



# Connecticut Workforce Summit

Discovering Hidden Talent | 4.16.24



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# Dalio Education



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**Getting young  
people back on track**

A report from the Boston Consulting Group



### Getting Young People Back on Track

Published by the Boston Consulting Group in October 2023, this report finds that approximately 1 in 5 young people in Connecticut between the ages of 14 and 26 are disconnected or at risk.

**A National Scan of Policies,  
Practices, and Systems  
Affecting Young People**



### National Scan of Policies, Practices, and Systems Affecting Young People

This report by MDRC published in 2024 reviews the programs, practices, and policies across the country that are facilitative of, or create barriers to, supporting our target population.

**ELEVATING  
YOUTH VOICE**



### Elevating Youth Voice

Through a qualitative research study to be published in 2024, Community Science will expand our understanding of the lived experiences of young people who are disconnected.

# AGENDA

7:30 am

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## Check-In & Networking Breakfast

8:30 am

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## Opening Remarks

**Chris DiPentima,**  
President & CEO, OBIA

**Kelli-Marie Vallieres,**  
Chief Workforce Officer,  
Office of Workforce  
Strategy

8:45 am

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## Keynote

**Blake Moret,**  
Chair & CEO,  
Rockwell Automation

Introduction:

**Mark Argosh,** Chair,  
Governor's Workforce  
Council; Executive  
Director, Social Venture  
Partners Connecticut

9:30 am

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## Panel Discussion: Opportunity Youth

Introduction: **Dr. Ellen Solek,** Executive  
Director, Connecticut  
Technical Education  
& Career System

Moderator: **Adhlere Coffy,** Senior Portfolio  
Director, Connecticut  
Opportunity Project,  
Dalio Education

**Vilma Cuevas,**  
AVP, Talent Strategy,  
Nuvance Health

**Julie DeGennaro,**  
Associate Executive  
Director, Domus

**David Golfin,** Associate  
Director & Deputy Chief  
Engineer, Pratt & Whitney

**Tara Spain,** VP & COO,  
Travelers Foundation

10:30 am

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## Networking Break

10:45 am

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## Panel Discussion: Nontraditional Populations

Introduction: **John Maduko,** President,  
Connecticut State  
Community College

Moderator: **Shannon Marimón,** Executive  
Director, ReadyCT

**Tahari Austin,**  
Re-Entry Program  
Manager, Best Chance  
Partnership, Capital  
Workforce Partners

**Judith Hahn,** Executive  
Director, Nursing  
Professional Practice  
& Education, Yale New  
Haven Health System

**Nancy Taylor,** Director,  
Workforce Development,  
Charter Oak State  
College

**Cyndi Zoldy,** Executive  
Director, Manufacturing  
Alliance Service  
Corporation, Inc.

11:45 pm

## Networking Lunch

12:45 pm

## Career Pathways: Program Participant Perspectives

Introduction: **Michelle Gilman**, Commissioner,  
Department of  
Administrative Services

Moderator: **Charlene Russell-Tucker**,  
Commissioner, State  
Department of Education

**Jadon Gomez-Stafford**,  
Student, University  
of Connecticut  
BRIDGE Program

**Damaly Mendez**,  
Student, Quinnipiac  
University

**Will Migliaccio**,  
Aerospace Production  
Technician,  
Westminster Tool

**Charles Razor**,  
DomusWorks Crew  
Leader, Domus

**Jah'shawn Vanholten**,  
Market Analyst, Travelers

1:45 pm

## Governor's Workforce Awards

Introduction:  
**Danté Bartolomeo**,  
Commissioner,  
Department of Labor

**Gov. Ned Lamont**

2:15 pm

## Closing Remarks

**Kelli-Marie Vallieres**



## Thanks for Attending The Connecticut Workforce Summit: Discovering Hidden Talent

Please share your experience at today's  
summit by completing this brief survey.

All responses will remain anonymous.

Visit [cbia.biz/wfs-survey24](https://cbia.biz/wfs-survey24)  
or scan the QR code  
with your phone.



# SPEAKERS

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## MARK ARGOSH

**Executive Director | Social Venture Partners Connecticut  
@SVPCConnecticut | Chair  
Governor's Workforce Council**

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Mark Argosh has been a partner with Social Ventures Partners Connecticut since 2014

and has served as executive director since December 2016.

Since 2016, SVP has tripled in size to almost 200 members, while its nonprofit and government consulting portfolio has grown from two to 18 organizations.

As executive director, Argosh oversees the daily management of SVP to engage partners, recruit new partners, and maximize the impact of SVP's work to close the opportunity gap.

In addition, he serves as chair of the Governor's Workforce Council and serves as an advisor to many of SVP's projects with nonprofit organizations and initiatives.

Prior to his role with SVP, Argosh worked for more than 30 years as a boardroom consultant and operating executive in the financial sector.

He began his career in the nonprofit sector as a community organizer and executive director of two grassroots

community organizations focused on community revitalization and economic development in low and moderate-income communities in the Midwest.

Argosh did his undergraduate work at Brown University and received his MBA from Stanford University's Graduate School of Business.

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## TAHARI AUSTIN

**Re-Entry Program Manager, Best Chance Partnership | Capital Workforce Partners | @CWPJobs**

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Tahari Austin's passion for serving people is the driving force that guides her in her current role

as program manager for the BEST Chance Partnership Program at Capital Workforce Partners.

Austin leads and manages the program, which is an Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program for individuals who have been involved in the justice system, supported by 14 area agencies and launched as part of the Governor's Second Chance Society.

A Hartford native, Austin graduated from Saint Joseph University in West Hartford in 2004, and completed her master's from Albertus Magnus College of New Haven in 2022.

She has spent the last 30-plus years giving back to the urban community where she was raised.

Whether it's leading a team of managers or standing on the front lines of a client facing office, Austin thoroughly enjoys being a support and resource for those in need.

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## DANTÉ BARTOLOMEO

**Commissioner | Department of Labor  
@CTDOL**

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Danté Bartolomeo joined the Connecticut Department of Labor in January 2019 as a deputy commissioner and

was appointed interim commissioner in June 2021 by Governor Ned Lamont. Her nomination was confirmed by the state Senate in March 2022.

Since joining the Department of Labor, Bartolomeo has been integrally involved in programs and services throughout the agency.

As deputy commissioner, Bartolomeo worked to expand the agency's approach to workforce policy to incorporate the Whole Family Approach, a progression of the Two Generations employment initiatives.

When the global pandemic hit, Bartolomeo switched gears to oversee multiple pandemic programs that were vital to Connecticut residents who lost their jobs—including establishing the agency's new Consumer Contact Center and transitioning the American Job Centers to provide virtual services to customers.

Under Bartolomeo's leadership, the department has continued pandemic recovery work with an added focus on labor force development in high-demand industries such as healthcare.

DOL's registered apprenticeship program will bring 1,250 patient care technicians into the healthcare field over the next four years.

These apprentices join thousands already in registered apprenticeships across 60 occupations.

DOL also continues to coordinate other job matching events like the Veterans and Diversity Hiring Expo held in partnership with Connecticut's soccer team, Hartford Athletic.

Prior to DOL, Bartolomeo served two terms as state senator for the 13th Senate District representing Cheshire, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, and Rockfall.

She also served on the Meriden City Council.

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## ADHLERE COFFY

**Senior Portfolio Director, Connecticut  
Opportunity Project | Dalio Education  
@DalioEducation**

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Adhlere Coffy works collaboratively with grantee partner organizations to help improve their

organizational capacity and performance management practices so that they can positively impact young people who are disengaged or disconnected.

He also plays a key role in developing

the Opportunity Project’s pipeline of prospective partners. He joined Dalio Education in March 2020.

Coffy has worked in philanthropy as a data scientist for over five years, most recently at Fairfield County’s Community Foundation, primarily developing data systems used to conduct impact analysis as well as data used for organizational performance management—including social media and web analytics, fund and financial analysis, program effectiveness, and donor management.

In this role, Coffy has supported several organizations in conducting program assessments and outcome evaluations in support of capacity building and organizational development.

He has also designed and constructed IT environments for organizations providing frontend support and training to staff.

Prior to entering philanthropy, Coffy worked as an aerothermal design and analysis engineer.

He designed and analyzed the performance of various propulsion and power generation systems for clients ranging from Siemens to the Department of Defense. As a result of his engineering work, Coffy has patents in mechanical design and heat transfer analysis methods.

