

Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County

Driving Economic Success



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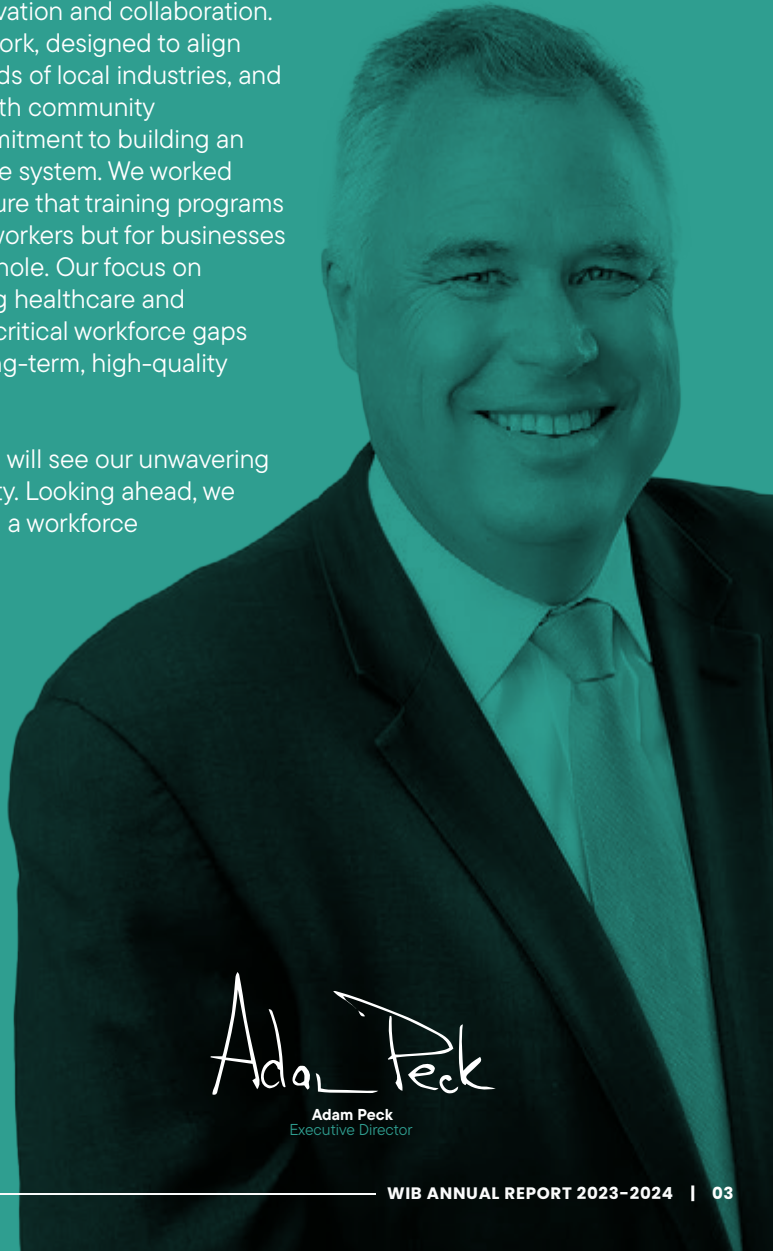
As we look back on another year marked by challenges and accomplishments, I am incredibly proud of the strides the WIB has made in shaping a more resilient, inclusive, and future-ready workforce. This year's report is not just a summary of our activities but a testament to the power of partnerships, the impact of thoughtful investments, and the dedication of the many individuals who make our work possible.

In this report, you will hear from people like Angelina, Misael, and Joe— whose lives have been transformed through access to skills training, career services, and unwavering support from our team and partners. These success stories reflect the essence of our work. They remind us that workforce development is about more than just job placement—it's about creating sustainable career pathways that lead to economic independence and vibrant communities.

This year, we leaned into innovation and collaboration. Initiatives like the TRAIN Network, designed to align training with the evolving needs of local industries, and our expanded partnerships with community organizations reflect our commitment to building an agile and responsive workforce system. We worked closely with employers to ensure that training programs deliver real value, not just for workers but for businesses and the local economy as a whole. Our focus on high-growth sectors, including healthcare and manufacturing, is addressing critical workforce gaps while creating pathways to long-term, high-quality employment opportunities.

As you explore this report, you will see our unwavering dedication to shared prosperity. Looking ahead, we remain committed to fostering a workforce ecosystem that lifts everyone.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we continue our work together to build a stronger, more prosperous community.



Adam Peck

Adam Peck
Executive Director

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



Convene



Guide



Broker



Invest



Measure

Board Members

Colby Wells, Southern California Gas Company – WIB Chairman

Joe Hallmeyer, Ken's Stakes & Supplies – WIB Vice Chairman

Gil Aguilar, Pine, Pedroncelli & Aguilar, Inc.

Randy Baerg, Warren & Baerg Manufacturing, Inc.

Danielle Beckett, Employment Development Department

Brent Calvin, College of the Sequoias

Jeffery Hudson-Covolo, Sierra View Medical Center

Ronny Jungk, IBEW Local 100

Robert Kleyn, Department of Rehabilitation

Brandon Lovenburg, U.S. Local #246

David Pena, Local Union #104

Yolanda Valdez, Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District

Amy Shuklian, Tulare County Board of Supervisors

Tricia Stever Blattler, Tulare County Farm Bureau



2023-2024

Annual Expenditures

YOUTH

\$4,358,786

29.4%

ADULT

\$3,564,803

24.1%

DISLOCATED WORKER

\$1,420,792
9.6%

**EXPANDED SUBSIDIZED
EMPLOYMENT**

\$1,402,859
9.5%

RAPID RESPONSE

\$596,559
4.0%

**STUDENT TRAINING EMPLOYMENT
PROGRAM**

\$297,543
2.0%

**EQUITY AND
SPECIAL PROGRAM**

\$272,275
1.8%

RESET
\$213,014
1.4%

**PRISON TO
EMPLOYMENT**
\$197,598
1.3%

**REGIONAL
EQUITY AND
RECOVERY
PARTNERSHIPS**
\$187,806
1.3%

R2Y RESET
\$118,811
0.8%

STEP UP LEAD
\$150,545
1.0%

**NDWG -
QUEST**
\$95,158
0.6%

**NDWG
WILDFIRES**
\$52,789
0.4%

**ENVIRONMENTAL
CLEAN-UP
OPPORTUNITIES**
\$260,498
1.8%

OTHER
\$105,474
0.6%

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC RESILIENCE FUND

\$364,461
2.5%

EQUITY TARGET POPULATION FUND

\$334,411
2.3%

25% DW ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

\$289,102
2.0%

**NDWG SEVERE WINTER
STORMS**
\$265,888
1.8%

GOOD JOBS CHALLENGE
\$259,316
1.8%

Tulare County Labor Market

OCCUPATION CHANGES

2021-2024 Occupations with Greatest Growth



+1,705 Home Health and Personal Care Aides

+919 Fast Food and Counter Workers

+880 Stockers and Order Fillers

+518 Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse

+438 Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators

2021-2024 Occupations with Greatest Decline



-443 Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals

-370 Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers

-239 Cashiers

-173 Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products

-147 Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators

INDUSTRY CHANGES

2021-2024 Industries with Greatest Growth



+4,351 Education (Local Government)

