

2022-2023

# ANNUAL REPORT



**WIB**

Workforce Investment Board  
OF TULARE COUNTY

*Driving Economic Success*

# THEORY OF CHANGE

## The Issue

Too many people are unemployed or in low-wage jobs that don't sustain their families, and too many businesses have high-quality jobs that go unfilled.

## Our Focus

Workers & Businesses  
Education  
Community & Civic Leaders


## Our Values


 Human-Centered

 Agile

 Inclusive

 Collaborative

 Skills-Focused

 Evidence-Based

## Our Strategies

 Fund

 Broker

 Convene

 Invest

 Guide

 Measure

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Note: Look for the icons on each section to see how we've incorporated our Values and Strategies into our work.

## EMPOWERING PROGRESS: A YEAR OF IMPACT & GROWTH

As I reflect on our year at the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County, I'm filled with a deep sense of pride and purpose. Our annual report is more than numbers and achievements; it's a testament to our shared journey and collective potential. Behind each statistic in this report lies a story: a life transformed, a family supported, an opportunity seized, a business flourishing.

At the heart of our efforts lies the belief that every individual deserves opportunities that empower them, and every business should thrive with the right talent. The initiatives and impact reflected in this report are emblematic of our commitment to this vision.

Our partnerships are the lifeblood of our success, underscoring that our mission is a shared one. Together, we've made strides in addressing the pressing challenges of unemployment and bridging the talent gap.

We stand at an exciting time. Our local economy continues to grow jobs at rates above the region and state. Our workforce is growing at rates we haven't seen in decades. Growth in worker wages continues to outpace the rest of the state.

Yet, with every achievement, we're reminded of the road ahead. Despite the challenges, our steadfast vision, values, and partnerships instill confidence in our path forward.

Thank you for being an integral part of this mission. Here's to the work we've done, the challenges we'll overcome, and the prosperous future we're building together.

With deep gratitude,



Adam Peck, Executive Director

## BOARD MEMBERS

Colby Wells *Chair*

Southern California Gas Company

Joe Hallmeyer *Vice Chair*

Ken's Stakes & Supplies

Randy Baerg

Warren & Baerg Manufacturing, Inc.

Gil Aguilar

Pine Pedroncelli & Aguilar, Inc.

Tricia Stever Blattler

Tulare County Farm Bureau

Brandon Lovenburg

U.A. Local #246

David Pena

SMW Local Union #104

Ronny Jungk

IBEW Local #100

Brent Calvin

College of the Sequoias

Yolanda Valdez

Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District

Robert Kleyn

Department of Rehabilitation

Christina Garza

Employment Development Department

Jeffery Hudson-Covolo

Sierra View Medical Center

Amy Shuklian

Tulare County Board of Supervisors

## & WHO ARE WE WHAT DO WE DO?

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) is a landmark piece of legislation designed to help people attain economic self-sufficiency, while giving employers opportunities to train, hire, and retain workers. WIOA strengthens and improves our nation's public workforce system and helps Americans, including young adults and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers and helps employers hire and retain skilled workers. WIOA funding is allocated through the U.S. Department of Labor to the State Workforce Board and then to local Workforce Boards.

At the local level, the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County (WIB) is responsible for using WIOA funds to connect Tulare County job seekers to employment and training opportunities. This is done through Employment Connection Centers, the youth@work program, and other special grants and projects.

**United States  
Department of Labor**



**California Workforce  
Development Board**



**Workforce Investment  
Board of Tulare County**



Workforce Investment Board  
OF TULARE COUNTY  
*Driving Economic Success*

**WIOA Career Services**



A proud partner of America's Job Center  
of California<sup>SM</sup> network.