Coffy holds a master’s degree from New York University and a bachelor’s degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

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## VILMA CUEVAS

**AVP, Talent Strategy | Nuvance Health**  
**@NuvanceHealth**

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Vilma Cuevas is a dynamic leader in human resources and recruitment, boasting over two decades of

experience driving strategic process improvements and forging effective partnerships crucial to business success.

With a solid background in the healthcare industry, Cuevas has earned a reputation as a trusted advisor to executive leadership, wielding influence across organizational hierarchies.

Currently serving as assistant vice president for talent strategy at Nuvance Health, Cuevas reports directly to the chief human resources officer and plays a pivotal role in the organization’s HR leadership team.

Tasked with spearheading the development of innovative talent strategies tailored to the diverse needs of Nuvance Health and its employees spanning New York and Connecticut, Cuevas focuses on cultivating partnerships and implementing programs that bolster the talent pipeline both internally and externally.

Her responsibilities include crafting career development methodologies to groom entry-level talent for rewarding healthcare careers while empowering existing employees to advance their skills and responsibilities.

Cuevas also leads her team in establishing and nurturing community

and educational partnerships across Nuvance Health’s geographical footprint, alongside developing and maintaining the employer brand.

Recognized as a role model embodying the health system’s mission and values, Cuevas is a highly sought-after subject matter expert, embodying a commitment to excellence in all aspects of her work.

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## CHRIS DIPENTIMA

**President & CEO | CBIA**  
**@ChrisDiPentima**

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Chris DiPentima is president and CEO of CBIA, Connecticut’s leading business organization, with thousands of member companies, small and large, representing a diverse range of industries from every part of the state.

The organization includes two critical affiliates—the business consulting firm CONNSTEP and the nonprofit education policy and program group ReadyCT.

DiPentima previously was division president of Leggett & Platt Aerospace, a unit of S&P 500 company Leggett & Platt, leading operations at the company’s Middletown-based Pegasus Manufacturing facility and locations in Washington, California, and France.

He joined Pegasus, then family-owned, in 2002 as general counsel and was named president in 2006.

Prior to joining Pegasus, DiPentima spent eight years as an attorney representing corporations and individuals on a broad range of issues, including labor

and employment, contracts, workers’ compensation, and mergers and acquisitions.

A former chair of CBIA’s board of directors, he chairs the Connecticut Manufacturers’ Collaborative and serves on the board of the Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund and the Connecticut Blue-Ribbon Panel on Childcare.

He is a past president of the Aerospace Components Manufacturers and served on the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the National Governor’s Policy Academy for Best Practices in Manufacturing, and the board of the Connecticut Technical High School System.

DiPentima has a bachelor’s degree from Boston College and received his juris doctorate from Quinnipiac Law School. He is admitted to the bar in Connecticut, New York, and the District of Columbia.

He lives in Durham with his wife and three daughters.

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## JULIE DEGENNARO

**Associate Executive Director | Domus**  
**@DomusKids**

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Julie DeGennaro joined Domus in 1993. She has worked as a youth worker, director of education,

director of residential services, charter school co-director, and assistant executive director.

DeGennaro now serves as associate executive director, overseeing all Domus

programs and ensuring fidelity to each program model and the Domus Relational Model, which help the organization achieve excellent outcomes for youth.

She oversaw Domus’ engagement with the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation as part of their PropelNext 2012-2015 cohort, a national initiative that selected a small number of nonprofits with promising practices and helped them improve their performance.

DeGennaro was one of 10 Connecticut Women’s Hall of Fame Education and Empowerment honorees in 2013.

She has a bachelor’s degree from Connecticut College.

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### DAVID GOLFIN

**Associate Director & Deputy Chief Engineer | Pratt & Whitney**  
**@prattandwhitney**

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David Golfin is deputy chief engineer of an engine development program at Pratt & Whitney where he has worked since graduating from the University of Connecticut in 2014.

He holds a bachelor’s degree from UConn and a master’s from Purdue University.

At Pratt & Whitney he has principally worked as a systems engineer, specializing in engine performance.

While studying at UConn he was a member and leader of the Engineering Ambassadors program, which he continues to lead from the corporate

side of the partnership today.

In addition to that program, Golfin has supported many facets of Pratt & Whitney’s relationship with UConn, including professional education and STEM outreach and diversity organizations.

He lives in Middletown with his wife and three young sons, he is an adopted native of Connecticut, having moved here in grade school.

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### JUDITH HAHN

**Executive Director, Nursing Professional Practice & Education | Yale New Haven Hospital | @ynhhealth**

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Judith Hahn oversees nursing practice, policy, nursing education, the ANCC Magnet program, nursing research, and professional governance.

She is board certified as an advanced nurse executive and a healthcare quality professional.

Hahn holds a passion for nursing professional governance and transformational leadership.

She has volunteered internationally with the Vietnam Nurse Improvement Project supporting nurses in Vietnam in utilizing evidence to improve outcomes.

Her scholarly work includes study of the Dedicated Education Unit model for nurses and the phenomenon of joy and meaning in work, specifically related to nursing practice.

Hahn is an experienced faculty member teaching leadership at the doctoral level at Yale University, University of Connecticut, and University of Saint Joseph.

She is a recipient of the prestigious University of Connecticut Carolyn Ladd Widmer Outstanding Alumni Award for Leadership in Nursing.

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## MICHELLE GILMAN

**Commissioner | Department of  
Administrative Services | @ConnDAS**

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Michelle Halloran Gilman currently holds the position of commissioner at the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services, appointed by Governor Ned Lamont in February 2022.

As commissioner, Gilman manages an annual budget exceeding \$250 million and supervises approximately 1,000 employees responsible for delivering statewide human resources, information technology, procurement support, construction management, fleet services, and more, primarily catering to Connecticut's executive branch.

During her tenure, she has focused on stabilizing the state's workforce in a competitive, post-pandemic economy to address the service delivery needs of Connecticut residents.

Gilman has implemented various recruitment and retention initiatives, particularly targeting the healthcare, engineering, and information technology sectors.

Aiming to enhance efficiency, Gilman has prioritized centralizing the state's

IT infrastructure, ensuring accessibility of resources and knowledge for state agencies.

She has spearheaded the development of a statewide digital equity plan to guarantee that all residents have the necessary education and hardware to participate in the digital economy.

Gilman has overseen ambitious climate sustainability measures across the department and collaborated with federal, state, and nonprofit partners to expand agency capacity in support of small and minority businesses.

Gilman actively participates in several policy boards, including the State Bond Commission, the Connecticut Paid Family Leave Authority, and the IT Capital Investment Committee.

She previously served as deputy chief operating officer to the governor, where she successfully managed COVID-19 initiatives, notably the nationally recognized free testing program for vulnerable populations and the implementation of the state's vaccination program.

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## JADON GOMEZ-STAFFORD

**Student | University of Connecticut  
BRIDGE Program**

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Jadon Gomez-Stafford is a third-year student studying mechanical engineering and minoring in mathematics at the University of Connecticut.

Gomez-Stafford is originally from New Haven and was raised in a Black and Puerto Rican household.

While studying at UConn, he participated in the BRIDGE program in 2021, and was part of the inaugural cohort of Pratt & Whitney Scholars.

Gomez-Stafford is also a part of the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation and Tri-Alpha First Generation Honor Society.

He is heavily involved in the Vergnano Institute for Inclusion, including leading the Engineering Your Future conference for eighth grade Black and Latino males, as well as volunteering for Science Bowl, Engineering Ambassadors events, and serving as a leader for the National Society of Black Engineers.

He is currently a student researcher in Dr. Kristin Morgan's Biomechanical and Motion Capture Lab.

Gomez-Stafford has interned with Pratt & Whitney as a project engineer for Hot Section for Operational Military Engines, and is looking forward to returning as a design engineer intern again this summer.

He is planning on pursuing an accelerated master's program next year.

telecom industry. The company grew to serve over 400 of America's largest college campuses and one million college students across the nation.

He is on the faculty of Central Connecticut State University as an adjunct professor of political science and philosophy, where he also helped to found a popular business start-up competition.

In early 2009, he helped lead an initiative to bring together Connecticut leaders from across the business, nonprofit, and labor sectors to unite in a strategy to create new jobs in the state.

As a candidate for the U.S. Senate in 2006, he challenged long-time incumbent Joe Lieberman for the Democratic Party nomination.

