

Governor's Council on Workforce Investment



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

April 13, 2023

Governor Tony Evers
115 East Capitol Drive #1
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers,

On behalf of the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI), it is our honor to submit the 2022 CWI Annual Report, which highlights the Council's activities during a historic year for Wisconsin's economy.

Through the 2019 Executive Order #6, you tasked the Council with aligning Wisconsin's workforce needs with its economic development goals and strategies. This Council exists to help Wisconsin employers find skilled talent while providing resources and training for workers to attain in-demand skills and family-supporting jobs.

The Council applauds your leadership and support, which contributed to a record-breaking 2022 for Wisconsin's economy and workforce. The state's first quarter gross domestic product (GDP) reached a record high of more than \$312 billion, and state unemployment reached a record low of 2.8% in January through April. The state also saw record low levels of both initial and continuing weekly unemployment insurance claims.

Your vision for the Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and the Department of Workforce Development's (DWD's) efforts to implement it during 2022 helped Wisconsin achieve:

- Unprecedented investment in workforce development as DWD and its partners deployed and managed more than \$150 million through your Workforce Solutions Initiative.
- Historic performance of the Registered Apprenticeship program, which surpassed 15,000 participating apprentices for the first time since 2001. The state also saw record Youth Apprenticeship participation with 6,402 participants and 4,484 employers.
- Grant awards including a \$15 million early childhood workforce development grant.
- Recovery of nearly \$790,000 in lost wages for workers and issuance of 37,651 work permits, up 10% year over year, by DWD's Equal Rights Division.
- Services that helped nearly 3,450 individuals gain employment through DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

While these results reflect tremendous progress, challenges remain. Long-term demographic trends and the gradual rise of employment barriers such as access to childcare, broadband, transportation, and housing, make it difficult for many employers to acquire and retain talent.

Fortunately, the charge of this Council aligns with developing strategies to address these issues. I am pleased to share the Council is engaged on these topics and continues to advance progress on these goals in alignment with the Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

Kind Regards,

S. Mark Tyler, Chair
Governor's Council on Workforce Investment

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Governor's Council on Workforce Investment Council Members

Governor Tony Evers Governor State of Wisconsin	Amy Pechacek Secretary-designee Department of Workforce Development	Emilie Amundson Secretary Department of Children and Families
Rebecca Bartoszek President/CEO Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce	Scott Bertschinger Vice President, Human Resources Spancrete Group	David Brukaradt (retired June 2022) Associate Vice President, Economic Development, University of Wisconsin System
Jeff Buhrandt (appointed Dec. 2022) Vice President for University Relations University of Wisconsin System	Andrew Disch Political Director North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters	Michele Erikson Executive Director Wisconsin Literacy Inc.
Dr. Morna Foy President Wisconsin Technical College System	Ann Franz Executive Director NEW Manufacturing Alliance	Shah Haqqi President/CEO S&L Global Consulting USA
Carver Harries Executive Director Ashland Area Development Corporation	Amanda P. Hoefling Executive Vice President, Human Resources Dairyland Power Corporation	Missy Hughes Secretary/CEO Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
André Jacque Senator, Senate District 1 Wisconsin State Legislature	Mark Kessenich CEO Associated General Contractors of Greater Milwaukee	Mark Johnson Director, Consulting CGI
Seth Lentz (ex-officio) Executive Director Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin	Terrance McGowan (retired Nov. 2022) President/Business Manger International Union of Operating Engineers	Shaun McHugh (appointed Nov. 2022) Organizer and Business Agent International Union of Operating Engineers
Dan Mella District Superintendent Plymouth School District	Delora Newton Administrator, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Department of Workforce Development	Saul Newton Founder/Executive Director Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce
Alan Petelinsek CEO Power Test Inc.	Warren Petryk Representative, Assembly District 93 Wisconsin State Legislature	Pravin Raikar President Lockstep Solutions LLC
Janis Ringhand (retired Jan. 2023) Senator, Senate District 15 Wisconsin State Legislature	Sara Rogers Business Services Manager Employ Milwaukee	Nora Roughen-Schmidt Consultant University of Wisconsin System Small Business Development Center
Kathi Seifert President Katapult, LLC	Katrina Shankland Representative, Assembly District 71 Wisconsin State Legislature	Sachin Shivaram CEO Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry

S. Mark Tyler (CWI Chair)

Chairman
OEM Fabricators

Dr. Jill Underly

(appointed Nov. 2022)
State Superintendent
Department of Public Instruction

Dr. Rolf Wegenke

(retired Aug. 2022)
President/CEO
Wisconsin Association of Independent
Colleges and Universities

Ann Zenk

Senior Vice President, Workforce
and Clinical Practice
Wisconsin Hospital Association

Corey Zetts

Executive Director
Menomonee Valley Partners

2022 – 2026 Council on Workforce Investment Strategic Plan

To further advance its mission to align Wisconsin's workforce and talent development initiatives and investment activities, the Council finalized its next four-year strategic plan and submitted it to Gov. Evers in May 2022. The plan outlines the key priorities and Council recommendations for outcome-based, workforce development strategies that are data-driven, and reflective of employer demands.

The strategic plan is built around the following four focus areas: Education, Employers, Workforce, and Organization and Resource Alignment. A brief excerpt from the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan detailing focus areas follows:



Focus Area #1: Education

Reinvigorate Wisconsin's culture and value of education and innovation to fuel ideas, businesses, people, and the next generation for future economic well-being and ensure that individuals from all backgrounds have access to the education, training, and support they need to achieve their full potential.

- **Objective 1A:** Early Childhood Education – Support the initiatives presented by the Departments of Public Instruction (DPI) and Children & Families (DCF) in the Preschool Development Grant Birth to 5 Statewide Strategic Plan to ensure that by 2023 all Wisconsin families will have access to high-quality, affordable, local early care and educational opportunities.
- **Objective 1B(i):** Career Pathways – Increase career exploration opportunities while students are in K-12 and provide all students the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment, earn a certificate/credential, or participate in work-based learning prior to high school graduation with emphasis on credentials where dual secondary and post-secondary academic credit is awarded.
- **Objective 1B(ii):** Career Pathways for Adults – Expand opportunities for adults from all populations to earn a certificate/credential, participate in work-based learning, and access other career pathway possibilities that allow fair and equitable access to meaningful, family-sustaining employment.
- **Objective 1C:** Entrepreneurship – Include or strengthen entrepreneurship as an outcome within workforce development and educational planning/programming.



Focus Area #2: Employers

Engage all employers to drive, build, and utilize Wisconsin's workforce development system.

- **Objective 2A:** Increase the number of employers that offer work-based learning experiences and lifelong training for all youth and adults.
- **Objective 2B:** Support employers' efforts to attract, hire and retain employees from all populations.
- **Objective 2C:** Expand opportunities for employers to provide input regarding their current and future workforce needs and requirements (e.g., specific skills, credentials, people, resources) to the workforce development system.
- **Objective 2D:** Improve employer awareness and utilization of the workforce development system.



Focus Area #3: Workforce

Increase Wisconsin's workforce participation by promoting infrastructure to improve access to job opportunities, incentivize workforce participation, and by improving the sustainability of work for individuals and families.

- **Objective 3A:** Strengthen collaboration and support the equity and inclusion plan to coordinate programs among public and private entities that can help historically underrepresented/under-resourced individuals and families overcome barriers to employment.
- **Objective 3B:** Incentivize workforce participation for individuals currently receiving public benefits in order to support their transition to sustainable employment.
- **Objective 3C:** Coordinate programs serving specific populations across the agencies to promote workforce participation.
- **Objective 3D:** Develop and promote strategies and programs for employers to attract and retain diverse talent/workforce.
- **Objective 3E:** Develop and target strategies that increase the number of individuals who are work and career ready.
- **Objective 3F:** Support policies that promote resilience of incumbent workers.



Focus Area #4: Organization & Resource Alignment

Advocate for resource alignment to maximize return on investment and use data for continuous improvement of the workforce system.

- **Objective 4A:** Identify and address the organizational and structural changes necessary to improve collaboration and accountability.
- **Objective 4B:** Continue developing a longitudinal data system and identify opportunity for collaboration and expand capacity to support evidence-based decision making.
- **Objective 4C:** Define and create an effective state and local partner communication strategy to increase awareness of workforce services.
- **Objective 4D:** Build a stronger, more coordinated relationship between state and local workforce partners.

National Governors Association Summer Workforce Symposium

In July 2022, Chair Tyler attended the National Governors Association's Summer Workforce Symposium. The Workforce Symposium brings together state workforce development leaders and advisors who represent their Governor's vision and goals for workforce development state policy, strategic investment, and the administration and oversight of state and federal workforce programs.

