rockford, IL 61101
600 S. State Street, Belvidere, IL 61008
307 W. Main Street, Freeport, IL 61032

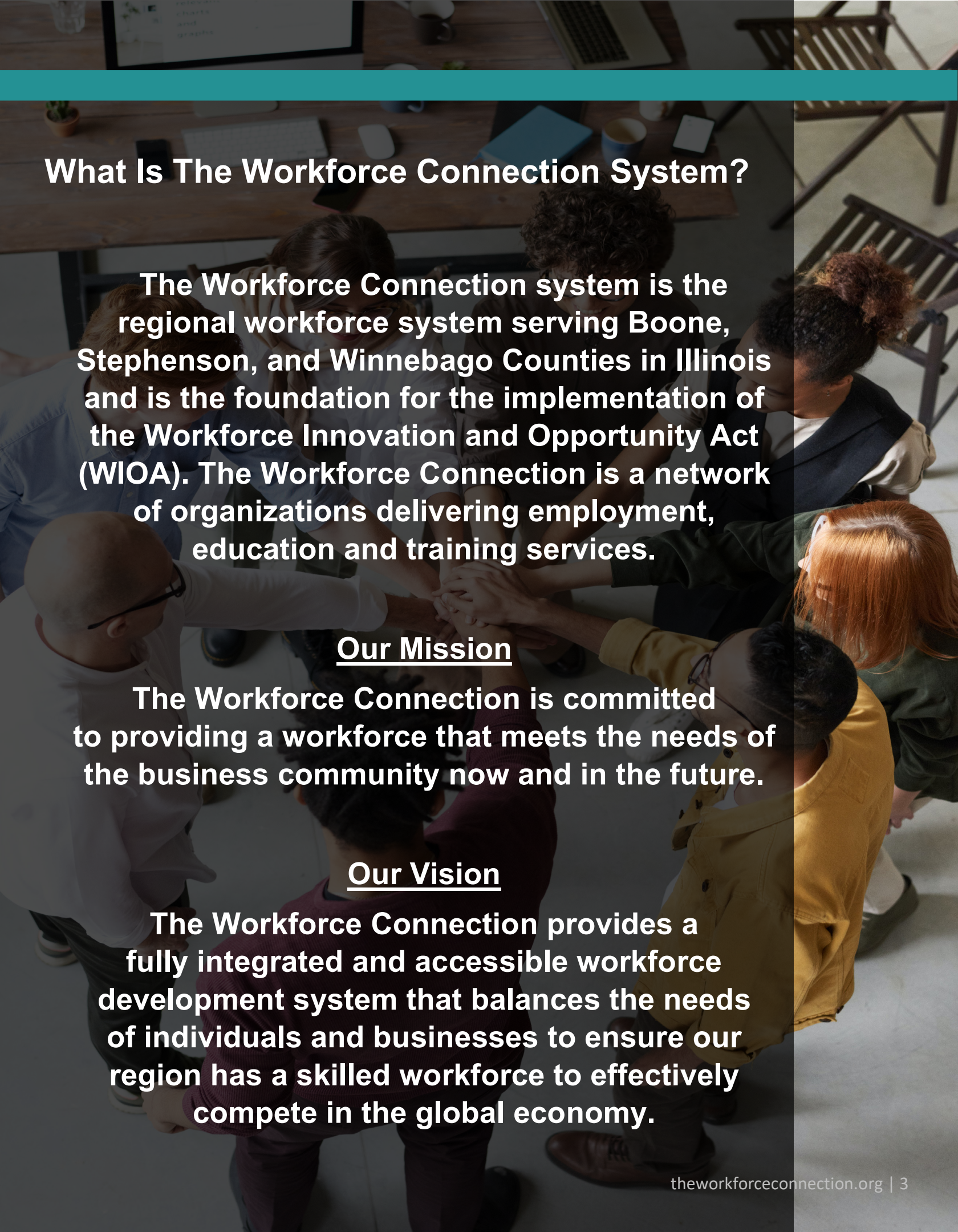
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Thank you to our sponsor:





What Is The Workforce Connection System?

The Workforce Connection system is the regional workforce system serving Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties in Illinois and is the foundation for the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Workforce Connection is a network of organizations delivering employment, education and training services.

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.



Year In Review

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Michelle Cassaro
The Workforce Connection, Inc. Board Chair
Chief Financial Officer, Chicago Rockford International Airport

The Board and staff of The Workforce Connection (TWC) have had an amazing year, and I've been honored and excited to serve as the Board Chair. It has been an impactful year, providing many opportunities for TWC to assist individuals and businesses throughout our region. As I continue serving as Board Chair into the new program year, we anticipate being able to have an even greater impact in our region serving Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties. Below are a few highlights of our successes this year:

- The Workforce Connection, Local Workforce Innovation Board 3 (LWIA 3), met or exceeded all indicators of performance assessed by The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) for Program Year 2021, including Employment Rate and Median Earnings.
- Developed a new Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) statement and webpage. Visit our new DEIB webpage featuring a resources blog section to assist employers with their DEIB planning at <https://www.TheWorkforceConnection.org/diversity-equity-inclusion-belonging/>.
- Quarterly Board and CEO Meetings returned to the traditional in-person format.
- Developed and maintained a balanced WIOA compliant Workforce Development Board representing the region's business community, which consists of many diverse industries.
- Collaborated with Region 1 Planning Council, business and community members involved in the mental health field to begin developing a mental health pathway.
- The idled Stellantis plant in Belvidere, Illinois resulted in LWIA 3 receiving an increase in Trade funding.
- Our Career Centers had 19,840 visits/16,265 individuals.
- 484 individuals attended occupational training.
- Career Center staff held 504 hiring events, resulting in 2,980 interviews.
- Our Rapid Response team participated in 24 Rapid Response events in our region, which enabled the team to assist 464 individuals who attended those events in person. Rapid Response Services are available to employers in the case of a permanent closure or mass layoff that results in mass job dislocation. These services for employers and workers include job search, placement assistance, and various types of training.
- \$3,596,659 spent on Participant-related Training.
- \$1,061,862 spent on Employer-related Training as follows:
 - Incumbent Worker Training projects totaling \$155,762
 - Work Experience projects totaling \$499,558
 - On-The-Job Training projects totaling \$370,515
 - Apprenticeship projects totaling \$36,027

Regional Workforce Development

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

Mayor Thomas P. McNamara
The Workforce Connection, Inc. Chief Elected Officials Chair
Mayor, City of Rockford, Illinois



Economic development is a critical tool that drives growth in our economy, creates new job opportunities and facilitates an improved quality of life. In the last year, we have seen great success.

We recently celebrated a milestone for the permanent Hard Rock Casino. The final steel beam was hoisted into place at the former Clock Tower Resort at East State Street and I-90. This project will employ 1,000 union construction workers and nearly 800 permanent employees averaging \$50,000 a year.

We also signed a development agreement with J Jeffers for our Barber Colman Complex. The first phase of construction will begin this summer and is expected to be completed in late 2024. It will create jobs for our local tradesmen and women, including unions, as well as for women and minority owned businesses.

We're currently working with SiFi Networks to lay a high-speed fiber optic cable network in front of every home and every business in the city of Rockford. This project will bring \$200 million worth of work to our local union workers. It will also help bridge the digital divide for our residents, help us attract more high-tech businesses and provide greater choice to our community.

In addition, we partnered with LT Construction, a local minority-owned concrete construction contractor, to provide mentorship, experience and workforce development skills to young adults that represented at-risk and underserved populations of our community. Last summer, each of the interns was accepted into a union apprenticeship program. We are continuing the program. It is changing the lives of these young adults and their families, while simultaneously improving neighborhood infrastructure.

These large developments are incredible, but we know that small business is truly the backbone of our community. We are working with Think Big to establish a small business incubator for women and minority-owned businesses. Think Big is already hard at work helping small businesses. In the last year, 92 individuals graduated from its School of Business and 11 have already opened brick and mortar storefronts. Two recent graduates of the program - Ambiance and TNT Funnel Cakes - recently opened stores in the heart of downtown! And, Think Big helped Crossover Motorsports take a long vacant auto repair shop on Auburn Street and turn it into a productive parcel and flourishing small business.