As a private citizen, he fought for the issues in which he believes, serving on the boards of Mercy Corps and the Conservation Services Group, nonprofits which seek to make a difference in the humanitarian and renewable energy fields, respectively.

Lamont has a bachelor's degree from Harvard College and an MBA from the Yale School of Management.

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## NED LAMONT

**Governor | State of Connecticut**  
**@GovNedLamont**

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Ned Lamont was sworn in January 3, 2023 for his second term as governor of Connecticut. He was first elected governor in 2018.

Prior to serving as governor, Lamont started his own company, taking on the large and established giants of the

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## JOHN MADUKO

**President | Connecticut State**  
**Community College | @CTStateEdu**

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John Maduko serves as the inaugural president of Connecticut State Community College, appointed in June 2022.

He leads the largest institution of higher education in Connecticut, the largest community college in New England, and one of the largest community colleges in the country, serving over 70,000 students annually across 20 locations statewide.

Maduko is focused on leading Connecticut State as a student-centered, mission-driven, equity minded, and data-informed higher education practitioner committed to an equity-by-design methodology to inspire the college community to be aware of the inequalities of students—especially when it comes to closing the opportunity equity gap among minoritized, low-income, first-generation, and international students.

Before his appointment, Maduko was vice president for academic and student affairs at Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Minnesota's fifth-largest community college, and a member of the 32-institution, 380,000-student Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System.

He has served in various leadership roles, from vice president to vice chancellor, dean, and faculty for two-year institutions in Minnesota, Texas, Florida, and Georgia.

He is a 2018 Thomas Lakin fellow and 2021 Aspen Institute Rising Presidential Fellow, committed to student success reformation and equitable post-graduate outcomes.

In addition, he serves on the College Board-Community College Advisory Panel, the ADL Connecticut-Regional Board of Directors, the Association

of Community College Trustees-Advisory Committee of Presidents, the Connecticut Presidents' Council, the Governor's Workforce Council, and the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges.

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## SHANNON MARIMÓN

**Executive Director | ReadyCT**  
**@ReadyCTEd**

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Shannon Marimón joined ReadyCT in 2018, leading the organization to become a vital

conduit for collaborative innovation among education, business, and civic communities, and shaping policies and practices that equitably serve all children in Connecticut.

Marimón has worked in PK-12 and higher education for over two decades. As a graduate of Connecticut's public school system, she is committed to narrowing the state's opportunity gaps and raising academic outcomes for all students through policy advocacy, public awareness, and capacity building.

She also aims to better align our educational system with our workforce needs in order to best prepare students for the world of work.

Before stepping into her role at ReadyCT, Marimón was director of talent and operations for the CT RISE Network, responsible for establishing, advancing, and monitoring organizational goals related to student on-track achievement and college and career readiness.

Prior to RISE, she was a division director

at the Connecticut State Department of Education, providing leadership and support to districts and schools to expand talent management systems and strategic planning efforts.

Marimón was a partner and director of site launch with The New Teacher Project and spent seven years working in higher education at Stanford University and Yale Schools of Art and Architecture.

She holds an MBA from the Yale School of Management, a master's degree from Stanford University, and a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College.

Marimón lives in West Hartford with her husband and two daughters and serves as vice chair of the West Hartford Board of Education.

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## DAMALY MENDEZ

**Student | Quinnipiac University**

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Damaly Mendez is currently a freshman at Quinnipiac University pursuing a bachelor's

degree in nursing.

During her time at Brien McMahon High School, she participated in the Carver Youth Development Program, which partnered with Nuvance Health. This collaboration allowed her to complete the High School Career Readiness Program at Norwalk Hospital.

Through this experience, Mendez gained valuable workforce insights into various medical departments and acquired hands-on skills, and earned her CPR certification, further enhancing her

medical knowledge and preparedness.

She also had the opportunity to intern in the Human Resources department at Nuvance Health during the summer, responsible for creating a comprehensive healthcare program workbook.

This resource provided high school students in the High School Career Readiness Program with valuable information about the hospital's different departments, fostering a better understanding of the healthcare environment.

Mendez also interned in the Outpatient Rehab department, where she learned to manage and fax patient care plans for physician approval.

Mendez's ultimate goal is to become a registered nurse in Connecticut and she is committed to advancing her education and skills to focus on providing exceptional patient care and advancing in the field of medicine.

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## WILL MIGLIACCIO

**Aerospace Production Technician  
Westminster Tool**

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Will Migliaccio is 22 years old and joined the Westminster Tool team six months ago as its

Learn While You Earn program recipient.

He is currently finishing Quinebaug Valley Community College's Advanced Manufacturing Program as the program's top student—all while working part-time at Westminster Tool.

A graduate of the Connecticut Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative, Migliaccio's journey in the industry began last year with his strong interest in advanced manufacturing technology.

Today, his responsibilities include aerospace parts production with ongoing cross-training in injection molding and Class 101 toolmaking.

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## BLAKE MORET

**Chair & CEO | Rockwell Automation**  
**@ROKAutomation**

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Blake Moret was appointed CEO of Rockwell Automation, the world's largest company dedicated

to industrial automation and digital transformation, in July 2016, and was elected board chair in January 2018.

Under his leadership, Rockwell Automation integrates control and information to help make industrial companies and their people more productive and the world more sustainable.

Moret is accelerating the Rockwell Automation strategy by focusing on understanding customer needs and their best opportunities for productivity, combining technology and domain expertise to deliver positive business outcomes, and simplifying customer experience.

Joining Rockwell Automation in 1985 as a sales trainee, Moret has built his career with the company and has held leadership positions in many areas of the business, including international assignments in Europe and Canada.

Moret is vice chair of the National Association of Manufacturers' board of directors and executive committee and is a member of the Wisconsin Governor's Council on Workforce Investment.

He is the co-chair of the World Economic Forum's Advanced Manufacturing Community of CEOs and is a member of the Business Roundtable.

He also serves on the board of the Advanced Regenerative Medicine Institute and the Georgia Tech Advisory Board.

Moret chairs the Rockwell Automation Charitable Corporation and is on the boards of FIRST, the United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha, and the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee.

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## CHARLES RAZOR

**DomusWorks Crew Leader | Domus**  
**@DomusKids**

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Charles Razor joined Domus in 2022 as a member of Domus' workforce development program, DomusWorks.

Razor began as an employee on one of the work crews and now serves as a crew leader due to his exceptional work ethic and leadership skills.

In his role as crew leader, Razor works at Western Connecticut State University directing other Domus employees on their daily tasks.

He serves as the lead Domus facilities crew member managing others on

the worksite while doing maintenance around the campus.

Razor is a passionate advocate for opportunity youth and returning citizens, sitting on numerous statewide committees advocating for opportunity youth and returning citizens to be given the chance to re-engage with their communities in meaningful, productive ways.

He shares both his professional and lived experiences so that Connecticut's cities and towns continue to adopt best practices for ensuring that all young people can have access to the resources it takes to secure bright futures.

Razor was born and raised in Stamford with his mom, dad, and two older sisters. In his free time, he works a part-time landscaping job and plays basketball.

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## ELLEN SOLEK

**Executive Director | Connecticut  
Technical Education & Career System  
@CTTechHS**

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Dr. Ellen Solek is honored to serve as executive director for the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System, the primary pipeline for Connecticut's skilled labor workforce.

For over 100 years, CTECS has provided high school students and adult learners with the skills to be successful in high-demand technical careers, while equipping Connecticut business and industry with a talented workforce to support economic growth. She is proud to be a part of this story.

Solek has worked in a variety of educational leadership roles, including numerous years of service as a school superintendent.

While superintendent for the Bristol Public Schools, she was directly involved in the development and implementation of a citywide career partnership initiative, as well as a successful school-to-work career pathways program.

Most recently, she served as superintendent of schools for CTECS.

Solek believes that educational leaders are in the business of serving people first. Student growth, achievement and outcomes do not happen without a solid school foundation built on trust, seamless and open dialogue, and the willingness to engage in critical conversations.

She is focused on the development of CTECS business and industry partners, the oversight of agency fiscal operations, and the continued collaboration with state legislators and leaders in support of the CTECS mission and vision.

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## TARA SPAIN

**VP & COO | Travelers Foundation  
@Travelers**

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Tara Spain is vice president and chief operating officer of the Travelers Foundation and assistant vice president of community relations at Travelers.

