

WORKFORCE CRISIS TASK FORCE 4TH ANNUAL SUMMIT REPORT

20 21



Prepared by
Strategy Matters, LLC

OVERVIEW

On August 11, 2021, the Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board's (LTWDB) Workforce Crisis Task Force (WCTF) held its annual summit. This event is an opportunity to both reflect on the work of the past years and to gather input from the Task Force and its stakeholders for the new strategic plan which will guide LTWDB's work in the years ahead.

The primary focus of this year's summit was to convene the Lincoln Trail community and thoughtfully engage local businesses. More specifically, businesses were asked to reflect on their learnings from COVID and practices they have adopted prior to the pandemic that have been helpful in increasing employment. The overarching purpose of the Workforce Crisis Task Force is to increase labor force participation. While this does not change in the face of our evolving public health challenges, the task force may modify its tactics and shift its focus in the coming months to more effectively respond to the region's needs.

THE GOALS OF THE SUMMIT ARE TO CONVENE THE LINCOLN TRAIL COMMUNITY TO...

1

Consider the state of the regional workforce;

2

Identify opportunities to expand the prepared workforce for local businesses; and

3

Share emerging strategic plan for Workforce Crisis Task Force (WCTF)

An overview of the agenda for the day is on the following page. A detailed report from the day's activities is in the sections that follow.

PARTICIPANT AGENDA

The Fourth Annual Workforce Summit | Wednesday, August 11, 2021 | 9 AM - 1PM EDT

9:00 AM Welcome and Overview

Dr. Juston Pate | President, ECTC

Liz O'Connor | Founder & Principal, Strategy Matters

9:25 AM The State of the Workforce and Current Employer Needs

Strategy Matters presentation with audience Q&A

10:00 AM What's at Stake? Employer Panel

11:00 AM Examining the Findings: Small Group Discussion

Business Engagement

Removing Obstacles

Unlocking Local Potential

12:06 PM Summary of the Day

12:09 PM Closing Remarks

Sherry Johnson | Deputy Director, Lincoln Trail Area Development District

Former Representative Dean Schamore | Board Chair, Lincoln Trail Workforce

Development Board

STATE OF THE WORKFORCE AND CURRENT EMPLOYER NEEDS

Strategy Matters has been working with the Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board since 2017. Over the last 18 months, COVID has presented serious challenges, disrupted schools and business, and, of course, has touched many personally. Despite the unprecedented nature of the challenges COVID has presented, many of the issues facing employers and the workforce in the Lincoln Trail area remain the same: there are not enough qualified and willing prospective employees to fill the positions that local businesses need filled.

The focus of the upcoming strategic plan, much like the last plan, will be on ways to prepare the emerging workforce and ways to connect the latent workforce with local employers. As with the previous strategic plan, this will require partnerships between educational institutions, employers, the workforce development board, local chambers of commerce and political leaders, and community organizations. Despite the challenges of the last 18 months, LTWDB is in a strong position to develop an excellent new strategic plan that builds on what has worked well over the last five years, adapts to changes, and focuses specifically on ways to achieve the most urgent priorities.

In preparation for the summit, the consulting team engaged local businesses and other stakeholders around several questions:

- 1) What modifications might we need to make to the WCTF's approach to raising labor force participation rates, if any?
- 2) Where should we invest in youth training to support our strategy of raising labor force participation?
- 3) If we had more funding for adult training, where should we invest? (Think geography, host institution, focus of skills/credentials, etc.)

A detailed overview of the findings was presented during the Summit and can be found [here](#). An overview of the State of the Workforce is available on the Lincoln Trail Workforce Crisis Task Force page [here](#).

Based on the data collected from interviews, focus groups, research, and a survey, strategies for moving the work forward emerged:

- Form a legislative committee for this strategic plan. For many of the most important issues, real change will require state laws;
- Increase affordable housing;
- Partner with employers/businesses to expand early childcare;
- Focus on essential workplace skills that address family dynamics, responsibility, and accountability;
- Support a shift in mindsets where employment is part of a meaningful life;
- Consider targeted marketing, outreach, and communications to build our audience;
- Expand existing strong partnerships with local employers to focus on career awareness/exposure and apprenticeships, internships, etc. may yield substantial near term gains in engaging the emerging workforce; and
- Connect with the State Chamber to post openings ([May 2021 Who's Hiring](#)).

EMPLOYER PANEL

Local employers, Baptist Health Hardin and ORBIS, were invited to participate in an employer panel to share some of their experiences attracting and retaining a workforce. Employers that were participants in the Summit were also invited to share their experiences and learnings.

Highlights from the employer panel are as follows:

- Adaptations made during COVID
 - Focused not just on the workforce, but also the well being of the employee, so making sure that they're not just short term but with us for the long haul;
 - Lost childcare for employees and subsidized by site because there's been shortage of childcare workers;
 - Increased part-time shifts to make scheduling more flexible;
 - Partnered with local schools, one of which is ECTC, where we basically remove financial barriers for our employees to pursue higher education so it is fully funded;
 - Conducted a wage analysis to remain competitive and pay fair wages;
 - Met applicants where they're at—social media, support applying for jobs, etc.;
 - Provided supplemental pay for those that want to return to school but can't afford the pay cut; and
 - Increased the starting salary wages as well as wages for long-term employees.
- Sustainable solutions for the future
 - Recognize that automation will require a workforce to manufacture, transport, code, staff the facility, etc.;
 - Continue to understand employees better, making adjustments where needed;
 - Explore avenues for health care and transportation to work; and
 - Mitigate damage done to entry level positions.

PANELIST BIOS



MYRA COVAULT

VP and Chief Human Resources Officer, Baptist Health Hardin

Myra joined Hardin Memorial Health (now Baptist Health Hardin) in 2011 as Practice Manager of Hardin Professional Services. For 3+ years, Myra has transformed HR at Baptist Health Hardin as a member of the senior executive team.

Ms. Covault has spent three decades sharpening her skills in hospital and health care HR, looking for ways to transform the practice of institutions to better serve its community.

Myra has a Bachelor in Health Administration from the University of Kentucky.



SHELLY BELL

Human Resources Manager, ORBIS

Shelly joined ORBIS in 2019 as HR Manager, implementing a number of recruiting and retention efforts that meet the needs and overcome the challenges of the workforce.

Shelly's career has encompassed working in several different industries, locations, and roles. Whether it is implementing change or developing associates to reach the next level of their career.

She lives by the words of one of her favorite authors, Maya Angelou, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Shelly is an active member of the community serving on boards and volunteering at fundraisers and food pantries.

She holds a Bachelor of Applied Science, MBA, and Doctorate from the University of Phoenix in Sustainable Enterprise, HR Management, and Business Administration and Management and Operations.

EXAMINING THE FINDINGS: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Participants were then invited to join breakout groups organized by Committee to further discuss the possible solutions to engaging and retaining a workforce.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT	
Chairs(s)	TBA/Interim Lance Blanford
Overview	Also called “grow business engagement”, this committee works to increase the likelihood of success in employee recruitment and retention across multiple companies.
Discussion Highlights	<p>More creative ways to open doors to potential employees such as...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eliminating the GED requirement ▪ Childcare course... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federal funding rolling out including incorporating childcare into benefits packages
How to Connect	Email Jackie Masterson at jackie@ltadd.org
Next Meeting(s)	TBA; sign-up on the Task Force website to get updates

REMOVING OBSTACLES	
Chairs(s)	Donielle Lovell and Julia Springsteen
Overview	Focused on clearing pathways for those who face barriers to employment such as unreliable transportation and criminal records.
Discussion Highlights	<p>Obstacles employees face when returning to work...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inclusive work environments ▪ The trauma employees live and bring to work ▪ Substance abuse ▪ Transportation ▪ Unemployment assistance ▪ Self-sufficient standard of living ▪ Review of expungement challenges ▪ Seeking work/life balance no matter the job, and ▪ Flexible shifts and scheduling

REMOVING OBSTACLES (CONTINUED)

How to Connect	Email Donielle (Donielle.lovell@wku.edu) or Julia (jwspringsteen@gmail.com)
Next Meeting(s)	Thursday, September 16th, 10-11:30 am, Zoom Thursday, October 21st, 10-11:30 am, Zoom Thursday, November 18th, 10-11:30 am, Zoom

UNLOCKING LOCAL POTENTIAL

Chairs(s)	Dr. Juston Pate
Overview	Dedicated to ensuring all regional students have access to high-quality education and on-the-job learning opportunities with local industries.
Discussion Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges with Staff retention at headstart, state pre-school etc. Positions require certifications and the pay is not commensurate with the debt most people have as a result of their certification process. ▪ We should offer higher wages and ways to get certifications without going into debt. There are some great opportunities for new fellowships (early childhood pathway—registered youth apprenticeship) for Spring 2022 related to childcare certifications, and many may not be aware of them. ▪ We need to add childcare to the essential industries list—lack of childcare will make the rest of the labor market grind to a halt. ▪ We will be able to attract more students to local chamber meetings if we put together a multi-regional group and make the sessions accessible and not intimidating to students. ▪ Many adult community members really want to see young people stay in their local communities and thrive—likely local adults will support this effort. ▪ Some of the new larger industries are recruiting employees from far away out of state, regional partnerships will be necessary to ensure some of these employment opportunities go to local young people. ▪ ECTC has developed some offerings in coordination with Elizabethtown schools that have been successful
How to Connect	Email Dr. Pate at juston.pate@kctcs.edu
Next Meeting(s)	TBA; sign-up on the Task Force website to get updates

CLOSING

The Summit closed out with a set of next steps from Liz O'Connor followed by final remarks from Sherry Johnson, Deputy Director of the Lincoln Trail Area Development District and Former Representative and Board Chair, Dean Schamore.

NEXT STEPS

- Give us your feedback on the Summit and help design better gatherings in the years to come: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LT2021Summit>
- There's still time to engage with the LT workforce survey. Tell us about your employment and workforce needs: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LT2021>
- Stay up-to-date with the Task Force!
 - Visit us and sign-up for our newsletter: <https://ltcareercenter.org/taskforce/>
 - Follow and share Task Force updates on Facebook and Twitter: [@ltcareercenter](https://twitter.com/ltcareercenter)
 - YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_r6hAetku07_Jpuwtt-ZA
- The 2022-25 Strategic Plan will be published late Fall 2021!