I'm proud of our growth. In 2016, almost 1,400 new businesses were opened in Winnebago County. In 2021, the latest year for which data is available, nearly 3,800 new businesses opened. That's a 168% increase! New development and new activity bring visitors to our community. In 2021, total visitor spending increased 21.7% from 2020. That money directly supported the livelihood of 3,798 hardworking area residents working in hospitality and travel related jobs with employment income of \$130 million.

A graphic of several interlocking puzzle pieces. One piece in the center is dark grey and has the word "Jobs" written on it in a white, sans-serif font. The other pieces are light grey with black outlines.

Jobs

Our Board

Officers

Chair
Michelle Cassaro, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration
Chicago Rockford International Airport

Vice-Chair
Todd Wells, Director of Operations
Bourn & Koch Inc.

Secretary/Treasurer
Karen Brown, Director, Human Resources
Highland Community College

Immediate Past Chair
Frank Rotello, CEO
Alpha Controls & Services LLC

Director-at-Large
Amy M. Ott, President
Boylan Catholic High School

Chief Elected Officials

Chair
Mayor Thomas P. McNamara
City of Rockford

Chairman Joseph Chiarelli
Winnebago County Board

Chairman Rodney Riley
Boone County Board

Chairman Scott H. Helms
Stephenson County Board

Board Members

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
SupplyCore, VP of Strategic Development & Execution

Pamela Fettes, Executive Director
Growth Dimensions of Belvidere and Boone County

Suzanne K. Fischer, Vice President
OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center

George Gaulrapp, External Affairs Manager
ComEd, An Exelon Company

Jeremy Grayewski, Talent Acquisition Manager
Bernier Food & Beverage, LLC

Dr. Daniel Grohens, Rehab. Services Supervisor
IL DHS – Div. of Rehabilitation Services

Bob Guirl
Community Member

Greg Harle, President/Training Director
Plumbers & Pipefitters LU 23

Dr. Sheila Hill, President/CEO
Hill & Hill Enterprises

Vanessa Hughes, President
Hughes Resources

Dr. Brant Hulsebus, Owner
Hulsebus Rockford Chiropractic

Eva Kretschmar, Owner/President
RBG Janitorial LLC

Kris Machajewski, President & CEO
YWCA Northwestern Illinois - Literacy Council

Matthew Montalbano, Senior Vice President-Branch Manager
RBC Wealth Management

Paul Nolley, Executive Director
Project First Rate

Amy Nord, Executive Director
Belvidere Area Chamber of Commerce

James Pirages, Attorney at Law
Allen, Galluzzo Hevrin Leake, LLC

Troy Primus, Vice President of Operations
AAR Corporation

Jamie Proctor, General Manager
Americold Logistics, LLC

Dan Ross, President
Community Foundation of Northern Illinois

Casey Schwebke, Operations Manager
Swebco Manufacturing Inc.

Dr. Howard J. Spearman, President
Rock Valley College

Therese Thill, President
Rockford Area Economic Development Council (RAEDC)

Mark Williams, Executive Director
Greater Freeport Partnership

Jeff Zeal, Local Office Manager
Illinois Department of Employment Security



Partner Organizations

Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois One-Stop-Operator and Youth Program Provider

WIOA Partners

City of Rockford/Goodwill

- Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth
- Trade Adjustment Assistance

City of Rockford, Health & Human Services Department

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG-Boone & Winnebago Counties)

Comprehensive Community Solutions

Youth Build

Highland Community College

- Title II: Adult Education & Literacy
- Perkins/Post-Secondary Career & Technical Education (Stephenson County)

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)

- Title III: Employment Programs (Wagner-Peyser)
- Job Counseling, Training, Placement Services for Veterans
- Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker
- Trade Readjustment Assistance
- Unemployment Insurance

IL Department of Human Services Department of Rehab Services (VocRehab)

Title IV: Rehabilitation Services

IL Department of Human Services-TANF

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

National Able Network

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Northwest Illinois Community Action Agency

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG-Stephenson County)

Rockford Housing Authority

Housing & Urban Development
Employment and Training Activities

Rockford Public Schools

Title II: Adult Education & Literacy (Winnebago County)

Rock Valley College

- Title I: Dislocated Worker and Trade Service
- Title II: Adult Education, Perkins/Post-Secondary Career & Technical Education
- Subcontractor to Goodwill for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Trade Service (Boone & Winnebago Counties)

YWCA Northwestern Illinois - Literacy Council

Title II: Adult Education & Literacy (Boone & Winnebago Counties)

Community Partners

Growth Dimensions

Workforce Board Member representing Economic Development – Boone County

Greater Rockford Growth Partnership

Workforce Board Member representing Economic Development – Winnebago County

Greater Freeport Partnership

Workforce Board Member representing Economic Development – Stephenson County

Plumbers & Pipefitters Local Union 23

Workforce Board Member representing Labor/Apprenticeships

Project First Rate

Workforce Board Member representing Labor/Apprenticeships

Belvidere Area Chamber of Commerce

Workforce Board Member representing Business

Community Foundation of Northern Illinois

Workforce Board Member representing Employment, Training, or Education

Regional Office of Education #4

Workforce Board Member representing Employment, Training or Education for Youth

Boylan Catholic High School

Workforce Board Member representing Employment, Training or Education for Youth

CEANCI (Career Education Associates of North Central Illinois)