Spain manages strategy and operations for the company's philanthropic arm,

as well as key national partnerships throughout the U.S.

In this role, she was instrumental in launching a national small business initiative for women, veterans, and entrepreneurs of color and a college access initiative for students from economically under-resourced communities.

Prior to her role in community relations, she was a marketing project manager and account manager with Citigroup, managing marketing strategies for five product lines.

Spain has served on several nonprofit boards and is currently a board member of ReSet (Social Enterprise Trust) and Usher's New Look. She is also an advisor for the U.S. Chamber Foundation.

Spain has been recognized with several honors including Top 25 Women in Business (2023) and 40 Under 40 by the Hartford Business Journal, Volunteer of the Year by the Urban League of Greater Hartford, A Women of Influence by Usher's New Look, and received the Recent Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Connecticut.

She holds a bachelor's degree magna cum laude from Virginia State University, a master's from the University of Connecticut, and a Certificate in Community Involvement Leadership from the Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College's Carroll School of Management.

She currently lives in West Hartford.

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## NANCY TAYLOR

**Director, Workforce Development**  
**Charter Oak State College**  
**@CharterOak**

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Nancy Taylor is director of workforce development for Charter Oak State College, Connecticut's public online college.

In this role, Taylor is responsible for the noncredit micro-credential programs the college offers, manages workforce grants, and is the college's liaison to the employer community.

Prior to this role, she was assistant director of corporate outreach for Charter Oak.

Previously, Taylor was vice president for public affairs with Aetna, where she had a 14-year career in healthcare policy, communications, and grassroots lobbying.

She has also provided fundraising and development consulting services to nonprofits in Connecticut.

Taylor currently serves on the St. Francis Hospital Foundation Board and as a eucharist minister at her Catholic church.

She was previously vice chair of the board of the American Red Cross in Connecticut and served two terms on the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Taylor holds a bachelor's degree from Fairfield University and a master's in economics and an MPA from Indiana University.

She and her husband Craig, a former state legislator, live in Canton with their son.

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## CHARLENE RUSSELL-TUCKER

**Commissioner | State Department  
of Education | @EducateCT**

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Charlene Russell-Tucker was appointed commissioner of the Connecticut State

Department of Education by Governor Ned Lamont in August 2021.

Prior to serving as commissioner, she was the department's deputy commissioner, a role in which she oversaw educational supports and wellness priorities.

Previously, she served as chief operating officer and division chief for the department's Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness.

She also served as associate commissioner of education and bureau chief within the department, overseeing a portfolio of programs and services that included student health, nutrition and safety, family engagement, magnet and charter schools, after-school programs and services, school climate, adult education, and special education.

Russell-Tucker has participated on various state and national committees, including the Children Strategic Action Group on Chronic Absence, and served as an expert panel member on committees of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

She also served as president of the Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and as a member of the national Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Russell-Tucker has extensive teaching experience, serving as an adjunct faculty member at Albertus Magnus College School of New Dimensions.

In 2015, she was named to the inaugural class of 100 Women of Color in Connecticut. In 2018, she was welcomed to the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading's Council of Champions.

Most recently, she received MENTOR National's Public Service–State and Local Excellence in Mentoring Award in 2021 and was also named among the 100 Most Influential Blacks in Connecticut by the NAACP.

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## KELLI-MARIE VALLIERES

**Chief Workforce Officer | Office of  
Workforce Strategy | @CT\_OWS**

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Kelli-Marie Vallieres leads the Connecticut Office of Workforce Strategy as chief workforce officer.

OWS directs the implementation of Connecticut's first strategic workforce development plan.

The business-led plan requires the coordination, collaboration, and cooperation of multiple stakeholders, including workforce development boards, state agencies, education, and economic and community-based organizations to build the systems, teams, and approaches that will make Connecticut a talent environment that attracts and motivates students, career builders, and companies alike.

Vallieres received a bachelor's degree in educational leadership and adult learning from the University of Connecticut in 2007.

She is an owner of two manufacturing companies, where she served as president and CEO for 14 years before stepping down to take on her role with the state of Connecticut.

Vallieres combines her roles in industry and education to carry out the mission of the Governor's Workforce Council's Strategic Plan.

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## JAH'SHAWN VANHOLTEN

**Market Analyst | Travelers**  
**@Travelers**

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Jah'shawn Vanholten is a Travelers EDGE alumnus, graduating from the University of

Connecticut School of Business in 2022 with a bachelor's degree in marketing management.

Currently employed at Travelers, Vanholten completed the Travelers Product Management Development Program and now serves as a market analyst.

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## CYNDI ZOLDY

**Executive Director | Manufacturing Alliance Service Corporation | @masc**

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Cyndi Zoldy was appointed executive director for Manufacturing Alliance Service Corp. in December

2020 after serving the Smaller Manufacturers Association for eight years.

Zoldy has over 26 years of management and accounting experience.

At MASC, she implemented a new functional educational experience, branding the school and streamlining curriculum to better match with the needs of local manufacturers.

The technical training center serves in a niche market where accelerated programs are offered to both traditional and non-traditional students, providing students a pathway from classroom to career in 10 weeks.

Zoldy holds a bachelor's degree from Post University and a state of Connecticut director's credential granted by Charter Oak State College.

She volunteers her time on numerous boards including the Connecticut Manufacturers Collaborative, ElevateHER—Connecticut Women's Manufacturing Council, Women in Manufacturing, Smaller Manufacturers Association, Waterbury Regional Chamber, United Way of Greater Waterbury, and Women United.

She has been married for 30 years to a local manufacturer, John Zoldy of Metallon, and they have four adult boys.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SPOTLIGHT:

# ORGANIZATIONS & PROGRAMS

### Capital Workforce Partners

As the state's premier workforce development board, Capital



Workforce Partners leverages public and private resources to produce skilled workers for a competitive regional economy.

CWP helps individuals overcome barriers to employment and closes the gap between skills and business hiring needs. The organization is guided by a consortium of the region's chief and elected officials and by representatives from business, education, and labor serving on its board of Directors.

CWP invests in youth development, develops sustainable career paths for adult workers, and assists employers with a variety of programs and services provided through the American Job Center network.

Supported by many funders and partners, CWP manages a diverse portfolio of projects and services for local jobseekers and businesses including:

- ▶ **American Job Centers:** This signature initiative offers a variety of free services to jobseekers and employers, connecting thousands of people to employment each year with training, workshops, one-on-one counseling, and job clubs.
- ▶ **BEST Chance Partnership:** BEST Chance is CWP's primary venue for serving returning citizens, implemented in partnership with numerous reentry stakeholders. The partnership framework coordinates resources across member organizations to provide comprehensive and flexible services tailored to the needs of individuals.
- ▶ **Youth & Young Adult Programs:** CWP continues to lead in youth development through a variety of programs, including the Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program connecting Connecticut youth living in the North Central Region between the ages of 14 and 24 with career exploration opportunities and paid work experience. The Opportunity Youth Program serves 18-24 year-olds, particularly in communities of color, who have seen

a significant increase in unemployment and disconnection from education and training. CWP provides free access to training and skill-building activities that will result in jobs and self-sustaining careers.

► **Regional Sector Partnerships:**

CWP helps coordinate several RSPs, which work with business leaders from a single industry to collaborate on making their industry more competitive. They define their own agenda and tackle a range of issues including improving the workforce pipeline, improving infrastructure, or facilitating business-to-business networking.

- **Career ConneCT:** A statewide initiative, Career ConneCT offers skilling, reskilling, and upskilling in growing industries. Depending upon particular needs and interests, individuals can participate in certificate training programs and earn industry-recognized credentials in as little as five to 12 weeks and get connected to employers ready to hire. CWP offers free training programs in IT and transportation.

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## Career ConneCT

Career ConneCT is the Connecticut Office of Workforce Strategy's \$70 million grant program focused on providing short-term, industry-aligned certificates to individuals who are unemployed or underemployed.



Launched in late 2022, this program will train 6,000 individuals for quality jobs in growing industries, including advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare, bioscience, infrastructure, and clean energy over three years.

Grants were awarded to five workforce boards and 12 community-based organizations to launch a total of 19 programs providing job training and additional support such as transportation, childcare, and housing.

OWS developed the Career ConneCT portal as a single entry point for broad recruitment, data collection, and reporting. The portal includes a skills inventory (assessment), connection to a career coach, training opportunities, and jobs.