+2,783 Support Activities for Crop Production

+2,145 Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities

+1,947 Restaurants and Other Eating Places

+1,189 General Warehousing and Storage

2021-2024 Industries with Greatest Decline



-2,140 Crop Production

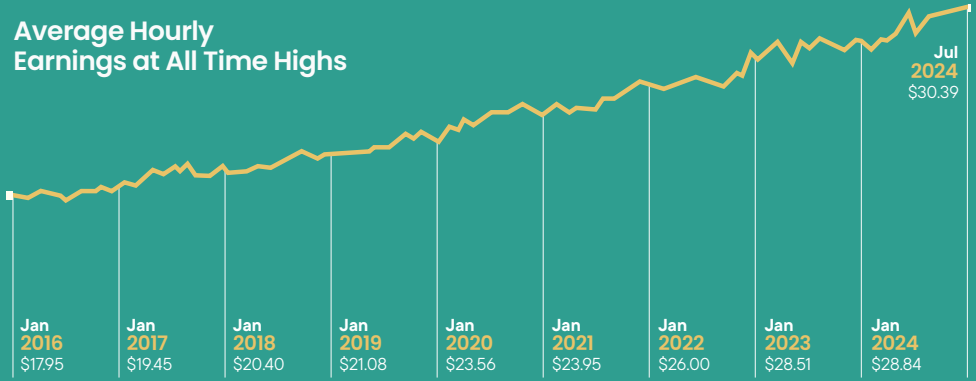
-1,492 Hospitals (Local Government)

-401 Direct Lift, Health, and Medical Insurance Carriers

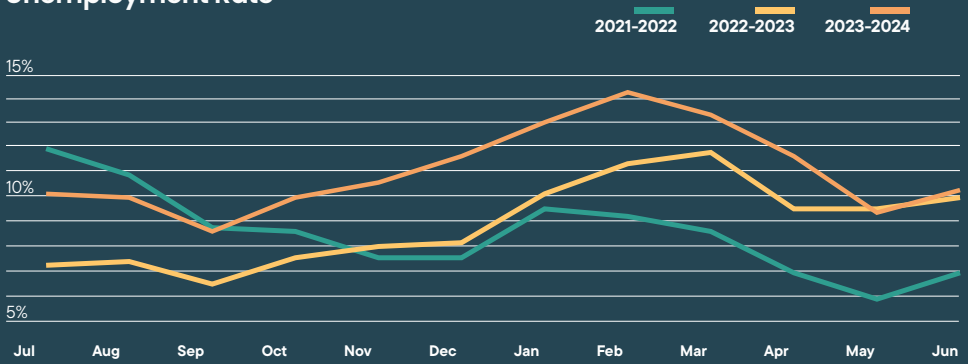
-243 Office Administrative Services

-228 Natural Gas Distribution

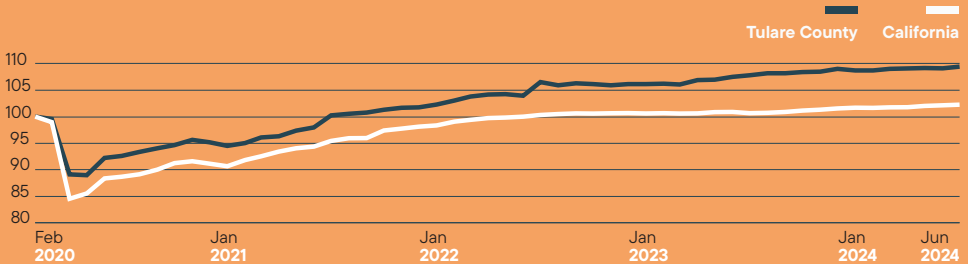
Average Hourly Earnings at All Time Highs



Unemployment Rate



Tulare County Nonfarm Job Growth Continues to Outpace California



Labor Force Remains Strong



WIB Initiatives

A Year of Human-Centered Workforce Innovation

Imagine a workforce system that's not just about finding jobs but about truly understanding and supporting the people behind those jobs. That's the vision behind the Workforce Transformation Corps (WTC), an innovative initiative sponsored by the James Irvine Foundation and managed by Jobs for the Future (JFF). The WTC is all about reshaping workforce development boards to be more empathetic and human-centered.

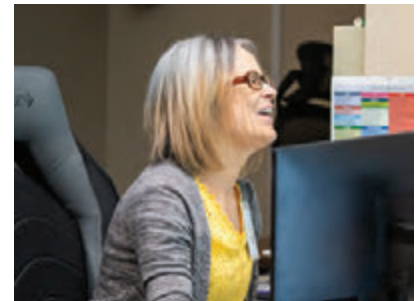
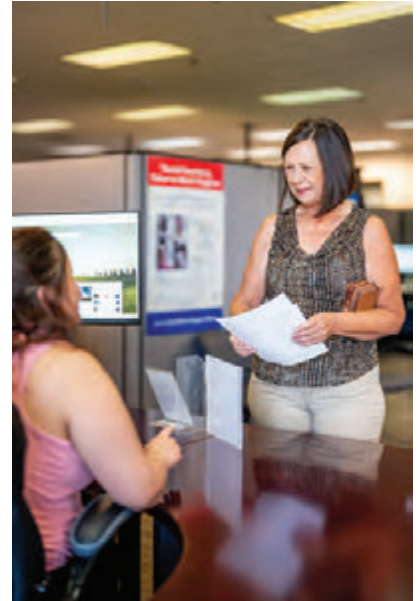
The heart of the WTC's approach is the fellowship model. The WIB joined forces with other forward-thinking workforce boards in this year-long program. Each board hosted a "workforce transformation fellow" trained in human-centered design (HCD). These fellows worked closely with board staff to identify pain points and needs, helping to create services that are truly centered around the customers they serve.

In Tulare County, the WIB was lucky to work with Tom Price from the local firm Middlestate. Over the course of the year, Tom helped the WIB connect with over 100 customers through surveys and interviews, engaged more than 50 staff members in various discussions, and held six stakeholder meetings to prototype and test a new Talent Pool initiative. This comprehensive approach to learning about and understanding our customers helped us begin embedding HCD practices into everything we do.



The goal of the WTC project was to move our system beyond simply placing people in jobs to elevating individuals beyond low-wage positions and addressing the gaps between job seekers' wages and the quality jobs available in our community. Thanks to this project, the Talent Pool initiative has evolved from a prototype to a fundamental part of our system. Once a fellow, Tom Price is now embedded in WIB and Employment Connection operations to continue this work.

The impact of this project is clear. Human-centered design is now a core part of how we operate, making our workforce services more responsive and effective.



AJCC Certification Drives Continuous Improvement and Inclusivity

Have you ever wondered how the WIB ensures that our local Employment Connection Centers provide top-notch services to job seekers and businesses? That's where the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) certification process comes in. Every three years, the WIB undergoes a thorough evaluation of our Employment Connection Centers to make sure they are meeting high standards and continuously improving.

AJCC certification involves independent evaluations of our centers to assess how well they deliver services, ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and promote continuous improvement. This process is crucial because it highlights best practices and identifies areas for improvement. The goal is to enhance service delivery and foster strong, effective partnerships, and ensure that services are accessible to all residents



From 2022-2024, the continuous improvement plans led to significant achievements:

- **Professional Development:** The WIB offered various training programs, such as Customer Service Excellence, Pathways to High School Diploma Acquisition, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace, and more.
- **Job Quality Framework:** The WIB developed a comprehensive framework to enhance the well-being of both employees and businesses.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** The WIB implemented initiatives like customer journey mapping to help tailor services to meet individual worker needs effectively.
- **Customer-Centered Projects:** The WIB improved feedback mechanisms and partner cross-training to ensure seamless service delivery.



Employment Connection

A proud partner of America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM network.

By focusing on continuous improvement, we've created a more inclusive and supportive environment for workers and businesses. The AJCC certification process continues to shape our efforts, driving us to innovate and improve. It's all about creating a workforce system that meets the needs of today and prepares for the challenges of tomorrow.

Employment Connection System Partners Involved in the AJCC Certification Process

- America Works of California, Inc.
- California Department of Rehabilitation
- College of the Sequoias
- Community Services and Employment Training
- Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District
- Employment Development Department
- Farmersville Unified School District
- Job Corps
- Porterville Adult School
- Porterville College
- Porterville Sheltered Workshop
- Porterville Unified School District
- Proteus, Inc.
- Root & Rebound
- Tulare County Health and Human Services
- Tulare County Office of Education
- Tulare Joint Union High School District
- Tule River Indian Tribe of California
- Schrank's Clubhouse
- Sequoias Adult Education Consortium
- SER - Jobs for Progress, Inc.
- Visalia Unified School District





Launch of the TRAIN Network Convenes Training Providers to Meet Industry Demands

A major accomplishment of the WIB this year is the launch of the TRAIN Network (Training Resources Aligned for Industry Need). This initiative aims to foster collaboration among training providers in Tulare and Kings Counties to better meet in-demand industry needs.