Committee Member representing Youth Education and Training

Belvidere Community School District

100
Committee Member representing Career Pathways

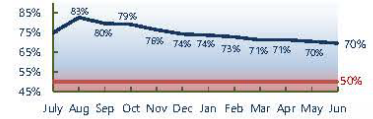
Freeport School District 145-

CareerTEC Freeport
Committee Member representing Youth

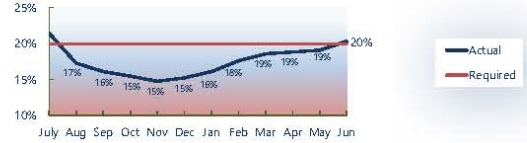
June 2023 Finance Report Summary



Adult & DW Minimum Training Expenditure = 70%



Youth Work-based Learning = 20%

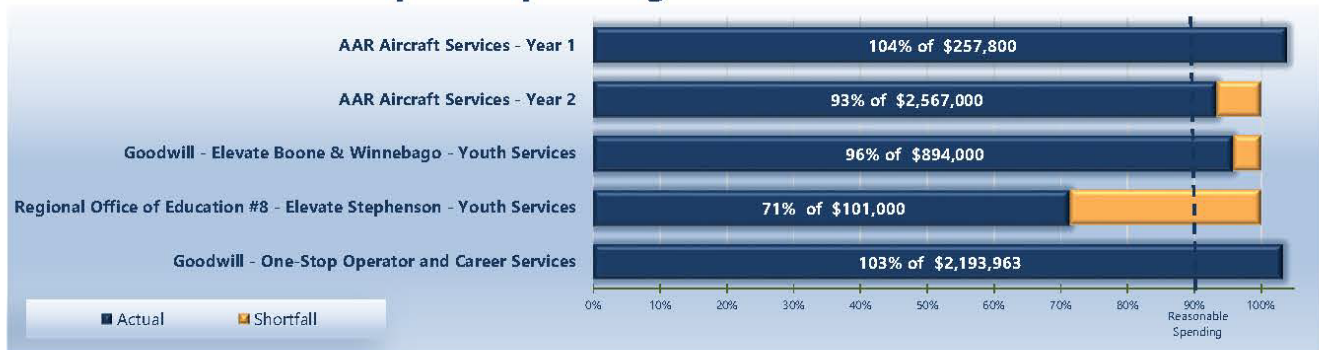


Training Costs + Obligations

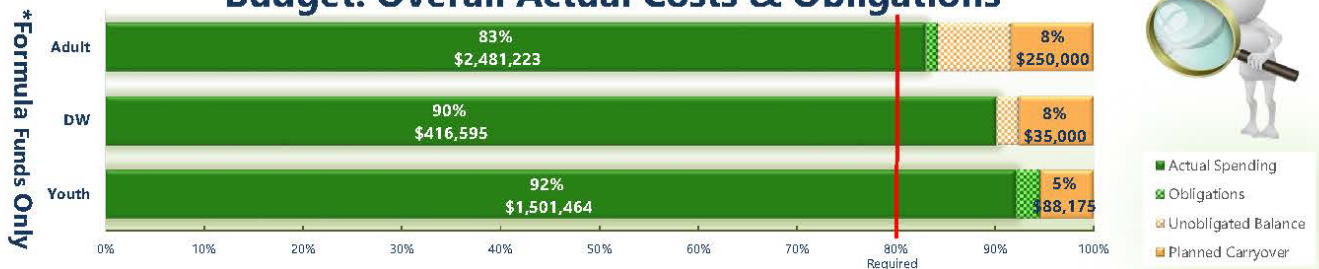


	Budget	Costs + PY23 Obs	% of Budget	Balance	
Adult Training	\$ 1,148,425	\$ 1,099,801	96%	\$ 48,624	} Combined Adult & DW Training Costs = 98%
Adult WEX/OJT	\$ 490,000	\$ 465,440	95%	\$ 24,560	
Dislocated Worker Training	\$ 114,410	\$ 103,309	90%	\$ 11,101	
Dislocated Worker WEX/OJT	\$ 35,000	\$ 9,125	26%	\$ 25,875	
Trade Grant Training	\$ 1,575,000	\$ 1,705,935	108%	\$ (130,935)	
Trade Grant WEX/OJT	\$ -	\$ 1,702	100%	\$ (1,702)	
QUEST Grant Training	\$ 360,000	\$ 348,054	97%	\$ 11,946	
Quest WEX/OJT	\$ 130,000	\$ 130,892	101%	\$ (892)	
State Emergency Grant Training	\$ 148,400	\$ 52,490	35%	\$ 95,910	
State Emergency WEX/OJT	\$ 10,000	\$ -	0%	\$ 10,000	
National Emergency Grant Training	\$ 43,900	\$ 65,016	148%	\$ (21,116)	} Youth Training Costs = 101%
Incumbent Worker Training	\$ 165,000	\$ 155,762	94%	\$ 9,238	
Youth Training	\$ 258,548	\$ 258,081	100%	\$ 467	
Youth WEX/OJT	\$ 256,971	\$ 262,914	102%	\$ (5,943)	

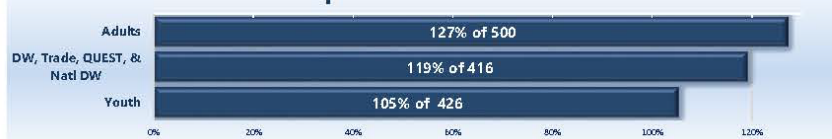
Subrecipient Spending - Percent of Subaward



Budget: Overall Actual Costs & Obligations



Participant Service Levels



Financial Impact



\$3,596,659
Spent On Participant Related Training
82% increase over Program Year 2021

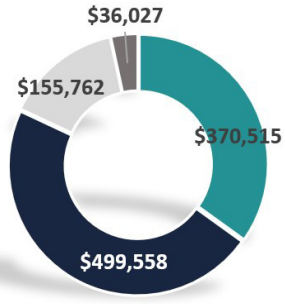


\$1,061,862
Spent on Employer Related Wages and Training including On the Job Training, Work Experience, Incumbent Worker Training, and Apprenticeships
46% Increase over Program Year 2021

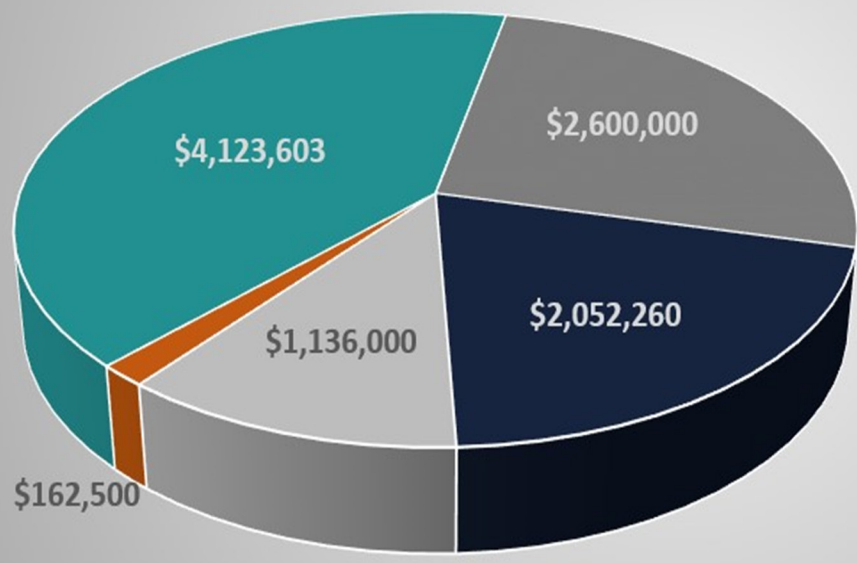
Participant Enrollment Levels



- On The Job Training
- Work Experience
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Apprenticeships



Grants Received Program Year 2022



- WIOA Formula Grant 07/01/2022-06/30/2024
- AAR Grant 07/01/2022-06/30/2024
- Trade Grant 10/01/2022-09/30/2023
- Quest National Dislocated Worker Grant 10/01/2022-09/30/2024
- State Emergency Grant 01/01/2023-06/30/2023

Career Center Services



Hiring Events

- 504 Hiring Events
- 2,980 Interviews from Hiring Events

Rapid Response

- 24 Rapid Response Events
- 464 people attended in-person

Services

- 46,598 Services Provided

Adult 636

45% Male
54.2% Female

Below 9th Grade Level at Entry:
25.3% Reading
64.6% Math

31.7% with Legal System Involvement

Youth 445

48.8% Male
49.7% Female

Below 9th Grade Level at Entry:
48.5% Reading
87.2% Math

11.7% with Legal System Involvement


Dislocated Worker 338

54.7% Male
43.5% Female

Below 9th Grade Level at Entry:
18.6% Reading
51.8% Math


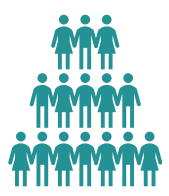
10.3% with Legal System Involvement

Regional Impact



308
Obtained a
Credential

42
Individuals earned
their high school
equivalency.

143
Completed
Work-Based
Learning

24
Individuals
obtained their high
school diploma.




32
Apprenticeships



**Top 3
Training
Programs**

CDL A
\$51,551 Average Wages
80% Successful Completion
211 Participants
For an impact of \$10,877,261

Nursing
\$75,987 Average Wages
66% Successful Completion
108 Participants
For an impact of \$8,206,596

Welding
\$46,516 Average Wages
100% Successful Completion
42 Participants
For an impact of \$1,953,672

*Source for wage data: Lightcast Occupational Snapshot Report dated August 2023 for Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties, Illinois.

On-The-Job
Training

Business Services
07-01-2022 to 06-30-2023

<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Number Trained</u>	<u>Type of Training</u>
Absolute Fire Protection, Inc.	7	Sprinkler Fitter - Apprenticeship
Anpec Industries	3	CNC Machine Operator
Cellusuede Products	1	Flock Production Worker
CorPro Signs	2	Screen Print Technician, Vinyl Installer
Crandall Stats and Sensors	1	Inventory/Customer Service Representative
Evergreen Warehouse Inc.	1	Machinist
Freeport Health Network	1	Medical Assistant - Apprenticeship
Greenlink Community Solutions	1	Weatherization Technician
I. Spinello Locksmiths	1	Locksmith
In the Black Company	1	Executive Assistant
Ingersoll Machine Tools	1	Manufacturing Helper
Kikifer's Academy	1	Child Care Worker
Leslie West Insurance Agency-State Farm	1	Insurance Account Representative
Life Decisions	2	Participant Advocate, Project Coordinator
McDonalds Corporation	1	Staff Trainer
Open Arms Early Learning Childcare Ctr	3	Teacher Aides
Rockford Auto Glass	4	Window Installer
Rockford Linear Actuation	2	Machinist
Rogers Precision Machining	1	Machine Operator
Ro-Pal Grinding	1	Machine Grinder Operator
Stateline Rental Properties	6	Property Maintenance Tech. , Admin. Asst.
SVS Management Group LLC	1	Maintenance Technician
Tad More Tailoring	2	Administrative Assistant/Sewer
Ultrasonic Power Corporation	2	Sales Assistant/Mechanical Assembler
	47	

