



# Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence



# Equity & Economic Opportunity

Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence



# Amy Pechacek

**Secretary, WI Department  
of Workforce Development**

**Governor's Task Force on  
Workforce and Artificial Intelligence**



# Top 5 Ideas for Preparing the Workforce

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**How should Wisconsin prepare the workforce to advance equity, economic opportunity, and a thriving economy?**

1. Prepare students for the future of AI
2. Investing in community-based tech hubs



# Top 5 Ideas for Preparing the Workforce

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3. Establish expectations around economic security for the workforce
4. Identify opportunities for small businesses to implement AI
5. Use data analysis to prepare the workforce



# Top 5 AI Challenges for Task Force Focus

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1. Investment in training, tech hubs, public outreach
2. Slow adoption
3. Overcoming mental barriers (fears), i.e., AI will take jobs
4. Organizational change management
5. Ensuring equity of AI



# Headline of the Future

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Wisconsin leverages AI to create an economy that works for everyone and provides AI opportunities to marginalized communities.





# Task Force Survey Findings

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# Q1: SurveyMonkey

## Priorities to Prepare Wisconsin's Workforce for AI

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- ✓ **Educate** employers, workers, and students to help prepare for the future of AI.
- ✓ Make sure policy makers and leaders have an **understanding** of AI.
- ✓ Improve access to **training** to speed skill attainment.
- ✓ Know which populations are marginalized or may be disadvantaged by these emerging technologies and take steps to **reduce barriers**.



# Q2: SurveyMonkey

## Challenges in Preparing Wisconsin's Workforce for AI

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- ✓ **Fear and mistrust** of the technology.
- ✓ Funding for **training** and other preparations.
- ✓ **Security** concerns.
- ✓ Increased gap in **access to economic opportunities**.



# Research on Underutilized Talent Pools & Underrepresented Groups in Wisconsin

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**Dr. Ellie Hartman**

Chief Evaluation Officer, Workforce Data Integration System (WDIS)  
DWD Division of Employment and Training

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# Underutilized Talent Pools

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## Individuals with Disabilities

690,000+ Wisconsinites self-identify as having a significant disability

## Veterans

141,600+ veterans of working age (18-64) in Wisconsin

## Justice Involved Individuals

Wisconsin DOC has nearly 21,500 Persons in Care

## Low Income Individuals

In 2021, about 363,000 working age people in Wisconsin lived in poverty



# Worker Connection Targeted Outreach

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- Worker Connection uses research to determine who would benefit from the program and how best to reach them.
- Reviewed the 2021 Current Population Survey from Midwest to determine our target populations.
- Created work groups led by evaluation team to plan ahead and build partnerships for collaboration.



# Building Partnerships



# Impact of Worker Connection Targeted Outreach

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- Enrolled over 2,000 participants to date:
  - **63%** low income
  - **4%** military service
  - **19%** experiencing homelessness
  - **27%** justice involved
  - **16%** with a disability
- Increased employment rates and access to WorkAdvance training.



# Targeted Outreach: People with Disabilities

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- Act 178 Competitive Integrated Employment
- DWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Career Pathways Advancement Grant
- Support to Communities
- Individual Placement and Support (IPS)