OWS also is implementing a YOU media campaign in English and Spanish, appearing on radio, social media, bus stops, and local stores.

## GRANT AWARDEES

- **Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board:** A statewide expansion of the nationally recognized Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative.
- **The WorkPlace:** Statewide scaling of the Southwest Healthcare Career Academy to train individuals in entry-level healthcare roles.
- **Career Resources, Inc.:** Training justice-involved and re-entering individuals for careers in healthcare, technology, construction, and manufacturing.

- ▶ **Capital Workforce Partners:** Expand CDL training programming across the state, with an additional focus on re-entering individuals.
- ▶ **Capital Workforce Partners:** Provide statewide information technology training focused on four core tracks: IT support, front-end development, information security, and network/cloud operations.
- ▶ **Connecticut Building Trades Training Institute:** Statewide program providing construction readiness opportunities for unionized building trades registered apprenticeships.
- ▶ **ReadyCT:** Supports high school seniors/recent graduates define postsecondary career goals and immediately enter employment in a high-demand industry.
- ▶ **ConnCAT:** Entry-level bioscience training including lab operations, compound management, laboratory animal husbandry, research support, and biomanufacturing.
- ▶ **Family Centers, Inc.:** Pathways to Employment Growth will train individuals for in-demand healthcare and IT jobs in Southwest Connecticut.
- ▶ **Efficiency For All:** Short-term job training for individuals looking to enter the energy efficiency industry.
- ▶ **Connecticut Center for Advanced Manufacturing:** Targets unemployed workers needing additional skills to enter the manufacturing workforce at higher level positions.
- ▶ **Havenly, Inc.:** A six-month paid training program creating stable, quality employment opportunities for refugee and immigrant women in the Greater New Haven area.
- ▶ **Career Resources, Inc.:** Sponsors an entry-level training program created directly by Waveny LifeCare Network to hire CNAs directly into their healthcare system.
- ▶ **Ability Beyond:** Allows individuals with disabilities the opportunity to obtain valuable pre-requisite skills and certifications prior to participation in a Bureau of Rehabilitation Services training program.
- ▶ **Charter Oak College Foundation, Inc.:** Trains entry level workers for health information management positions.
- ▶ **Marrakech:** Bridgeport, New Haven, and Waterbury program training individuals for community and social services, human services, personal services, and office and administrative support roles.
- ▶ **District Arts + Education, Inc.:** Provides high-school students with a foundation in digital life skills and a 12-month immersion experience in software engineering and web development.
- ▶ **The WorkPlace:** The RemoteWorks program prepares participants for an array of occupations in remote customer service, database management, internal support, and a variety of additional fields.

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## Charter Oak State College

Charter Oak  
State College is  
Connecticut's  
only public online



college and is part of the Connecticut  
State Colleges and Universities.

Established in 1973, Charter Oak  
was envisioned as a non-traditional  
institution, designed to offer flexible,  
accessible, affordable and relevant  
education to individuals balancing work,  
family, and other commitments.

Today, Charter Oak is a nationally  
recognized, premier online institution  
known for its innovative programs  
tailored to meet the demands of a  
rapidly changing workforce.

Nontraditional students are at the heart  
of Charter Oak's student body. Notably,  
77% of Charter Oak's students work full-  
time and half are parents. The college  
prides itself on having a diverse student  
body, with nearly half being students of  
color, three-fourths are female, and 43%  
are Pell-eligible, low income students.

A point of pride for Charter Oak is that  
its retention, graduation, and median  
earnings after graduation are the same  
or better than what is found at an on-  
ground regional university according  
to the College Scorecard.

Charter Oak is committed to empowering  
adult learners with the knowledge and  
skills needed in today's dynamic job  
market. Whether seeking to advance  
in their current careers, transition to  
new fields, or acquire specialized skills,  
the college provides students with the  
education needed to achieve their goals.

Charter Oak's fully online, asynchronous  
format allows students to access  
coursework anytime, anywhere. By  
maintaining strong partnerships  
with industry leaders, it ensures that  
its programs remain relevant and  
responsive to workforce needs.

Career-focused programs, led by  
expert faculty, include Business,  
Human Resources, Nursing, Social Work,  
Public Safety, Early Childhood Education,  
Health Information Management,  
Healthcare Administration,  
Organizational Leadership, Health  
Informatics, Cybersecurity, and others.

These programs are designed in  
collaboration with industry experts to  
align with current workforce trends and  
employer demands. In fall 2024, the  
college will launch a bachelor's degree  
in software development that will provide  
students with a diverse range of skills  
including programming languages,  
mobile and web technologies, web  
application frameworks and project  
management in addition to industry-  
recognized credentials embedded in  
the degree.

Through the Workforce Development  
Division, the college offers short-term,  
noncredit microcredentials to upskill  
employees and help them gain industry  
recognized credentials. The division also  
allows the college to offer grant-funded  
programs to those currently outside the  
workforce to gain the skills needed to  
obtain entry level jobs in high-demand  
fields and create educational pathways  
for those entering these fields.

One of these programs is the Career  
ConneCT grant, a partnership between  
Charter Oak and Hartford HealthCare

that provides training for entry-level positions in revenue cycle management. Students from diverse backgrounds are provided free online training and supportive services such as laptops and career services to help them succeed. This noncredit training is the first step on an educational pathway that Charter Oak has built with certificates and degrees in health information management.

With its focus on workforce relevance, flexibility, and innovation, Charter Oak continues to redefine the boundaries of higher education, preparing students to thrive in an ever-changing world.

**Visit [charteroak.edu](https://charteroak.edu) for more information.**

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## Connecticut Second Chance Business Coalition

The coalition working to lower barriers to employment for people with a criminal record.



The Connecticut Employer Toolkit for Second Chance Hiring is a print and online guide developed by CT-SCBC, providing employers with a set of best practices, HR, legal and technical assistance, and links on how to partner with and access Connecticut-based resources, training, and expertise that will facilitate a successful second chance hiring program, opening career and economic opportunities for people with criminal records.

Second chance employment is the practice of offering fair and equal job

opportunities to individuals with criminal records.

In a hypercompetitive economy, where companies struggle to identify strong candidates at all levels of their operations, too many employers are missing out on a significant number of qualified applicants who may otherwise be overlooked due to their criminal history alone.

Second chance hiring programs are a smart workforce development strategy that help employers grow a healthier, more productive, loyal, engaged workforce, with less turnover; enhance individuals' dignity through productive work and providing for their families; improve public safety and stabilize communities by reducing recidivism; and building a more productive, equitable and resilient workforce for the future.

The Connecticut Second Chance Business Coalition is supported by leading private and public business and service organizations across Connecticut that are committed to expanding Second Chance hiring and advancement practices, including the Connecticut Society for Human Resource Management, employers and professional associations representing manufacturing (CBIA), transportation (MTAC), construction (CCIA), hospitality (CRA), among others, as well as an equally wide range of public sector community provider organizations involved in workforce development and reentry support services.

The Toolkit provides employers with an extensive list of steps through which they might implement a program, conduct a self-assessment to evaluate how

your current corporate culture and HR policies might align with such a program, or as a checklist to plan and track your program's progress. The Toolkit also contains detailed reference materials and sample templates on key issues, such as:

- ▶ How to develop a business case statement
- ▶ Sample HR, website, and DEI policies
- ▶ How to discuss your program with team members, particularly overcoming objections
- ▶ Conducting background checks
- ▶ Recruiting, interviewing, onboarding, and mentoring strategies
- ▶ Contact lists for community partners offering training and support services for second chance hiring programs.

There is no fee to join the coalition and access these resources.

If you would like to learn more about the Coalition-TOOLKIT and explore how to safely and effectively implement a second chance hiring program, please contact:

**Mark Soycher**, CBIA HR Counsel, retired  
(mdsoycher@aol.com; 860.324.4147)

**Heidi Hughes**, Associate Professor & HR Faculty Advisor, Central Connecticut State University School of Business  
(h.hughes@ccsu.edu; 860.832.0135)

**David McCluskey**, Legislative Liaison, Connecticut Department of Correction,  
(david.mccluskey@ct.gov; 860.692.7510)

**Robert Hebert**, Chief Strategic Officer, Career Resources, Inc. (hebert@careerresources.org; 860.953.3260)

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## Connecticut's Two Generation Initiative

Benefits cliffs are negatively



impacting employers, workers, families, and Connecticut's overall economy.