**WIOA Youth Services**



Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County

**Special Grants  
& Projects**

# 2022-2023 FISCAL YEAR EXPENDITURES



## OCCUPATION CHANGES

### 2021-2023 Occupations with Greatest Growth

**+1,348** Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse

**+1,106** Home Health and Personal Care Aides

**+778** Stockers and Order Fillers

**+719** Fast Food and Counter Workers

**+482** Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers

### 2021-2023 Occupations with Greatest Decline

**-140** Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agriculture Matters

**-125** Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals

**-107** Educational Instruction and Library Workers, All Other

**-105** Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators

**-104** Retail Salespersons

## INDUSTRY CHANGES

### 2021-2023 Industries with Greatest Growth

**+3,466** Support Activities for Crop Production

**+3,071** Education (Local Government)

**+1,947** Restaurants and Other Eating Places

**+1,275** Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities

**+1,023** Fruit and Vegetable Canning, Pickling, and Drying

### 2021-2023 Industries with Greatest Decline

**-1,172** Hospitals (Local Government)

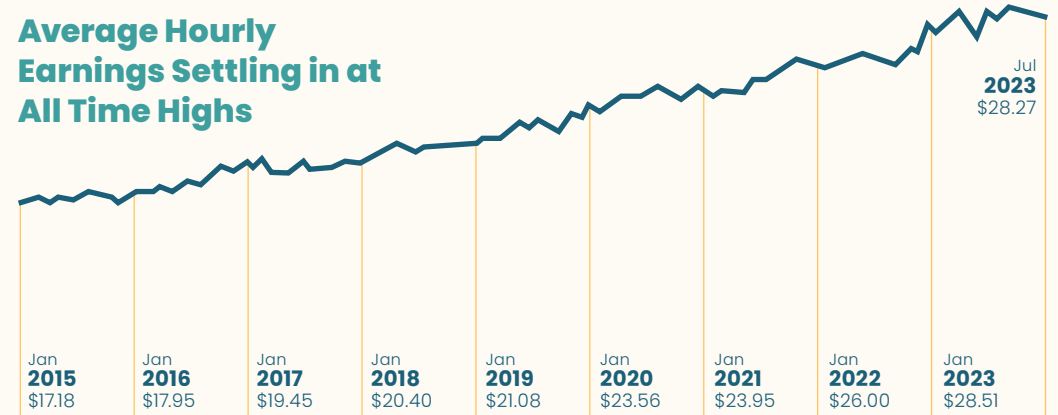
**-1,106** Crop Production

**-925** Frozen Food Manufacturing

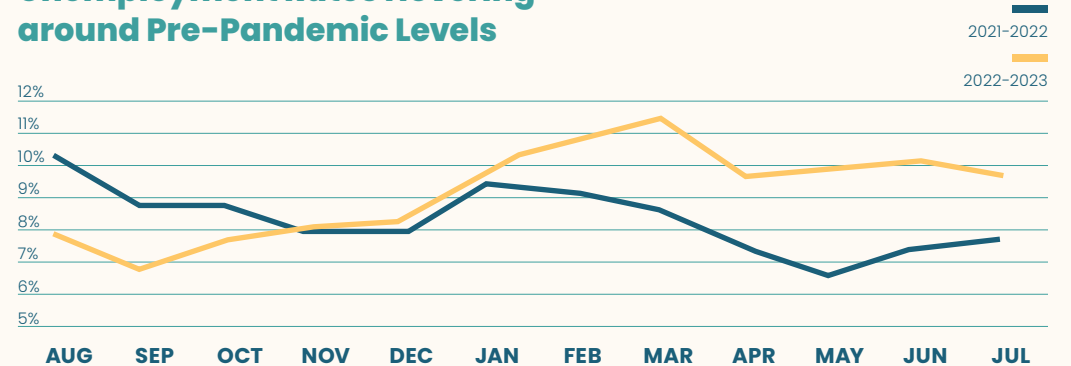
**-358** Professional Employer Organizations

**-239** Office Administrative Services

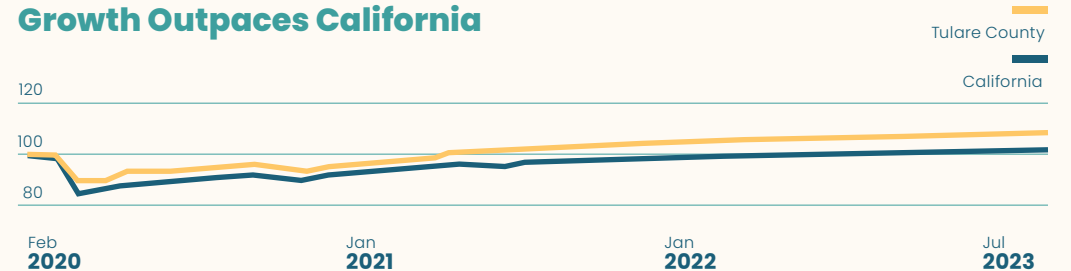
## Average Hourly Earnings Settling in at All Time Highs



## Unemployment Rates Hovering around Pre-Pandemic Levels



## Tulare County Nonfarm Job Growth Outpaces California



## Labor Force at All Time High



## Putting the Customer's Experience at the Center of Our Work

Human-centered design is a core value of the WIB. We believe that to successfully serve a customer you must design systems and processes with people in mind. This year the WIB has undertaken a number of projects that made us rethink, redesign, and develop prototypes of our systems and processes, improving our customers' experience with the workforce development system.

### Bringing New Perspectives

The WIB is proud to be one of five workforce boards participating in the Jobs for the Future (JFF) Workforce Transformation Corp. (WTC). The WTC aims to foster equitable change in the public workforce system by collaborating with future-focused workforce boards committed to integrating human-centered design principles into their services. The WTC utilizes a fellowship model where workforce boards host and work collaboratively with a "workforce transformation fellow". The Workforce Transformation Fellow for Tulare County is Tom Price, founder of Middlestate who has previously worked with the WIB on a number of human-centered design projects. With the new perspectives and resources of Tom and the other WTC Fellows, we expect to make significant impacts on our systems' processes and policies leading to more equitable outcomes for Tulare County.

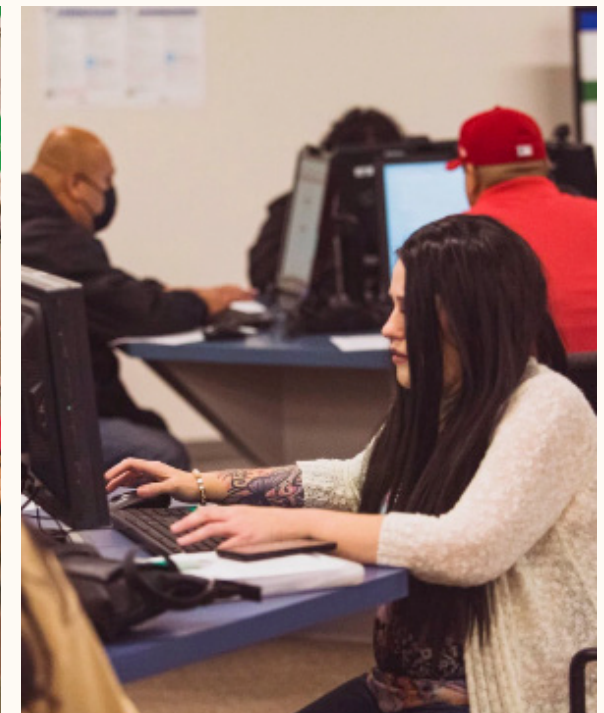
### Redesigning Customer Interactions

This year the WIB made a significant investment and launched a new Employment Connection website in April 2023, [www.employmentconnect.org](http://www.employmentconnect.org). The website offers customers a self-guided tour of workforce resources and provides direct

links to customers allowing them to access the information they need when they need it. With the click of a button, job seekers can now book appointments with our staff directly, register for workshops, download job leads, and much more. The website redesign removes many obstacles for job seekers who may not have the ability to go to an Employment Connection Center for help.

### Increasing Collaboration to Serve Customers

Individuals who find themselves laid off from work often face many challenges and obstacles as they work to become re-employed. The WIB, in partnership with the Employment Development Department and the Employment Connection Centers, have worked together this year to design a solution to the following question, "How might we create an experience for dislocated workers that connects them to WIOA career services at the time they are attending the re-employment workshops?" This workgroup recently launched a prototype workshop to test out the proposed changes. Customer and staff feedback will be used to edit and collaboratively design a final product that will be customer focused.





## A Trusted Neutral Convener

The WIB is committed to workforce and community development through several ongoing regional initiatives that bring much-needed resources and expertise to the region.