**SKILLS
TRAINING**

<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Number Trained</u>	<u>Type of Training</u>
Aircraft Gear Corporation	1	Mechanical Engineer Intern
Carlson Boys and Girls Club	1	Group Leader
Computer Dynamics	1	Shop Technician
Crudup Construction	2	Office Assistant
Elevate the Family Entertainment Company	1	Office Assistant
Freckle Dot	1	Retail Stocker
Freeport Area Church Cooperative	1	Case Worker Assistant
Get Connected 815	2	Administrative Assistant/Reentry Specialist
Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois Freeport	1	Donation Attendant
Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois Rockford	4	Retail Store Associate, Donation Attendant
Hilldale Deli	1	Food Service worker
Ida Public Library	1	Circulation Clerk
JP Fashions	1	Retail Sales
J's Event Studio	1	Event Planner Assistant
KFACT - Keeping Families and Community Together	1	Administrative Assistant
KEYS Program	19	E-Commerce Associate
Kids Around the World	3	Welder
Kikifer's Entrepreneurial Academy	1	Child Care Worker
LCU Properties	1	Landscaper
McDonalds Corporation	9	Crew member
Mo's Coffee and Café	1	Store Manager/Chef
Northwest Community Center	1	Youth Leader Assistant
One Stop Shop Center	1	Nail Technician
Orthollinois	2	Clinic Runner
Orthopedic Rehab Specialists	2	Medical Administrative Assistant
Plumbers and Pipefitters/Local 23	2	Pre-Apprentice Pipefitter
Precision Dynamics, LLC	1	Mechanical Engineer Intern
Quiet Souls	1	Retail Sales Office Manager
Ripe Life Juice	1	Retail Associate
Rock Valley College	1	Administrative Assistant
Rockford Housing Authority	8	Property Maintenance and Admin. Asst.
Sonny's Bakery	5	Culinary Asst./Pastry Cook-Apprenticeships
Tad More Tailoring	2	Sewing Assistant
Tailor Made Autoworks	2	Auto Maintenance Technician
The Workforce Connection (Rockford, Belvidere, and Freeport)	4	Career Center Assistant
Ultrasonic Power Corporation	3	Sales Assoc./Assoc. Mechanical Engineer/Assembler
Winnebago County Housing/NiReach	6	Maintenance/Administrative Assistant
	96	

**Work
Experience**

Business Services
07-01-2022 to 06-30-2023

**Incumbent
Worker
Training**

**Business Services
07-01-2022 to 06-30-2023**

<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Number Trained</u>	<u>Type of Training</u>
Assist Natural Products	5	ISO Standards and Certification
Bourn and Koch, Inc.	1	Precision Machinist Apprenticeship
Bourn and Koch, Inc.	1	Mechatronics Apprenticeship
Bourn and Koch, Inc.	14	Training within industry Comprehensive Training
Ekstrom Carlson	3	ISO Standards and Certification
Ford Tool and Machining	17	ISO Standards and Certification
Freeport Health Network	1	Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship
Freeport Health Network	9	Medical Assistant Apprenticeship
General Mills	6	FANUC Robotic Training
Heritage Mold	1	Tool and Die Apprenticeship
Kadon Precision Machining	5	On Time Delivery & Continuous Improvement
Kadon Precision Machining	2	Customized CNC Machinist Training
Northern Precision Plastics	8	Training within industry job methods and relations
O&L Machine	3	ISO Standards and Certification
Quantum Design	12	Manufacturing Fundamentals Upskill
Rockford ID Shop	1	Quality training for manufacturing
Spider Company	12	CRM System implementation training
Superior Joining Technologies	2	Roll Forming Advanced Training
TH Foods, Inc.	4	Training within industry Job Instruction
TH Foods, Inc.	12	Training within industry Job Methods
UltraSonic Power Corporation	2	B&R Automation Academy Training
UWHealth/Swedish American	10	Medical Assistant Apprenticeship
UWHealth/Swedish American	9	Medical Assistant Apprenticeships
	140	

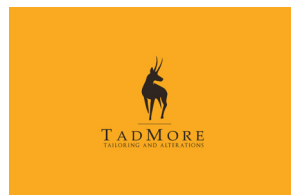
*Meet Ebony, Angel, Brittany and Latricia (pictured left to right).
Visit our home page blog posts at www.TheWorkforceConnection.org to learn about
these participants' success with our business services programs.*



Innovative Partnerships



Leslie West of State Farm Insurance (pictured on the right) learned about The Workforce Connection's On-The-Job Training (OJT) program by chance from one of her job candidates. She contacted The Workforce Connection and got the wheels in motion for an OJT program. She started sharing the benefits of the program with all of her candidates, and Crystal Carbajal (pictured on the left) was the candidate who successfully completed the process. This was the first insurance sales associate OJT for our Business Services Team, and they worked with the employer to develop a customized program to meet the employer's needs. When asked to describe the enrollment process, Leslie stated *"They took the time to learn what it was that I was looking for in my business and what I needed the partnership for, which for me was for licensing"*.



The Workforce Connection has collaborated with Tad More Tailoring on four OJT's over the last two years. Due to their highly diverse workforce, we have been able to place multiple English Language Learners with Tad More. This has allowed those English Language Learners to be accepted and work while learning new skills. When we spoke with Tad More's CEO and Co-Founder, Sarene Alsharif, she stated *"The Workforce (TWC) has been crucial for our business, because it enables us to train somebody so that they get to the point where they can do the quality alterations or do the high quality fittings and it offsets the price of the training...because it takes a long time to get somebody who works with us to the place where they are actually able to be generating that income to help support them."*



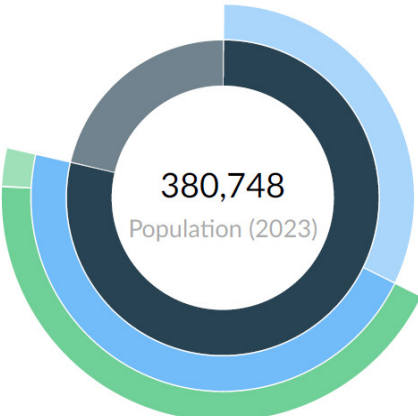
Regional Statistics

<h2>380,896</h2> <p>Population (2022)</p> <p>Population decreased by 2,241 over the last 5 years and is projected to decrease by 466 over the next 5 years.</p>	<h2>169,193</h2> <p>Total Regional Employment</p> <p>Jobs decreased by 6,155 over the last 5 years but are projected to grow by 5,489 over the next 5 years.</p>	<h2>\$65.8K</h2> <p>Avg. Earnings Per Job (2022)</p> <p>Regional average earnings per job are \$15.0K below the national average earnings of \$80.8K per job.</p>
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Takeaways

- As of 2022 the region's population declined by 0.6% since 2017, falling by 2,241. Population is expected to decrease by 0.1% between 2022 and 2027, losing 466.
- From 2017 to 2022, jobs declined by 3.5% in 3 Illinois Counties from 175,348 to 169,193. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 3.8% by 7.3%. As the number of jobs declined, the labor force participation rate decreased from 63.9% to 59.6% between 2017 and 2022.
- Concerning educational attainment, 15.0% of the selected regions' residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (5.8% below the national average), and 9.7% hold an Associate's Degree (0.8% above the national average).
- The top three industries in 2022 are Restaurants and Other Eating Places, Education and Hospitals (Local Government), and General Medical and Surgical Hospitals.

April 2023 Labor Force Breakdown



	Population
● 16+ Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	299,053
● Not in Labor Force (16+)	122,593
● Labor Force	176,460
● Employed	165,763
● Unemployed	10,697
● Under 16, Military, and institutionalized Population	81,695

*Source: Lightcast Q3 2023 Data Set | lightcast.io | Economy Overview for Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties, Illinois.