Appendix A: Participant List

Amanda Farmer	Hannah Viens	Melody Ognan
Amanda Reed	Hope Burke	Meredith
Amanda Santos Jewell	Kayla P.	Mile Embry
Andy Hightower	Jackie Masterson	Mike Hazzard
Angell Manufacturing	Jennifer Carman	M. Taylor
April Spalding	Jerisia Lamons	Myra Covault
Beth Ann Poole	Jim Rachlin	Myra Wilson
Beth Avey	Jim Skees	Nicholas Siutherland
Beth Cassity	Joe Fowler	Nora Ballard
Brandi Lee	Josh Moulton	ORBIS
Brenda Hagan	Julia Springsteen	Pamela Pitman
Cathy Williamson	Julita Leachman	Paul Gronowski
Carter Dyson	Juston Pate	Phillip Abell
Cheryl Bolden	Kayla Douthitt	Selena Hudson
Christine	Kenny Rambo	Sheila Hudson
C. Morgeson	K. Fuller	Sheila Runyon
David Raleigh	Khadijah Jordan	Shelly Bell
Dean Schamore	Kim Myers	Sherry
Debbie Dennison	Kimberly Boyd-Lane	Sherry Johnson
Derisa Hindle	Kimberly Mattingly	Stephanie Wetzel
Diane Kelley	K. Myers	Terri
Donielle Lovell	Krista Levee	Brooklyn
D. Warren	Lance Blanford	Terrie Morgan
Emily Hickman	Laura Lang	TJ Conrad
Gina Clear	Lisa Slaven	Tommy Wheatley
Goodwill Works	Liz O'Connor	Trish Niles
Greg Ashworth	Marion County	TW Shortt
Greg Gribbins	Meaghan	
Hal B. Goode	Megan Sith	

Appendix B: Watch the Summit

A recording of the Summit is available on the Task Force website [here](#).

SUMMIT TRANSCRIPT¹

09:07:40: You know anyway thanks for joining us and we, you know, as you just said if you need to step away. We'll have a recording so you're welcome to look at it later on, they'll also be a report so you'll be able to see whatever you missed.

09:07:53: Great. And so, as as you just said we've got a lot of work to do. We're going to try to keep the time a little bit shorter than we originally asked you for because it's a long time to be on zoom and of course we originally planned this we thought we'd have the ability to be together but it just seemed like the safer option to go virtual so we did.

09:08:13: So what we're going to do today is just talk about what we've learned in our strategic planning work. This past spring and summer about the state of the workforce initiative which is a has been a significant concern to many of you for many years and remains one of the most pressing issues of the region. So we will talk to you about what we've learned about the state of the workforce, and will then ask the employers in the room we have two in particular that we've asked to think about some things they'd like...

¹ Note: the transcript is produced by Zoom. Please excuse any errors

09:08:41: to share with you about what these current conditions mean for them as employers and how they've adapted and what's worked and maybe some of what's not and all of you in the room have some insight into them so we'll hope to get a good discussion going on, what's going on with the employer from the employer perspective. And then we want to have small groups. As many of you know the task force has been composed of committees, working under the big umbrella.

09:09:07: And they focused on it, education, removing obstacles to employment for people that are struggling to get back to and reconnect to work and engaging businesses, so we'll have people in small groups, you'll be able to self select your group, and then we'll wrap it up and bring it to a close.

09:09:24: We won't be too dedicated to timeline. So, if those times don't exactly correlate to what we do. No big deal. No problem we'll figure it out along the way.

09:09:33 Make sense? So far so good?

09:09:35: All right, good. With that, let me turn it over to Dr. Pete and I just want to say dr pain has been since I think we, I think we sort of ensnared dr page shortly after he arrives in town to do to leave the college.

09:09:48: And has he has been a really incredible leader and partner in this work for years now and I really have appreciated the alignment, that the college has brought to the test scores and sort of helping us keep focused on, you know what we really can do and all the resources that the college can leverage to help ensure prepared records for the future so really excited to work with you on this and thank you for your work today and with that, we'll hand it over to you to introduce some of your call.

09:10:17: Thank you ladies, appreciate the time to be with everybody and appreciate everybody's flexibility would have loved to have hosted this event and seeing everybody here in person but such things are not warranted or safe right now so this kind of large gathering will utilize our technologies and, and still share information and then that's the biggest thing, you know so much of what so many of us involved in a lot of his work are really wanting is, is to know where, you know, employers need the support Where can we direct resources, what can we do to help, you know, bridge this gap in this workforce shortage.

09:11:07: So much of what we've got to talk about though, you know, everybody has to understand that there's no policy there's no button to push there's nothing that's going to solve this problem tomorrow.

09:11:19: You know what we have got to collectively do in a unified fashion is really work to make decisions today that impact the 10-year future. You know the 20-year future.

09:11:33: These problems are not solved overnight, but they can be solved. But we have to unify and that's what makes this work so important and that's why all these partners, you know, we all come together, you know, whether it be k 12 schools and the college.

09:11:49: The workforce and business community, great partners like heartland communications.

09:11:54 You know we all come together to try to unify strategies and resources. And that's a big part of the work that will be doing today is really working to try to unify our collective resources and maximize the potential of what it is that we can do together.

09:12:13: We're all working on this. You know we've all got ideas and many of us have the same ideas but if we're working on it on separate tracks it's not nearly as powerful as it is if there is a unified strategy, which is why things like this summit are important, because not only do we get to share best practices and ideas and collect feedback from what the needs are out in the workforce. But we also get to think about, okay, which of us can work together to maximize our impact.

09:12:47: So we do have the three subcommittees and we'll hear from them just a little bit later.

09:12:52: So that you will know kind of where to plug into later on.

09:12:55: But the ultimate goal here is that we are going to be developing a new regional strategic plan for the next three-year strategic plan.

09:13:05: And a lot of the feedback that we get is going to help inform and prepare that plan that's that's how we did it, you know, in the long-ago Liz was outlining there at the beginning.

09:13:20: And in this summit really helped shape, where we went with that strategic plan and that's what we intend to do again.

09:13:27: So, you know, again if we can all just be mindful that what we are trying to put in place. Right now, our decisions plans, actions resources are going to impact.

09:13:41: What happens 10 years from now. And for every, you know, young person that we can keep here in this community and connect here with jobs, keep them in the education pipeline here in an apprenticeship pipeline here, whatever that is to keep them here.

09:14:02: 25, 30 years down the road that has an exponential factor on what happens here in this community when that young person if now of famil raising age, and now their children, maybe two or three children may also be here as a result of the decisions

09:14:21: and the things that we did to keep that young person here, you know, with our military community, everything that we do to convince the folks at Knotts on post that this is a great place to live and work.

09:14:33: They bring themselves, their family future citizens in our community.

09:14:39: This is what we've got to be looking at doing.

09:14:42: And I think that we will be better informed after today and other days like today.

09:14:50: And we just need to keep that going. So, Without further ado, we'll kick this thing off. I do want to say welcome and thank you all for taking time to be here and look forward to meeting with you a little bit later.

09:15:02: Thanks Dr. Pate. That's great, really appreciate your sort of framing this for us and, as Dr. Pate mentioned our team is working on the new strategic plan in your slide deck you'll see a timeline of sort of how we have come to hear.

09:15:22: I won't read it to you but I just want to say we have you know for a long time, known that a workforce shortage in your region has been a pressing problem and a problem which you know is threatening the vitality and vibrancy of the communities. Of course it could've made that worse, so there's no better time than right now for this team to come together, figure out how to get through this time, and come out the other side with the, you know, bigger better sort of answer to the workforce shortage.

09:15:44: So that's what we're here to do today. So much of this work has already been done by the people in this very virtual room. And I want to ask our incoming Task Force share land Lanford to introduce himself and some of the people who've been leaders in the committee work. So, to you Lance.

09:16:04: Thanks, Liz I appreciate it Hello everyone, welcome again thank you all for being here this morning and to follow up on both Dr. Pate and Liz's comments, your involvement in the strategic plan as we move forward is critical.

09:16:21: You know, I think that a lot of times you know when those of us that have may have been involved for the last several years, and for those that are newcomers.

09:16:33: You all may think that you don't have something to contribute or you're just going to try to figure out where you are placed I encourage you just to jump in please offer up everyone has something that they can contribute to this group.

09:16:46: We need feedback as we continue to develop this strict, this strategic plan, and also to as we continue to implement the strategies moving forward over the next three years.

09:17:01: I first want to give props to Mr. Jim Rachlin. He was a former chair. He has led this group for the last four years, done an outstanding job candidly has been a great mentor to me.

09:17:13: So Jim. I'm not sure that you were ready to speak but if you'd like the opportunity to say something we sure would appreciate it.

09:17:23: Thanks clients thanks for, the kind words to appreciate that a lot. This has been a great role.

09:17:30: So, like Lance said I'm Jim Rachlin look here any town, have been with the workforce board about eight years, started to believe Sherry it's been that long but I was a member of the week committee to workforce education and economic development committee and then when we formed the task force. I was excited, to help take the lead and shape that and bring on some awesome team members that carried the ball, three to four years.

09:17:58: I know we're going to talk about some of the history of what the task force done in the past but I just wanted to thank the committee members and put so much effort in on this so far.

09:18:06: It really is a self-directed activity, and everybody that is engaged that's the direction forward, and having good people on the teams that are active is how we really move the needle on things so look forward to working with everybody going forward.

09:18:23: Very well said. Thanks, Jim, I've certainly got big shoes to fill. And again, appreciate all your contribution to the, to the work in the region.

09:18:33: As Liz or dr paid one pitch and the task force has been broken down into three different subcommittees that have done a lot of great work and at this time I would like to recognize those three committees and individuals who have press them forward and made some great change.

09:18:52: First off I wanted to start with employee engagement. Daniel Carney has led that unfortunately, Daniel couldn't be with us this morning. I know the gym Rachlin who you just heard from, he had a lot of involvement within that particular subcommittee, Jim.

09:19:12: Jim Do you have anything again not to throw it back to you but do you have anything that you'd like to comment and specifically regarding No, no, that's great.

09:19:18: I did have a couple of things when we started this out...a little history on it so business, business investment team we wanted to change the name to engagement because we thought that was more representative what we were looking for but what we saw when we started, and it was Rick Games and I were the original committee leads for that committee.

09:19:38: We saw employers obviously they have trouble finding people, but we also saw a lot of employers still doing things the old way you know the traditional way for employers is I need bodies I need people where can I get them, and then kind of shaking the trees to try to find somebody to develop and provide those people but there wasn't.

09:20:00: And I was guilty of this too. I'm not speaking as an outsider. I was in business with Dan Mattel's for 30 years so we didn't really engage as much as we could to help develop the talent stream and help develop the pipeline.