In the State's **Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF)**, the WIB, in partnership with the Central Valley Community Foundation, is playing the role of convener and facilitator for the Kings-Tulare subregion. This 18-month, \$995,000 grant-funded collaboration will result in setting inclusive, equitable, and sustainable local community and economic development strategies focused on bringing high-quality jobs of the future to the region. The WIB will convene and facilitate meetings with more than 30 local stakeholders, host public forums, and engage in community outreach to ensure the strategies provide equitable economic access to all. For more information go to: [www.valleycerf.org](http://www.valleycerf.org)

The WIB is also a leading partner for the Federal Government's regional **Good Jobs Challenge**. This four-year \$2 million project aims to support and

build capacity of the South Valley Industrial Collaborative while also making complementary evidence-based investments in workforce development training in the industrial sector. The WIB and its partners will work to identify quality jobs and build pathways to those jobs in close partnership with training providers, industrial businesses, and other stakeholders.

**“** It has been great being part of this experience, coming together with Kings, Tulare, Fresno, and Madera Counties to explore data and collaborate with different workforce sectors. Sharing each other's experiences and visions for the region has been motivating, and I'm looking forward to the results over the next decade.”

**SAVINO PERICO**  
Community Development Manager  
Kings Community Action Organization

**CONNECTING PARTNERS**

**1,439** Customer referrals made

**5** Cross-training sessions for partner organizations

**217** Partners and staff trained

## Employment Connection Partners Work Together to Support Our Community

In Tulare County, the local workforce development system is referred to as the Employment Connection (EC) System. This system is a broad network of partner organizations that offers our community universal access to seamless professional services, and workforce information to encourage job creation and skills development. EC System partners provide integrated services to maximize effectiveness while minimizing duplication of services. As a system, we continuously evaluate our partnerships and services to ensure we are providing customer-centered services. This year we have continued to implement several best practices.

### Cross Training:

EC System partners and staff participated in partner cross-training throughout the year. The training provided professional development opportunities for system partners to broaden their knowledge of how to help customers access commonly needed resources. Training brings an increased awareness of services ensuring we can provide our customers with relevant referrals in an effective manner.

### Modern Service Delivery Tools:

Braiding resources through partner referrals provides a holistic approach to service delivery.

EC system partners utilize an electronic referral form to reduce the time it takes for customers to receive services. The electronic form allows partners to provide basic information about a customer to a single point of contact at another agency. Referring partners can communicate with confidence to their customers that the partner agency will contact them within a specific period of time, providing accountability for everyone involved.

**“** TulareWORKs is thankful to be in partnership with Employment Connection. Through our continued partnership and collaboration in the Welfare to Work Job Search and Expanded Subsidized Employment referrals, educational opportunities, and cross-training of staff, we are continuously supporting our customers and positively impacting their success, leading them through their journey of self-sufficiency.”

**ALEYDA MONTENEGRO**  
Tulare County HHS

**\$3,675,000**  
TO INVEST IN COMMUNITY IMPACT

**PARTNERS** | College of the Sequoias · CSET · Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District · Employment Development Department · Department of Rehabilitation · Farmersville Adult School · Job Corps · Porterville Adult School · Porterville College · Porterville Sheltered Workshop · Proteus Inc. · Root & Rebound · Sequoias Adult Education Consortium · SER Jobs for the Future · Tulare Adult School · Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency · Tulare County Office of Education · Tule River Indian Tribe · Visalia Adult School · Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County





## Guiding Customers on their Journey to Employment and Training

The impact of these training initiatives is **nearly \$1.5 million**, covering tuition and training costs for 500 job seekers in Tulare County annually.

### Career Services Impact:

- 1 Improved Employability
- 2 Development of In-Demand Skills
- 3 Increase in Job Placement
- 4 Higher Earnings for Job Seekers
- 5 Job Retention and Advancement
- 6 Growth of the Local Economy
- 7 Creating a Pipeline of Job-Ready Candidates
- 8 Performance Accountability through Data Collection

exploration and guidance. Together, they develop customized action plans that align with each individual's unique career objectives, ensuring a clear path to success. These plans serve as roadmaps and provide valuable resources that help job seekers realize their goals. Action plans may include attending job readiness workshops, participating in skills assessments, reviewing labor market data for specific industries or careers, and learning to navigate the job search process.

To further support our job seekers' growth, we offer training scholarships up to \$5,000 in value. These scholarships make it possible for job seekers to enroll in training programs that they otherwise would not be able to afford to attend. Each scholarship provides a job seeker with the ability to gain hands-on education and training at community colleges, private vocational training schools, and local adult schools. For individuals whose chosen career path does not require certified training, they can gain work experience and skills training with local businesses through on-the-job training. If they have limited or no prior work experience, they can participate in a paid transitional job. The impact of these training initiatives is nearly \$1.5 million, covering tuition and training costs for 500 job seekers in Tulare County annually. These investments enable individuals to kickstart their careers, secure good jobs, and pave the way for a brighter future.

The WIB provides valuable career services to the residents of Tulare County through strategic investments of WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding. These funds ensure that job seekers from all communities have access to skills training that leads to high-quality employment options. Investments empower workers to support their families and achieve lasting success. The WIB's four Employment Connections Centers are strategically located throughout Tulare County to cater to the needs of job seekers. Dedicated Career Coaches work closely with individuals at these centers to offer personalized career



### Transitional Jobs:

**72**

Individuals

**\$232,918**

Invested in wages

### On-the-Job Training:

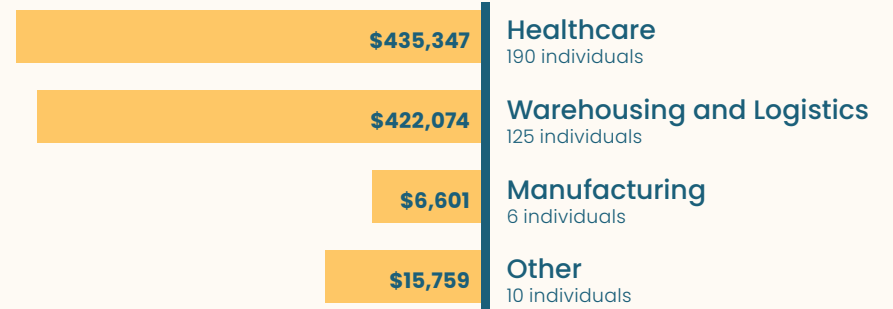
**17**

Individuals

**\$42,122**

Invested in wages

### Training Scholarships by Industry:



TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED:

**331**

TOTAL SCHOLARSHIP INVESTMENT:

**\$947,217**

## Expanding Access to Employment Opportunities for Marginalized Customers

The WIB's WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funds are the backbone of workforce services in Tulare County. Effectively leveraging these funds, the WIB successfully secured an additional \$4.4 million in specialized grant funding this year. These funds are dedicated to delivering equitable and inclusive workforce and training services to individuals facing challenges to finding employment, such as people with disabilities, justice impacted individuals, English language learners, and people experiencing homelessness. By prioritizing these initiatives, the goal is to address disparities in accessing high-quality workforce services and empower marginalized communities.