Educational Attainment

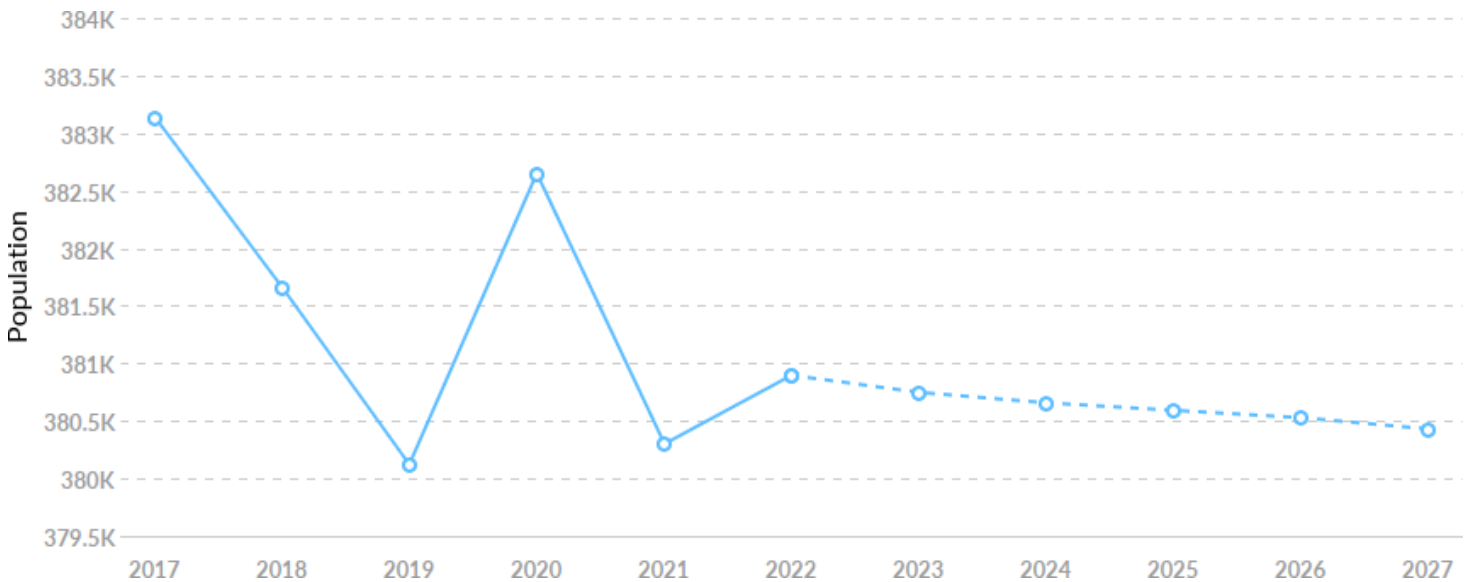
Concerning educational attainment, **15.0%** of the selected regions' residents possess a **Bachelor's Degree** (5.8% below the national average), and **9.7%** hold an **Associate's Degree** (0.8% above the national average).



	% of Population	Population
Less Than 9th Grade	4.3%	11,318
9th Grade to 12th Grade	7.2%	18,924
High School Diploma	31.2%	81,595
Some College	24.2%	63,121
Associate's Degree	9.7%	25,205
Bachelor's Degree	15.0%	39,269
Graduate Degree and Higher	8.3%	21,756

Population Trends

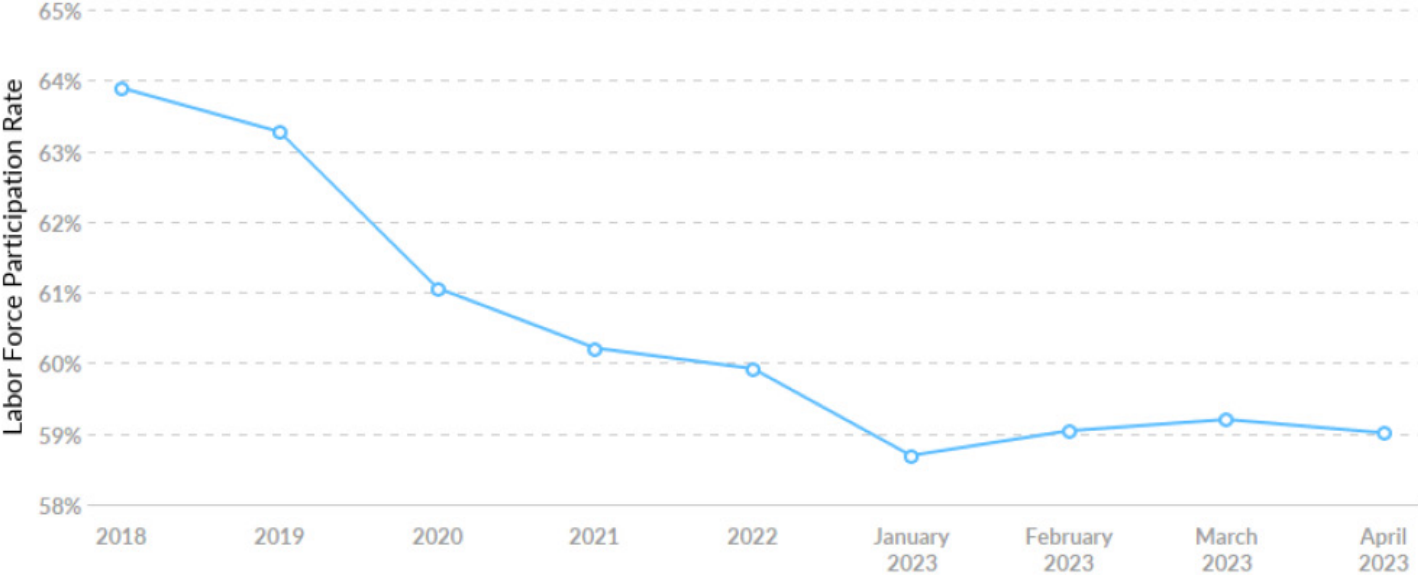
As of 2022 the region's population **declined by 0.6%** since 2017, falling by 2,241. Population is expected to **decrease by 0.1%** between 2022 and 2027, losing 466.



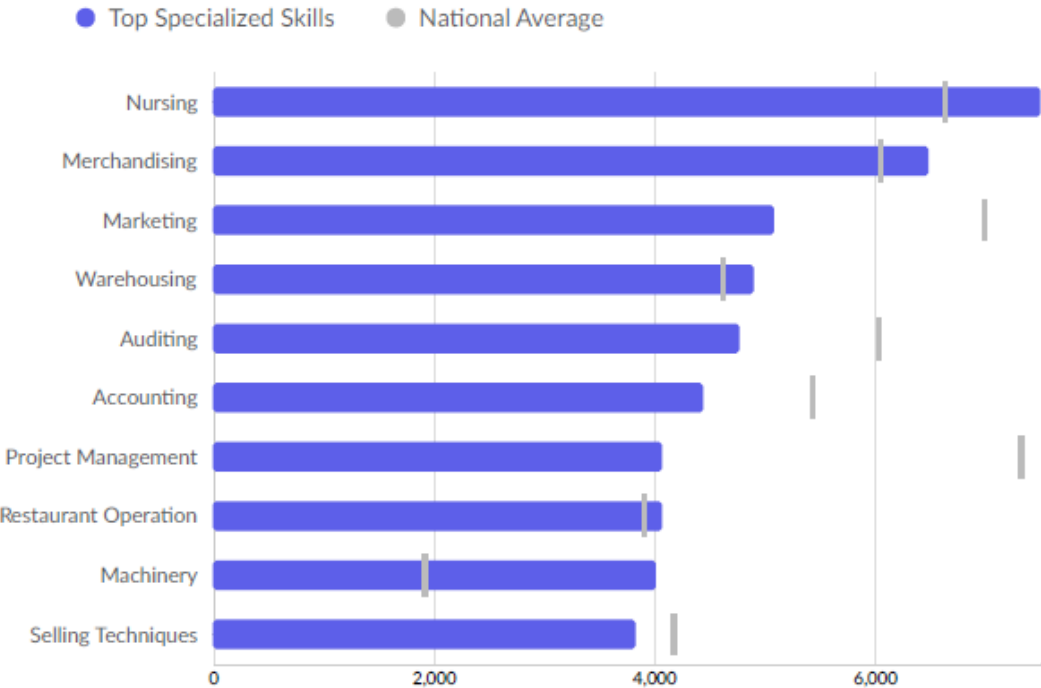
*Source: Lightcast Q3 2023 Data Set | lightcast.io | Economy Overview for Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties, Illinois.