When an individual's loss of public benefits that are work supports (like childcare and healthcare) is greater than a wage increase, they face benefits cliffs, which limit job mobility—as workers consider entering higher wage jobs or credentialing programs that lead them into next-level occupations, they often face the loss of public benefits.

As a result, the worker may decide not to take a job, or move ahead, to avoid economic instability that jeopardizes their family wellbeing.

A typical example: A single parent with two young children was offered a \$0.10 per hour wage increase by her employer that would put her over eligibility for continuing to receive child care subsidy. The approximate \$200 annual increase would result in the loss of nearly \$9,000 in childcare subsidies.

In 2023, Connecticut's Two Generation Initiative and the Office of Workforce Strategy worked with CBIA to survey employers, with the majority of responses from manufacturing, with significant responses from the construction and professional services sectors.

The results indicate that benefits cliffs are a challenge for Connecticut employers and are impacting operations:

- ▶ 53% of manufacturing employers are aware that employees working full-time at minimum wage (or anyone in the \$31,000 annual salary range) may be receiving public benefits.
- ▶ 68% of manufacturing employers said they were aware that some job seekers may not apply to or take a job because of a loss of benefits.
- ▶ 27% of all employers indicated employees have turned down promotions and/or increased employee work hours. Of those employers, over two-thirds responded that loss of benefits was the main reason for employees turning down offers.

Employers are experiencing fewer applicants and job acceptances, and benefits cliffs certainly contribute. Workers facing benefits cliffs are having a hard time figuring out how to enter the labor market in a way that supports themselves and their families.

Connecticut is not tapping into the talent and labor force that can move the state's economy forward.

Governor Ned Lamont has supported legislation passed by the General Assembly mitigating the cliff effect to some degree. The most impactful is the refundable state earned income tax credit, which was raised to 40% in 2023.

More can be done to open economic opportunity for workers and to meet employer skill demands at the state level as well as the federal.

Your feedback, through this short, three-question survey would be valuable to

understanding the impact across other industries. Please scan the QR code to complete the survey.



**To learn more about the 2Gen Initiative, visit [ctoec.org/2gen/](https://ctoec.org/2gen/) or contact Christina Morales ([christina.morales@ct.gov](mailto:christina.morales@ct.gov)).**

## Connecticut Technical Education and Career System

The Connecticut Technical Education and Career System prepares trades-bound students



to meet skilled workforce needs through exemplary trade and academic programming.

CTECS operates 17 diploma-granting technical high schools, one technical education center, and two airframe mechanic and aircraft maintenance programs. The school system provides a direct employment pipeline for approximately 11,500 grade 9-12 students and 3,000 adult learners.

CTECS offers a rich system of career and technical education opportunities in 31 in-demand career areas. CTECS high school graduates earn a Connecticut high school diploma, CTE certificate in their field of study and multiple industry recognized credentials.

The historical connection between what CTECS offers and the needs of industry partners is well established. Executive director Dr. Ellen Solek, CTECS central office leadership, school principals, and faculty are all actively engaged in a wide

range of partnerships and collaboration with employers, post-secondary institutions, K-12 schools, workforce agencies, and others.

Vital to the success of CTECS programs are employer connections. Employer partners regularly collaborate with teachers to ensure curriculum, facilities, and credentials align with the latest industry trends and needs. Through their involvement, employers also gain access to a pool of talented students who have been trained according to industry standards.

CTECS offers a robust Work-Based Learning Program that fosters the skills and talents for students to thrive in the workforce and connects them to employers in their community.

Through WBL, local employers can hire juniors and seniors and provide them with on-the-job training. WBL takes place during the school day and students not only receive credit towards their trade program, but they also get paid. Notably, through an agreement with the Department of Labor, CTECS students can work in hazardous careers as early as age 16. WBL participation rates have steadily increased at CTECS each school year.

Unique to CTECS is the Student Workforce—a business run by students and faculty providing students with real projects for real customers here in Connecticut. A wide range of services are offered to the public at a fraction of the market price. Services range from automotive repair, printing services, dining opportunities, hairdressing, electrical and more. The work helps prepare students for the transition from

high school to the workforce, and is an invaluable training experience in their chosen career.

CTECS' adult apprenticeship program operates a total of seven training programs across the state, in addition to online courses. Both registered and non-registered apprentices can apply for DOL-approved related-instruction in the licensed construction trades. Some locations offer extension courses such as welding and computer applications. These courses are designed for individuals to learn new skills or information.

**Are you looking to build your workforce with skilled individuals? Partner with CTECS! Learn more about how you can get involved at [cttech.org/about/getinvolved](https://cttech.org/about/getinvolved) or visit [cttech.org](https://cttech.org).**

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## Digital Media Connecticut

Digital Media Connecticut represents a dynamic coalition of higher education institutions across Connecticut, united in their commitment to advancing career opportunities in the fields of film, television, and digital content creation.



In a strategic alliance with the Connecticut Office of Film, Television, and Digital Media, DMCT plays a pivotal role in cultivating and collaborating with educational initiatives.

These initiatives are specifically designed to discover, foster, and maintain a pipeline of burgeoning talent tailored to meet the evolving demands of Connecticut's burgeoning industry.

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## DomusWorks

Domus  
builds loving  
relationships



with young people aged 12 to 26 facing adversity, empowering them to pursue their path to self-sufficiency. Based in Stamford, Domus utilizes a trauma-responsive approach to help youth overcome obstacles that jeopardize a bright and stable future.

Our education, workforce development, re-entry, and other programs enable young people to transform their own lives and thrive. Domus was founded in 1972 as a single group home for young men removed from their families due to abuse and/or neglect.

The DomusWorks program engages young people aged 17 to 26 who are unemployed or underemployed at enrollment and provides them with the supports and skills they need to gain employment. Youth go through the program for approximately one year, including three to six months of skills development and employment in our social enterprise, working an average of 25 hours per week.

Every youth works alongside a staff crew leader for three to six months to apply classroom learning to the real-life situation of subsidized employment. Young people earn money while receiving daily feedback about their employment-readiness skills. This is followed by six months of unsubsidized employment while continuing to meet weekly with DomusWorks staff for support and coaching. If a program participant stops

showing up for services, Domus staff conduct outreach to re-engage them.

Our social enterprise partners include UConn-Stamford, Western Connecticut State University, the City of Stamford, and various local businesses. We also do regular and occasional business with individuals and others, including baking for holidays and parties with The Domus Cake Company (a DomusWorks crew).

The long-term outcome we seek for each participant is for them to be employed in a job on the path to self-sufficiency, as measured by full-time employment at 12-months post- program completion. To ensure they are on track, we monitor intermediate outcomes and indicators. These include monthly on-track jobs skills module completion, upward trend on daily employment-readiness skills checklist, proficiency in all areas of work readiness assessment, and employment.

For fiscal 2023, 100% of youth who successfully completed the program continued to be employed one year later, and our retention rate was 94%.

According to youth.gov, “Compared with youth in higher income households, youth from lower income households more often face barriers to career training, and more often have limited resources and access to financial education and related services.

“Therefore, these youth may be less able to achieve financial well-being. Youth employment programs offer opportunities to help young people, especially disadvantaged youth, gain the financial knowledge, skills, and access to resources necessary to effectively manage finances through adulthood.”

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## Hartford Youth Data Fellowship

The Hartford Youth Data Fellowship is a program for



Hartford youth ages 17-24 that provides them with the tools and experience they need to engage and analyze data about their communities.

The program is managed by the nonprofit CT Data Collaborative through the Hartford Data Collaborative, a network of Hartford area nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and philanthropic partners that facilitates data sharing and integration among its partners.

HDC partners with schools and youth-serving organizations in Hartford to recruit youth to participate in a five-month after-school program with workshops about data literacy, analysis, and visualizations. Youth serve as co-researchers and share their experiences growing up in Hartford and its impact on their development in their data insights.

The fellowship program addresses a need for increased data literacy among residents, provides Hartford youth with career development opportunities, and allows them to create a data project that can be part of their resume or portfolio.

The program culminates in a Data Walk where community members and city leaders engage in local data and data sharing efforts and hear the insights of Hartford youth.

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## Manufacturing Alliance Service Corporation

Manufacturing Alliance Service Corporation is a state approved, post-secondary



training facility located in Waterbury that provides high-quality, accelerated technical training programs for individuals seeking to enhance their skills and knowledge in the manufacturing industry.