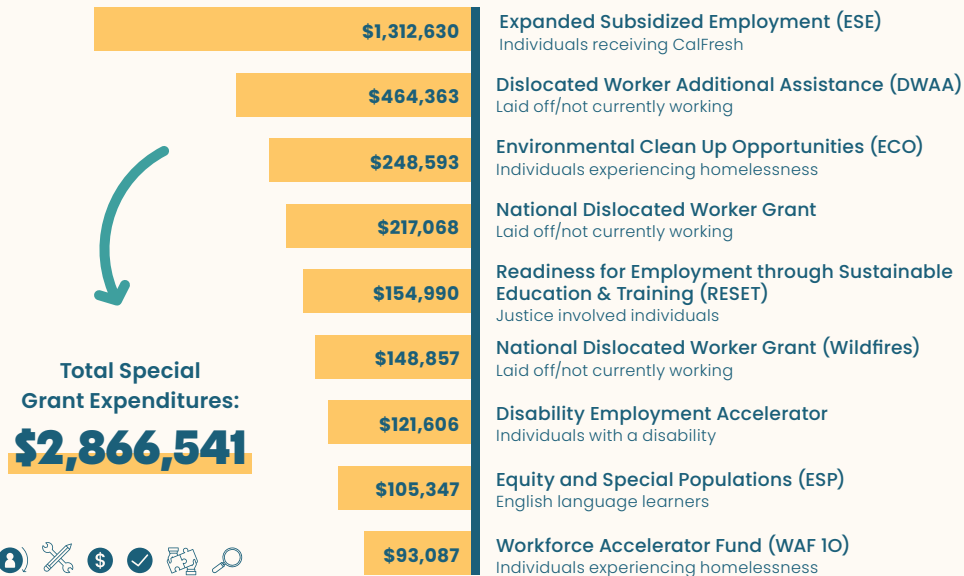
When applying for specialized grant funding the WIB strives to learn about the specific needs and challenges of the individuals within the identified populations. Interviewing customers, using existing data, and relying on local subject matter experts provides the foundation needed to develop each project or program.

The success of specialized grant programs depends on a strong Integrated Resource Team comprised of local partners who work together to align resources, share information, provide a network of supportive services, and assist customers. The WIB continues to work with Integrated Resource Teams to provide specialized training for staff and partners to educate them on how to better serve individuals with barriers to employment. The training has resulted in a more informed staff who now have the knowledge, tools, and resources to serve individuals in many marginalized populations with sensitivity and cultural awareness.

The Integrated Resource Teams also provide ongoing case management and support to customers. The WIB believes that when marginalized job seekers receive customized career and training services, they are able to secure meaningful and sustainable employment, and local businesses are able to find qualified workers.



### Special Grants Supporting Marginalized Customers:



## Developing Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

In 2019, the WIB received the first round of Disability Employment Accelerator Grant funding and launched **Access to Careers and Employment (ACE)**. ACE is designed to provide career development and job opportunities to individuals with disabilities in Tulare County ultimately leading job seekers to career pathways and lasting employment. ACE aims to address the high unemployment and poverty faced by individuals with disabilities in Tulare County and brings much-needed attention and focus to the importance of inclusivity within the workforce.

After successfully implementing the ACE program in 2019, the WIB received a second round of grant funding (April 2021 – March 2023). The WIB and the Integrated Resource Team continued to adjust, and improve elements of the program and ensure

that individuals with disabilities continue to receive access to resources and services. During the 2022-2023 program year ACE served 60 individuals, providing career services, work-based training, training scholarships, and helped 29 individuals obtain unsubsidized employment with local businesses.

While the Disability Employment Accelerator Grant funding ended in March of 2023, the WIB understands that there are still many individuals with disabilities who need and deserve access to career development and job opportunities. The WIB was recently awarded the **Equity and Target Population Funds** grant through the Employment Development Department which will allow the ACE program to continue to serve customers through April 2025.



**MEET GILBERTO!**

### IMPACT OF ACE:

**60**  
Individuals with disabilities served

- 23** Completed work-based training
- 29** Obtained unsubsidized employment
- 6** Awarded training scholarships

**INTEGRATED RESOURCE TEAM PARTNERS** | College of the Sequoias · Department of Rehabilitation · Employment Development Department (EDD) · Porterville Adult School · Porterville College · Tulare Adult School · Visalia Adult School · Visalia and Porterville Employment Connection Centers · WIB



Gilberto was a licensed CNA who wanted to take the next step in his medical career. He began working with Maria Koo, a Career Coach at the Employment Connection, who helped him to enroll in a new COS RN program designed to allow working adults to obtain an RN degree.

After starting his coursework, Gilberto began to struggle in some of his classes. He met with his professor who suggested that he purchase an iPad that would allow him to record and download lectures and help him with notetaking in class. Gilberto confided to his counselor at the Access & Ability Center at COS and with Maria that purchasing an iPad was going to be a financial hardship. Maria quickly assured him that this financial challenge should not stop him from completing his courses and provided him with a voucher to purchase the needed technology.

Today Gilberto is excelling in his courses and is extremely grateful that the ACE program was able to assist him. "I am very thankful for the iPad, it has played a big role in my study habits since I learn best from visuals and audio, and this has helped so much with my class lectures. I do not know what I would do without one."

Gilbert also noted "To this day, I have challenges in school since English is not my primary language, but that does not stop me, it just takes more time studying and researching to fully comprehend a subject in both languages. I have to fully understand and grasp the subject as I first think in Spanish and convert it to English. I think of it as a benefit to me and it helps me in explaining and answering questions from our Hispanic patient population when I am in the clinical setting."