# Increase in Employment Rates for People with Disabilities



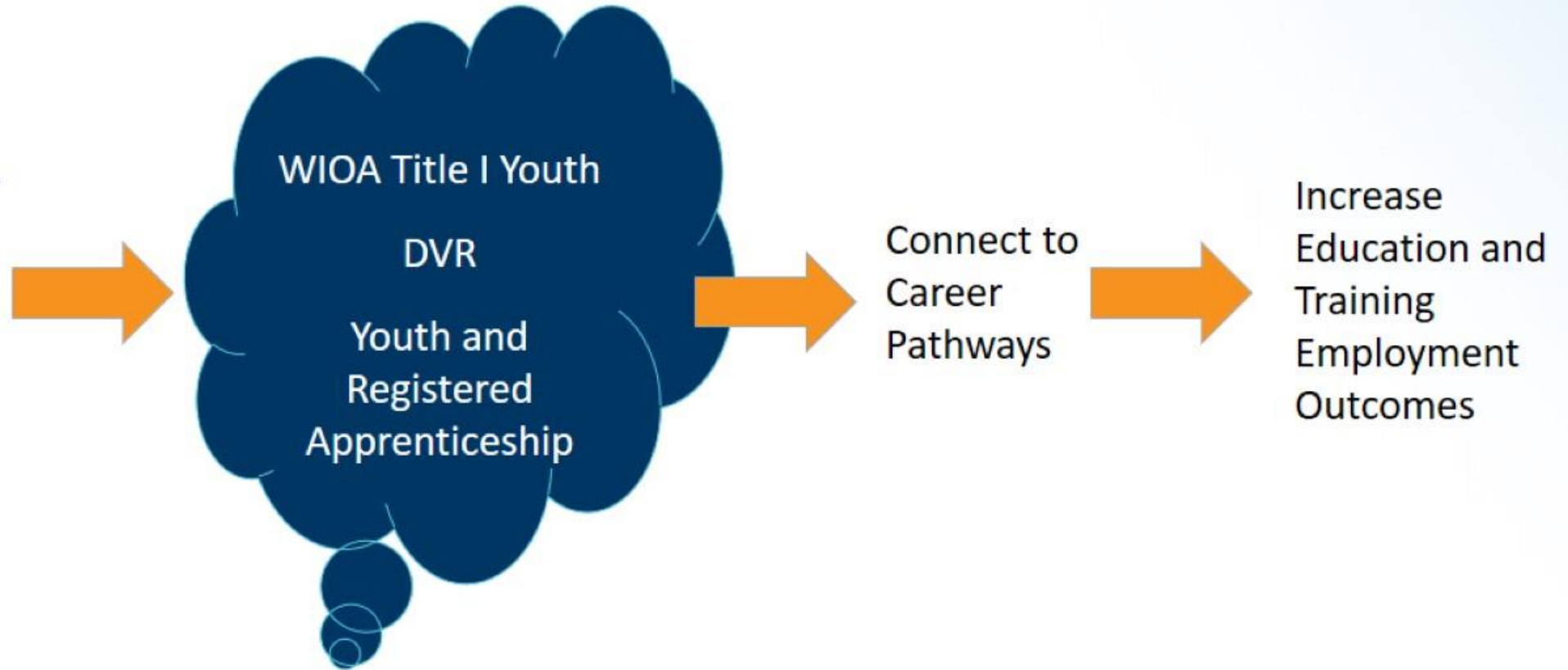
# Connecting the Dots for Opportunity Youth

Find & Visualize the Opportunity Youth

Connect to Education Training Careers

Potential Targets:

1. School dropout or at risk
2. Justice involved
3. Child welfare
4. Medicaid
5. Foodshare



# Fixed Internet Speeds

Wisconsin Public Service Commission

## Fixed Internet Speeds

100+ Mbps Download / 20+ Mbps Upload



25+ Mbps Down / 3+ Mbps Up



10+ Mbps Down / 1+ Mbps Up



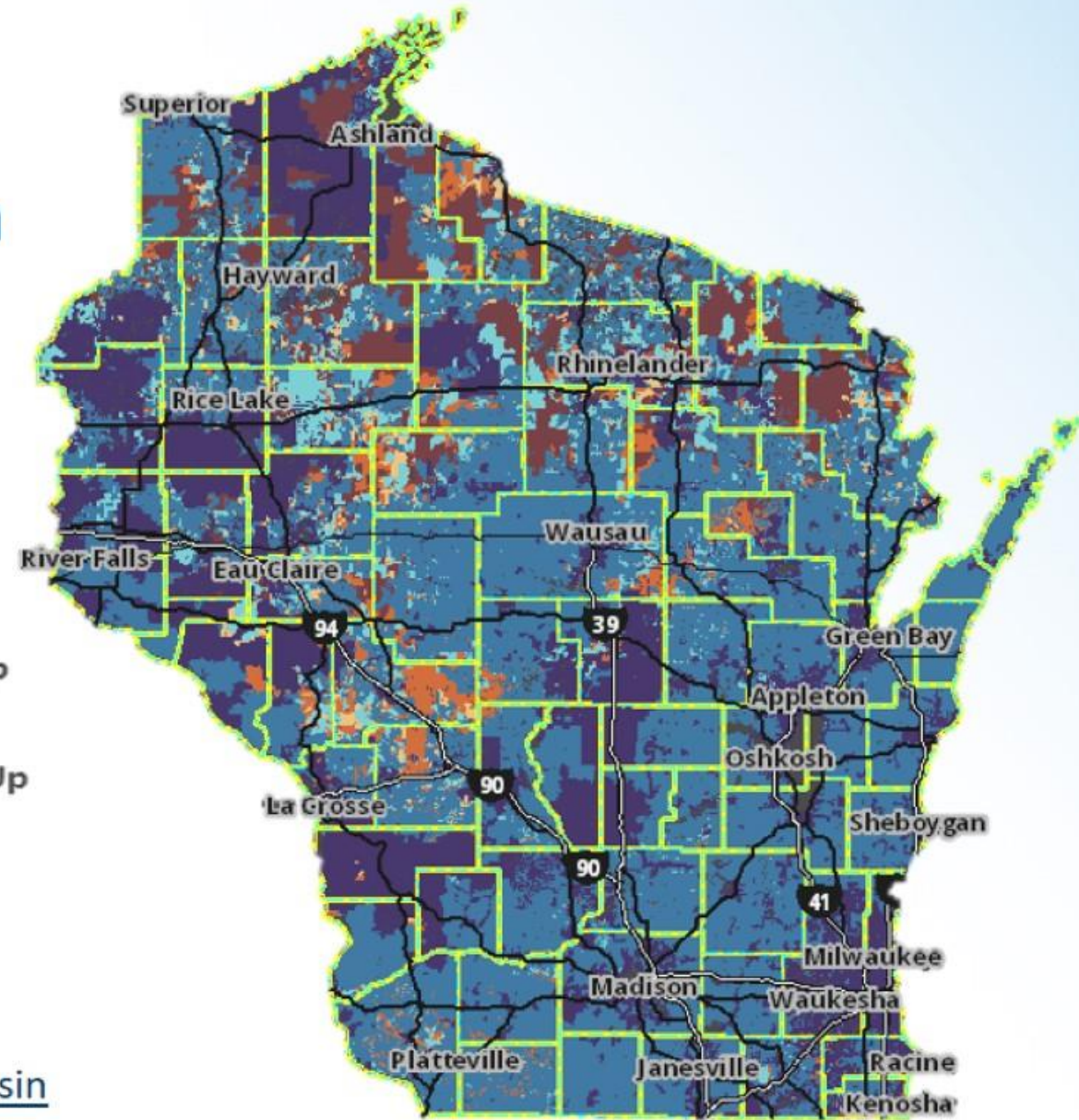
5+ Mbps Down / 0.6+ Mbps Up



< 5 Mbps Down / < 0.6 Mbps Up



No Known Internet Coverage



[Wisconsin Broadband Map - Public Service Commission of Wisconsin](#)



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# Guidelines for Unserved and Underserved