With a strong focus on meeting the needs of the local manufacturing community, MASC has established itself as a trusted partner for companies looking to upskill their workforce and individuals aiming to pursue a career in the manufacturing sector.

Founded with the mission of bridging the skills gap in the manufacturing industry, MASC offers a wide range of introductory training programs designed to equip students with the practical skills and theoretical knowledge needed to succeed in today's competitive manufacturing landscape.

The institution's curriculum is carefully crafted in collaboration with industry experts and approved by the Connecticut Department of Higher Education, ensuring that students receive relevant and up-to-date training that aligns with the industry standards and best practices.

One of the key strengths of MASC is its state-of-the-art facilities and equipment. The institution boasts modern labs equipped with the industry standard machinery and technology used in the

manufacturing sector. This hands-on learning approach allows students to gain practical experience and develop the technical skills required to excel in their chosen field.

MASC prides itself on its team of experienced instructors who are industry professionals with a wealth of knowledge and expertise in various areas of manufacturing. These instructors provide personalized attention and guidance to each student, ensuring that they receive the support they need to succeed.

In addition to its core training programs of CNC Operation, Plastic Injection Molding, and Fundamentals of Manufacturing Technology, MASC also offers a range of support services in partnership with the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board, the City of Waterbury, Regional Sector Partnerships, and Bureau of Rehabilitative Services.

This includes career counseling, job placement assistance, and networking opportunities with leading employers in the local manufacturing area. By fostering strong partnerships with local businesses, MASC helps students secure internships and job opportunities that align with their career goals.

MASC is committed to promoting diversity and inclusivity within the manufacturing sector. The institution actively recruits students from diverse backgrounds and provides a supportive learning environment where all individuals are encouraged to thrive and succeed.

MASC is currently focused on disengaged/disconnected youth,

veterans, and those with disabilities, as well as any other adult learner interested in the trade to help bridge the workforce gap.

Through its community outreach initiatives, MASC also works to raise awareness about the rewarding career opportunities available in manufacturing and inspire the next generation of industry professionals.

**For more information about our programing or information on partnering with the program, visit [mascttc.com](http://mascttc.com).**

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## Nuvance Health

Nuvance Health

is a system of  
award-winning



nonprofit hospitals and outpatient healthcare services throughout the Hudson Valley and western Connecticut, including Danbury Hospital and its New Milford campus, and Norwalk Hospital and Sharon Hospital in Connecticut; and Northern Dutchess Hospital, Putnam Hospital, and Vassar Brothers Medical Center in New York.

Our integrated health system offers convenient, accessible and affordable care to community members by our talented team of more than 15,000 compassionate caregivers providing high-quality care through:

- Community hospitals
- Primary care and specialty practice locations
- Outpatient settings

- ▶ Home care services
- ▶ Telehealth visits

Our network also includes a well-known research institute, which brings breakthroughs from the lab directly to the bedside. We take research to heart and focus on treatments and cures that will benefit our community.

Whether you need emergency care, help managing a disease or medical condition, or simply a partner to help you stay healthy—we're here for you. We provide medical care when you and your family members need it, and we help you achieve optimal health.

Nuvance Health offers the latest prevention, diagnostic, medical, surgical and rehabilitation services, including through the Cancer, Digestive Health, Heart & Vascular and Neuroscience Institutes; and primary and specialty care.

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## Pratt & Whitney and the University of Connecticut

Pratt & Whitney and



**Pratt & Whitney**  
An RTX Business

the University of

Connecticut partner to



increase the diversity of the engineering workforce and improve outcomes for underrepresented minorities in our state via three programs that engage and support would-be engineers at all levels of their educational journey:

- ▶ **Engineering Ambassadors** program, which is an early to late grade-school program.

- ▶ **BRIDGE** program which supports the transition to college.

- ▶ The **Pratt & Whitney Scholars Program** intended for students studying at UConn.

The Engineering Ambassadors program, which utilizes an annual grant from RTX (P&W's parent company), training undergraduate engineering students from all backgrounds in communication and presentation skills. These ambassadors go on to effectively engage K-12 students all around the state to show, face-to-face, the excitement, reward, and accessibility of a STEM education and career.

The EA program also puts young students of all backgrounds, with little exposure to the concepts of engineering, in front of their near peers who show them with hands-on activities and engaging presentations, just how exciting and accessible an engineering career can be.

The BRIDGE program, sponsored annually by P&W supports underrepresented minority populations in engineering as they transition from high school into the College of Engineering at UConn.

The program specifically targets four core necessities of support in college: academics, professionalism, social, and financial. Over five weeks in the summer prior to freshman year, BRIDGE gives these students exposure to the professors, college environment, and courses they will be taking and helps them forge crucial connections with their peers before the hectic pace of freshman fall takes hold.

The program consists of on-campus residency with coursework, lab exposure, industry tours, team building, and networking opportunities.

Also a part of the BRIDGE program, P&W hosts BRIDGE students for tours of the P&W labs, shop floors, and Training Center. This industry tour day includes a panel discussion with engineers, including many UConn and BRIDGE alumni, and executive speakers who have a passion for continued diversity and inclusion in engineering.

The Pratt & Whitney Scholars Program is a five-year, \$1.25 million annual investment intended to benefit underrepresented minority engineers attending UConn's College of Engineering.

The program consists of annual cohorts of five students who receive a \$10,000 annual scholarship for four years; engineering internship opportunities after their sophomore year; and a Pratt & Whitney-sponsored senior design project.

In addition to these annual scholarships, Pratt & Whitney Scholars are also introduced to a near-peer mentor, who is an engineer at P&W, and an executive mentor, who is a director or higher-level contributor within the company.

The program is funded to support 20 students with a goal to extend beyond the initial five-year partnership with UConn's College of Engineering.

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## State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation Grant (Yale New Haven Health System, Connecticut Department of Labor)

This innovative apprenticeship program supports nurse's aides transition to patient care associate roles in the acute care setting.

This is the second time that the Department of Labor and Yale New Haven Health partnered together to support the nursing workforce team. In 2016, the same partnership led the nation in the establishment of the very first registered nurse apprenticeship.

The State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation Grant provides funding for 1,250 patient care associates to transition to the complex high-tech environment of acute care with a one-year apprenticeship model.

The program is integrated across all Connecticut hospitals in the Yale New Haven Health System including Greenwich Hospital, Bridgeport Hospital, Yale New Haven Hospital, and Lawrence and Memorial Hospital. Each apprentice receives 144 hours of instruction, mentorship, and simulation while being paid to learn.

Mentorship is provided by registered nurses who integrate content in the workplace that has been introduced in monthly seminars and simulation labs. Mentors meet apprentices on their



**Yale  
New Haven  
Health**

units on off-shifts and work side-by-side with them to reinforce seminar content and practice communication such as “arc-ing up” concerns and participating in shift-to-shift reports.

A focus on communication, teamwork, safety, and patient experience are combined with high tech skills such as phlebotomy, EKG, and electronic documentation. The clinical environment is complex and layered with technology including smart beds, bar code scanning, monitors, and point of care testing.

The program supports this critical role in patient safety, patient experience, and communication with confidence and sensitivity. Quality metrics specific to the nursing care team include patient outcomes such as infection prevention, comfort and reduction of falls and pressure injuries which are central to the curriculum.

In addition to skill acquisition and competency, complex topics such as death and dying, workplace violence, and diversity are included. Clinical reflective debriefs with stress reduction and case studies bring the program to life in each session.

Each apprentice has a career plan and monthly goals. Relationships and support drive commitment, confidence, and growth. Many apprentices advance on the Yale New Haven Health patient care associate career ladder, enroll in nursing school prerequisites, or explore next level jobs.

A prerequisite for entry into the apprenticeship begins with a nurse’s aide certificate followed by a rich year of learning and relationship building and career growth. Initial evaluation outcome

metrics demonstrate improvement in confidence in every domain.

Those enrolled in the program have demonstrated a 5% decrease in annual turnover as compared to the aggregate patient care associate group. This program is transformational, and the investment creates a career trajectory and contributes to succession planning for our nursing workforce.

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## Travelers EDGE

Established in 2007, Travelers EDGE provides a unique, holistic approach to college and career readiness for students.



Through partnerships with high schools, colleges, universities and community-based organizations, Travelers EDGE increases access to higher education and provides students with opportunities to excel.

The program helps high school students prepare for post-secondary education, funneling a strong pipeline of future leaders to college and beyond.