## Collaborative Strategies Support Justice Involved Customers

The **Readiness for Employment through Sustainable Education & Training (RESET)** program was established in 2014 in collaboration with Tulare County Probation. The primary focus of the collaboration is to prepare individuals under the jurisdiction of the Tulare County Probation Department for workforce training, educational, and employment opportunities. RESET aims to empower justice involved individuals to successfully re-enter society through employment readiness, personal growth, and making a positive contribution to society. This program addresses the significant service gap experienced by justice-involved individuals by providing access to career readiness, education, and work-based training.

Tulare County Probation plays a key role in recruiting, and screening participants, conducting job readiness workshops, and providing essential supportive services. The Employment Connection team provides access to comprehensive career services including career coaching, job search assistance, work-based learning, direct placement aid, and employment retention support.

By emphasizing the importance of employment as a successful re-entry strategy, the program seeks to help formerly incarcerated individuals not only secure jobs, but maintain them effectively, fostering a safer and more stable community for everyone.

### RESET Program Elements:

#### Employment and Self-Sufficiency

Help justice-involved individuals secure gainful employment through career readiness, education, and work-based training. This fosters confidence and self-sufficiency.

#### Reduced Recidivism

Break the cycle of re-offending by offering comprehensive support, job placement assistance, and follow-up services, reducing the likelihood of returning to criminal activity.

#### System-Wide Change

Collaborate with partner organizations to create a more supportive approach to reintegration, identifying and addressing barriers to improve overall outcomes, and contribute to a safer community.

### IMPACT OF RESET:

131

Justice-involved individuals served

- 16** Completed work-based learning
- 13** Participated in a transitional job
- 3** Completed on-the-job training
- 47** Achieved unsubsidized employment



**MEET JACK!**

Jack was living with his family because he had fallen on hard times due to his lifestyle choices and recent incarceration. He was looking to make a positive change in his life and took the first step by engaging with the RESET job readiness and training program. Jack was referred to the Visalia Employment Connection by the Tulare County Probation Department and began meeting with Herb Schneider, a RESET Career Coach.

Jack and Herb started the process of rebuilding his skills, and exploring career opportunities that would allow Jack to have a productive and self-sufficient lifestyle. Jack stated that his goals were to "re-engage with a work routine, hopefully drive a truck again, improve his skills, and learn new skills." He also wanted to save money to fix his car, and eventually get a place of his own.

Herb was able to help Jack get an interview with a company that needed a welder fabricator. Since

Jack did not have all the skills needed for the job, Herb helped him secure an on-the-job training opportunity so that he could learn new skills while working and being paid. Herb also helped Jack purchase the necessary work attire for the new position. Jack successfully completed 100% of his training goals. Jack noted, "This experience will help me get a better job in a better work environment one day."

Soon after, Jack received a job lead for a local distribution business that was looking for a Class-A truck driver. Jack was thrilled at the idea of getting back into truck driving. He successfully interviewed for the position and was offered a full-time job as a Heavy Truck Driver. After getting the job offer Jack said, "I now feel more confident and capable of accomplishing my ultimate goal of becoming self-sufficient and know that I have a more positive future to look forward to."

**At Employment Connection, we understand that having a good job is key to having a good life.**



At Employment Connection we provide services so that job seekers in Tulare County can get the guidance, training, resources, and confidence they need to realize their career potential. We connect job seekers to Employers so that Tulare County businesses prosper, and our community thrives.

The WIB contracts with local community-based organizations, Community Services Employment Training (CSET), and Proteus Inc., to manage the Employment Connection Centers. These organizations are subrecipients of WIOA funding from the WIB. They assist with carrying out the mission of the WIB by providing direct services to customers at the Employment Connection Centers.

**Career Services:**

**Career Coaching**

Career Coaches at Employment Connection work one-on-one with job seekers to develop a customized plan to build skills and find work.

**Training & Scholarships**

Employment Connection connects interested job seekers to training opportunities to increase skills or learn a new skill that can lead to a better job. Scholarships are available for in-demand training.

**Job Preparation Workshops**

Employment Connection offers a variety of workshops to help job seekers. Workshops are held virtually and in person, and cover topics such as resume building, interview skills, and etiquette in the workplace

**Hiring Events & Job Leads**

Employment Connection provides weekly job leads and hosts hiring events for job seekers to meet local employers.

**Locations and Contact Information:**

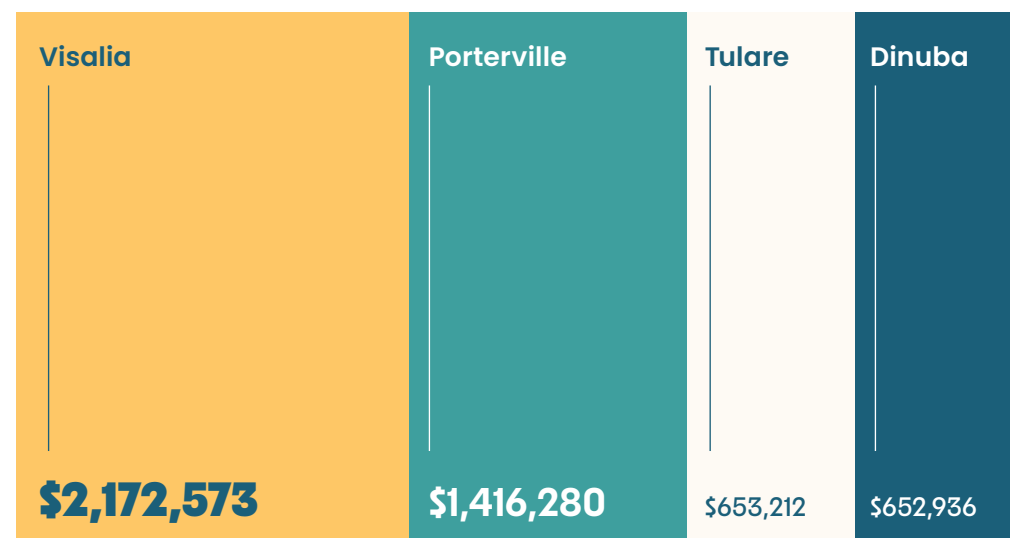
- 1 Visalia**  
4025 W. Noble Ave.  
Suite B  
559-713-5000
- 2 Porterville**  
1063 W. Henderson Ave.  
559-788-1400
- 3 Tulare**  
304 E. Tulare Ave.  
559-684-4987
- 4 Dinuba**  
400 W. Tulare St.  
Suite C  
559-406-1001