Broadband Expansion Grant, FY 2023  
Wisconsin Public Service Commission

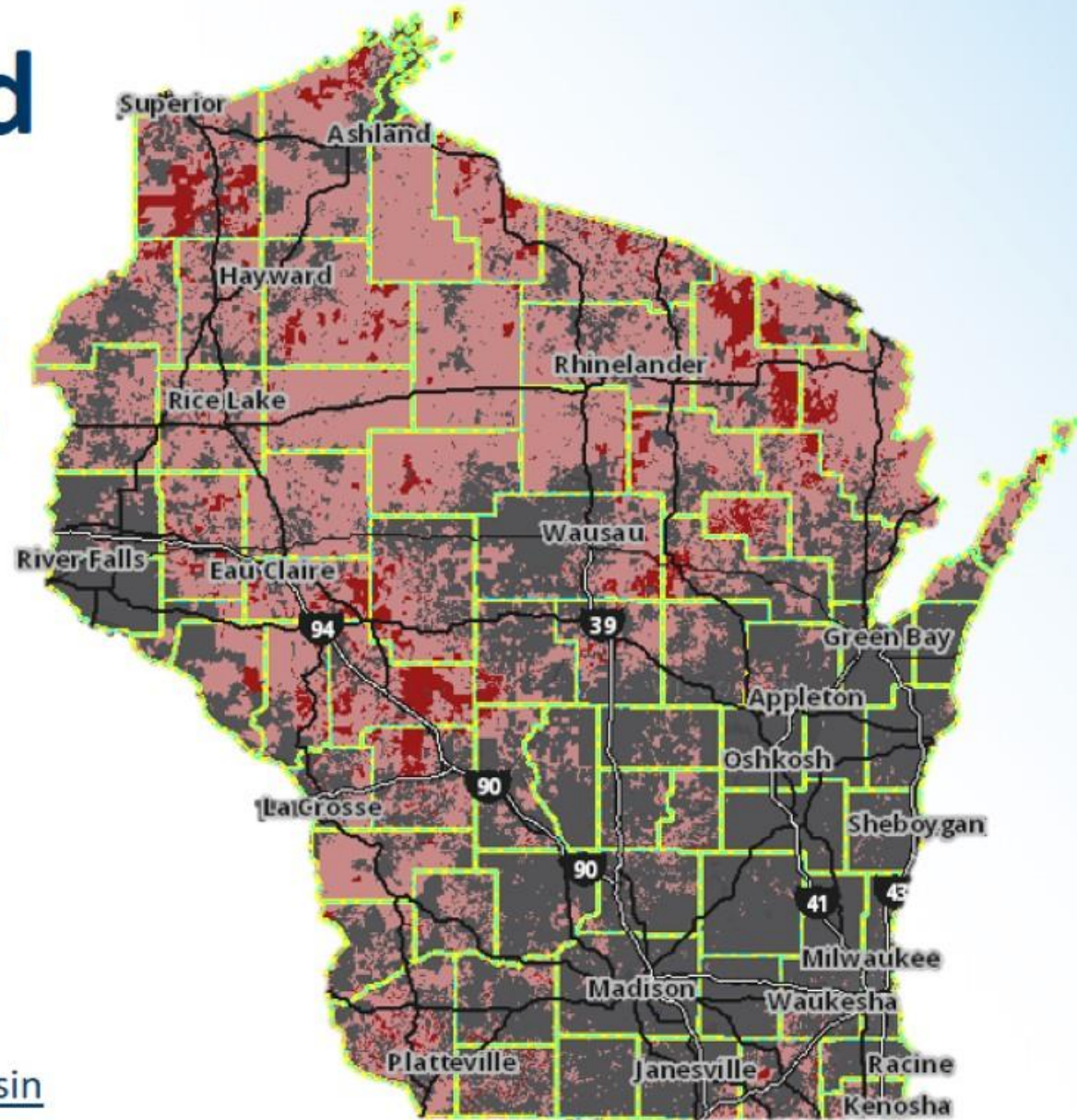
**NEW!** - Broadband Expansion Grant  
"Unserved" Guideline, FY 2023

0 Fixed Internet Options for 5+ Mbps Down / 0.6+ Mbps Up



**NEW!** - Broadband Expansion Grant  
"Underserved" Guideline, FY 2023

0 or 1 Fixed Internet Options for 25+ Mbps Down / 3+ Mbps Up



[Wisconsin Broadband Map - Public Service Commission of Wisconsin](#)



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# Promoting Equity and Opportunity for Diverse & Underserved Populations

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**Danielle Williams**

**Assistant Administrator**

DWD Division of Employment and Training

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# Our Changing Economy

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## The Issue:

- Wisconsin's economy is changing, and jobs are being automated.
- Employers need to adapt.
- Employees and jobseekers need access to training and resources.

