



BOONE COUNTY
UPWARD MOBILITY

Jobs and Workforce Development Workgroup Minutes

March 19, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM

Regional Economic Development Inc (REDI, 500 E Walnut St #102, Columbia, MO) and Zoom

Meeting Objectives:

- Develop further understanding and collaboration with local employers
- Make progress on 2025 Jobs and Workforce Development Workgroup Efforts

Attendance: Lisa Driskel-Hawxby (Regional Economic Development Inc. (REDI)), Josh Butler (Aurora Organic Dairy), Conrad Hake (Love Columbia), Jane Williams (Love Columbia), Lisa Buxman (Love Columbia), Caroline Roush (Love Columbia), Russ Unger (Missouri Works Initiative), Mark Briley (Anderson Homes), Jami Clevenger (Home Builders Association (HBA) of Columbia Megan Weaver (Moberly Area Community College), Katie Siegel (Columbia Public Schools), Brooklyn Hill (Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA)), Onni Flint (CMCA), Meredith Rataj (St. Louis University (SLU) - Transformative Workforce Academy), Nikki Chilton (SLU - Transformative Workforce Academy), Liz Sensintaffar (Job Point), John Scalise (Job Point), Andy Bonderer (Construction Engineering Solution LLC.), Mel Constatine (Flourish Initiative), Lisa Buchanan (Columbia Chamber of Commerce), Verna Laboy (Boone County Community Services Department (BCCSD)), Kerby Webb (BCCSD), Gina Jenkins (BCCSD)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lisa Driskel-Hawxby, facilitator for the workgroup, opened the meeting and everyone in attendance introduced themselves. During her introduction, Kerby said she would be less involved in workgroup meetings due to shifting job responsibilities. Lisa briefly shared background information on Upward Mobility and the Jobs and Workforce Development workgroup.

2. Employers Spotlight: Manufacturing

Lisa Driskel-Hawxby provided some information on the partnerships which benefitted the development of the [Career Next Steps website](#) which Love Columbia continues to build as a community-wide resource for those interested in a very local look at jobs and workforce development. Lisa Buxman, lead Career Coach at Love Columbia, highlighted the updated [Manufacturing Career Path](#) page, providing a walkthrough of the various features and information included. Love Columbia is hoping that what was done within the context of manufacturing can inspire others to contribute information for other sectors, such as further development to the Construction Career Path on the Career Next Steps website.

Corad led discussion of the Career Next Steps website, noting the partners that continue to assist in developing this resource to support those that are unemployed and underemployed. The site also addresses barriers to employment and links to external resources when appropriate. The [DeBruce Foundation](#) was mentioned as an external link for a work-related agilities quiz as well as being a source for low/no cost information related to overcoming employment challenges.

Opportunities to expand the Career Next Steps were noted, with interest in including a local video for each career path. [Lisa Buxman](#) invited the workgroup to share any information with her that could be a useful addition to the website. Jane noted their resource library website had over 250,000 hits last year, so everyone is welcome to share additional information. Further support from



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other businesses to build the other career paths is welcome. Love Columbia is currently working on the Healthcare career path on the Career Next Steps website and will continue to partner with others to have other industry pages more like what was done with the Manufacturing career paths.

The Manufacturers listed have links to their businesses that show job opportunities available today. There is also a list of available fast track workforce incentive grants where you can click and learn more about how to access funds, as well as getting connected to other government grants and scholarships that are available.

Love Columbia stated that they have a few grants pending and would like to devote more time to building career pathways for construction, healthcare, nutrition, engineering and others. They want to use local employees sharing their stories to share their journeys of entering employment and growing with promotions and opportunities. Jami offered to assist with construction information and others present sharing interest in further collaboration. There was discussion around transportation being a barrier for many entering construction trades because of necessary travel for those jobs, with interest in learning about any local resources to help with vehicle purchases. Jane said Love Columbia may assist through financial coaching and Anthony Conway with Cars for Columbia was mentioned as someone that might be another resource.

3. Workgroup Planning

a. Spotlight Summary

The workgroup thanked the guests who attended from manufacturing and construction industries, inviting anyone that was attending this portion of the workgroup meeting to stay for the remainder of the meeting if they would like. The meeting paused briefly as some in attendance connected with others before leaving the meeting.

b. 2025 Workgroup Plan Review and Updates

Lisa Driskell-Hawxby reviewed the plan from the February workgroup meeting to have content for each month rotating monthly between the three strategies (Implement upwardly mobile business practices, enhance support for justice-involved individuals, and increase youth leadership opportunities). The workgroup plans to have the April meeting focused on youth with May to be focused on individuals with justice involvement. Discussion included further exploration of the rationale and intent with this format.

4. Closing

a. Partner Updates

- Jami shared [Careers Under Construction](#) will be April 10, 2025 for registered high school juniors and seniors only and then it is open to the public on April 11, 2025 from 9:00am-12:00pm at the Northeast Event Center in Columbia. Jami noted this is not just a HBA but a community event thanks to partnerships.



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- Lisa Buchanan shared the [Business In Motion](#) Expo will be on April 17, 2025. Katie added that high schools are sending students, with Junior Achievement and Columbia College assisting students in creating resumes in preparation for this event.
- [Job Point Annual Awards Banquet](#) is Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at Courtyard by Marriott. Contact Info@Jobpoint.org for more information.
- John shared that Job Point is now offering a standalone Commercial Driver License (CDL) training program.
- [REDI has a new President, Paul Eisenstein](#).
- Russ shared that Missouri Works Initiative's next [apprenticeship ready class for the construction](#) industry begins May 5, 2025.
- Katie mentioned that [Show Me Careers](#), a collaboration with The Chamber of Commerce, and several businesses is happening for local teachers, administrators and counselors April 23 – 27, 2025.
- Flourish Initiative has [summer internship opportunities](#) for high school juniors going into their senior year of high school. Applications close April 9, 2025.
- Brooklyn Hill with Skill-Up (CMCA) shared that a hiring event is taking place at Isle of Capri on April 2, 2025, from 9:00 am – 11:00 am.
- A meet and greet with the new Columbia Public School Superintendent, Dr. Klein, will be at the Aslin Building on March 20, 2025.

b. Comments and Questions

The workgroup ended with a reminder that the next workgroup meeting will focus on efforts related to youth. Anyone interested in inviting others to get involved can reach out by emailing upward@boonecountymmo.org to get connected with further information.

Next Workgroup Meeting: Wednesday, April 23, 2025, 1:30 – 3:00PM at Boone Electric Community Building – Watt Room (1413 Rangeline, Columbia MO) or via [Zoom](#)