Regional Statistics

Labor Force Participation Rate Trends



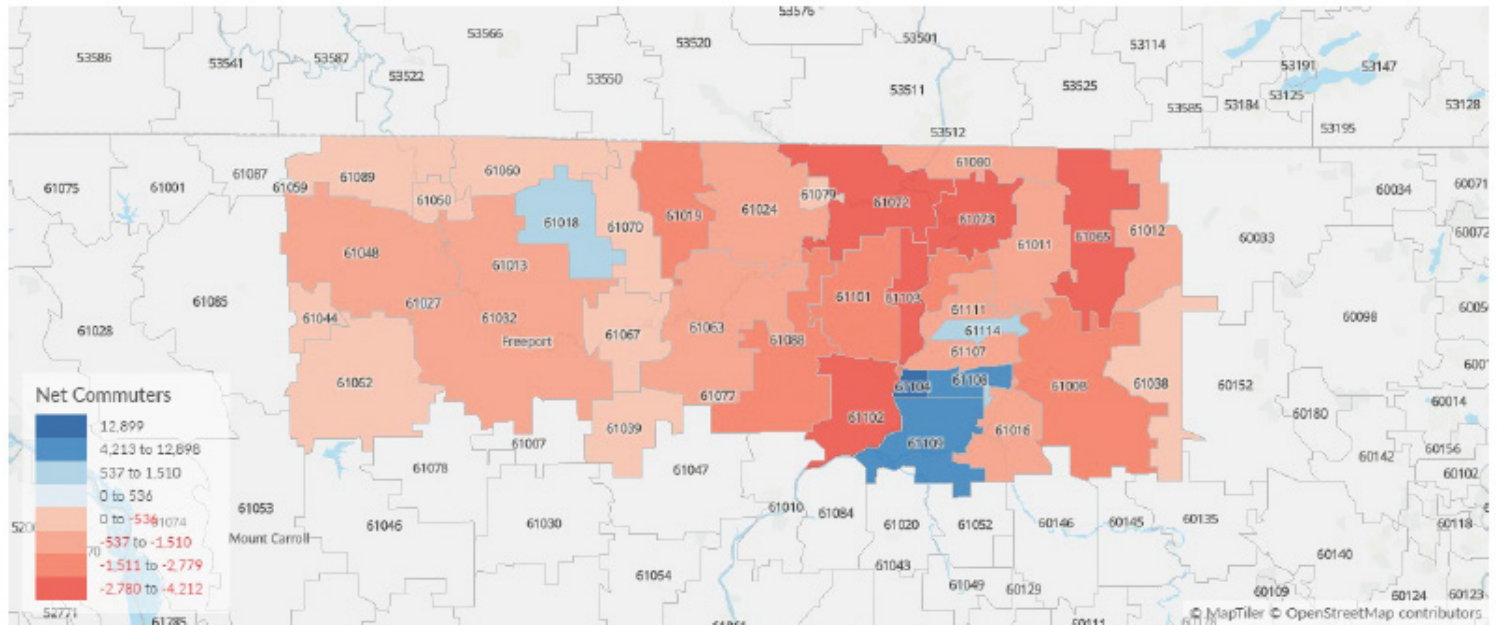
In-Demand Skills



*Source: Lightcast Q3 2023 Data Set | lightcast.io | Economy Overview for Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties, Illinois.

Inbound and Outbound Migration

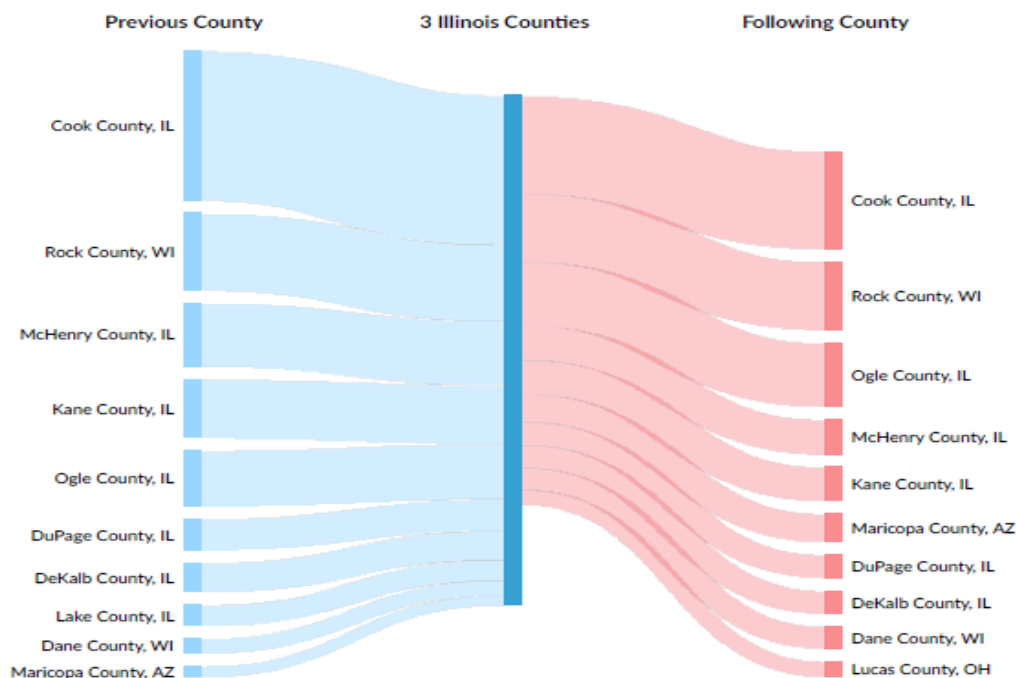
Understanding where talent in the region currently works compared to where talent lives can help you optimize site decisions. For example, the #1 ranked ZIP for employment ranks #13 for resident workers. The top ZIP for resident workers is 61032.



Place of Work vs Place of Residence

The table below analyzes past and current residents of 3 Illinois Counties. The left column shows residents of other counties migrating to 3 Illinois Counties. The right column shows residents migrating from 3 Illinois Counties to other counties.

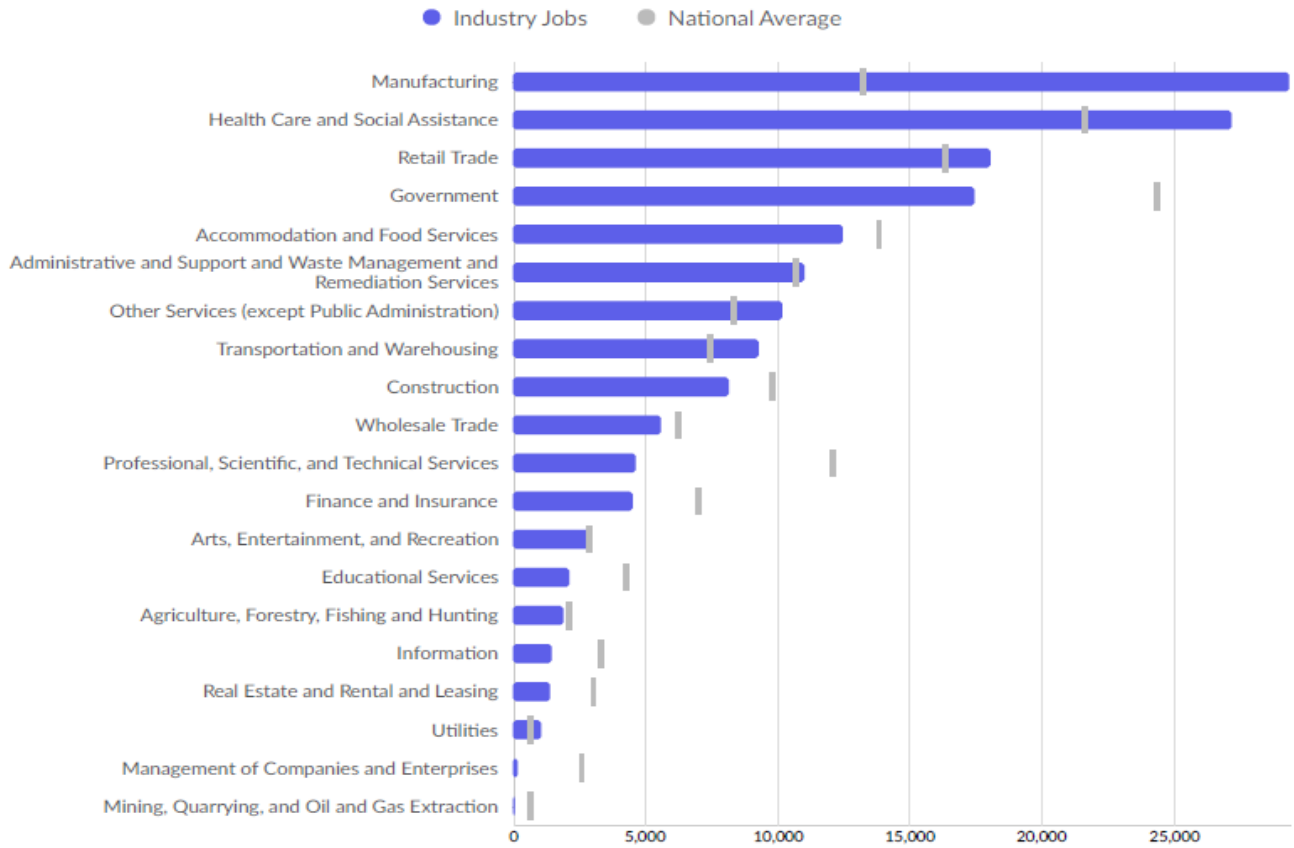
As of 2020, 1,532 people have migrated from Cook County, IL to 3 Illinois Counties. In the same year, 1,000 people left 3 Illinois Counties migrating to Cook County, IL. The total Net Migration for 3 Illinois Counties in 2020 was -1,761.