09:20:14: We wanted to be customers of the pipeline but didn't engage enough into the pipeline, there's different levels different some people were more engaged than others but for the most part we wanted to hire people we wanted somebody else to develop them and have them ready for us so we could hire them. And in the old days that work, because we started up locations all over Kentucky all over the country and 2030 years ago you can go into a town or you could start up a company or you could increase your capacity.

09:20:38: And you could hire people and then waiting in line to come in, but obviously the last 10 years that's changed quite a bit.

09:20:45: And there's just not enough workforce out there so the business engagement was really about how can employers, engage with the schools, how can employers engage with the organizations that are trying to help people get back on their feet, and how can the employers work with employees to help them succeed when they do get on.

09:21:05: And so, so we tried to build on that premise of of creating a more collaborative environment between the company's the employers and, and the people that we're developing our workforce of the future.

09:21:19: Some, some real quick bullets...

09:21:23: We wound up over the last four years we've had meetings in the different counties we work with the economic development groups. They've been awesome facilitators of this.

09:21:33: We've had some awesome engagement from the Chamber of Commerce, not every chamber has been as engaged as others, but we believe going forward the Chamber of Commerce engagement is going to be key, we strengthen connections like Dr. Pate mentioned we strengthen connections tremendously between the schools. Not that we did it but we facilitated it, the schools have done an awesome job of aligning stronger with the employers and having more collaboration there and I think the others are going to talk about some of the things that happened.

09:22:07: And then a shout out to Bardstown Nelson county because they took it to the next level with the implementation of TPM and development around the chamber, putting together the hub and really pulling the whole county into a collaborative activity to develop workforce as the going forward. That's a model that the other counties can learn from.

09:22:30: So last thing again, your input shapes the direction where self-directed team, and things that the people that are engaged think are important this is what we're going to work on so I encourage everybody to stay engaged and really shape the future of them.

09:22:58: That's all I can say Lance hope I didn't take too long. No perfectly well said, Well said, you know, and just to kind of elaborate on that just a little bit, referring to what Dr paint mentioned earlier, I think one of the key components of the employee engagement committee is, we kind of all assumed that these discussions weren't being had but as we dug into it, we realized that

they were being had just in different parts and different areas of, of our communities and I think the polling and everyone together in a single, single place is really been beneficial and allowed us to kind of more target our initiatives and so again I think that that's been a great byproduct of the employer engagement is a communication piece and getting on the same page so thanks again Jim for all your work.

09:23:36: The second committee was the committee that we have named removing obstacles and mostly that is pertaining to removing social barriers and anything that is preventing employers from entering or re-entering the workforce.

09:23:54: And this initiative and subcommittee was mostly led by Donielle Lovell and Julia Springsteen, and both of them, fortunately, have been with us today. Two very intelligent women, Donielle, Julia would either of you all like to comment on the work of removing obstacles over the last several years. Sure, I'm going to let Julia introduce herself first and then I'll talk a little bit about what it is that we've done the last several years, morning I'm Julia Springsteen, I'm local attorney I'm also a town city council member so we have a constant struggle of various levels of barriers for people who want to re enter the workforce or get into the workforce and to also find the right employees.

09:24:42: And so I'm happy to work with Danielle.

09:24:45: She is a force of nature, I believe, is how she's been described, and so we learned a lot, and hopefully we can keep moving forward.

09:24:56: So the last couple of years as Julia said we have co-led this team, and it has been our responsibility to help those in our community to see the challenges that those that want to go back to work, that they face in trying to do that.

09:25:15: Not only am I do I work with Julia on this committee but I am also the Board Chair for the Warm Blessings Community Kitchen.

09:25:23: And so we so we work directly with the group, the population that is typically out of the workforce for various reasons.

09:25:32: And that can be something as. And I'm not going to say simple because I spent five hours one day trying to do this is getting an ID for someone to be able to go back to work.

09:25:45: All the way to helping our local employers and helping our, our leaders and others in the community understand the challenges of what poverty looks like for our folks and not only just poverty but those that are teetering right on the edge of their in the middle class right now but one little step can push them over into poverty and what are the kinds of policies and the kinds of programs we can have in place to help those individuals.

09:26:20: So along that line over the last several years, we have been thinking about employee engagement policies that can maybe help some of these individuals get back into the workforce.

09:26:32: One of the projects that we have had the pleasure of partnering with Baptist Health and Myra Covault is the employer of the management program and what that did is that it was in its it is an incentive program that they now offer that if you have a criminal record that at the end of a certain amount of time of working for them, they're going to help you pay to have that criminal record expunged and we know that across the state of Kentucky, that this is a, you know, very, it's a pretty major.

09:27:10: You know barrier to getting a large group of people back to work. And so, unfortunately, we launched that program right before the pandemic. And so we never got the chance to go on the road with this that is something that we are as a committee looking to do in the next several months.

09:27:30: And in also again, it is our work to focus on the employees focus on the barriers and make sure that we are helping to put things in place that allow them to more seamlessly enter the workforce again.

09:27:45: So if that kind of work interests you, Julia and I would absolutely welcome, having you reach out to us to be a part of this committee because it's you know it's a critical piece of what this entire program looks like this entire Task Force looks like we have to have a group that looks very hard at the barriers for folks getting back to work. And so we look forward to today and we look forward to hopefully picking up some new committee members, and I will shoot it back to Lance.

09:28:18: Thanks do your work, you know, Regarding the expansion, the other initiatives that you all bled.

09:28:26: It's really shown that all it takes, sometimes is just one employee or one or one later and your community to be the catalyst, and then all of a sudden, other see the value, and it starts to just kind of the trickle-down effect and the results that we're

09:28:41: seeing across the region are really great dude you all being great leaders in that particular subcommittee, and helping those that need a hand up, sometimes and so definitely certainly appreciated.

09:28:54: Thank you again for all your work.

09:28:56: The third committee is the unlocking local potential committee, and that is more so the education committee.

09:29:07: Secondary and post-secondary working together to make sure that we will retain local talent.

09:29:16: And that has been mostly led again by Dr. Juston Pate from the ECTC. Dr. Pate, would you like to comment a little bit about the work of that committee?

09:29:24: Yes, sir. Thank you guys.

09:29:37: You know, the recurring theme that there's kind of developing here, or that things have been started initiatives have been started programs I've been starting that had not been started prior to this work you know these are intentional decisions that result in an outcome that improves the state of the workforce that's what we're talking about and the education committee has been very much the same way, you know, whether it be discussions about, you know, the keeping the local talent, local.

09:29:59: That's resulted in things like this University Center project that we were undertaking here at the college to bring more four-year programs to the region.

09:30:08: So that list.

09:30:11: You know students have to leave the region to go get that four-year training they get to stay here, complete that degree, connect with companies, in turn, Co-Op apprentices with local companies rather than companies in Nashville or Lexington or livable.

09:30:26: And then, you know, increase the likelihood that they stay in those other locations because they've got the training they've gotten localized community, they've got in with an employer, we can do all that here.

09:30:38: So, you know, that's one of the things that the education committee has been working toward, but it's also resulted in things like our mobile Training Unit at the college, things that we can take training out to companies so companies don't have to send employees, out of the region just keeping that local talent local, but then also that in K 12, so much work has been done to increase work based learning opportunities.

09:31:06: And, you know, whether it be Hardin County Schools expanding programming through EC three or, you know, partnerships here at the college all local school districts I've taken a look at various certifications and trainings and, you know, forging partnerships with employers.

09:31:24: But then, you know, I'll echo Jim sentiments about the work being done there and Nelson county been some really fantastic. And again intentional decisions made to structure the school systems differently there at Nelson and Bardstown to really engage with the chamber and the local employers to provide pathways for students to see these jobs and these local careers. And rather than, then go on them on, take it back to Lance, who can give them much better kind of wrap around the, what is happening there...

09:31:57: ...because again it is reflective of intentional decisions made four years ago that are impacting today. So I just want to bring that point home again that that's what we're doing today we're trying to collect information so that we can make intentional decisions to provide a 5, 10, 20 year better future. Lance?

09:32:19: Absolutely, yeah and you know I'll see a lot of familiar faces that were on this call I think last year and if you did you heard a little bit of a breakdown about what we were doing in Bardstown and Dallas County regarding getting secondary and post-secondary more connected getting secondary and employers and other employee organizations, more connected and also taking the strategic plan that we had developed and just making it breaking it down on the county level, we duplicated or replicated.

09:32:49: I think is a better word, the committee's on a local level, took our particular counties strengths and weaknesses and use those three subcommittees to kind of push our county board because if again if our county moves forward, along with every other than the region wins, and particularly relating to the work-based learning opportunities in the schools, and everything that's going on in our region. I mean, I'll say you miss Brandi Lee on the call you know Grayson County, Nelson county barge town and I know many others.

09:33:24: The H-town Hardin County have all invested in workforce development coordinators or transition readiness coordinators,

and our jobs and I am one for Bardstown high and our jobs is to strategically look at each individual student and make sure that they're developing not only a professional path but also a professional network with employers here locally so that when they do transition whether or not they, they go on to a post secondary opportunity and leave our region. They always know that they have had a great experience with a word based learning opportunity. Locally, they have that professional relationship with an employer here locally so after they graduate they can, they can come here or...

09:34:08: ...if they've, hopefully just went right down the road to etc. They were able to remain here in the region and work while they're attending college, which is both a win-win for the student and the employer, and of course for us as secondary providers.

09:34:24: So, again, those strategies that we've implemented and I think maybe I'm a little biased here, Dr. Pate but I think that there has been more movement in that regard and I've been in education for almost 20 years, eight to 17 years.

09:34:43: I think in the last three years I've seen more movement, and more excitement regarding Post-Secondary Transition readiness and engagement with employers from secondary students than I ever had.

09:34:58: And that can't do anything but help our region and help our employers and so we need to continue to push that that's one great thing that has come about this, we need not to let go of that we need to continue to push that and again dr paid thanks to you for your leadership at DC and making sure that we're aligning our educational pathways.

09:35:20: Brandi I know you're doing great work over Grayson County, good job there. So definitely something that this particular subcommittee needs to continue to focus on.

09:35:30: But I'm also looking forward to what is our next step and you talked about that 1020 year plan.

09:35:36: So, I'll be quiet now, I just wanted to make sure that everyone had a synopsis about what the three subcommittees were doing what we've been able to accomplish.