## Our Solution:

- Provide employers what they need to hire, train, and retain workforce.
- Flexible programs focused on employment, training, and resources.





# Talent Pools

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# Underutilized Candidate Pools

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**Veterans**

**People  
with  
disabilities**

**Justice-  
involved**

**Under-  
employed**

**Youth**





# Job Opportunities





### Skill Explorer: Linking people, skills and knowledge to job postings.

Skill Explorer looks beyond job titles to match you with new opportunities related to the skills and training you already have. Jobs you may not have considered. It's a smart way to widen your career options and find a great job.

- Enter your current or past **job experience**.
- Select the **best match** to what you entered.
- Choose **any** job that shares your skills & explore!

Enter your current or past job experience:

**Find My Matches**



### Many paths to reach the top

One example of many career paths across all industries. Career path progression rewards workers for gains in skills and knowledge.



# Hiring Incentives and Tax Credits

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## **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)**

Federal income tax credit designed to help people gain on-the-job experience by offering employers a tax incentive to hire new employees from specific target groups.

## **Fidelity Bonding Program (FBP)**

Business insurance policy incentive offered free-of-charge that protects employers against losses due to employee dishonesty.





# Discover Training Solutions

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# Wisconsin Apprenticeship

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## Registered Apprenticeship

- Builds a customized skills training system instilling a company's values.
- Apprentices earn wages as they gain high-demand occupational skills.

## Youth Apprenticeship

- High school juniors and seniors work and earn high school credit.
- Retains youth after graduation through full-time employment and a seamless transition to Registered Apprenticeship.



# Wisconsin Fast Forward

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**Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants** address Wisconsin's skill gap through grants to employers for customized skills training.

**Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Equipment Grants** reimburse school districts for costs to buy and install technical education equipment. The equipment is used for vocational training and technical education in advanced manufacturing.



# Training Resources

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## **Eligible Training Provider List**

WIOA-paid tuition assistance; 2,000+ trainings, including technical college and apprenticeship credentials.

## **State Agency Collaboration**

DOC job labs; Windows to Work; WTCS tailored curriculum development; data sharing/evidence building across agencies.

## **Supports & Incentives**





# Innovative Solutions

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# Workforce Solutions Initiative

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- \$128M **Workforce Innovation Grant** program funding communities to develop long-term solutions to workforce challenges
- \$20M toward the **Worker Advancement Initiative**, to offer subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers to unemployed individuals
- \$10M for the **Worker Connection Program** to provide career navigators who connect and reengage individuals in the workforce using an evidence-based, human centered model



# Worker Connection Program

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- Embracing AI training now with partners Gener8tor and the Bay Area Workforce Development Board.
- Cohort of 13 learners now enrolled in a six-week Generative AI and Project Management skills course.
- Connects with local employers who have skills gaps in these areas.
- Will work to place participants in related employment when the training is complete.



# Worker Advancement Initiative

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## **Bay Area Workforce Board**

Digital Literacy program that provided introductory, technical, and workforce curriculums to individuals identified as chronically unemployed or marginally employed and historically disconnected.

## **Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin**

Compensated digital literacy work-and-learn interfaces integrated into traditional on-the-job and technical skills training.



# Workforce Innovation Grants

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## **Lakeshore Technical College**

Provide automation and robotics training.

## **UW-Stevens Point**

Address workforce challenges in Northern Wisconsin, purchase simulation equipment that trains forestry students in a safe environment, and embrace advanced technologies considered the future of the industry.

## **Mid-State Technical College**

Construct the Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering Technology, and Apprenticeship Center.

## **Southwestern Wisconsin Technical College**

Provide custom training, advanced technology expertise, and targeted employee support.



# Learn More

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We're here to find solutions to your workforce needs through:

- Flexible programs focused on employment.
- Providing employers with information and expertise to hire, train, and retain workforce.