The TRAIN Network brings together training providers, including community colleges, adult schools, private schools, and K-12 institutions from Tulare and Kings Counties, to collaborate and share resources. The goal is to create a strong network where these providers can exchange strategies and best practices, ensuring that their training programs are relevant and effective for current industry needs.

By offering a platform for resource sharing and feedback, the TRAIN Network helps providers deliver high-quality training programs which lead to jobs that support workers and their families. Using data to measure the impact of these programs, ensures providers continuously improve and stay aligned with labor market demands. This alignment helps training programs meet both current and future industry needs, enabling businesses to fill quality jobs with well-trained employees.

TRAIN Network Priorities

1. Optimize Training Investments
2. Respond to Industry Need
3. Tackle Talent Pipeline Challenges

TRAIN Network

- Career Development Institute
- Central Valley Mother Load Regional Consortium
- College of the Sequoias
- Employment Connection of Tulare County
- Kings County Job Training Office
- Lemoore College
- Milan Institute
- Porterville Adult School
- Porterville College
- Tulare Adult School
- Tulare County Office of Education
- Tulare County Public Health
- San Joaquin Valley College
- Sierra View Medical Center
- South Valley Industrial Collaborative
- Visalia Adult School
- William M. Maguy School of Education

Providing Regional Leadership Beyond Tulare County

This year the WIB expanded its leadership role beyond Tulare County, taking on initiatives that will influence and inform the workforce development strategies for the broader Tulare-Kings-Fresno-Madera region. These efforts are rooted in the WIB's commitment to ensure that the voices of our communities are central in shaping regional planning and that investments in job creation and workforce development are designed with local needs at the forefront.

One of the key arenas where the WIB took the lead is the Sierra San Joaquin Jobs Initiative (S2J2), part of the California Jobs First Initiative. Serving as the Tulare-Kings local convener, the WIB worked collaboratively with other regional leaders to develop a Regional Investment Plan. This plan outlines strategies for target sectors, identifies future investment opportunities, and will drive policy changes focused on equity, good jobs, and environmental sustainability. A particularly noteworthy achievement was the WIB's involvement in the Spring Sprint, an intensive eight-week initiative designed to generate investment strategies in eleven key sectors across the region. By participating in these efforts, the WIB ensured that Tulare and Kings County are not just participants, but leaders in the conversation about regional workforce priorities.

The WIB also took on a critical role in the Good Jobs Challenge, ensuring that industry voices from Tulare-Kings are heard. This initiative will directly inform decisions regarding investments in industrial training and job creation for our region. By convening discussions with local industry leaders, including major employers like VF Outdoor, Leprino Foods, and Dreyer's Ice Cream, the WIB in partnership with the South Valley Industrial Collaborative (SVIC) is identifying key in-demand jobs and the skills gaps that need to be addressed to fill those roles. This direct engagement with businesses ensures that training programs will be aligned with the real-world demands of our local economy.

These regional efforts reinforce the WIB's long-standing commitment to ensuring that workforce development strategies are both responsive and forward-thinking. By aligning with state-wide initiatives while maintaining a strong local focus, the WIB is driving systemic changes that will have lasting impacts on job quality, economic sustainability, and community growth.

Career Services

Strategic Investments Transform Lives and Strengthen Tulare County's Workforce

The WIB strategically invests Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker funds into the four Employment Connection Centers located across Tulare County. These centers play a critical role in transforming the lives of job seekers by offering comprehensive career services that empower individuals to achieve their employment goals, support their families, and contribute to a stronger local workforce.

At the heart of these efforts are the Career Coaches and staff who work closely with job seekers to provide personalized career exploration, guidance, and support. Through one-on-one interactions, they help individuals develop customized action plans that align with their career aspirations and unique circumstances. These action plans become roadmaps for success, detailing clear, strategic steps that help job seekers navigate the path to employment.

The services offered at the centers are diverse and tailored to meet the specific needs of each individual. They range from job readiness workshops and skills assessments to assistance with obtaining a high school diploma and understanding local labor market trends. Additionally, staff provide valuable guidance on the job search process, helping individuals build resumes, prepare for interviews, and connect with local employers.

The WIB contracts with local community-based organizations Community Services Employment Training (CSET), and Proteus Inc., to manage the Employment Connection Centers in Tulare County. These organizations are tasked with carrying out the mission of the WIB and providing career services to customers across Tulare County.

Impact of Career Services

- **Increased Employment and Economic Stability**
- **Community Well-Being**
- **Reduction in Unemployment and Underemployment**
- **Support for Local Businesses**



Meet Angelina

In July 2023, Angelina came to the Employment Connection with a goal—she wanted to become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). During her visit, she expressed her passion for patient care and her desire to build a career in the medical field. She knew that upgrading her professional skills was essential for providing a better future for her family. Despite her enthusiasm, Angelina faced significant barriers that made it difficult for her to pursue her goals.

Determined to help her achieve her goals, the Employment Connection team helped Angelina access a training scholarship to cover the cost of the training program and associated expenses. With their support, she enrolled in the CNA program at Porterville Adult School, completed her training, and earned her certification as a CNA.

Angelina's coach, Stephanie provided her with extra support to achieve job readiness milestones and ultimately her employment goals. Her dedication paid off when Angelina secured a full-time position at a local hospital in December 2023. She not only gained a stable job but also received full benefits and has opportunities for professional growth within the organization.

Angelina is deeply grateful for the support she received from the Employment Connection. The staff's caring guidance, regular check-ins during her schooling, funding for her state testing, and supportive services with uniforms were all instrumental in her success. The kind words of encouragement, understanding, and motivation from her career coach and the entire Employment Connection staff helped her stay focused and determined.

Angelina's journey is a testament to what can be accomplished when a customer's persistence is met with a supportive system.



"Working with the staff at the Employment Connection meant that I had the support and resources that I needed in order to reach my goal. I don't know if I would have my job today if I had tried to do this alone."

Employment Connection Centers of Tulare County

The Employment Connection Centers are a one-stop-shop for all things job-related in Tulare County. Whether you're just starting your career, looking for a change, or needing extra help overcoming employment barriers, our team is ready to help.

We believe everyone deserves a chance to find fulfilling work. Job seekers can access free employment and training resources at any Employment Connection Center or online at www.employmentconnect.org.

Employment & Training Services



- Career Coaching
- Training & Scholarships
- Hiring Events and Job Leads
- Job Readiness Workshops
- Accessible Resource Rooms



Locations and Contact Information:

Visalia

4025 W. Noble Ave. Suite B
559-713-5000

Porterville

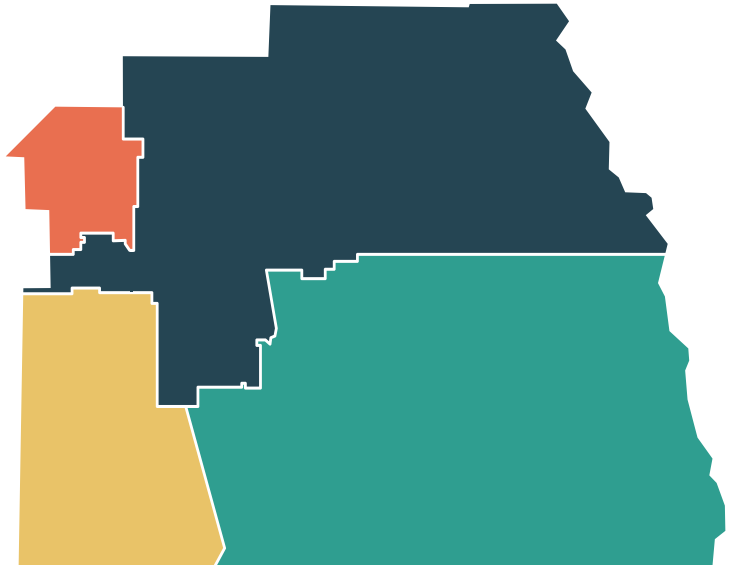
1063 W. Henderson Ave.
559-788-1400

Tulare

155 N "K" St.
559-684-4987

Dinuba

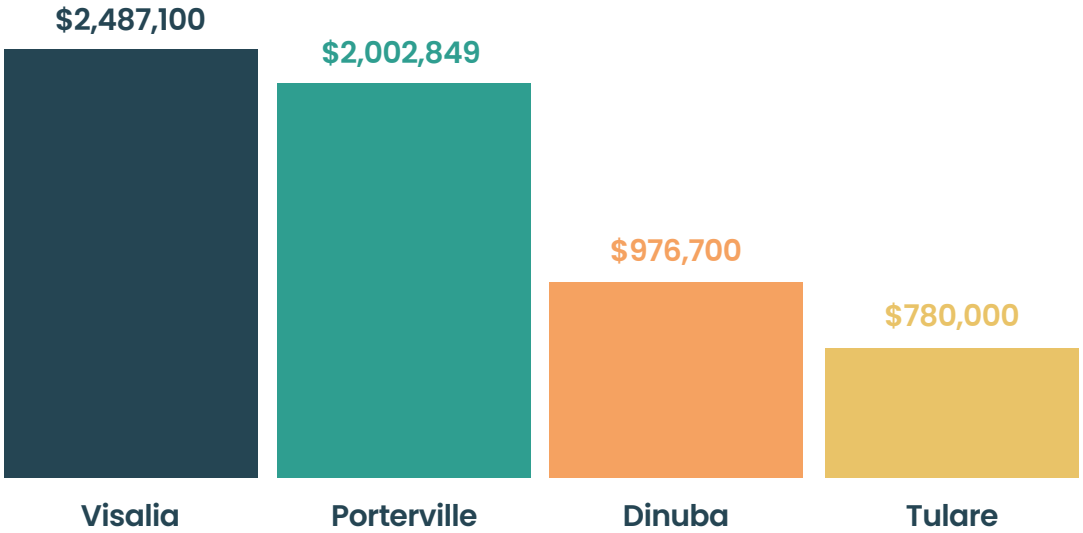
400 W. Tulare St. Suite C
559-406-1001



www.employmentconnect.org



Total Investment by Location



Employment Connection Centers by the Numbers

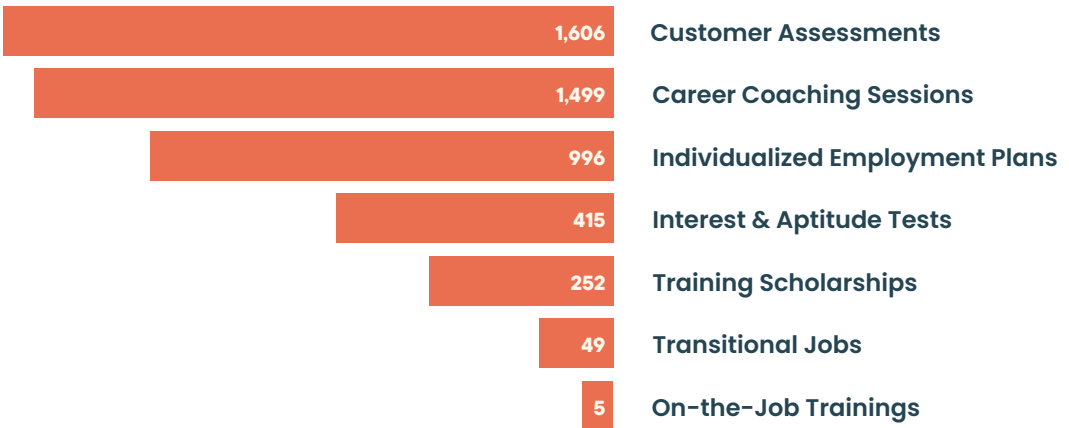
Resource Room Visits

50,670

Distinct Visitors

14,774

Employment Connection Services Provided:



Training Services



Strategic Training Investments Fuel Workforce Growth

One of the core responsibilities of the WIB is to invest in training programs that lead to high-quality jobs to enable individuals to sustain themselves and their families. These investments are not made in isolation; they are the result of strategic partnerships with local employers, data-driven insights, and collaboration with training providers to ensure alignment with the needs of the local economy.

The WIB plays a key role in convening local industry leaders to understand their workforce needs, identify skills gaps, and highlight in-demand jobs within priority sectors. By directly engaging with employers, the WIB ensures that investments in training programs are focused on areas where demand for skilled workers is highest. These conversations are further supported by the WIB's use of labor market data, which informs decision-making and validates the needs expressed by local employers.

This valuable information is then conveyed to local training providers, who use it to develop programs that align with industry requirements. Only programs that meet strict standards are added to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), ensuring that job seekers are presented with high-quality training options that lead to real goals established for employment and wages.

Job seekers, in turn, work with Employment Connection staff to identify career goals and determine the right type of training. If eligible, individuals can access training scholarships to cover the cost of tuition, fees, and other associated expenses, removing financial barriers to skill development.

The impact of these targeted investments is profound. Individuals who complete training programs typically earn higher wages and experience better long-term employment outcomes compared to those who do not receive training. By aligning investments with the needs of local businesses, the WIB not only improves individual livelihoods but also strengthens Tulare County's workforce and economy, driving sustainable economic growth for the entire community.

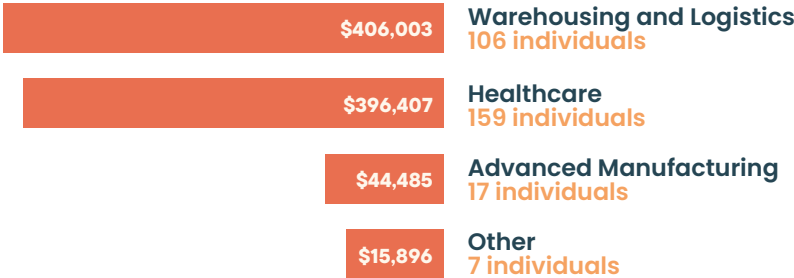
Total Scholarships Awarded

289

Total Scholarships Investment

\$862,792

Training Scholarships by Industry



Transitional Jobs

158

Individuals

\$699,209

Invested in Wages

On-the-Job Training

6

Individuals


\$20,359

Invested in Wages

Training Partners

- Advanced Career Institute
- Career Development Institute
- College of the Sequoias
- Lemoore College
- Milan
- Porterville Adult School
- Porterville College
- San Joaquin Valley College
- Tulare Adult School
- Visalia Adult School
- William Maguy School of Education



A man wearing a black turtleneck sweater and a black baseball cap is holding a large, dark metal bell. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a solid, bright orange color.

"I knew that I wanted to be a truck driver, but without the money to pay for the training program, I could not reach my goal. Being awarded a scholarship to attend truck driver training, made a huge impact on my life."

Meet Misael

Misael entered the Employment Connection in July 2023 intending to become a Class A Driver in the transportation industry. However, Misael informed his coach that he did not have the financial resources needed to enroll in the Class A Truck Driving Training program. Working with the Employment Connection Team he was able to complete the application for a training scholarship funded by the Regional Equity Recovery Partnership program. Soon Masiel was awarded the scholarship which provided for his full tuition and all the expenses associated with the program. He began his training in September 2023 and completed the training in December 2023.