[www.employmentconnect.org](http://www.employmentconnect.org)



**Total Investment by Site:**

*\*Excluding Training Scholarships*



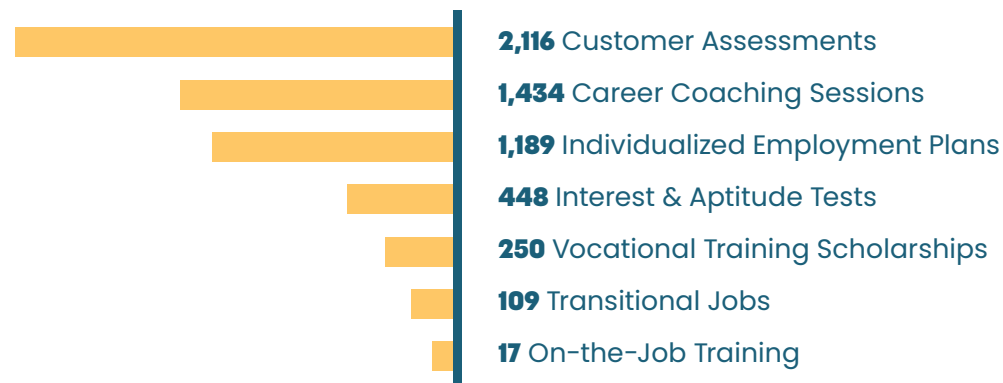
**Employment Connection Centers by the numbers:**

**50,069**

Visits to the Resource Rooms

**16,013**

Distinct Visitors



## Preparing Young Generations for Work

The WIB serves youth and young adults 16-24 years old through the **youth@work** program. This program aims to provide **Out-of-School youth (OSY)** and **In-School youth (ISY)** with access to education, training, and employment opportunities and has two distinct strategies to serve these customers.

The OSY program is designed to assist young adults ages 18-24 years of age who are not currently employed or enrolled in post-secondary education or a training program. OSY places emphasis on providing access to training in high-growth and in-demand occupations by supporting young adults who desire to increase their skills as they transition from secondary education to career technical education training.

The ISY program partners with local school districts to support and enhance existing career technical education pathway programs within each district. ISY focuses on providing additional support to students who are experiencing significant barriers, including homelessness, English as a second language, foster care, and more. ISY aims to bridge the gap in services between education, training, and employment, that these students often encounter while in high school.

More than 30 distinct businesses participate in the youth@work program annually and provide meaningful paid work experience for the young adults participating in youth@work. In addition to the paid work experience, 30 young adults were awarded scholarships to attend training programs for: Medical Assistant, Truck Driving, CNA, and LVN.



### youth@work Impacts:



Young adults are placed in either employment education or training.



Young adults participate in paid work experience and gain employment upon completion.



Young adults are exposed to career pathways and gain a clear understanding of the labor market to make informed decisions about their future careers.



Young adults without a high school diploma transition to high school equivalency programs, and obtain a diploma or equivalent.



Young adults gain training and work experience that aligns with their career interests.



## MEET MARIA!

Maria walked into the Porterville Employment Connection looking for a job. She was armed with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish Studies, but had very little work experience outside of working in a student store and food service while in school at UC Santa Cruz. She also lacked a driver's license and that proved to be a challenge for employment.

Maria began working with Nou Cha, a youth@work Career Coach, to explore her career options. Maria came to realize that she really wanted to get a job in the clerical field, and hoped to be able to learn new skills that she could include in her new resume. She began attending work readiness

workshops, and the youth@work team worked behind the scenes to arrange for her to participate in a work experience with Parenting Network as a clerical/office aide.

Maria thrived at her job and earned excellent marks on her evaluations. She did so well that Parenting Network hired her on as a permanent employee when her work experience came to an end.

"I want to thank Nou and the youth@work team for providing me with this great opportunity to gain work skills, and for the guidance. I now have a valid driver's license and a great job."

## Jump Start Program Fosters Career Exploration

Jump Start is an initiative developed between West Hills College Lemoore, Porterville College, College of the Sequoias, and Reedley College. The purpose of the initiative is to help high school seniors and first-year college students explore career options through hands-on learning experiences. Sixty-three students representing 16 high schools participated in the Jump Start program this year. Students were placed in four cohorts each focused on an in-demand career pathway including Agriculture, Industrial Technology, Healthcare, Police and Administration.

Jump Start students attended 3-4 weeks of classroom curriculum taught by Community College instructors. Instructors accompanied the students on industry tours where business professionals discussed their career paths, and talked about the skills and education the students will need to accomplish their future employment goals. Many students were given the opportunity to learn new skills and use new equipment during their visits. The community colleges provided the

students with transportation, meals, and necessary equipment to enhance their learning experience.

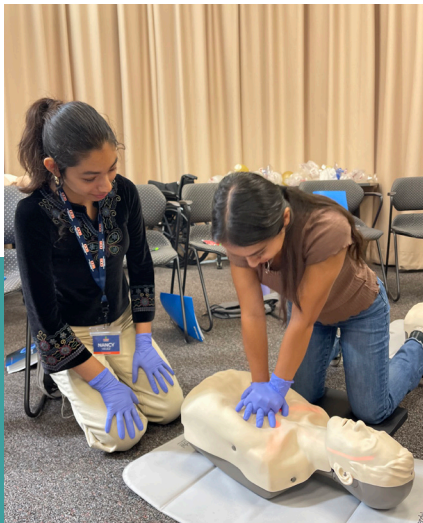
Lastly, the students participated in a work-based learning project showcasing the skills and knowledge they gained during their Jump Start experience.

Various funding sources and partners were leveraged to pay for youth work experiences and internships. In addition to leveraging youth@work funding for stipends, those who were enrolled in youth@work received rich services and supports to help them on their career path. Jump Start is an example of the strong partnerships in Tulare and Kings Counties, and how they rally together to bring resources and funding to youth in the region.

Of the 63 students who participated in Jump Start 28 were enrolled in the youth@work program and received WIOA-funded stipends upon completion of the program. Additionally, 17 students were provided with stipends funded through the Southern California Edison Stem grant administered by the WIB.