[dwd.wisconsin.gov](https://dwd.wisconsin.gov)



# Wisconsin's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) & AI Workforce Connection

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**Patara Horn**

**Director, Bureau of Working Families**  
DCF Division of Family and Economic Security

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# Understanding TANF

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a time-limited program that helps families when parents or other relatives cannot provide for the family's basic needs.
- It is designed to help families in need become self-sufficient by promoting work, responsibility, and self-sufficiency.
- States receive a federal block grant and decide on their own program decisions like:
  - Type and amount of assistance payments.
  - Range of services provided.
  - Rules for determining who is eligible for benefits.



# Understanding TANF

- Services provided using TANF grants are designed to address one or more of the program's four broad purposes:
  1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
  2. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
  3. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.
  4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.





# Wisconsin Works

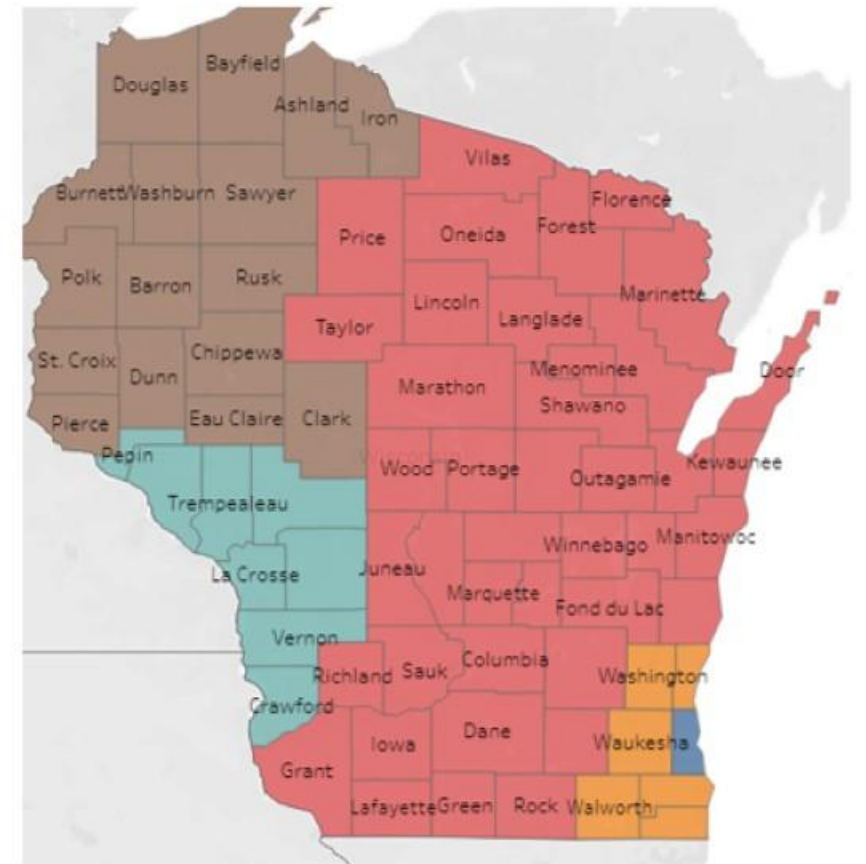
- Wisconsin Works (W-2) is the name of the TANF program administered in Wisconsin.
- Eligibility criteria consist of both financial, and nonfinancial criteria. Some criteria are:
  - Being 18 years of age.
  - Being a custodial parent.
  - U.S. citizen or qualified non-citizen who is a resident of Wisconsin.
  - Total countable income less than 115% of the Federal Poverty Line.
  - Less than \$2,500 in countable assets.
- W-2 has both paid and unpaid placements.
  - The maximum monthly benefit paid through the W-2 program is \$653.



# Wisconsin Works Program Delivery

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- The W-2 program is administered by contracted agencies who provide the services.
- There are 8 agencies, and their service territories are defined by county lines everywhere except Milwaukee.
  - Individuals seeking services must go to the office serving the county of they reside in.
  - In Milwaukee, 4 agencies split the county into regions.
- Financial Employment Planners (FEP) are the agency workers who meet and counsel participants.
- FEPs provide individualized case management services and supportive services for participants. They are the primary case manager.