With his training complete, he worked to achieve job readiness milestones and worked with his career coach to ensure that he took advantage of all the employment opportunities he could find. In mid-December, Masiel attended an event hosted by the Employment Connection where he met with the WIB team and learned more in-depth information about the truck driving job market, and how he could stand out from other candidates. Misael was very committed to the job search process and continued to receive many job leads from his career coach. In February 2024 he was able to secure a position as a Driver with a large trucking company where he could put his new skills to use.

Misael expressed his gratitude for being awarded a training scholarship that allowed him to accomplish his goal, which led him to get his new job.

Specialized Grants For Adults

Breaking Barriers and Empowering Marginalized Job Seekers

At the WIB, one of our most impactful strategies for addressing workforce inequality is through the use of specialized workforce grants. These grants are designed to provide tailored career services to some of our community’s most underserved and marginalized populations—people who often face significant barriers to employment. This includes individuals with disabilities, those experiencing homelessness, justice-involved individuals, English language learners, and individuals from low-income backgrounds, among others.

By focusing on these groups, the WIB works to close employment gaps by delivering high-quality, inclusive workforce services. Securing and effectively utilizing these grants allows us to offer targeted support and create opportunities for individuals facing employment challenges. This agile approach means that we can quickly adapt to the evolving needs of the community, ensuring that critical resources are available when and where they are needed most.

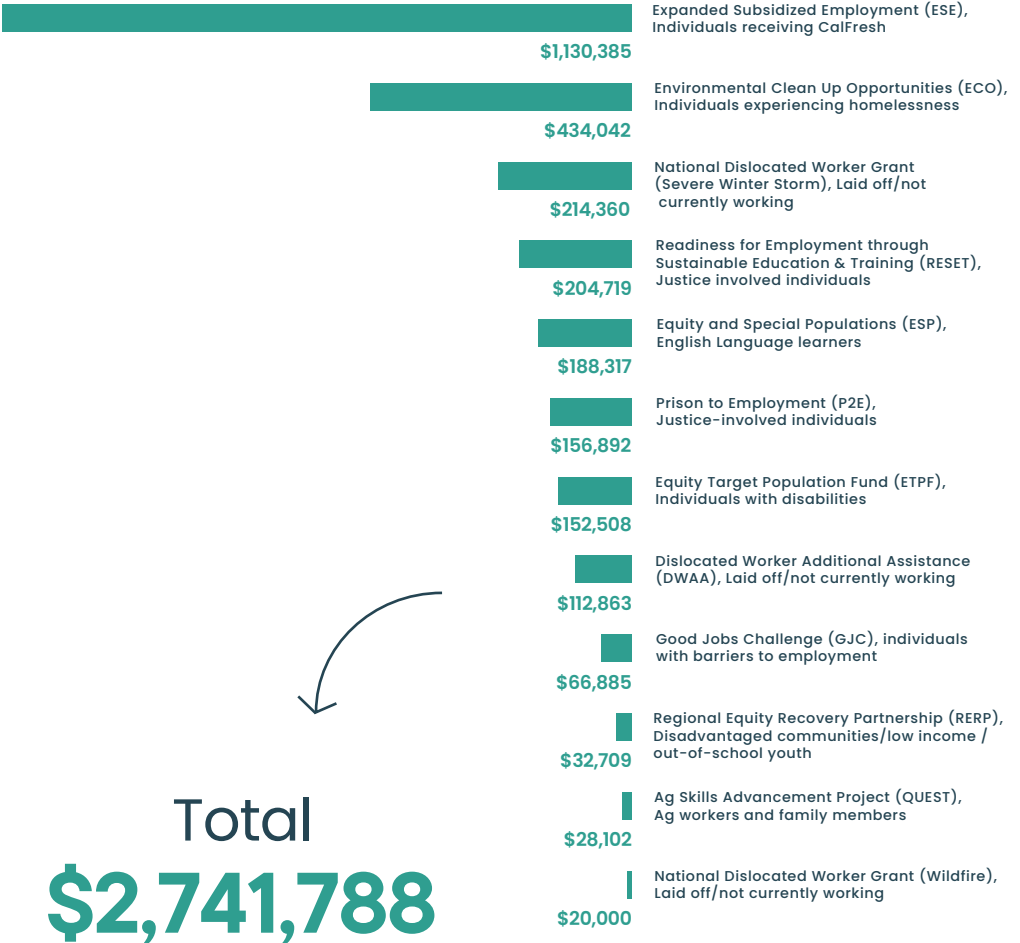
One of the key aspects of our success in utilizing specialized grants is the creation of Integrated Resource Teams in collaboration with our community partners. These teams align resources, share vital information, and provide a robust network of supportive services that directly address the needs of our shared customers. Through ongoing training, our staff and partners serve individuals with barriers to employment with sensitivity, cultural awareness, and respect.

These efforts not only help individuals secure meaningful, sustainable employment but also contribute to building a diverse and resilient local economy. Seeing individuals from marginalized communities thrive reaffirms our commitment to the belief that every community member is essential to our collective prosperity. By continuing to leverage specialized grants and fostering strong community partnerships, the WIB ensures that the services we provide are both fair and inclusive, creating pathways to success for all.



“When marginalized job seekers receive tailored support, they secure meaningful and sustainable employment, benefiting both individuals and local businesses in need of qualified workers.”

Special Grants Supporting Marginalized Customers



Specialized Grant Partners

- City of Visalia
- Fresno County Economic Development Corporation
- Employment Development Department (EDD)
- Department of Labor (DOL)
- Foundation for California Community Colleges
- San Joaquin County Employment & Economic Development
- California Workforce Development Board
- Tulare County Board of Supervisors
- Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency
- Tulare County Probation Department



Rebuilding Lives and Parks With The Severe Winter Storms Project

The Severe Winter Storms (SWS) project, launched in response to the devastating winter storms that struck our area in late 2022 and early 2023, showcases the incredible resilience and strength of our community. The SWS program offers temporary employment to people who lost their jobs due to the severe winter storms and those who are long-term unemployed. Participants earn \$20 per hour in disaster recovery roles, providing immediate financial relief and equipping them with valuable work experience and skills. The focus of the program is cleaning up and restoring public areas like Bartlett Park, which suffered significant damage during the storms.

The impact of the SWS project on both job seekers and the community has been profound. Thirteen job seekers gained current work history and valuable experience while helping restore Bartlett Park. Their efforts have led to the rapid cleanup and repair of the park, making it safe and functional for public use once again. Clearing debris and repairing fences have significantly enhanced the park's usability and safety, boosting public morale and providing a revitalized space for community activities.

The collaborative nature of the project has fostered a strong sense of community and teamwork among participants, including Tulare County Parks and Recreation, and others. This collaboration has not only sped up the recovery process but also strengthened community bonds.

Beyond providing temporary employment, the SWS program offers participants a pathway to long-term career development. The program provides access to career coaching, resume assistance, interview practice, and weekly Job Connect meetings where participants network with potential employers. Some participants have taken advantage of further education and training opportunities, such as truck driving and welding programs, empowering them to achieve better-paying and more stable careers.

The success of the SWS project underscores the importance of community-focused initiatives. By providing immediate relief and long-term career support, the project has made a significant difference in the lives of many Tulare County residents. As we continue to rebuild and strengthen our community, the partnerships formed and the lessons learned from this project will guide our future efforts.

13

Individuals Served

\$100,164

Participant Wages

\$3,170

Supportive Services Provided



“The progress that the work crew at Bartlett Park made in the last year would not have been possible without our partnership with the WIB, and the funding they provided to support this project. We are proud to be able to provide temporary work for our residents who in turn are helping to improve our community.”

*- Albert Cendejas, Parks Division Manager,
County of Tulare General Services Agency.*

Meet Joe

Joe was referred to the Porterville Employment Connection from the Tulare County Probation Department. Joe was quickly provided with a Career Coach who set out to help him develop a plan and stay motivated along his journey to employment. As he began to get to know his coach, he shared that he was facing a lot of challenging barriers that had made it difficult for him to find work on his own, including a lack of formal education, being justice-involved, and not possessing key documents such as his driver's license or I-9. Joe and his coach were determined not to let the barriers stop him from reaching his goal of finding a job that could provide him with stability and benefits.