There are two affiliate associations of the National Governors Association in attendance at these meetings: The National Association of State Liaisons for Workforce Development Partnerships and the National Association of State Workforce Development Board Chairs.

Members of the National Association of State Workforce Development Board Chairs are the chairs of Governor-appointed state workforce development boards, like CWI. The Association provides a vehicle for state workforce board chairs and staff to learn from their peers, share best practices, propose solutions to common challenges, have a unified voice on national policy issues, and strengthen the nation's workforce development and education systems.

CWI Chair Tyler is the chair of the National Association of State Workforce Development Board Chairs and leads its Executive Committee.

At the symposium, Wisconsin's delegation was invited to participate in a panel discussion on addressing barriers to workforce participation. This invitation gave Chair Tyler the opportunity to highlight the exciting and innovative work resulting from Gov. Evers' Workforce Solutions Initiative.

The Workforce Solutions Initiative is a historic investment by Gov. Evers of more than \$150 million in solutions to address Wisconsin's workforce needs and support innovative pandemic recovery efforts. The groundbreaking investment builds on Wisconsin's leadership in workforce development and advances the state's economic competitiveness. Funded through the American Rescue Plan Act, the investment is delivering regional solutions to address labor force challenges and workforce constraints exacerbated by the pandemic so that Wisconsin's economy can bounce back even stronger than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Initiative is composed of three programs:

- The Worker Connection Program

The \$10 million Worker Connection Program offers individuals who are attempting to reengage in the workforce career coaches who connect them with the information and support necessary to overcome any barriers that may prevent their full participation in the labor force. The program also offers individuals local training opportunities that are focused on in-demand sector and employer needs. Employers ensure that the training meets their workforce needs and provide job opportunities to participants.

- The Worker Advancement Initiative

The \$20 million Worker Advancement Initiative offers subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers. It serves people whose jobs have not returned since the onset of the pandemic, as well as those who were not attached to or

were not successful in the labor market prior to the pandemic, by offering subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers.

- The Workforce Innovation Grants

The \$128 million Workforce Innovation Grant program is a partnership between DWD and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). These grants fund leading-edge, long-term solutions to workforce challenges based on local needs and expertise.

During the panel, Chair Tyler presented on all three programs in the initiative: the Worker Connection Program, the Worker Advancement Initiative, and the Workforce Innovation Grants. Chair Tyler then expanded on the Workforce Innovation Grants program by showcasing projects funded by the grants that address areas not traditionally associated with workforce development efforts, such as projects to improve access to housing, childcare, and transportation.

The presentation of Gov. Evers' Workforce Solutions Initiative was well received by the other states in attendance. Following the panel, Wisconsin's delegation received nearly a dozen requests for additional information about the Workforce Innovation Grant program from states considering implementing a similar program. Wisconsin's delegation was also asked to present Gov. Evers' Workforce Solutions Initiative to New Jersey and Oregon's workforce development entities, which was done later in 2022.

CWI Full Council Meetings

The Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) convened quarterly as a full council throughout 2022. Additionally, the CWI's Executive Committee and three standing committees met in between the full council meetings to work on committee-focused efforts. The following sections provide an overview of the quarterly CWI full council meetings.

First Quarter – Feb. 17, 2022

The CWI had its first meeting of the year on Feb. 17, 2022, which was held entirely virtually out of caution for the recent spike in COVID-19 cases that was occurring at the time. The Council members were briefed on the workforce development implications of Gov. Evers' State of the State address, which included a call for a special session devoted to many of the same issues the Council identified for the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan, such as reducing barriers to employment, investing in education, and providing targeted economic relief to state residents, caregivers, and property taxpayers.

Council members were also informed of the progress being made with Gov. Evers' initial \$130 million investment in the Workforce Solutions Initiative that were highlighted during the 2022 State of the State address. Council members received a detailed overview of the Workforce Innovation Grants, which were one component of the Workforce Solutions Initiative, and the projects that were awarded in the first round of the grant announcements that were relevant to the themes the CWI had been focusing on for the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan. The projects that were discussed were ones dedicated to public-private partnerships to train and attract healthcare workers throughout rural Wisconsin; develop next-generation advanced manufacturing employees in west-central and southeast Wisconsin; expand affordable, high-quality childcare in Door County, Green County, and south-central Wisconsin; and, to create pipelines of young, educated workers in Milwaukee.