### Jump Start Impact:

- 4** Cohorts
- 3** Community College Campuses
- 63** Students from 16 High Schools
- 21** Industry Tours
- \$62,833** Invested in Student Stipends





**youth@work provides services to young adults ages 16–24 years old who face education, training, and employment barriers.**

The Out-of-School Youth (OSY) and In-School-Youth (ISY) program services are delivered by WIB service providers: Community Services Employment Training (CSET), Proteus Inc., and Tulare County Office of Education Services for Education and Employment (TCOE SEE). These partners are subrecipients of WIOA funding from the WIB and assist with carrying out the mission of the WIB by providing direct services to young adults ages 16–24 years of age.

**youth@work Services:**

- 1 Career and Education Exploration
- 2 Paid Internships & Work Experience
- 3 Job Leads
- 4 Work Readiness Training
- 5 One-on-One Mentoring
- 6 Work Attire, Interview Attire, Transportation Assistance, and More

**Primary youth@work Offices & Contact Information**

- 1 Visalia Employment Connection**  
4025 W. Noble Ave. Suite B  
559-713-5000
- 2 Porterville Employment Connection**  
1063 W. Henderson Ave.  
559-788-1417
- 3 Tulare Employment Connection**  
304 E. Tulare Ave.  
559-684-1987
- 4 Woodlake**  
168 N. Valencia Blvd.  
559-781-1852
- 5 Cutler**  
40802 Rd. 128  
559-528-1790

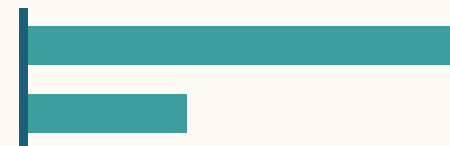


**youth@work by the numbers:**

**686** Young Adults Served

**494** OSY Participants

**192** ISY Participants



**271** Young Adults Participated in Paid Work Experience

**181** OSY Participants

**90** ISY Participants



**\$740,903**

Wages and benefits paid to young adults participating in work experiences

**Young Adult Awarded Training Scholarships\***

**29** Young Adults

**\$87,299** Invested in Training Scholarships

*\*co-enrolled in the Career Services program*



## We're Your Workforce Resource for Business

The WIB Business Services team is dedicated to helping Tulare County businesses thrive. The team works with companies during all stages of the business cycle from recruitment, expansion, downsizing, and more.

### Business Services Provided Include:

#### 1 Employee Training

We provide businesses with training opportunities for their entry-level workers to promote employee retention.

#### 2 Subsidized Employment

We provide businesses access to job-ready candidates looking to build skills and work experience.

#### 3 Restructuring and Downsizing Support

We provide customized, confidential services to businesses and their employees during downsizing and restructuring.

#### 4 Labor Market Information

We provide businesses with relevant data that keeps them informed and competitive.

#### 5 No-Cost Human Resources Hot Line

Tulare County Employers can connect with a live Human Resources expert for free at 1-888-563-2373.

#### 6 Recruitment Assistance

We work with businesses to promote job openings through customized recruitment and hiring events.

## Increasing Training Opportunities to Meet Industry Needs

For more than a decade the WIB has played the role of convener for the Tulare-Kings Health Care Partnership. The purpose of this convening is to listen to and learn about the workforce needs of the healthcare industry. One of the recurring workforce struggles voiced by partners is the shortage of Registered Nurses (RN) in the Central Valley.

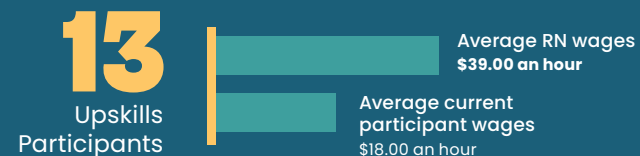
After hearing the feedback and concerns from the partnership, the College of the Sequoias began to develop multiple strategies to grow its RN program. One of the strategies is to implement a part-time, evening, and weekend RN program.

Kaweah Health agreed to invest funding and resources into making this program accessible

to their current employees who expressed an interest in becoming an RN but were not able to participate in a traditional RN program due to schedule and cost constraints. A cohort of 20 students was accepted into the first class of part-time nursing students in May 2022, 13 of those students are current employees of Kaweah Health.

Upon entering the part-time RN program at COS, the cohort of students from Kaweah Health earned an average wage of \$18 per hour and represented positions such as CNA, Health Unit Coordinator, Care Coordination Specialist, and Health Information Technicians. Upon completion of the RN program and the subsequent promotion to RN at Kaweah Health, this cohort of students can expect an average wage increase of 200%.

“The cohort of students from Kaweah Health earned an **average wage of \$18 per hour**. Upon completion of the RN program and the subsequent promotion to RN at Kaweah Health, this cohort of students can expect a **average wage increase of 200%**.”



For the new part-time RN program, the WIB is going to be providing UpSkill funding directly to Kaweah Health to help offset their investment in the program. UpSkill Tulare County provides funds to employers to help cover the cost of training their existing workforce, as they acquire new skills,

allowing the employees to move into higher-skilled, higher-paying positions within the business.

Through UpSkill Tulare County, the WIB will provide reimbursement for up to 50% of the training costs for 13 students from Kaweah Health participating in the program.



## Connecting Businesses to a Skilled Workforce

One of the roles of the WIB Business Services Team is to provide local businesses with access to a skilled workforce. In 2022–2023, Tulare County businesses experienced an increasingly tight labor market. The WIB worked closely with nearly 300 businesses to provide customized recruitment assistance ranging from job postings on social media to large-scale job fairs.

**JOB CONNECT** is a weekly event held at the Visalia and Porterville Employment Connection Centers. Businesses are invited to talk about their company, the open positions they have, how to apply for a position, and answer questions from the job seekers in attendance.

**OPEN INTERVIEWS** are designed by the WIB to provide a single business with a dedicated space, and time, to interview job seekers when they need to hire large numbers of people at one time.

Businesses gain access to job seekers interested in working for the specific business.

**JOB FAIRS** are the largest recruitment event that businesses can participate in. Job Fairs are designed to draw large numbers of job seekers to one place to meet and talk with multiple businesses. These events are scheduled throughout the year, so that businesses have the opportunity to reach large numbers of job seekers during their peak hiring season.