In June 2024 Joe joined the work crew for the Severe Winter Storm project. While participating in this work crew, Joe gained valuable work experience and a steady paycheck.

While Joe was working to clean up Bartlett Park and other impacted areas in Porterville, he made significant progress in overcoming many of the barriers he was facing. With the help of the Employment Connection team, Joe obtained his I-9 documents and is currently working on getting his driver's license. Additionally, he recently completed his probation and is in the process of getting his record expunged. Overcoming these challenges will make it possible for Joe to achieve his future employment goals.

Inspired by his experience in the SWS Project, Joe decided to pursue a career in welding and enrolled in a welding program scheduled to start in August 2024. He chose this path because after researching this career he learned that getting a welding certificate will equip him with the skills and knowledge needed to secure employment in an in-demand industry that offers high wages, benefits, and opportunities for career advancement.

"Being part of the work crew provided me with the chance to earn a paycheck while I was trying to overcome other challenges in my life. It gave me a sense of purpose and motivated me to continue to work towards my future goals."



Youth Services

Youth Programs Pave the Way for Successful Futures

The WIB funds a variety of programs tailored to meet the unique needs of youth ages 16-24. These services are provided through youth@work where young adults can access resources, training, and employment guidance in a supportive environment.

The Out-of-School Youth (OSY) and In-School Youth (ISY) programs offer young adults and students case management and supportive services, including career exploration and counseling, skills development and training opportunities, educational support, and paid work experience.

The OSY program is geared towards young adults ages 18-24 who aren't currently employed or enrolled in post-secondary education or training. This program focuses on providing access to training in high-growth, in-demand occupations. youth@work supports young adults looking to boost their skills as they transition from secondary education to career technical education, training, or directly into job placements.

The ISY program partners with local school districts to enhance existing career technical education pathway programs. This program provides additional support to students facing significant barriers, such as homelessness, English language learners, or in foster care. ISY aims to bridge the gap between education, training, and employment that these students often encounter while in high school.

The WIB contracts with local community-based organizations Community Services Employment Training (CSET), Proteus Inc., and the Tulare County Office of Education to manage the youth@work services. These organizations are tasked with carrying out the mission of the WIB and providing direct services to young adults throughout Tulare County.

Through these tailored programs, we aim to empower young adults, helping them build bright futures and contribute to a thriving community.





Impact of youth@work

- **Enhance Employability:** We offer training and skill development that align with industry demands, making young adults more competitive in the job market.
- **Provide Career Guidance:** Our counseling and career exploration services help young adults identify their strengths and interests and set realistic career goals.
- **Facilitate Work Experience:** We create opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, and other forms of work-based learning to provide practical, hands-on experience.
- **Support Educational Attainment:** We assist with educational resources and support to ensure young adults can complete high school or attain their high school diploma or equivalency.
- **Address Barriers to Employment:** We provide comprehensive support services, such as transportation assistance and access to professional attire, to remove obstacles that may prevent young adults from participating fully in training and employment opportunities.
- **Promote Economic Self-Sufficiency:** Ultimately, our goal is to enable young adults to secure stable, well-paying jobs that lead to long-term economic independence and an improved quality of life.

Meet Bianca

With no work experience and uncertain career goals, Bianca, a 19-year-old out-of-school youth hoped youth@work would help her find a path to a successful future.

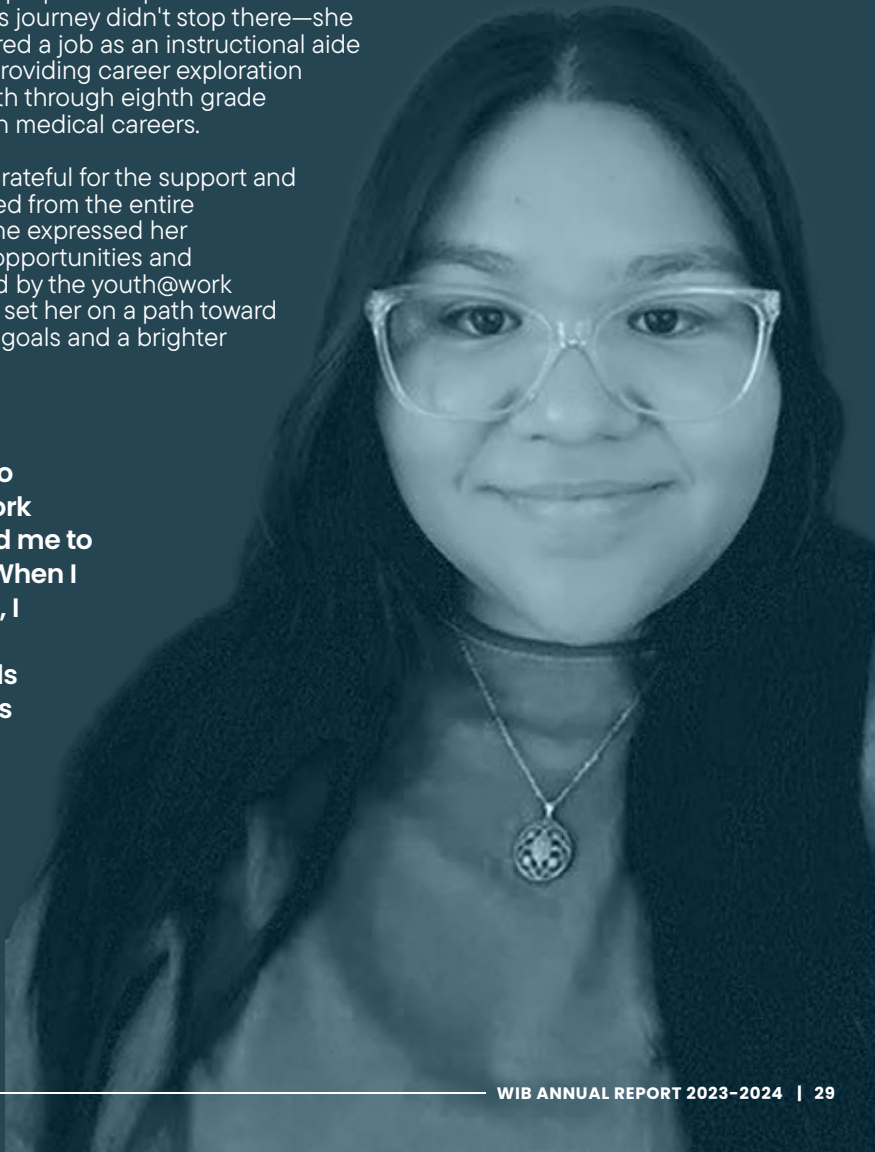
To get started, Bianca attended work readiness and career exploration workshops. She was actively engaged and participated fully, which allowed the team to help her identify potential career goals. Bianca expressed an interest in office work but also had a long-term goal of becoming a teacher.

In order to help her gain valuable work experience and develop her skills, her coach helped to facilitate a work experience contract for Bianca with CSET as an office clerk. Bianca excelled in her role, communicating effectively with her co-workers and mastering basic office duties. Her supervisor, Angel, provided excellent feedback on her performance review throughout her contract.

After successfully completing her work experience with CSET, the youth@work team assisted Bianca in enrolling at the College of the Sequoias to get her associate's degree in early childhood development. To support her studies, they provided her with a laptop to complete her homework assignments. Bianca's journey didn't stop there—she applied for and secured a job as an instructional aide for a local business providing career exploration opportunities to fourth through eighth grade students interested in medical careers.

Bianca is extremely grateful for the support and guidance she received from the entire youth@work team. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunities and experiences provided by the youth@work program, which have set her on a path toward achieving her career goals and a brighter future.

"The opportunity to participate in a work experience, helped me to gain confidence. When I applied for my job, I knew that I had learned many skills that the employers would find valuable."



youth@work provides employment and training resources to support young job seekers on their career journey.