09:35:46: And again, you know, the theme here is we need to all come together. This strategic plan is something that we are going to have to live with. And of course we can change it and alter it as we go but it's better to get the information up front so please make sure that you're engaged today in the conversation and speak up within your breakout rooms, so that we can get the information that we need to develop the best strategic plan.

09:36:13: So we have a great launching point.

09:36:15: Again, thank you all for joining us today. And at this time I'm gonna turn it back over to Liz, with Strategy Matters.

09:36:23: Thanks Lance so I'm actually I'll, I'll jump in sorry Josh. Yeah, no, no worries.

09:36:28: Good morning, everyone. My name is Josh Moulton, I'm a Senior Consultant at Strategy Matters, had the pleasure of working with you over the last several years.

09:36:38: So, you know, thanks to everybody that was able to give us some updates on the work that the subcommittee's have been doing, and you know I think For our part, it's been really great to work with all of you and I think we've learned an awful lot about, you know, your approaches to some of the challenges that you're facing down there and in ways that I think have helped us, you know, bring some, some insights to some of our other clients that are in other areas, I think some of the things that you've...

09:37:03: ...you know, been dealing with, you know, have been kind of forging some, you know, some great solutions to some of these challenges but we want to talk more today about, you know, what we can do to accelerate progress in the coming years.

09:37:17: So, you know, we've. We want to make sure that there's plenty of time for you all to talk with one another in some smaller groups. Before we do that though we want to take a little bit of time to just share some of what we've learned in the course of...so the....

09:37:43: ...to begin, you know, the three strategic questions that were really guiding our investigations over the last couple months have been the following three things so you know first.

09:37:54: We know that there's been a strategic plan in place for the last several years, and that the subcommittee's have been doing work.

09:38:02: All along to address some of the challenges related to the workforce participation crisis that you can face in your area. And so what we want to know, you can see number one there is what types of modifications, we need to make to the to the approaches that are already in place in order to make sure that you continue to make progress for progress has been made in where

you start to make progress for progress has been kind of slow.

09:38:24: The next is to think about what the role of youth training investments might be moving forward. So obviously there's been a lot of focus on education and on job learning opportunities.

09:38:35: We want to know, you know what, what further things may be effective to help you get to where you'd like to be.

09:38:42: And then, you know, kind of related to that would be, you know, expanding funding for adult training.

09:38:50: Where would the investments have the highest impact. So those are some of the things that we've been trying to think through with you all. And we want to share a little bit of what we've been observing over the last several months.

09:39:02: So here's where we were looking first. We've had the opportunity to do some interviews and conduct some focus groups, we've had about 19 participants in total.

09:39:13: We've done quite a bit of research into the background for your area we've looked over all the, you know, the notes that we took during the last round of strategic planning to see you know where, where did we encounter obstacles most frequently, where did we find opportunities to make progress and then, you know, try to build on those things that worked last time.

09:39:33: We've also launched a workforce participation and business demand survey and only got about 26 responses to that but you know that's more than zero.

09:39:43: So we've got some information to work with there. And we've also undertaken a labor market analysis. And so what we're about to talk through is just some findings that you know stood out to us, a significant form from those investigations that we've undertaken over the last several months.

09:40:03: Okay. So to begin, you know, this is not news to most of you I'm sure but the labor force participation rate in the US is about 60% in Kentucky, it's significantly lower than that, and then link and trail, it's a little bit lower than in state.

09:40:24: So, your state is a little bit below the national average. And your region is a little bit below the state average. Now clearly there's going to be some impact here related to covet coven has reduced the labor force participation rate nationally it's reduced it in Kentucky it's reduced it in Lincoln trail. But we also know that that's not the only.

09:40:44: That's not the only thing that's driving this; this has been in place for a number of years. And we just see this, you know this trend continuing.

09:40:51: So, we could click forward one you can, I think we're going to have a snapshot there of the you know the the coded timeframe. You can see all the way to the, to the right hand side of that graphic, the significant drop off in the labor force participation rate...

09:41:12: You know came into our lives.

09:41:16: Okay so, some other things that we've been seeing we know that coven has driven, some unemployment filings, it's added about 900 people who would be claiming benefits between January 20 and January 2021.

09:41:30: We've also seen the expansion of some payments that are you know slated to end September.

09:41:39: Again, I think you know a lot of these things are in line with what we're seeing nationally, but also significant because there are obstacles that you obviously are going to have to contend with some.

09:41:55: So Liz if you're ready I think you could jump in here I can keep going up to you.

09:42:00: Thanks, Josh. I'm here and ready. Okay. Um, so we want to just keep, you know, you have this deck and so if you want more detailed and we're offering you know you can look at it yourself or you also can jump in and press pause on the conversation if you want to now, but we want to give you the high level so that you can get to the part of the meeting where you're talking to each other.

09:42:21: But so here's what we learned from the surveys.

09:42:25: Most businesses are hiring, and that comes as no surprise to any of us who think it's a chronic issue to get a little more detail on that we can look at sort of what are they, hiring for and what's there...hiring that they're trying to do. And so here is the second here. Just want to make a little bit bigger. If you can't, again if you can't see it on the screen, you're welcome to you can open it on your own computer because I know Could you just shared it.

09:42:54: But we ask people, you know, are you, how much are you hiring you know you need a lot of workers with just a couple you know it, or is it actually an existential threat to your company.

09:43:02: And I think, you know, it's only for folks have said, our businesses threatened by the shortage of workers but we know that they are indicative of much greater number.

09:43:12: And we know that there are a lot of companies out there who simply can't survive unless they can get a workforce, certainly we've seen restaurants in such closing for that kind of reason.

09:43:21: So that was confirmed here. We asked it also, what kind of positions that you're trying to fill.

09:43:27: And many of them said entry level, and unskilled. So I think that actually is really important news and I'm not sure that that would have been the answer for years ago, I think, employers have actually lowered some of their expectations, they're more willing to on the job training, simply to fill the position right now is the is the main event and I think that's part of what, why, Neil and Julius committee work has been so critically important, because what they've been doing with that committee is figuring out ways to take folks who are struggling to get back into the workplace, but may not come as you know skilled or experienced in the ways that regional employers are looking for, but they've enabled them through the various services and obstacle removals to reconnect. And then once that reconnection is made those workers can, you know, can be trained on the job. And you know, just anecdotally here, especially for the employers in the room.

09:44:19: We've heard a lot.

09:44:21: I don't know if there's actually great research on this but we've had a lot of anecdotal experience with employers who say they've done very well hiring people who have criminal records, actually, that those folks are incredibly grateful for the second chance and stay and they're loyal, so the retention rates are higher. And so I want to just encourage folks that are currently asking that question and using it as a filtering device to reconsider whether it's actually important, and also to remember just how many of our friends, neighbors and relatives have actually been incarcerated and so, you know, and how important it is for those folks to be able to get back to the workforce.

09:44:54: So I think in a weird way it was a bit encouraging to see the majority of positions that people are looking to fill being open to people who may have struggled in earlier times to connect back to the workforce.

09:45:05: So what does the future workforce need? I mean I think we spend a lot of time talking about the here and now, but what about in the future.

09:45:12: So, regionally, you know, the Bureau of Labor Statistics in your local, state version of that are predicting that these industries will continue to be your growth areas.

09:45:24: I don't think this is any surprise to you that these are growth areas and industries. I want to point out that many of the positions in these industries do not pay a wage that is adequate to support a family in your region and the housing costs in your region are going up and cost of living, maybe going up to. Certainly some of the shortages of supply shortages we've seen him cause rising prices so I think we have a continuing concern about the growth, the growing need for workers, and the stagnant wages in their fields.

09:45:57: What are the business challenges ahead of us.

09:46:00: You know, employers are talking about automation because they can't have humans. So that's a concern. I think it's interesting. It's a concern for a lot of folks that's a huge investment, it often doesn't work as well as people hope and know it may eliminate jobs today that you're hopeful would be available in the future. You know, as you all know, childcare is a major obstacle people can afford to work because she cares too much proportion of what they would earn.

09:46:26: And there's a shortage of childcare spots. So, and the third problem here I think is that the childcare business does not have margins that are, that attractive, so it's a tough business to make money and so the shortage is unlikely to be solved by kind of free market solutions, because if you're an entrepreneur, and you want to make a wager that you know make a living that covers your family's expenses.

09:46:49: That's a really tough business to go into. So, I think that, you know, this committee has some work to do to figure out what to do about that because people can't go to work without childcare, they may be able to work remotely, sometimes not very effectively everybody's seen kids coming in and out of the frame.

09:47:04: But you know, in your regions, all those industries I just showed you, you know, the vast majority of those have jobs that can't be outsourced to zoom.

09:47:12: So we definitely need to work for us. And that last sort of challenges the housing problem.

09:47:19: You know, the last boom and bust cycle left a lot of developers skeptical about the value of building and worried about their financial losses. If, if the market.

09:47:32: If the bottom falls out of the market. But there's increased demand. And what's interesting to us in this process actually, is that we've begun to hear stories of people moving to the region for space and schools, and you know just quality of life.

09:47:45: So we think that's something to work with, as you're trying to attract workers to the region, but it's also going to put a lot of pressure on your housing prices.

09:47:53: And so what we want to encourage you all to think about and this is I think a couple of my colleagues on on the task force talked about trying to integrate economic development thinking and planning into this process, but we want to encourage this process to do is think about what is the role of economic development and workforce development working together with long range planning to talk about preserving and increasing your supply of affordable housing.

09:48:30: And I think, you know, just to put another pin on this, there's a kind of a lot of turbulence in the workforce and many people are not just working from home but now they're working from anywhere.

09:48:39: So you may end up finding that people are moving to your region, because of quality of life, you know they're interested in the quality of life and space and the currently still somewhat affordable housing stock and grades schools for their kids, but working in New York, right they're working totally remotely somewhere else. So, that could create incredible pressure in your housing market because the wages at the jobs and those other places are likely higher than your regional wages, so I just want to, I don't want to overstate the catastrophic impacts of this but we do need the economic development partners to help us think about what all this means when taken together because absent that we might make things worse without intending to.

09:49:17: So those are some of the challenges businesses are facing. You know you can't have a workforce if they can't have a home. Additionally, you know, again, the transportation challenge is incredible.

09:49:28: Last time I was there, I foolishly thought I could get a cab or an Uber somewhere and. Nope. So, and there's no public transit and, you know, not even private for paid transit that is readily available so it's really hard for people to get to work.