The grants also are being used to train construction and skilled craft workers throughout the state; foster a culture of entrepreneurship in Kenosha; and enable incarcerated individuals to earn undergraduate degrees from the University of Wisconsin. Council members were notified that the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) announced earlier in the week that the second round of the Workforce Innovation Grants were open for the remaining \$40 million in funds available under the program, and Council members were encouraged to spread the word to potential applicants in their network.

Following the briefing on the State of the State, the Council conducted its annual review of the CWI bylaws and proposed revisions for consideration. The most significant change for this edition of the bylaws was modifying the purpose of the CWI standing committees so that the duties and purpose of each committee contained in the bylaws were updated to reflect the new focus areas and priorities established for the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan. The Council voted on the proposed revisions, and they were accepted unanimously and without correction.

The Council received an informative presentation from Nancy Nakkoul, the Wisconsin Technical College System Education Director for Apprenticeship, Construction, and Architecture, on the WTCS 2019 – 2020 Apprenticeship Completion Report before convening for breakout sessions. The respective standing committees continued their work developing the 2022 – 2026 CWI

Strategic Plan. The CWI committee chairs provided a report on each of the committees' progress to the full council following the breakout before the Council adjourned.

Second Quarter – May 19, 2022

CWI held its second quarterly meeting of 2022 at the Appleton International Airport where the Council voted unanimously to approve the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan. After nearly a year of research, discussions, and development, the Council crafted a strategic plan that focuses on four key priorities related to education, employers, workforce, and organization and resource alignment. The final product was the result of the collaboration of experts from the private sector (represented by the business members of the Council), education (K-12 and higher ed), and the workforce development system. The 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan outlines the key priorities and recommendations of the Council for outcome-based, workforce development strategies that are data-driven and reflective of employer demands. CWI Chair Mark Tyler explained that CWI intends to use the strategic plan as a living document to continue shaping and advancing Wisconsin's workforce policies, strategies, and desired outcomes. Review and updates to the plan will be a standing agenda item at Council meetings throughout the course of the plan; and the recommendations may evolve over the next four years to ensure they reflect input from key stakeholders and incorporate new strategies to meet the state's ever-changing workforce and economic development landscape.

After the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan had been approved for recommendation to the Governor, the Council received an update from DWD Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek on the condition of Wisconsin's economy and workforce. DWD Assistant Deputy Secretary Danielle Williams then summarized for the Council the relevant legislative activity that took place during the 2021 – 2022 legislative session. During the session, DWD monitored or actively tracked approximately 190 bills. Fifty bills were directly related to DWD programs, policies, or funding, and of those that passed the legislature, 10 bills were vetoed and six were enacted and signed into law. The bills that were enacted into law include:

- Special Session SB 1 (2021 WI Act 4) - Relating to: Transactions with the Department of Workforce Development under the unemployment insurance law, funding for unemployment insurance modernization efforts, granting rule-making authority, and making an appropriation;
- SB 11 (2021 WI Act 29) - Relating to: Various changes to the worker's compensation law;
- AB 220 (2021 WI Act 83) - Relating to: Providing information about educational options offered in a school district;
- AB 406 (2021 WI Act 59) - Relating to: Unemployment insurance contribution rates;
- AB 910 (2021 WI Act 231) – Relating to: Various changes to unemployment insurance law; and
- AB 911 (2021 WI Act 232) – Relating to: Various changes to the worker's compensation law and granting rule-making authority.

Williams concluded by giving the Council an overview of the Workforce Innovation Grant program and shared details of the different projects and initiatives that were funded through the first round of grants.

The Council members proceeded to the Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation hangar on the airport grounds where they were taken on a tour of the facility. Following the tour, DWD Office of

Special Initiatives Director Becky Kikkert updated the Council members on the Comprehensive and Accessible Reemployment through Equitable Employment Recovery (CAREER) Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) that DWD was awarded through the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL). The CAREER DWG initiative will enable states to address and recover from the unprecedented unemployment and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. DWD was awarded funds to support and enhance comprehensive employment services, and for supporting modernization of services to unemployed jobseekers as well as the data systems necessary to connect the unemployed to reemployment.