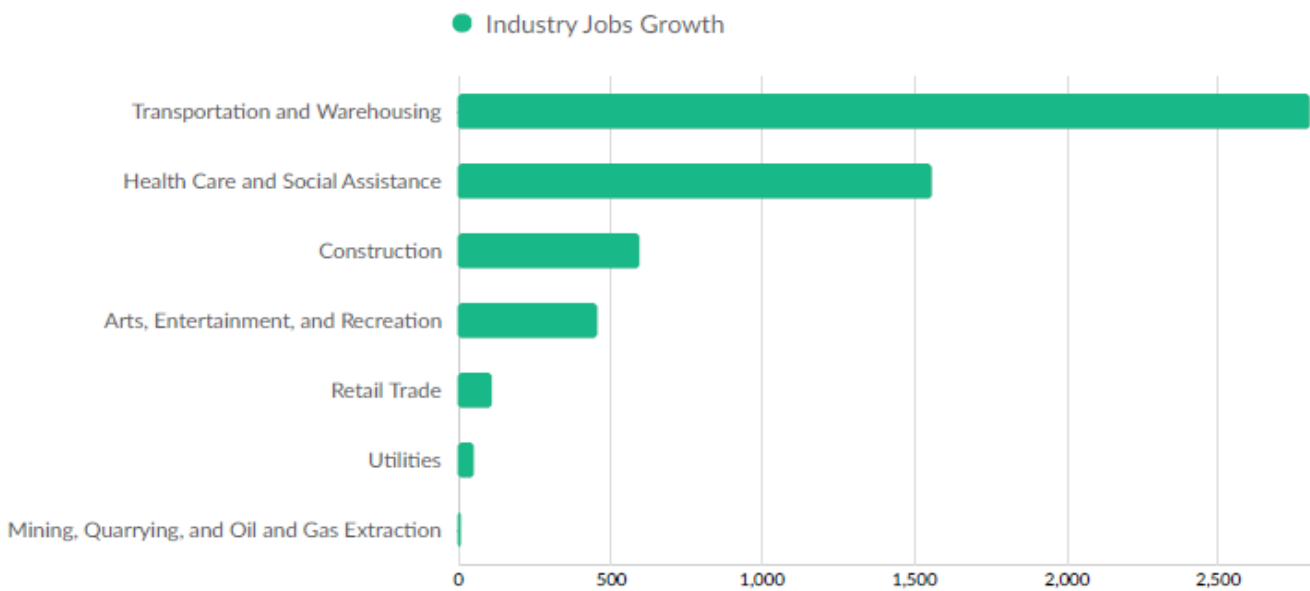
*Source: Lightcast Q3 2023 Data Set | lightcast.io | Economy Overview for Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties, Illinois.

Regional Statistics

Largest Industries



Top Growing Industries

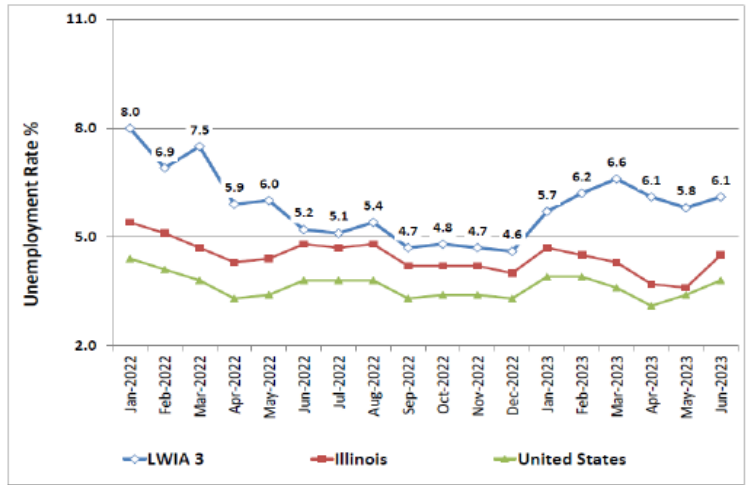
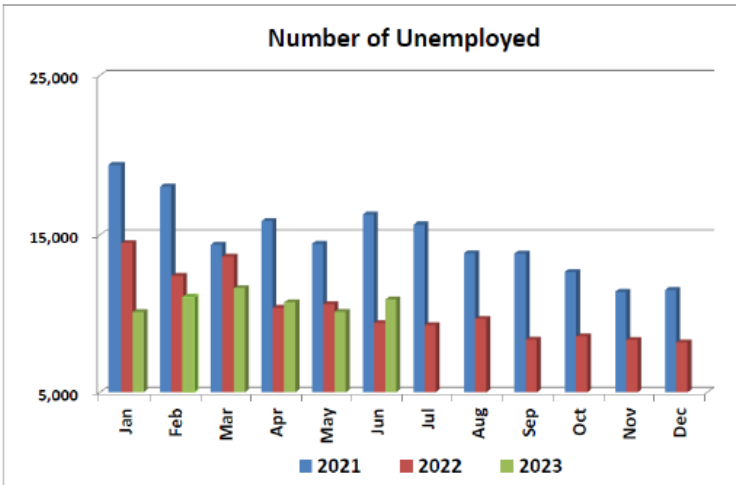
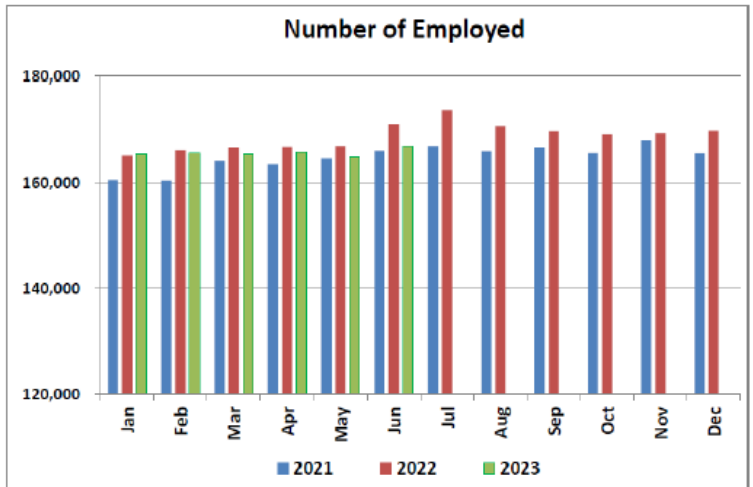
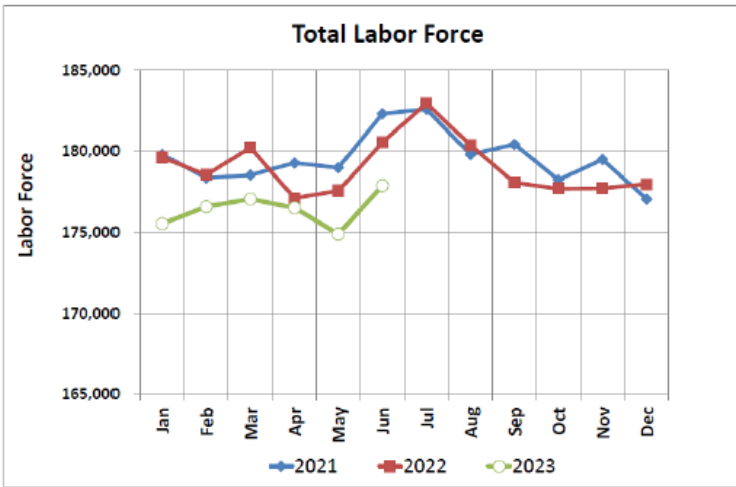


*Source: Lightcast Q3 2023 Data Set | lightcast.io | Economy Overview for Boone, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties, Illinois.