Employment, Training, and Educational Services

- Career & Education Exploration
- Paid Internships & Work Experience
- Job Leads and Hiring Events
- Work Readiness Training
- One-on-One Mentoring
- Supportive Services

“We believe every young person deserves the opportunity to find fulfilling work and access to educational opportunities.”

Primary youth@work Service Delivery Sites and Contact Information:



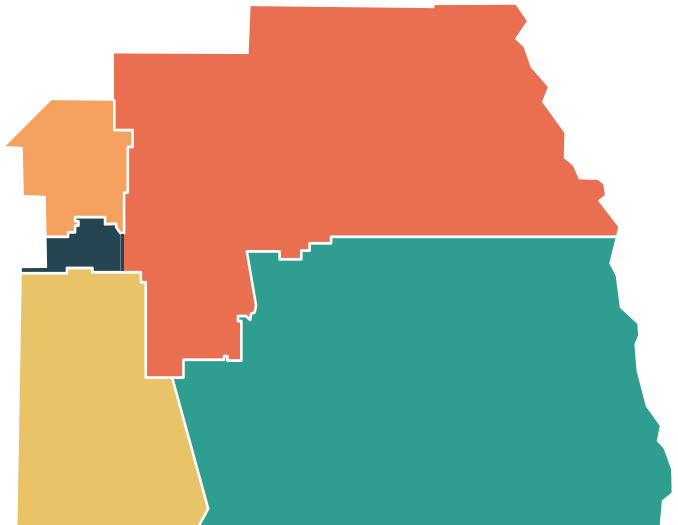
Visalia Employment Connection Center
4025 W. Noble Ave. Suite B
559-713-5000

Porterville Employment Connection Center
1063 W. Henderson Ave.
559-788-1400

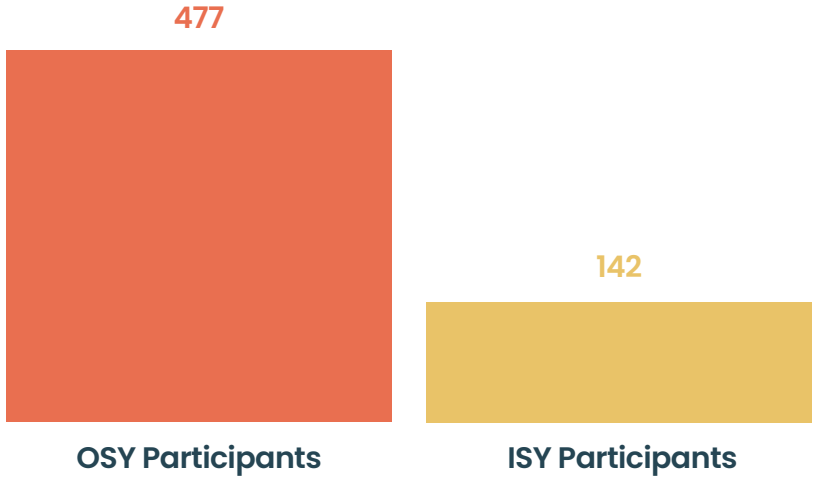
Tulare Employment Connection Center
155 N "K" St.
559-684-4987

Woodlake
168 N. Valencia Blvd.
559-781-1852

Cutler
40802 Rd
128 559-528-1790



Youth Served
619



Youth Participated in Paid Work Experience
203



Wages and Benefits
\$634,139

Training Scholarships
31 Young Adults Invested in Training Scholarships
\$81,638

Specialized Grants For Young Adults

Building Foundations for Success: How STEPS and ACE Programs are Transforming Lives for Young Adults

The WIB is making significant strides in enhancing the lives of young adults through specialized workforce development grants. These grants, which fund the Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS) and the Access to Careers and Employment (ACE) empower young people with disabilities to embrace their abilities and advocate for themselves, building their confidence and opportunities to thrive in the workplace. This program year, these initiatives were expanded to include all of Tulare County, in response to community needs, ensuring support is available throughout the entire county.

The STEPS program is designed to support students with disabilities who may have limited work readiness skills. This program is unique because it offers a comprehensive approach to skill-building. Students work closely with dedicated career coaches who guide them through a series of work readiness training sessions designed to help them develop essential skills before transitioning into paid work experience with various local businesses.

Impact of ACE

- 88** Individuals with disabilities served
- 28** Enrolled in work-based learning
- 10** Achieved unsubsidized employment
- 13** Awarded scholarships

Impact of STEPS

- 45** Individuals with disabilities served
- 45** Enrolled in work-based learning
- 12** Participated in a Work Experience

The ACE project focuses on young adults with disabilities, providing short-term occupational skills training and work-based learning opportunities in key industry sectors such as Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation and Logistics, and Healthcare. These targeted industries are part of the WIB's priority sectors, ensuring that participants receive training that aligns with current job market demands.

The success of these initiatives is made possible through strong partnerships with nine high school districts, regional occupational centers, community colleges, adult schools, and local community-based organizations. The Integrated Resource Team (IRT) plays a crucial role by facilitating collaboration among partners, ensuring streamlined wrap-around services and shared referrals. These collaborative efforts ensure that the programs are well-rounded and impactful.

Special Grant Partners

- Central Valley Regional Occupation Center
- College of the Sequoias
- Community Services Employment Training
- Culter/Orosi Joint Union High School District
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Dinuba Unified
- Exeter Unified
- Farmersville Unified
- Lindsay Unified
- Porterville Adult School
- Porterville College
- Porterville Unified School District
- Proteus, Inc.
- Tulare Adult School
- Tulare County Office of Education
- Tulare Joint Union High School District
- Woodlake Unified
- Visalia Adult School
- Visalia Unified School District



Meet Erik

Erik, a COS student from Farmersville, was referred to the STEPS program by the Department of Rehabilitation. Erik aspired to be a police officer but recognized that he needed assistance completing job applications and improving his interview skills. Erik started working with his career coach and began attending job readiness workshops where he worked to improve his resume. Soon, Erik felt prepared to participate in a work experience, and was able to secure a position as part of the security team located at the Visalia Employment Connection Center.

Through his work experience, Erik acquired many skills he knows he will need as he continues to work towards becoming a law enforcement officer including alertness, interacting with community members, and communication. While participating in the work experience, Erik also studied to obtain his guard card so he will have the certification necessary to continue working in security when his work experience ends. The support Erik received from the STEPS program and the integrated resource team partners provided Erik with confidence, a clear roadmap, and essential workplace skills that will surely give him a competitive advantage in the future as he continues to work towards his career as a police officer.

“This program provided me the opportunity to learn and grow my skills in a work setting.”



SECURITY

Business Services

Empowering Tulare County Businesses to Thrive and Grow

The WIB Business Services Team plays a vital role in supporting local businesses by helping them access the skilled workforce they need to thrive. Through customized services, the team connects employers with qualified job seekers, provides labor market insights, and offers recruitment assistance, all while tailoring solutions to meet the unique needs of each business.

Whether it's organizing job fairs, offering on-the-job training programs, or helping businesses navigate workforce challenges, the WIB ensures that employers are well-equipped to grow and succeed. By partnering closely with local industries, the team fosters a collaborative environment where businesses can find the resources and talent they need.

This targeted support helps businesses remain competitive while creating high-quality job opportunities for residents, making the WIB a crucial partner in building a stronger, more resilient local economy.

Business Services

- **Employee Training:** These programs ensure that employees acquire the skills necessary to excel in their roles, enhancing productivity and contributing to overall business growth.
- **Recruitment Assistance:** By leveraging these resources, businesses can streamline their recruitment process and build a skilled workforce that meets their needs.
- **Subsidized Employment:** These programs offer financial incentives to employers who hire and train eligible job seekers.
- **Restructuring and Downsizing Support:** Services include planning and implementation assistance to minimize the impact on employees and maintain business continuity.
- **Labor Market Information:** This data helps businesses make informed decisions about hiring, compensation, and market opportunities, ensuring they remain competitive in the evolving economic landscape.
- **No-Cost Human Resources Hotline:** This no-cost human resources hotline, offers expert advice on a range of HR issues. 1-888-563-2373.