The Council then reviewed the relevant provisions of H.R. 7309 titled the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2022 to Reauthorize WIOA. The WIOA reauthorization proposal would authorize appropriations under WIOA for FY2023 through 2028 and extend the authorization for WIOA Titles II, III, and IV programs. The WIOA reauthorization proposal also included revisions to the composition of state and local workforce boards – which would directly affect the Council as it is the state workforce board for Wisconsin. Additional provisions in the WIOA reauthorization proposal that the Council discussed during the meeting included proposed modifications to the WIOA Title I system such as eliminating the existing memorandum of understanding (MOU) requirements, establishing that infrastructure costs will be funded out of WIOA formula grants and expanding the criteria states are permitted to use when establishing eligibility for the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL), as well as other modifications to performance and accountability provisions under WIOA.

Council members were then briefed on the WIOA PY2020 primary indicators of performance results for Wisconsin and informed that the state will soon begin the negotiation process with U.S. DOL and U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DoED) to establish goals for the primary indicators of performance for the next WIOA state plan. The last WIOA topic that was covered during the meeting was an announcement that there will be a WIOA Roundtable event planned jointly by the WIOA partners and will occur in late-2022 or early-2023 and CWI members are encouraged to participate.

The meeting concluded with an overview of the recommendations brought forward by the Job Center Task Force (JCTF) for improvements to Wisconsin's one-stop system to increase program collaboration at the federal, state, and local levels to integrate available programs and services to job seekers and employers through American Job Centers (AJCs). The recommendations presented by the JCTF include:

- Conducting a feasibility study to determine how to improve effective coordination of services for job seekers and other audiences;
- Developing and implementing a single, unified WIOA brand;
- Expanding the availability of virtual services to increase customer access to resources; and
- Developing joint policy requiring staff to complete a universal training curriculum to better serve the needs of customers.

Third Quarter – Sept. 12, 2022

The Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board hosted the Council for the third CWI quarterly meeting at the Daniel Hale Williams Rock County Resource Center in Janesville, Wisconsin. The meeting began with a demonstration for the Council on the mechanisms that will be used for tracking the implementation progress and metrics for the items included in the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan. One mechanism is designed for keeping track of the owners, timelines, and progress of the individual action items under each objective in the plan; and the other is intended to be used for tracking the metrics and data associated with the objectives in the plan by comparing the baseline data against four-year future benchmarks and evaluating the current metrics in relation to one another. The mechanisms will serve as information repositories that can be used for reference throughout the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan and updated with the latest developments as the data becomes available.

Council members then received a presentation from the Department of Public Instruction, CESA 10, and WEDC on a Career Readiness System initiative that would create a framework to convene key career readiness stakeholders at the state and regional levels in order to provide strategic direction and support implementation of career readiness initiatives at the local level. This collaborative initiative relates to the work being done by the CWI Growing Workforce Opportunities Committee as part of the career pathways objectives in the 2022 – 2026 CWI Strategic Plan.

During the meeting, Council members also received two presentations related to Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI) grants. The WAI grant program enables Wisconsin's local Workforce Development Boards (WBD) to leverage connections to support job seekers who remain affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Seth Lentz, executive director of the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, provided Council members with information on the WAI program overall as well as the projects being funded through the WAI grants. Through the program, \$20 million in grants were awarded to 11 regions across the state to help more than 2,300 Wisconsinites. Council members were informed the local WBDs are intentionally braiding funding sources to ensure participants receive the services and training they need to succeed in the workforce. This approach allows the local WBDs to strategically distribute costs among funding sources to provide services based on WAI grant guidelines. The presentation noted that the local WBDs are prioritizing WAI services for individuals from target populations including racial/ethnic minorities, justice-involved individuals, low income, long-term unemployed, victims of human trafficking or sexual assault, single parents, tribal members, and individuals with substance use issues. Council members heard examples of the projects being funded through the WIA grants including career training opportunities for justice-involved individuals, programs to address child care demands, work-based learning programs, and piloting new workforce development strategies to be more responsive to customer needs. Throughout the presentation, the Council discussed the early takeaways and the potential policy implications from the WAI grant program.

The Council members also heard from Rhonda Suda, CEO of the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board Inc. (SWWDBI) on the specific initiatives in that area with funds from the WAI grant. The initiatives focus on improving participant outcomes through subsidized training, support, and incentives to connect job seekers with opportunities in the region. The Council also had the opportunity to see the Rock County Job Center as part of a tour of the Daniel Hale Williams Rock County Resource Center. Council members witnessed regional

collaborations in action and received a firsthand look at the services being delivered to customers in the region.