09:49:41: I think that, you know, I know, again the removing obstacles committee has done a lot of work to help create transportation options, and I know the business community and has talked about different options that they might, you know, ranging from like working on helping employees to arrange carpool together to shuttle services that might collect people from a central location and bring them to manufacturing hub.

09:50:04: Yeah, go ahead.

09:50:09: I thought of someone had a question or comment.

09:50:12: Okay, please feel free to unmute and interrupt if you do, by the way, to hear from everyone.

09:50:19: So yeah so transportation I've mentioned the wages thing, and, you know, I think we, we really want to just keep an eye on how the business engagement community can support both the integration with economic development and maybe talk about the pressure on wages too many of you probably heard some of you probably experienced yourself that workers are jumping job to job because wages are increasing and you know people are competing for workers.

09:50:48: So that's a really, I think a big challenge especially for small businesses or slim margin businesses I mentioned the childcare workforce right there, their wages are low, and the margins are too small to really hope have much hope for increasing wages anytime soon, so that that's going to create a massive challenge in that industry and of course it's related because the minute, people don't have childcare anymore they can't go to work, so it's these problems are sort of interacting in a way which is really, I think, requires a lot of clear thinking about complex issues.

09:51:19: The next chart on slide 18 is about wages, I think it's a little more detailed than this group needs right now. So I think, you know, we've done enough talking on the hand it over to Josh to just take us out on the presentation part and then we'll get to the employers to talk about their issues and chill.

09:51:35: Sure. So I think Thanks, Liz I think just a few things that are worth raising up just for your consideration as you move into groups.

09:51:46: You know, the first being, you know some of the issues here on this slide. So we've done some focus groups and in some of those focus groups when we're talking about you know what are employers and people in this domain noticing about the workforce as it is today. And there's some pretty.

09:52:05: You know, pretty challenging dynamics that we talked about some of them had to do with kind of the legacy of some of the substance abuse challenges that a lot of community members in the area have experienced.

09:52:19: So, you know, for example, you know people who are now of an age where they're entering the workforce have grown up, either.

09:52:25: You know missing parents because of things like overdoses or incarceration, or just kind of absent from their lives, kind of dealing with, you know, early childhood traumas associated with that themselves kind of struggling with issues related to substance abuse, trauma survivorship and mental health. And so that seems to be according to the folks that we spoke with manifesting itself in a variety of ways when it comes to the workplace.

09:52:56: So, one of these things being this idea that people are coming up coming into the workforce just really unprepared, in some significant way is related to basic life skills like knowing that you need to actually show up on time for a job, knowing that if you're asking for flexibility for example for something like a court appearance, you probably do not need the entire day for that 30 minute appointment, you could ask for.

09:53:21: You know what you need in order to make that appointment work but then you know try to get back to your place of employment.

09:53:26: And I think another thing that came up is this idea that there's that we heard from a number of people that there's sort of a generational mindset of, you know, approaching unemployment benefits as your employment, like that's what you do with your time as you as you figure out how to make those, those things work.

09:53:50: So, you know, of course not that's not something that everybody is doing but that's that's a concern that that we heard in some focus groups that there are just some of these really deeply ingrained and generational challenges related to, you know, the mindsets of people about approaching employment.

09:54:09: So obviously that that's a, that's a deep and challenging thing to contend with if that's what is a major barrier to increasing labor force participation, but it seems like something that we should be prepared to, you know, talk about frankly, in some of these small groups if if this sounds true to you like some, this may sound familiar to a lot of you.

09:54:32: Certainly it was something again that came up in conversations that we had in preparation for our work here today.

09:54:38: So I think just one or two more slides and then we can get into some small group work. Another you know observation about the state of the workforce I again I think probably this is something that many of you folks are aware of, you know, across counties.

09:54:54: Most folks have completed high school.

09:54:58: Most have not completed a bachelor's degree or higher education so most of the workforce has, you know, a high school graduate or equivalent, and then some.

09:55:11: Many also have a small amount of post secondary education in the form of an associate's degree or some several years worth of college. So, that.

09:55:26: That is some maybe some useful information for you.

09:55:30: Alright so, Liz you can speak more to this I think this is something you've been thinking about a lot recently but one of the things, and this may intersect with some of the thinking about housing that you're talking about a minute ago but there's this of having a climate haven right so as you know sea levels rise and wildfires raised out of control people are going to be attracted to places that seem to be more or less immune to some of those, you know, kind of, you know, climate related natural disasters.

09:56:01: Lincoln Trail Area might be a really attractive place for some people, you know, kind of fleeing, you know, for example here on the, on the coast and Boston.

09:56:10: Every time there's a nor'easter that comes up the coast we get more and more water inundation that goes further into the city. So as the years go by if that trend continues I would imagine that there's a lot of folks in this area that are going to be looking for somewhere that's not so close to the coast.

09:56:25: Same for you know folks that are out on the West Coast experiencing all these, you know fires so it's possible that this contributes to the cost of housing rising.

09:56:37: And so that might present a challenge they may also be some opportunities if this dynamic increases over the coming years maybe some opportunities to, you know, to kind of get ahead of that and prepare for it and use it as, You know, use it to your advantage in some ways in order to address some of the issues that you've been contending with was anything to add there.

09:56:59: No Thanks, Josh. I guess the one thing I want to add is that you might think it sounds crazy, to be talking about climate haven. I mean, some of you are probably thinking we're absolutely nuts but we are, we're looking at in the upcoming strategic plan.

09:57:15: We're really, it's really going to boil down to three strategies for the region's continued focus on raising labor force participation rates. As you all know, there's difference between unemployment rates and labor force participation rates and so what we really want to do is reactivate what we think of as the latent workforce people who could be working but for variety of reasons or not. And that's where the committee's have come in, it's like what are those reasons and could we just just work on resolving that but this coming strategic plan will also two additional areas of focus worker retention and worker attraction. So, retention, because we don't want people who can work from anywhere now just, you know, leaving your reasoning living somewhere else...

09:57:57: ...and, you know, taking their working hours with them. So worker retention is really important and I think, you know, worker attraction is the new strategy that we're thinking about. How do we get people to move to this region and work here.

09:58:08: So that's where the climate haven concept comes from it. There are communities around the country that are looking at this. I think Khadijah has done some research to find out about Ann Arbor, and Buffalo.

09:58:19: Both are considering this and I think we're glad to share any of that with you, if it's of interest. but we're not, and we're not necessarily recommending that the link Israel area become, you know, start branding itself as a climate Heyman, but it is notable, at least to us from where we're standing that you have done a tremendous job branding yourself as a, as the bourbon trail right that tourism effort has just been really wildly successful.

09:58:42: So we know that the region can sort of take control of its image and use it and make it, you know, and get that word out there. So I think this process is an opportunity for folks to think about what is the next generation of how you think about this region so we're throwing it out there is one possibility. But I think, again, I want to stop short of some sort of thing that we're recommending is something for you to consider and think about.

09:59:07: So with that, I want to just pause there and say, we had planned at one point to take a little, little break, but instead we want to get into the employee perspective, right away.

09:59:18: We want to just. We've asked a couple to join us and you know they're more on the call than we expected, which is great. And so what I want to do is ask Myra and Shelly to introduce themselves just give us a little bit of background on who you are, where you come from, and with respect to this work, and then to talk about how the workforce crisis looks from where you're standing, and then we'll go from there.

09:59:42: Let me start with Shelly and then we'll pass it to Myra.

09:59:46: Good morning everyone. Hi, I am Shelly Bell and I'm with Orbis. I'm their HR manager.

09:59:53: Been in the HR industry for a little bit over 20 years, so have seen lots of changes, good and bad and everything in between. Our focus primarily has been on of course, not just workforce, but also the well being of the employee, so making sure that they're not just short term but with this for the long haul.

10:00:22: Great, thank you. Shelly thank you so much for joining us and how about Myra.

10:00:34: You're muted, Myra.

10:00:39: Can you hear me now?

10:00:41: Yes we can.

10:00:41: Thank you. I thought, I don't know why...but...more technical difficulties.

10:00:48: My name is Myra cobalt most of you probably know and remember me when I was Vice President of Human Resources for Baptist Health Hardin I have actually for the last three or so years had been working towards going into something part time less stressful, as I'm sure all of you can understand what my boss finally said yes this past March, so I'm actually now manager of special projects. So I wanted to put that out there that it was my choice.

10:01:17: Good. Good move, nothing bad basically in that role I handle a little bit of everything. And one of the things that I specifically asked that I retain was my involvement and workforce development because of human resources and just that that angle of business working with employees has always been a passion of mine and so I. That's why I continue my work on this with this group. I think it's important work.

10:01:49: You know, I have to laugh, Liz internally when you say, talk a little bit about your, your environment right now. anybody that knows anything about the world knows that COVID is top of mind and anyone who knows anything about healthcare knows that it.

10:02:07: it. Just when I thought things couldn't get any more challenging, they have with recent news about vaccine mandates and I'm not going to get into whether you're pro or against.

10:02:20: I'm just here to share that.

10:02:23: At a time when healthcare recruitment was difficult and challenging as it was pre pandemic. It has become even more challenging since the pandemic and actually has become even more challenging.

10:02:36: In the last week so I am.

10:02:42: I see myself as an extension of human resources and doing whatever I can to help treat our patients basically is, this is more than just trying to recruit and retain right now it is making sure that we are able to provide a level of care that is safe and efficient for our patient population so I want to do what I can to, to help with that endeavor and I think the work that you all do is great. I've already made a mental note to follow up with Danielle and Julie about, you know, what can we do to...

10:03:30: ...even do more to remove obstacles to getting people to work so I am very much looking forward to what we're able to do in this group and still remain hopeful that I hope for the best prepare for the worst and so I'm going to focus on that whole part as forward so thanks for the opportunity to serve. Thank you Myra. You know I just your story actually is one great example of what's happening, of these adaptations that we're talking about right.

10:03:47: You know, employers are now willing to do things that they never would have been willing to do before. And they have to, you know, I'm a small employer myself, I got to have a team of eight folks over here and in the last six months we've had to make some really interesting adaptations one, one of our team has lost childcare because her childcare has lost workers. So now her hours need to be adjusted, you know, we, people are starting to work from different locations, and you know, being...

10:04:16: ...in the office far less often, even though it is now basically safe, we're, we're pretty lucky up here with our breakthrough rates are very very low but um you know people are nervous about it.

10:04:25: And I think many employers are hesitant to start requiring anything that they don't absolutely need because any kind of requirement is just another push out of the workforce.

10:04:34: So I'm curious, actually, Shelly, if you could tell us a little bit about any adaptations that you've had to make at orbits and how they have worked out for you.