Once enrolled in college, Travelers EDGE scholars benefit from a broad range of services, including scholarships and financial support, career and business mentoring from employees, internships and job shadowing, and professional development workshops.

## PROGRAM GOALS:

- **Increase** the number of students from local partner high schools attending college.

- ▶ **Help** students graduate from college through scholarship support and academic advising.
- ▶ **Build** awareness of careers in insurance and financial services by providing a combination of professional development, internship and mentorship opportunities.

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## University of Connecticut School of Public Policy

UConn's School of Public Policy is dedicated to solving pressing societal problems through cutting-edge scholarship, high quality instruction, and relevant service to the profession and society.



We are committed to preparing diverse leaders employed in a wide range of professions and prepared with the important skills and competencies to be highly successful in their chosen careers.

The School of Public Policy is home to the only Master of Public Administration program in Connecticut accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration, the global standard in public service education.

In addition to the MPA, we offer a Master of Public Policy, four graduate certificates, and professional development workshops for public sector partners and beyond through the Public Service Executive Leadership Collaborative.

Academic programs and professional development workshops are available

at UConn's Hartford and Stamford campuses and online.

Aside from academic and professional development programs, we reinforce public service workforce pipelines through the coordination of graduate internship programs where talented MPA and MPP students contribute meaningful work to host organizations, positively impact local communities, and increase host capacity.

**Visit [publicpolicy.uconn.edu](http://publicpolicy.uconn.edu) for more information, or email [publicpolicy@uconn.edu](mailto:publicpolicy@uconn.edu) with any questions.**

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## Workforce Alliance

Workforce Alliance remains steadfast in its commitment to cultivating a highly skilled workforce through a community-driven approach. Our efforts persistently broaden in response to the ever-changing economic and workforce dynamics across the 30 towns we serve in our region.



Through our array of employment and training initiatives, we have facilitated job placements for thousands of individuals while aiding employers in achieving their workforce development objectives.

Collaboration with local leaders and stakeholders ensures our responsiveness to the evolving needs of residents and businesses in South Central Connecticut.

Our mission remains steadfast: to deliver an inclusive, customer-centric workforce system that empowers individuals

to cultivate skills crucial for career progression and meeting employers' evolving needs.

Through our American job centers in Meriden, Middletown, and New Haven, we provide comprehensive supportive services. This includes the Youth Program: Project CEO, aimed at assisting young participants in acquiring valuable skills and experiences.

The Health Careers Advancement Program supports individuals looking to advance in the healthcare sector, while the Skill Up for Manufacturing program equips jobseekers with training and resources essential for success in manufacturing.

Additionally, our Next Steps Re-Entry Program offers vital assistance to ex-offenders seeking to reintegrate into the workforce.

While our services are primarily participant-centered, we actively engage with employers through our business services team. By offering grants to offset new-hire wages, we enable employers to invest in essential job skills training, fostering a collaborative approach that benefits both employers and employees.

As the demand for skilled workers continues to grow across various sectors, Workforce Alliance remains dedicated to anticipating and addressing future workforce needs. Through ongoing surveys and assessments, we stay attuned to the evolving landscape, ensuring our programs align with the needs and aspirations of our community.

Since the pandemic, we have integrated online learning opportunities and career fairs to meet participants where they are. Our commitment to individuals doesn't end once they find a job or start a career; we remain engaged with them throughout their journey.

**Participants can find all our program services and events on our website, [workforcealliance.biz](https://workforcealliance.biz), or by visiting one of our offices.**

A close-up portrait of a young woman with dark, curly hair, looking slightly off-camera with a gentle smile. The background is dark and out of focus.

# EVERY BREAKTHROUGH HAS A BEGINNING

Building a workforce system in which every Connecticut resident has equitable access to a rewarding career and every business has the skilled talent to innovate and thrive.



GOVERNOR'S  
WORKFORCE COUNCIL

This project is supported by federal award #SLFAP0128 awarded to CT by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

# Capital Workforce Partners: The state's premier workforce development board — partnering for your success since 1978

Please Join us for CWP's 2024 Annual Meeting

Friday, June 21, 2024

7:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Marriott Hartford Downtown

200 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103

To register or for more information, including sponsorship opportunities, please contact John Hampton at 860-803-4072 or at [jhampton@capitalworkforce.org](mailto:jhampton@capitalworkforce.org).



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**The National Center for Next Generation Manufacturing (NCNGM) utilizes a national network of advanced manufacturing stakeholders to provide:**

- Opportunities for industry-academia partnerships
- Educational resources for high school and community college advanced manufacturing programs
- Information on events, grant opportunities, and other content on advanced manufacturing trends and careers
- Professional development opportunities for high school and community college educators

**Visit our website: [nextgenmfg.org](http://nextgenmfg.org)**

**Follow us on LinkedIn: National Center for Next Generation Manufacturing**

Contact:  
Dr. Karen Wosczyzna-Birch  
Executive Director & Principal Investigator  
[Kwosczyzna-birch@commnet.edu](mailto:Kwosczyzna-birch@commnet.edu)

The NCNGM is funded by the National Science Foundation  
Advanced Technological Education (NSF ATE) Program



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The Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023–2028

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## CTDOL BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Access essential tools, benefits, and solutions to get and stay competitive. Recruiting, hiring, training & more, we can help you succeed.

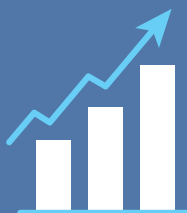


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- Build a customized workforce with Registered Apprenticeships.
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## ECONOMIC & MARKET DATA

CTDOL's economists provide monthly reports covering the job market, industry performance & unemployment rate changes. Get them right to your inbox.



## LESS PAPERWORK TIME MORE BUSINESS TIME

SIDES is an online tool that makes responding to unemployment claim notifications faster & easier. It improves efficiency & helps prevent fraud.

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CTHIRES: [WWW.CTHIRES.COM](http://WWW.CTHIRES.COM)  
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@CTDOL @cthires\_official



# Our Vision:

Every Eastern Connecticut Worker has the preparation and opportunities needed to achieve a living-wage career. Every Eastern Connecticut business has the workers needed to thrive.



[ewib.org](http://ewib.org)



american**job**center  
EASTERN CT





# Supporting Hidden Talent

## Developing Untapped Potential



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FIRST JOB | NEXT JOB | BEST JOB

Through personalized training, mentorship, and resources, NRWIB is advancing every individual's unique talents and abilities. Together, we're breaking down barriers, overcoming obstacles, and creating pathways to success for all.



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62 COMMERCIAL BLVD  
860-496-3500

**DANBURY**  
185 MAIN STREET  
203-730-0451

**A**dvancing career-connected learning opportunities for all Connecticut public school students through collaboration with business, civic, and education leaders.



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Contact [info@readyct.org](mailto:info@readyct.org) to learn how partnering with ReadyCT can help build the talent pipelines you need.



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# Social Impact Partners

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***Building a Thriving Connecticut Together***

Our vision is a thriving Connecticut where every person has equitable access to a high-quality education and a sustainable livelihood. We are committed to changing inequitable systems and catalyzing positive social change by amplifying the impact of Connecticut leaders across nonprofit, government, education, and business organizations.



**Learn more  
about our work!**  
[www.svp-ct.org](http://www.svp-ct.org)

**Let's Connect**

Follow us @SVPConnecticut



# When You Take the Next Steps, Keep Going!



**Take advantage of all we offer to help you in the next phase of your life, all at no cost!**

## **Learn more about our Next Steps Program!**

.....  
**Next Steps helps job seekers who have been involved with the criminal justice system with life skills, job training, and workplace-readiness. We work with the police, the courts, probation, parole services, and community organizations to provide a program that increases the odds of success.**  
.....

### **We provide services in:**

- **Interviewing techniques**
- **Job applications**
- **Computer classes**
- **Supportive services**
- **Job fairs (transportation is supplied)**
- **Access to adult education**
- **Case management**

**Learn more:**

**<https://workforcealliance.biz/next-steps/>**

# NOTES

[illegible]



We measure our success  
by your success



Wells Fargo makes it our business to know your business. We take the time to listen and learn about your business and its operations, growth opportunities, and challenges, so we can offer relevant and informed recommendations.

Talk to Wells Fargo. No matter where you are in your business life cycle, we can help you explore possibilities and capitalize on opportunities.

Lou Gallo  
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