Labor Force Information

Dashboard
June 2023

	Illinois		United States		Rockford MSA		LWIA 3	
Current	4.5%		3.8%		6.3%		6.1%	
Prior Month	3.6%	▲	3.4%	▲	5.9%	▲	5.8%	▲
Year ago	4.8%	▼	3.8%	◀▶	5.4%	▲	5.2%	▲
	Boone		Stephenson		Winnebago			
Current	6.8%		4.9%		6.2%			
Prior Month	6.5%	▲	4.6%	▲	5.8%	▲		
Year ago	5.5%	▲	4.1%	▲	5.3%	▲		
	City of Belvidere		City of Freeport		City of Rockford			
Current	8.1%		6.0%		7.3%			
Prior Month	7.7%	▲	5.7%	▲	6.8%	▲		
Year ago	6.9%	▲	4.9%	▲	6.3%	▲		



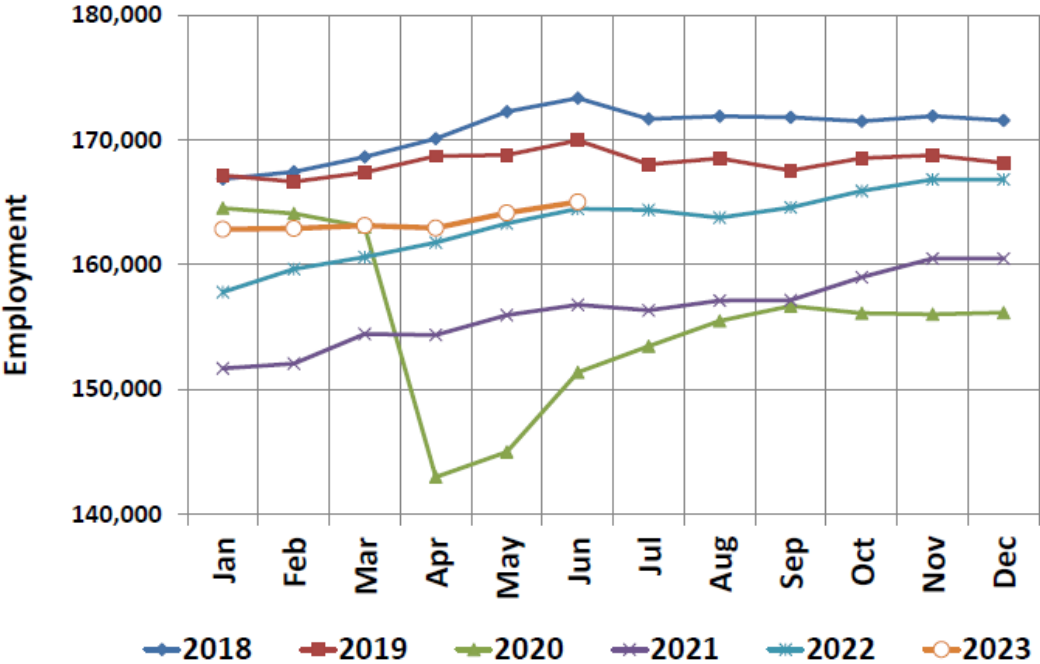
Note: Current Month is Preliminary and Not Seasonally Adjusted

*Source: Data provided by the Illinois Department of Employment Security, Tom Austin.

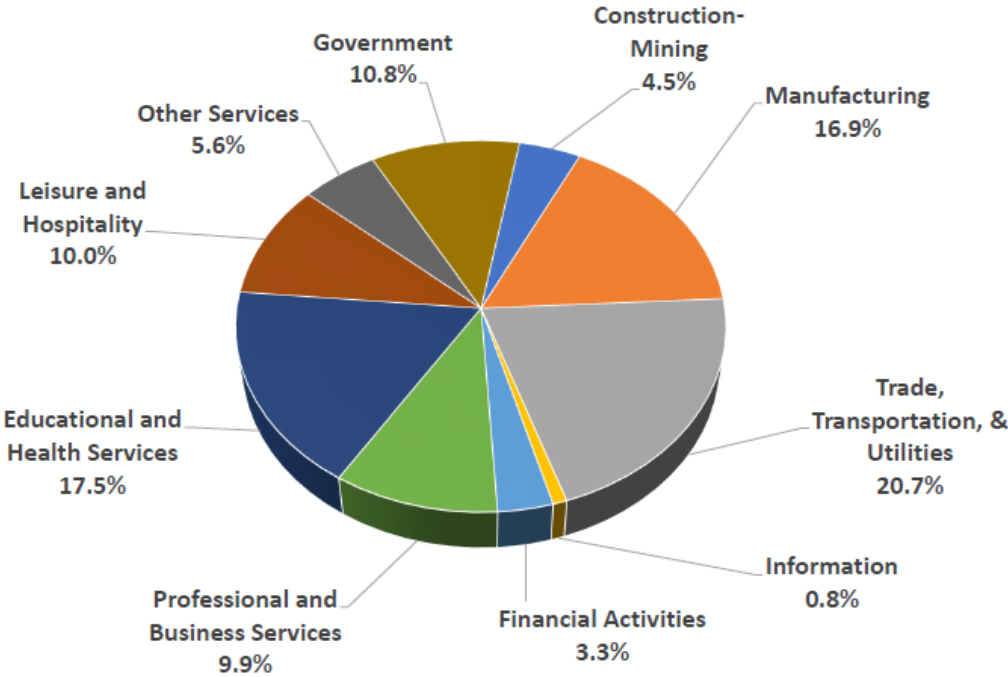
These reports are updated monthly and may be viewed at www.TheWorkforceConnection.org/labor-market/.

Employment By Industry Information

Total Industry Employment



Employment by Industry



Note: Current Month is Preliminary and Not Seasonally Adjusted

*Source: Data provided by the Illinois Department of Employment Security, Tom Austin.

These reports are updated monthly and may be viewed at www.TheWorkforceConnection.org/labor-market/.

A Word From The Workforce Connection Executive Director, Dr. Gina Caronna

This past program year, we focused on the theme of collaboration. The Workforce Connection (TWC) has been involved in many projects collaborating with multiple area businesses and organizations. Highlights include:

- Earning over 2 million dollars in grants in collaboration with the State of Illinois to assist workers whose jobs have been impacted long-term by COVID.
- Working with Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Rock Valley College, Hard Rock Casino, Representative Dave Vella, and other area partners to explore creating a culinary training program.
- Participating on a team including Region 1 Planning (R1), Rockford Area Economic Development Council (RAEDC), Illinois Rapid Response Team, and multiple elected officials to assist displaced workers from the Stellantis plant shuttering.
- Joining R1 in convening a working group to address workforce shortages in mental health occupations.
- Convening multiple community partners to apply for several grants from the State to support and develop clean energy jobs through the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA).

As we begin our next program year, we plan to continue on our path as a champion of collaboration in our region.

Thank you!

**The Workforce Connection Board Leadership Team
would like to thank our Board Members and Chief Elected Officials
for their dedication and commitment to our organization.**



Top Row left to right:

**Chris Oysti, Program & Communications Manager
Cathy Cornelius, Board Liaison & WIOA Compliance Manager
Dan White, Fiscal Manager**

Bottom Row-left to right:

**Joan Rabe, Business Account Liaison
Dr. Gina Caronna, Executive Director**



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