10:04:43: Well, we'll end it ORBIS I can say that we've made changes to both our scheduling.

10:04:51: We have gone to a more of a more of a friendly schedule for individuals that are looking for part time work. So we have 16 hours and six hours shifts.

10:05:05: Me, a six hour shifts, eight, eight to 18 hours a week. So for instance, a Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or a Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. So that can accommodate you know that stay at home mom, or that college student that has now gone back to campus.

10:05:19: We've also looked at it from the standpoint of overtime.

10:05:37: We're able to deal with a lot of manufacturers may not be able to do but to basically schedule.

10:05:37: Our overtime during the week, so that we have a rotating two to three schedule so individuals are able to have two weekends off a month. So that's Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

10:05:45 So that gives a lot of work life balance for individuals, so that's another plug as far as for individuals that are looking for that in an employer.

10:05:59: We've also of course teamed up with our local, you know, education providers Nelson county, Bardstown town to see what we can do as far as with students.

10:06:13: We're actually in a situation where we can only hire individuals that are 18 years old, because of some of the equipment that we have.

10:06:19: But we've still partnered with both Lance and also David from Nelson county to see what we can do to to get those students in they have turned 18.

10:06:35: But those are great, thank you. And I was going to also say that also looking at salary, you know, doing a wage analysis to see where we can pair to both other manufacturers within our local area and also within the area that our employees come from, we did do that wage analysis we were able to see that we had employees that in fact came from came from about nine different counties.

10:07:03: So we have employees that are competing, all the way from Bullit County, Kentucky, to Bardstown to work.

10:07:10: So that was one of those, you know, kind of, aha moments that you know what's making someone drive that far, just to work here in Bardstown. And if sell them what can we do to bring in more people, and also keep the ones that we have.

10:07:31: I'd love to hear some of the adaptations that you've had to make and how it worked.

10:07:36: Well, one that actually that we're working on as we speak so I don't know that I can speak to success yet but a program that we've had here, we call advanced, where we have partnered with local schools, one of which is the ECTC where we basically remove financial barriers for our employees to pursue higher education so it is a fully funding, two year adn nurses to get a four year BSN degree from McKendry.

10:08:14: We do that with Rn LPN getting there aren't degrees with WKU. And with these etc in that particular case, we actually will also if your full time when you enter into the program will supplement your pay for you to work part time but not receive a cut and paste we found that a number of employees, wanted to go back to school to become a nurse, but frankly couldn't afford it and they couldn't afford to go part time because it's very challenging to go to school full time and work full time so for those we actually supplement their page that has been wildly successful.

10:09:03: They're not huge numbers I would love to say, through those programs we generate hundreds of nurses, it's just, it's a slow process but we have seen individuals graduate with degrees and it does support the skill level of our employees.

10:09:20: Our employees also see that we're putting our time and resources and energy into them rather than into unknown workers, and so it has been successful schools, looking at expanding that to other areas other than just nursing, we have shortages in surgical technology, and just respiratory therapy in so we're at a point where we are looking at how do we expand that to capture even more individuals that are wanting to pursue education and be remain a part of our workforce in those areas that we are finding just workforce...

10:10:09: ...shortage and so we are actually had a conversation this morning about that will continue to have those conversations over the next few weeks.

10:10:17: So, hopefully, by this time next year, I'll be able to share how successful we've been but certainly, you know, again, that's part of why I'm part of this group is we're open to looking at other initiatives to try to address our challenges.

10:10:36: Yeah, thank you. You know the one of the threads I noticed in your comments and Shelly is where your focus on learning from employees, where they're coming from, what do they want, what do they need, I think, in our experiences consultants we work with, you know, lots and lots of organizations and that is not a common practice actually organizations are really good at telling employees things not so good at, hearing from them.

10:10:59: So I'm curious if either of you have really, I mean she only mentioned being somewhat surprised about the community distances and some of their employees are tackling.

10:11:08: What else have you learned when you ask your employees what they need or want that might have surprised you?

10:11:16: Well, I would say a majority of the needs are simple, you know, a good living wage which we've recently increased our

wage, our starting salary as well as provided increases for all of our long term employees too.

10:11:32: So that was one of the things also looking at career progression, having a clear line of where when they start from an entry level production position, where can I go to from there.

10:11:45: So from that standpoint, we have a program where they can advance from levels, all the way up to eat so they could start up as a production person and possibly be a plant manager.

10:12:00: So with those goals in mind for individuals, and we also have.

10:12:06: Excuse me. We also do have. Continuing Education Program for our employees here, we team up with ECTC, as well as to when you and other providers so that we can get those programs that are needed for their advancement.

10:12:27: So that's one of the things that we're seeing as an ass for employees and also one of the things is transportation.

10:12:35: This hasn't really come to a conclusion yet but just looking at how we can get some of these employers that have no desire to get their driver's license.

10:12:47: We actually have an employee that walks, I would say about four miles one way to work my conversation with this person is that, you know, I don't want to have a car, you know, I'll ride my bicycle or I'll get to work, walking and I'm fine with that.

10:13:05: So within that Gen Z group. You know what can we do here locally to provide them with cheap transportation for employment.

10:13:17: Or maybe free umbrellas if they want to be walkers. Right. Right. That's awesome. That's great.

10:13:25: Yep.

10:13:27: Real quickly, on that note on the transportation note, just so you know, working with six to 15, 16 and 17 year olds here in the high school level that trend unfortunately is, it seems to be one that's going to be to persist for a while.

10:13:43: They're just not a lot of them are just not interesting and dropping so interesting thought something else I wanted to make mention too is what we're seeing here is employers as you become more in tune with your employees' needs and you're making those adjustments.

10:14:00: What and for those that I didn't mention this earlier, I own three childcare centers which is one of those entry level positions that we talked about that were in high demand earlier.

10:14:11: And what we're notice or what I'm noticing and I can't, I can't imagine that it's not across all entry or many entry level positions is is as those mid or higher level positions, and those employers are continuing to understand their employees better and make those adjustments increase wages increase opportunities, then what ends up happening is, those entry level positions such as mine, end up losing employees and so it's a great benefits, one sector of the workforce.

10:14:40: While negatively impacting another sector. And that is something that we need to continue to monitor, great for you all not not discrediting what you all are doing it's great work.

10:14:52: But I think that as we progress through this conversation, it's important to figure out maybe how we can mitigate that damage done to entry level positions.

10:15:00: Because, again, childcare being one of the most important infrastructure needs. We need to make sure that we carefully and restaurants and other hospitality are our entry level positions as well. We need to make sure that we, you know, keep that in the forefront of our mind about how that's impacting that workforce demand as well.

10:15:25: I would also say Liz that we tried to meet our employees were they were there at the moment.

10:15:35: So that's kind of our thinking as far as when it comes to both recruiting and retention, you know, where are they at at the moment and then where they want to be.

10:15:48: Great. Good. I'd like to comment please, please. Yes. How good I'm the executive director for Central Kentucky Community Action of spoke to this group three times and Lance I appreciate some of the folks you said to me, Shelly I think you made a good point about transportation, one of the 13 programs that we share here at Community Action for the Lincoln trail area is transportation,

and we've been really making a push naturally we do the medical piece that we're noted for for dialysis runs, cancer runs anyone needs to go to the doctor and we do that. But what we've also been working with especially with this group is to find out how we can break that barrier of transportation.

10:16:33: And we've done that you made mention somebody riding their bike, when we've been able to give someone a ride to Kroger instead of ride the bike we've been also been able to provide electrical assistance for someone to be able to use that funding to help not only pay for their electrical bill but save some money to help prepare their car, because I think you know a lot of times we don't realize exactly what some of the new job seekers are looking for, but also what they're facing to be able to go to work 8 because a lot of times they don't get the first check for two weeks, sometimes it could be up to a month and some employers, but just want to rest assured that we're out there looking at new ways that we do our programs to be able to get people back to...

10:17:15: ...work because I know that's one of the barriers. Thank you. And you know there was a comment in the chat about. From April, about employers trying to create, you know, shared transit options for employees that can you know have pick up points in their communities on the shift schedules. I know in Washington County a couple years ago we had a conversation about having manufacturers make sure that their schedules aligned to enable carpooling growth across companies and April's question was any other advice on what has worked for other folks, and in the transportation category specifically.

10:17:52: It is a gnarly problem so I'm not surprised if there isn't a whole lot of stuff to be known. I will keep thinking about what I wanted to raise now is this question, unless anyone.

10:18:05: If you have a comment.

10:18:08: It's just, Thankfully too many of us to see all at once.

10:18:10: I wanted also to turn.

10:18:13: Sorry Liz, I could use you here I was just going to hop in and say you know folks just go ahead and keep adding things in the chat or take yourself off mute as Lance and how did and I am keeping an eye out for any hands being raised via the reaction feature on zoom so they're ample opportunities you know if you're not comfortable.

10:18:35: You know, taking yourself off mute and speaking, that's okay. There are other ways to engage a turn it back to you, Liz.

10:18:42: Yeah, thank you. And I think what I wanted to ask about now really is about what's going to happen, what do you predict will happen if the shortages can't be resolved quickly.

10:18:51: I think we're looking at long term problem and a lot of long term solutions. So I think it's also important for us to note in the here and now what are some of the consequences of this workforce shortage and you know the parts of that the forces that are working together here can start to mitigate some of the challenges. So let me just start with Myron Shelly and see what you would say about what your worries are about the next couple of years, if the shortages can't be resolved quickly.

10:19:17: Let's start with maybe Shelly.

10:19:21: If those shortages persist, then I do see more automation.

10:19:26: But with automation also comes the need for skilled workers, both in automation technicians that have technicians and things like that that we would still need.

10:19:36: So there will always be a demand for employees, it may change the numbers may change the quantities, you know, instead of, you know, a factory possibly needing 200 employees, it may go down to 50, you know, if automation can get to that point.

10:19:56: That makes sense why or what about for you.

10:19:59: Well, we really have no options, we have to keep the doors open.

10:20:06: And, you know, closing down beds, I suppose you, you get to a point where you start to limit the services that you offer you start to prioritize which which groups of patients that you have to take care of, you know, an example is impatient versus elective surgeries and.

10:20:28: So, we hope to never get to that point, and are working hard to stay ahead of that.

10:20:35: The challenge is, we kind of have a double whammy right now in that the numbers of people were trying to recruit are shrinking and the ones we have are becoming overworked under, under motivated because they're just sure they're just tired and

physically, mentally and emotionally and so how do we keep them going and keep them energized and still engaged in wanting to just come back, day after day, frankly, so it's it's a challenge but, you know, we have to keep the doors open so well.