# Wisconsin Works Participants

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- W-2 participants represent a sizable underemployed segment of Wisconsin's workforce.
- They are dispersed throughout the State, but most W-2 participants reside in urban areas of Wisconsin, and particularly the Milwaukee metro area.
- As of September, there were approximately 5,550 participants on the monthly caseload.
  - Of these, approximately 3,500 participants lived in Milwaukee county.
- They engage in up to 40 hours of work preparation activities a week.

# Transform Milwaukee Jobs & Transitional Jobs

- Transform Milwaukee Jobs (TMJ) was created in 2013 to assist low-income adults in Milwaukee County transition into stable unsubsidized employment.
- Transitional Jobs (TJ) was an expansion of the TMJ program and provides limited-term subsidized work to low-income adults.
- TJ/TMJ is available to individuals who have been unemployed for at least 4 weeks and do not qualify for unemployment insurance.

## Program Goals:

1. To help parents secure stable unsubsidized employment.
2. To increase child support payments through stable unsubsidized employment.
3. To support reunification plans with children by enhancing parental capabilities and long-term child safety through stable unsubsidized employment.
4. To help foster youth live independently through stable unsubsidized employment.



# Wisconsin Works Participants and AI



- Participants entering the W-2 program may lack the job skills necessary to obtain and hold employment positions, but they are eager to transform their families' and their own lives for the better.
- Most W-2 participants have the foundation and drive to begin learning new career skills, especially in industries where the prospect of a family-supporting income is possible.
  - 76% of W-2 participants hold a high school or equivalent degree or higher.
- The W-2 program has thousands of job ready individuals currently training and learning employment skills.
  - These constituted 2,700 individuals throughout Wisconsin in September, of which 1,800 lived in Milwaukee county.





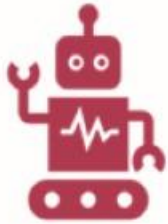
# W-2 Technology Education & Partnerships



- Through our current W-2 contract, W-2 participants have opportunities to:
  - Learn to work with AI through a career-oriented perspective.
  - Gain skills working with data for current or projected in-demand jobs.
  - Improve internet and data literacy.
- In the Lacrosse region, an agency has a standing partnership with Western Technical College to have their staff on campuses to allow for referrals related to the tech field.
  - W-2 agency staff is onsite at weekly Tech Club events that help focus on both credit, and pre-credit programming at Western.
- Another agency, whose contract covers 41 counties, partners with Urban League and their IT Career Academy trainings. These trainings cover IT Help Desk and partners with Madison College so students in the class can graduate with the CompTIA+ certification.
  - They also partner with YWCA for IT-related trainings that cover HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.



# Wisconsin Works Participants and AI



**For participants in the W-2 program, wanting an AI job is secondary to being provided an opportunity for an AI job.**

Many W-2 participants come from disadvantaged backgrounds where technology employment opportunities may be limited.



**To be successful, W-2 participants need assistance in finding the appropriate connections and resources to pursue positions in a new and growing sector.**



**There are already W-2 agencies that provide technology literacy training in several facets which could pivot to providing training for AI positions.**



# THANK YOU!

**Presenter:**

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**Wisconsin Department of Children and Families**





# Equity & Economic Opportunity

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# Equity & Economic Opportunity

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The rise of generative AI offers the potential to advance equity and economic opportunity. This committee will explore existing programs designed to connect underutilized talent pools with in-demand skills, identify gaps, and propose solutions that lead to career advancement in these new fields.



# Question 1:

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**To advance an economy that works for everyone, where do you see the greatest opportunities to connect underutilized talent pools with AI skills and jobs?**



# Question 2:

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**Thinking about the worker quantity challenge and employers' need for talent, what do you envision in terms of roles and responsibilities for government, education, and the private sector in terms of connecting underutilized talent with AI skills and jobs?**



# Question 3:

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**Where do the greatest challenges lie in terms of connecting underutilized talent with AI skills and jobs? Please consider the perspectives of workers, employers, and job seekers. Also consider factors such as accessibility and existing employment barriers.**



# Thank You

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