Collaborating for Health: Tulare-Kings Healthcare Partnership Strengthens the Local Healthcare Workforce

The Tulare-Kings Healthcare Partnership (TKHP) is an industry-led, community-supported collaborative that brings together local healthcare organizations to address industry challenges and foster growth in the Tulare-Kings region. Since 2010, TKHP has united healthcare providers, educational institutions, and workforce development organizations to create impactful training programs and initiatives that ensure the community has the skilled healthcare professionals it needs.

Over the past year, TKHP has significantly expanded its network, adding seven new healthcare organizations and six supporting partners. This growth highlights the partnership's ability to foster collaboration and build a robust support system for the healthcare sector.

TKHP's current priorities focus on three main areas:

- **Employer-Driven Early Education Coordination:** Aligning educational programs with industry needs to ensure students are well-prepared for healthcare careers.
- **Essential Workplace Skills for New and Existing Workers:** Providing training to enhance the skills of both new entrants and current employees in the healthcare field.
- **Incubation to Employment:** Facilitating partnerships between employers and educational institutions to create seamless pathways from education to employment.



TULARE-KINGS HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP

Industry Partners

- Altura Centers for Health
- Aria Community Health Centers
- California Department of Corrections
- California State Hospital-Coalinga
- Central California Blood Center
- Dinuba Healthcare
- Family HealthCare Network
- Imperial Ambulance
- Kaweah Health
- Porterville Developmental Center
- Sierra View Medical Center
- Tulare County Public Health
- True North Physician Agency

Supporting Partners

- Central Valley Medical Association
- Central Valley Mother Load Regional Consortium
- College of the Sequoias
- Hanford Joint Union High School District
- HealthForce
- Kings County Job Training Office
- Lemoore College
- Porterville College
- Porterville Adult School
- Porterville Unified School District
- San Joaquin Valley College
- Sequoias Adult Education Consortium
- Tulare Adult School
- Tulare Kings College and Career Collaborative
- Visalia Adult School
- Tulare-Kings Dental Society



307

High School
Students Attended

40

Speakers

30

Volunteers

Growing Our Own Healthcare Workforce

One of the signature events hosted by the TKHP is the Growing Health Leaders Conference. This conference brings together high school students interested in pursuing careers in healthcare to listen to local experts, learn about the skills needed for success, and discover educational pathways that lead to fulfilling careers.



Connecting Talent to Opportunity: WIB Business Services Fuels Hiring Success for Tulare County Businesses

The WIB is dedicated to supporting Tulare County businesses in their quest to find and hire qualified talent. Through comprehensive support and customized strategies, the WIB helps businesses connect with and hire the right talent, driving growth and contributing to a robust local economy. The WIB helps businesses connect with and hire the right talent, driving growth and contributing to a robust local economy. Understanding that each business has unique needs, the WIB works closely with employers to develop customized recruitment strategies that align with their specific requirements.

Recruitment Assistance Services

- **Job Connect:** The WIB hosts a weekly Job Connect event at the Visalia and Porterville Employment Connection Centers. Businesses are invited to talk about their company, the open positions that they have, and how job seekers can apply for the positions.
- **Hiring Events & Job Fairs:** The WIB organizes several job fairs each year, providing a platform for businesses to meet and interview multiple candidates in one place. These events help businesses find suitable employees more efficiently.

Job Fairs & Hiring Events

12

Events

247

Participating
Employers

3,770

Participating
Attendees

Job Connect

24

Participating Employers

3,274

Participating Attendees



Rapid Response: A Lifeline for Businesses and Workers During Layoffs and Closures

When a business faces layoffs or closures, the impact ripples beyond the company—workers and the community feel the effects too. That’s where Rapid Response comes in. Coordinated by the WIB, this essential service provides immediate support to businesses and employees during challenging times, offering guidance, resources, and a pathway forward.

Rapid Response is an early intervention program that springs into action as soon as a business announces layoffs or closures. The goal is clear: to help affected employees navigate this difficult transition and ensure they have access to the support they need. The Rapid Response team, made up of professionals from the WIB, the Employment Development Department, and the Employment Connection of Tulare County, goes directly to the source, meeting on-site with employers and employees to provide real-time assistance.

For businesses, the team provides guidance on legal requirements and resources to help manage the transition smoothly. For employees, the team offers vital information on unemployment benefits, health coverage, pensions, and career services available at the Employment Connection Centers.

More than just a service, Rapid Response is a lifeline during times of uncertainty. By providing immediate, comprehensive support, the program helps businesses stabilize, assists workers in transitioning to new employment, and ultimately strengthens Tulare County’s economy by building a resilient workforce ready for the future.

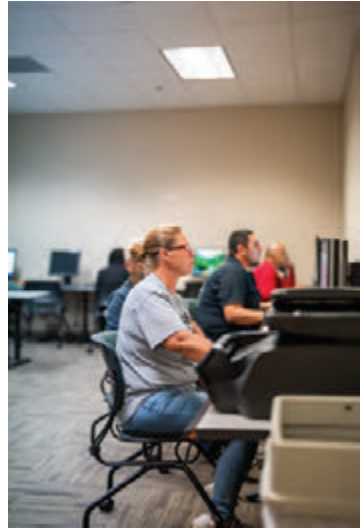
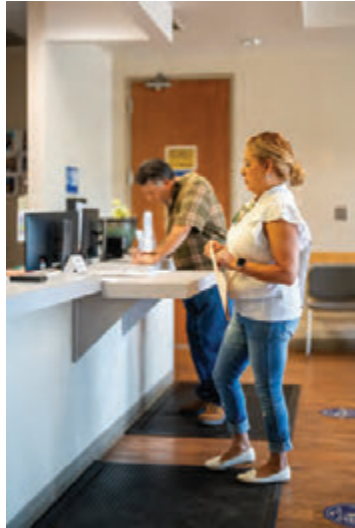
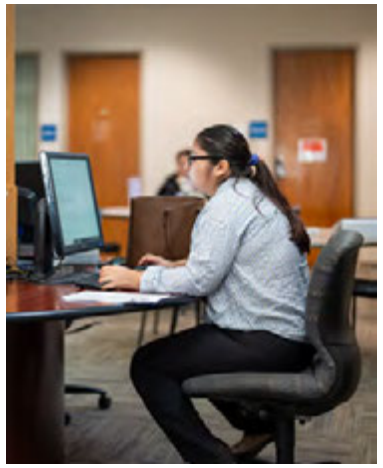
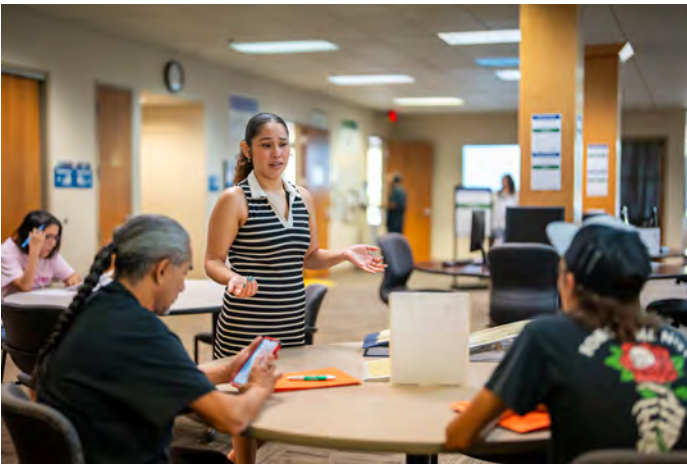
Rapid Response Impact



Industries Served

- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting
- Utilities
- Manufacturing
- Retail Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Finance and Insurance
- Educational Services
- Healthcare and Social Assistance
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Public Administration
- Other Services







Workforce Investment Board
OF TULARE COUNTY