10:21:30: That's why that's why a lot of us have a lot of sleepless nights trying to brainstorm and really think outside the box and and that's really you know what I am hoping to get from this group is out of the box, approaches out of the box thinking, what can, what can we do one person at a time to bring someone who is not currently working into our workforce, what do we need to do to support that person getting to work and having them today because I really think it's going to be one conversation at a time and so.

10:21:53: So there you go. Yeah, thank you. You know, I know, Shelly you had a, you had a pretty successful recruitment drive recently Do you want to talk a little bit about what made it so well we actually just last week we had a job fair here at here at the planet.

10:22:11: We got about 25 candidates. I think the success was because we went to social media, Facebook, we also had a local DJ here in town that has a quote unquote weekend broadcast.

10:22:34: So I reached out to him and said hey can you post this on your site, you know, just looking at all means necessary. As far as to get in contact with those employees, Overwatch.

10:22:44: I know that's one of those social media sites that some people deem is just, you know, totally gossip, but you know when you post something there people look you know people are asking, it's it's one of those websites that people are saying hey orbit says orifices harming you know, has anyone gone to the job fair. Does anyone know if they're still having it. So starting those conversations and also, you know, taking part in reply.

10:23:12: I know that's been one of the things that many HR professionals have kind of, you know, our skittish about, but from my previous employer, you know we embraced social media.

10:23:28: Totally. We had, it was Walmart, and that was one of the things that we did we engage with social media to get the word out, whether it was that we were hiring or any other type of event.

10:23:42: So, as I said, I think that played a major role, but we also reached out to the Kentucky reentry program, Adele, who's our contact here.

10:23:54: We also reached out to some of the local we have a facilities, or coordinators, after being one Isaiah house, and also the the ministerial society. So those folks that kind of know the the pulse of the community.

10:24:15: You know those ministers, priests or whatever they may be. So that was another option that we use, reaching out.

10:24:23: Those are great, I'm sure, I actually saw a few people taking notes. Terry you wanted to join in, please do...

10:24:39: ...apologize...

10:24:40: I just wanted to share, Neil Gibbs who works for us at our early college Academy held a session, but we assistant people in completing the resume is actually had our applications actually had a person sit there and type in for them.

10:24:56: Because the application process being online for most many are uncomfortable with that so letting them come in and having someone to fill out the application for them.

10:25:08: I know some people are like, well, they just have to get over that and use technology but it really depends on what type of jobs they're applying for.

10:25:15: So, letting, we had 25 to 30, people show up that day. And many of those stressed that it was because we said hey will help you with the application process.

10:25:29: And when they came in he had someone to sit with them and type if needed, or just to tell them what each for what each thing was being asked of them to do and that was very beneficial for us.

10:25:51: It's super creative and I got, go ahead. I was gonna say we also did convert it over to paper applications. To make it easier. As you said, Terry it's just you know meeting those individuals where they're at, at the moment. And we also teamed those candidates that were coming in for the job fair with current employees. So we utilize production workers to take them on a tour of the facility so that they could see firsthand what exactly we do you know on a day to day basis, you know we didn't can can be called anything. And from that, as I said this week we're expecting to have 18 individuals in our orientation for that.

10:26:32: That's great. That's great. I think, you know, you Shelly story I think and Terry's conversation about their work with helping people with applications reveals I think state of mind that employers may have to embrace, which is not easy for everyone.

10:26:49: And Terry your stripes are you mentioned that people think well you know they should learn the technology and just to get over there barrier. But that's not how barriers work right so the employees are going to be successful in, in overcoming some of these challenges are they going to be the ones that are really reckoning with some of those obstacles, as genuine obstacles for people who really do in fact want to go to work, but are facing some real challenges and getting there.

10:27:13: Whether literally or figuratively.

10:27:13: And Thanks all for jumping into the chat there, it looks like there's some good resources which if you're not following the chat. I know some folks are like, I can't talk and watch and listen and be in the chat at the same time, so everything that's there 6 will also go into our notes and we'll send it out as meeting.

10:27:30: Let me ask if anyone else has anything they'd like to contribute at this stage. Before we consider putting you into smaller groups for more conversation.

10:27:41: Um, I see Jim you drop something in the chat and if you're comfortable with it for folks that, you know, can't do chat and listen and digest if you're interested in taking yourself off mute and giving a little more context your comment or we're happy to read it, let us know.

10:27:59: Yeah, Eleanor in there. I just threw it out I think it's most people would probably see this already but talking to a couple of large employers here in Hardin County in automotive it's very cyclical so every, every several years you got to read you the and it takes a lot of capital investment and they're considering moving to other locations if they can't find a tangible solution to the hiring shortages.

10:28:22: So, over the long term obviously it's pretty intuitive, if you have a shortage of employees over the long term your, your employers are going to move production elsewhere, it's not production and then said very similar but on a smaller scale.

10:28:36: I talked with a lot of small employers and.

10:28:41: And, in short staff they can't pay their bills and then their own lease renewals every 5, 10 years and many are consider and after the leases are up and they don't have that obligation that they just close their shop because they can't hire people that can make it a positive cash situation. So I just wanted to throw those two in there you're talking about what happens to employers want they can hire people.

10:29:01: Yeah Thanks Jim and you know, that's just such an important thing to underscore the importance of coordination with economic development, because our, our colleagues in the economic development side of things are very busy.

10:29:14: Often, trying to recruit new companies to come to the region. That's sort of the old idea of what economic development is about. I say old because I think it's got to be a lot more, a lot more complex than that now, but it's still happening where people are recruiting companies to come and meanwhile watching companies leave because they can't get a workforce, so i mean i think that you know the futility and frustration that is obviously really high.

10:29:38: And let's see, Terry and Brooklyn. Yeah, please jump in, I think we have some voices from economic development here. Thanks. Yes, this is Brooklyn the economic developer in Marion County.

10:29:49: And just to kind of piggyback off of what Jim shared actually had a meeting yesterday with one of our tier one Toyota suppliers in the automotive industry and they are actually about to go through an expansion.

10:30:07: It's a smaller expansion, that's a result of a major announcement from a Toyota plant in Indiana, and they're going to be receiving a portion of that work from this new announcement.

10:30:17: However, they still have that currently need 15 people. And so I think their expansion is going to look something like 20 to 25 new jobs as a result of this new work, but it's just the continued theme across our industrial employers they need to expand because the demand is there but they just can't in this case they're literally being forced to expand it, it's almost a hard thing to celebrate, because we know that there's still this major issue and if there wasn't this issue, then the job numbers with...

10:30:50: ...look even better for this new expansion, it would be even more of a 20 to 25, that's just what they feel like they can absolutely get by with.

10:30:59: And so it was an interesting meeting because most of the time, those are really exciting conversations and there was some excitement, but there's also this thought in the back of everybody's minds like it's not as great as it as it could normally be.

10:31:15: Yeah, thank you. and thank you for joining us today.

10:31:19: Anyone else want to jump in at this juncture.

10:31:24: All right. Alright, um, we did at one point, promise you a break. But I think, in the interest of sort of keeping everyone what will suggest instead is that we do what we call self directed breaks so take one as you need one.

10:31:36: As we mentioned the meetings recorded so you won't miss anything. And you know I think what we want to do now is get you into some small groups because there's a lot of us in this meeting, and we want to make sure that you have a chance to talk to each other as much as hear from us, maybe hopefully more than talk for us. So with that, let me hand it back to Joshua thing is going to tell you some logistics and instructions on that.

10:31:58: Sure, thanks.

10:32:00: So, here's the place to start. So we want to break out into groups where you can select which of these three sub committee topics you'd like to participate in a conversation about.

10:32:12: So just to remind, we've got these three subcommittees that we wanted to have breakouts about the first one is about business engagement.

10:32:21: And the idea here is, is just thinking about ways to increase the likelihood of success related to employee recruitment and retention.

10:32:30: And the next one. The next subcommittee topic area would be removing obstacles. So, Donielle I think earlier talking about, you know, making it easier for people with past with past criminal records to find, you know, to find and maintain employment.

10:32:49: I think, you know, the some of the challenges around childcare were also things that had counted as obstacles in the past. The third area was unlocking local potential and this was really more focused on job training and education.

10:33:04: So those are the three topic areas and what we'd like to ask you to do is to consider which, among those three topic areas you'd be interested in having a conversation.

10:33:19: And then you can pick that group, join that group, and then have some conversation.

10:33:26: Once you're in that group. So with the discussion question that we'd really like for you to address is the following. We'd like you to think about whether there are some things that the committee can do to make some significant impact on workforce participation, worker retention and attracting talent.

10:33:44: Right, so in addition to that, how might we help businesses cope with the challenges of the region more generally, right so that's what we'd like you to talk about when you're in that group.

10:33:56: It would be great if you could pick somebody to be a note taker and somebody who's willing to share. So the way this usually works right we get into small groups we have discussion for a little while, we come back and we share the results of that discussion in a larger group so that you know people, for example, who are in removing obstacles and unlocking local potential can hear what happened in the business engagement session and, and vice versa.

10:34:19: So that's what we'd like you to do again.

10:34:22: Pick a group business engagement removing obstacles or unlocking local potential, whichever one of those three you'd like to have a conversation about when you're in the group, pick somebody to be a note taker and somebody who's willing to share the results of the conversation with the larger group, and then again the discussion question would really be about some concrete and positive things that you can do to impact workforce participation.

10:34:48: Okay, any questions about what we're asking you to do.

10:34:51: Just one friendly amendment Josh, equal groups of slightly less work to do because one Strategy Matters consultant will join each of the groups and we will take your notes.

10:35:01: So, you will have to have a reporter though and then report out by the way we will definitely not want to have people reporting out on your whole conversation because it'll be rich and complex and long, but we do want to do is ask you to think

about something surprising, or some highlight of the conversation so just one highlight or surprising thing that comes out of the conversation as the report that would be great and to definitely remember to designate one.

10:35:24: Good. Any other thoughts from folks about this questions.

11:15:42: Welcome back everyone.

11:15:44: Probably every.

11:15:46: No matter how many months of a pandemic we have, we will never get used to the mid sentence relocation, so my apologies Pamela was making a final point in our group when the zoom brought us back together, and thanks for everyone for your patience with this format this morning, I know it's not nearly as fun as getting together in real life and having lunch together.

11:16:06: We are trying to end a little bit early so those of you who are having lunch with other actual human beings. At the heart and County Chamber can get there.