The Council reconvened and concluded the meeting with a high-level summary of the events from the National Governors' Association 2022 Summer Workforce Symposium where Wisconsin was invited to participate in a panel discussion on addressing barriers to workforce participation and had the opportunity to highlight the exciting and innovative work being done as part of Governor Evers Workforce Solutions Initiatives.

Fourth Quarter – Nov. 17, 2022

The CWI had its final meeting of the year on Nov. 17, 2022, at No Studios in Milwaukee. The meeting began with the Council members receiving annual training on Wisconsin's public records law as required for public officials by state statute.

After the conclusion of the required public records training, Council members received an overview of the Worker Connection Program, which is part of Gov. Evers' Workforce Solutions Initiative. The Worker Connection Program is active in two areas of Wisconsin: Milwaukee County (Workforce Development Area 2) and the Bay area (Workforce Development Area 5) so it was an especially pertinent topic for the fourth quarter CWI Full Council meeting since it took place in Milwaukee. The \$10 million investment in the Worker Connection Program provided workforce career coaches in these areas to connect with individuals attempting to reengage in the workforce post-pandemic. With a target goal to engage 2,500 people, these "Career Navigators" provide free navigational services to expand career opportunities at the local level. To accomplish this goal, Career Navigators facilitate community-generated action plans that will strengthen connections across the workforce system and local communities to amplify, expand, and activate opportunities.

Council members then heard from Chytania Brown, CEO and President of Employ Milwaukee Inc., on the innovations and investments being done in the Milwaukee Area through Employ Milwaukee Inc. and the funds received via a Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI) grant. Highlights of Employ Milwaukee's programs include a youth career readiness and employment program referred to as the Earn & Learn summer youth program. The program is a partnership with the Milwaukee Mayor's Office in which young adults are placed in public and private sector work experiences for seven weeks during the summer to receive job readiness training, enrichment activities, and wages of approximately \$12 per hour. During the presentation, Council members learned about the Skillful Transitions service Employ Milwaukee is funding through a WAI grant to serve underrepresented populations by providing job training activities, stipends, incentives, wraparound services and supportive services among other new and flexible opportunities.

Next, Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry CEO and CWI Committee Chair Sachin Shivaram shared with the Council the successful experience and outcomes that resulted from a worker recruitment and retention initiative at Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry that was funded with a Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) grant from DWD. With the assistance of WFF grant funding, Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry created a dedicated training center and curriculum to provide a learning environment where employees can learn foundry basics; build finishing and production skills; improve understanding of customer specifications; and acclimate to the physical demands of the job. At the end of the program, trainees gain transferable skills and earn a certificate of completion for internal career advancement. Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry also identified a

need to change recruitment practices to attract a more diverse workforce and those with barriers to employment, such as language or childcare. Using WFF grants and additional grant funding through the Department of Children and Families Partner Up! Program, the foundry was able to hire full-time translators and support funding for staff child care needs. The foundry intends to continue with these programs after the funding ends and hopes to serve as an example to the other employers on CWI and throughout Wisconsin.

CWI members turned their attention to updates and reports related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). Council members evaluated the annual performance metrics for the core WIOA programs in PY2021 and discussed the WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Narrative that states are required to submit to the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) each year. The report provides an opportunity for states to give an update on their progress for meeting their strategic vision and goals for workforce system. States are required to report on the program waivers in place and their progress; the two approaches chosen to pilot the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator; and descriptions of evaluation and research projects, completed reports, and descriptions of continuous improvement processes for incorporating customer satisfaction feedback. The Council reviewed the report narrative and performance metrics and raised no questions or concerns.

In response to the recommendations of the Job Center Task Force shared with the CWI earlier in 2022, Council members were given an introductory presentation on the progress of the efforts to develop a unified WIOA brand for the state. The Council was informed of the initial findings of phase one of the branding effort and the activities remaining to complete phase two. The project efforts included interviewing external stakeholders on their perspective of WIOA; CWI members were among those interviewed. The next phase of the WIOA branding effort is scheduled to begin in February 2023 and will include brand development and brand implementation.

The Council concluded the meeting by determining the CWI Full Council meeting schedule for 2023 before adjourning for a brief site tour of No Studios.