**YOUTH JOB FAIRS** are held at the end of each school year and provide opportunities for businesses to meet with graduating seniors from around the county. The businesses participating in these recruitment events are committed to hiring young adults getting ready to graduate from high school, many of whom do not have previous work experience.



### 23 Open Interview and Job Fair Recruitment Events

200 Employers participated

3,177 Job seekers attended



### 5 Youth Job Fairs

95 Employers participated

1,063 Students attended



### 76 Job Connect Events

39 Employers participated

1,606 Job seekers attended



## Customized and Confidential Services for Businesses

Rapid Response is a series of customized, confidential, and convenient services designed to assist businesses experiencing downsizing, restructuring, or closure. It is a cooperative effort between the WIB, Employment Connection, and the Employment Development Department (EDD) to help affected workers return to work as quickly as possible following a layoff by connecting them to training and employment opportunities.

This service provides immediate relief for the affected workers by offering resources such as utility and housing assistance, unemployment insurance information, occupational skills training,

and more. For the business, this service helps alleviate some of the stress of letting people go when unfortunate circumstances arise.

This was an unusual year for Rapid Response due to the wildfires and floods that Tulare County experienced. Many businesses were affected by these natural disasters, and our team worked closely with organizations such as FEMA and SBA to ensure that businesses who experienced losses due to natural disaster were provided with the resources and information, they needed to assist their employees in a time of need.

### Industries served:

1. Retail Trade 
2. Accommodation and Food Services 
3. Manufacturing 
4. Arts Entertainment and Recreation 
5. Healthcare and Social Assistance 
6. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting 
7. Educational Services 
8. Finance and Insurance 
9. Professional Scientific and Technical Services 
10. Unclassified 



26

Businesses served

1,827

Workers affected

996

Workers served



## Visalia Economic Development Corporation (VEDC) Contracts with WIB to Engage Businesses in the Visalia Industrial Park

While the WIB Business Services Team prioritizes outreach to local businesses in Tulare County, this year, thanks to a new contract and partnership with the VEDC, the WIB team provided extensive business outreach to the Visalia Industrial Park to assist with VEDC business retention efforts.

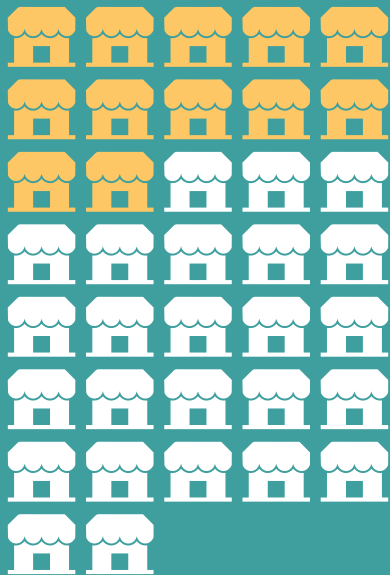
During the 2022-2023 program year, the VEDC and WIB outreach team visited 37 businesses in the Industrial Park. These visits included facility tours and time for the businesses to openly share training needs, hiring peaks and valleys, and any additional follow-up services and resources that they need.

Many of the businesses expressed a desire to provide training to their employees and were quickly referred to the COS Training Resource Center, while other businesses expressed the need to expand or upgrade their facilities and were put in contact with local representatives from utility companies, or the City of Visalia. One of the most common challenges reported to the outreach team was employee recruitment. In response to this feedback, the WIB partnered with the VEDC to host three job fairs in the Visalia Industrial Park. This resulted in 40 unique employers participating in the events held in February, April, and June with more than 870 job seekers in attendance.



**37** Business visits

**12** VEDC members



### February Job Fair

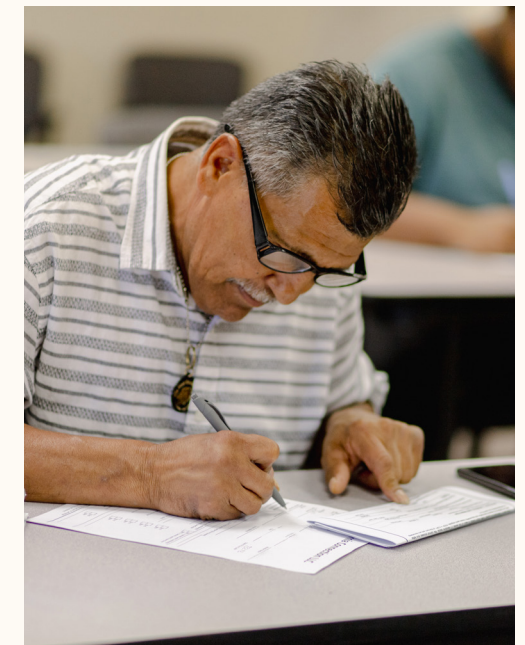
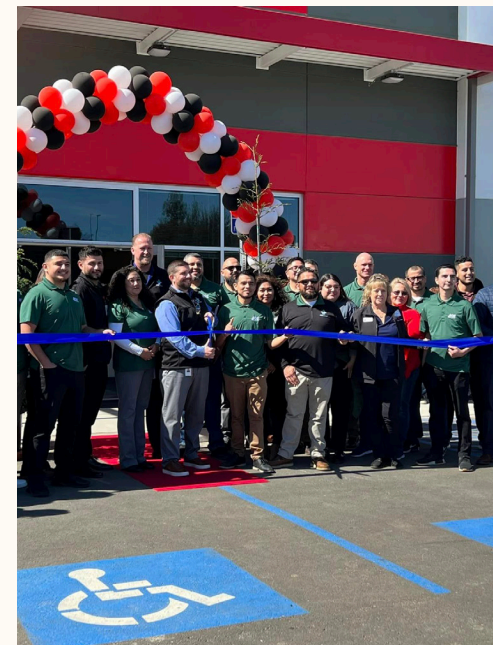
**16** Employers  
**589** Job Seekers

### April Job Fair

**18** Employers  
**167** Job Seekers

### June Job Fair

**16** Employers  
**116** Job Seekers





309 W. Main St. Suite 120  
559-713-5200  
[www.tularewib.org](http://www.tularewib.org)

**DRIVING  
ECONOMIC  
SUCCESS**