11:16:14: And with that, I want to just talk about maybe hearing some of those highlights from the conversation. We didn't my I did not successfully browbeat anyone in my group to being the volunteer reporter.

11:16:28: So I'm going to flip it to Lance who is by five formal leadership position sort of obligated to do stuff like this.

11:16:35: Alright, thanks. Appreciate it.

11:16:37: Yeah, so we were just talking about how employers. I joined the employee engagement subcommittee we were just talking about how they're getting more creative in making sure that they can open their practices and their doors to employ potential employees and one of the topics that was discussed was that manufacturers and others were.

11:17:00: They were eliminating the GD requirement that was necessary for employment with them, and then doing on the job training and helping them through that GD and and so on I thought that was a great topic again childcare, of course, came up as a major issue and I mentioned that federal funding is being discussed for childcare, but as a integral part of that they're discussing employee engagement with that and making childcare part of Employee Benefits packages in so that's a that's a huge one and the other...

11:17:37: ...major topic was I don't remember Lance, I'm last, like you know, there were a lot of just a lot of great ideas about different ways, employers can be flexible and I think that's really just the theme of today's we really have to make sure that all the creative possibilities are fully explored and worked out, and you know that's the, that's going to be that short term answer that you talked about earlier on that let's talk a little bit.

11:18:02: Let's hear a little bit from the removing obstacles group, what came up over there.

11:18:06: Sure. So one of the things that we did we had 16 people in our group which was absolutely fantastic. And I, again I want to thank everyone for sharing so openly and there were nine areas that we that we discussed in terms of things that are affecting impacting employees. And so again, we're kind of unique in that we, we look at that, you know, very closely at what employees are experiencing in terms of obstacles.

11:18:34: One of the first thing that we discussed was inclusive environments. So, so, the questions of how we value diversity and how we actually live that through our policies in our places of employment.

11:18:49: Another one that we talked about was the trauma that people have in their own lives as they come to work that those things like self care.

11:18:59: You know those are important parts of what we think about in terms of the whole employee, substance abuse continues to be an issue that our employers and employees are dealing with and then what that looks like for their lives as they re enter the workforce.

11:19:16: We discussed unemployment assistance, transportation continues to be a big one, across, we know not only here at Hardin County, but we know across the entire region that we've got us seriously look at transportation in terms of getting, being able to help folks get back to work.

11:19:34: We talked about self sufficiency, and what it looks like to have a self sufficiency standard and what it takes for a person to be able to have those basic needs in life met through their work, what does that wage look like, um, we looked at we talked about maybe kind of review of where we're at in terms of experiment, and whether or not employees are finding it easier to have their

records expunged now that the cost has gone down.

11:20:06: You know, folks in all levels of employment are looking at work life balance. So how do we make that a reality and then of course, one of the last things we talked about folks are looking for flexible shifts and it was exciting to hear how employers are already starting to look at that. And in terms of what they offer. So, and then we opened it up to anybody who wanted to join could give us their email and join us in the work...

11:20:35: ...and also if any of you that are listening to this find that some of this sounds interesting. I'm going to drop my email into the chat box and you can just shoot me an email and come work with us as we look at how we continue to remove barriers for people across our region.

11:20:54: Excellent, thanks for the summary and also the invitation I hope a lot of people take you up on it.

11:20:59: And last, are unlocking local potential group would it be up.

11:21:09: Hello, my name is Brandy Lee, I work with the Grayson County School District, as transition coordinator, and we discussed several things similar to some of the topics you all mentioned but Brenda Hagen who works with the governor's office of early childhood...

11:21:23: ...she really emphasized that childcare is something that we're going to have to spend a lot of time focusing in on as the owner of two independent childcare centers, and she sees the big need for entry level positions and again she reemphasize that if we...

11:21:40: ...don't have workers at the childcare facilities, then our workforce can't come to work so she really talked a lot about what at the governor's office so she kind of wears two hats, one she has her own businesses, And she also works in the governor's office for early childhood. She talked about the youth apprenticeship program, which can offer students who want to go to school to get an industry certification in early childhood education, there are scholarships she mentioned, the number \$2 million.

11:22:25: Better available to help provide students with some support in getting their education so that they can go into the field of early childhood so that's very exciting.

11:22:23: She talked about. Also, just that we want to really make sure students know that this opportunities are available.

11:22:34: I mentioned something that I think would be good, working with high school students and our local Chamber of Commerce is, I would love to see us bring together groups of students and take them to various counties surrounding counties so that they can...

11:22:47: ...for multiple reasons one to get them comfortable in that professional setting to so they can get to know some of the leaders in the workforce industry and Cheryl Bowden who was on in our group actually said that she started going to the Chamber of Commerce when she was 14 years old, and that she got to know some people who she still talks to you today in her professional life and if they were great mentors for her.

11:23:11: She emphasized that adults want to see young people in their communities. And I think that would be a great opportunity so we're going to work on some ideas to get that rolling and Nick Sutherland for me county he emphasized the importance for regional...

11:23:26: ...partnerships for various reasons they have a new industry coming that's going to provide 400 jobs for them. So he said that their county cannot accommodate all of these new jobs as far as living, entertainment, food so he said that people are going to be living in surrounding counties to come to work there so we really need to kind of talk about our regional participation as far as helping with some of those issues.

11:23:56: And then, finally, we had a lively conversation and Mike hazard and Jackie Masterson discussed a couple different things. One of them was the ECTC has created a newly.

11:24:09: It's called the youth coding Academy, which is a new program to train students to go work at Fort Knox with a starting wage of \$70,000 which is amazing.

11:24:20: They had their first group complete that last year. They had, I believe, 30 students graduate from the coding Academy and are going on to work at Fort Knox so that's really exciting.

11:24:32: They're getting ready to offer a second cohort of that. And they're going to make a few modifications to the program but that will start up in October, so if you know of anyone who is interested in that, please contact Mike Sutherland, and they talked

about also the another program that they're starting that is for production production worker program, it's basically to train people and they do not have to be ECTC students this is open to anyone, but to help them with soft skills troubleshooting things that would be beneficial in a workplace setting. So these classes are offered starting next week on Fridays. There, they will get six credit hours after they complete it.

11:25:14: So we just had lots of information so hopefully Mike is sharing I believe he's sharing information about that program with our group and so if there's anything else that you have questions about just include it in the chat room.

11:25:29: Thank you. Thank you so much, those were obviously robust conversations and if you enjoyed it and want to do more than there's excellent opportunities by getting involved more closely with the task force.

11:25:39: So, what's coming up next is will be publishing the strategic plan sometime in the fall.

11:25:44: We will be, you will be hearing. If you're on our mailing list anyway, about the next upcoming committee meetings and we really encourage you to join join one of those committees, maybe two of them if you have the time and capacity to do that.

11:26:00: We definitely want to make sure you're on the mailing list so if on the slides here you will see the address to the link to go get on the mailing list and sign up for the newsletter and keep in touch with your colleagues and what they're doing.

11:26:11: And there's also a couple of links here.

11:26:14: That can be shareable drop into the chat, but we'd like to ask you to give us a little meeting feedback at some point. So, you know, it's hard to do these things virtually especially we have gotten used to doing them in person, and our team as meeting designers and facilitators really want your critical feedback on how we can do better in the future. We really find it's important to ensure that we hear you and look, you know take your instructions on how to make this as engaging as possible.

11:26:40: I'm really incredibly appreciative of the time and energy you've all put in this morning. And as promised, trying to finish early so with that I'm going to thank, Sherry and Dean for their leadership at the Workforce Development Board and turn it over to share you to make a couple of comments and then Dean will close us out.

11:26:56: Thank you, Liz and and I want to say thank you to Liz, the strategy matters team and the Heartland Communications Consultants teams.

11:27:05: All of you for participating today.

11:27:09: We started this process about four years ago.

11:27:15: And I think you've heard throughout the morning that we had many barriers and challenges before the pandemic hit. Now that's been compounded, but we have a framework to begin working on it, but we can't do it without your input.

11:27:31: There are three things that I want to mention before I turn it over to Dean is we have one potential that may not have been discussed a lot, and that's Fort Knox.

11:27:43: We have spouses who are coming to our region that want to work in our region. We have opportunities to keep those people in our region.

11:27:55: So we need to utilize that opportunity. As part of our solution, going forward.

11:28:03: The second thing is, I think, Liz mentioned it earlier, economic development and the chambers of commerce and each week. Each community are critical for the success of implementing the strategic plan.

11:28:18: Now the local Workforce Development Board that I have the privilege of working for has one very important role, that's established in the law, but it's probably the most critical piece that they do.

11:28:32: And that's conveying conversations.

11:28:36: And we want you all to be engaged in the conversation because the challenges that we have right now are some that we've never seen in our lifetime.

11:28:48: So if we don't work together. We're not going to resolve them.

11:28:54: We want your input, we want your elbow grease and we want to roll up our sleeves and make this for Liz. Thank you for coming honorary Kentuckians, we still want you to to relocate to our region.

11:29:08: And I'll turn it over to our Board Chair, Former Representative Dean Schamore.

11:29:15: Well thank you, Sherry And thanks to everyone here today and it's a big crowd and excited that you all came out and thanks for taking the time and, hopefully, we can all work great together in the future.

11:29:25: I know a lot of work with the speakers and facilitators and panel participants. This work has been a long time in the making and many unknowns with coven, and unfortunately that still is, is changing.

11:29:50: ...gonna be a lot of changes. And it's an opportunity for us here if you think that changes the opportunity for people to get new positions and hopefully move other people up into the workforce. So it's an opportunity that we're here to hopefully help you along the way. And, but likes been said many times, we need your input and we need help from you all to engage, if you see some social media like to share it out there. We get reports on those on our monthly meetings and they do good out in the community.

11:30:22: And, you know, it has a lot of response so share those out if you could even be more helpful, and any other ideas you may have with us and share those with us as well.

11:30:29: Only control region extraordinary position to directly impact his future. We're hoping this is through stronger partnerships with each chamber of commerce businesses connecting with education and training services, employers and hiring managers tapping into service providers.

11:30:47: All of us creating an agenda that we can take to our representatives to make sure the changes we need can come to life.

11:30:53: We look forward to getting to know you and engaging with us. We hope to see you before our next summit. Many thanks and stay safe.

11:31:04: Thanks so much, Dean, and I know no one will object to getting some minutes of your life back and your busy schedule. So it's summer go outside enjoy the free time and thanks to everyone for joining today and we'll see you soon.

