



BOONE COUNTY
UPWARD MOBILITY

Jobs and Workforce Development Workgroup Minutes

April 23, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM

Boone Electric Community Building (1413 Rangeline, Columbia, MO) and Zoom

Meeting Objective: Progress in workgroup efforts focused on youth leadership opportunities

Attendance: Lisa Driskel-Hawxby (Regional Economic Development Inc. (REDI)), Arissa Calvert (Millstone Weber), Beatrice Stewart (Flourish Initiative), Alaina Joyner (Flourish Initiative), Conrad Hake (Love Columbia), David “DJ” Johnson (Dept Higher Ed Workforce Development), Jennifer DeLaPorte (Columbia Public Schools (CPS)), Dr. Katie Siegel (CPS), Renee Winters (CPS), Salam Dawood (Salam PMO), Megan Weaver (Moberly Area Community College), Dr. Nikki Carter (MU Healthcare), Brooklyn Hill (Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA)), Leslie White (CMCA), Dr. Lester Woods (Source Summit), Miles Gibson (First/Last Mile), Onni Flint (CMCA), Liz Sensintaffar (Job Point), John Scalise (Job Point), Janna McKay Russell (Flourish Initiative), Lisa Buchanan (Columbia Chamber of Commerce), Amy Messner (Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development), Verna Laboy (Boone County Community Services Department (BCCSD)), Gina Jenkins (BCCSD), and Joanne Nelson (BCCSD)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lisa Driskel-Hawxby, facilitator for the workgroup, opened the meeting and had everyone introduce themselves. She briefly shared background information on Upward Mobility and the Jobs and Workforce Development workgroup.

2. Spotlight: Current Youth Leadership Opportunities

Lisa provided organizations with the opportunity to share information about their opportunities for middle and high school youth for leadership opportunities and the ability to experience various job opportunities in the community.

- a. Columbia Chamber Jobs and Workforce Development Lisa Buchanan Vice President Jobs and Workforce Development highlighted three initiatives: (1) [Business in Motion Expo](#) 91 businesses engaged; students prepped via Junior Achievement and Columbia College. (2) [Show Me Careers](#) Educator-focused career exposure (50 CPS, 30 regional staff). (3) [World of Works](#) a collaboration with Columbia Public Schools that focuses on youth starting in middle school and follows them through high school.
- b. Columbia Area Career Center – Renee Winters, Assistant Director and Practical Arts Curriculum Coordinator Offers over 80 career pathways; is a Registered Youth Apprenticeship Program provider (2,000-hour programs with a 95% retention rate). Current partnerships include Jacobs Property Management, Shelter Insurance, and more. Supports Career and Technical Student Organizations (e.g., FFA, FBLA, DECA).
- c. The Flourish Initiative – Beatrice Stewart, (Director) Alaina Joyner and Janna MacKay Russell They highlighted their [summer internship opportunities](#) for high school juniors going into their senior year of high school. Support Services: Includes case management, dental care, housing support. Scholarships: \$2,500 available upon program completion. Partnering with Job Point for facility improvements and employer engagement.
- d. Columbia Public Schools Jobs and Workforce Development – Dr. Katie Siegel, Associate Director of Workforce Development (Inaugural position) – Expanding K–12 career awareness; strong collaboration with community partners like MU Healthcare, Job Point, and Flourish. Internship Programs: 100+ students each semester, including gifted and special needs students. New Program for At-Risk Students: Paid internships via WIOA funding (goal: 50 students, current: ~80). Statewide Expansion: Julie Carter is lobbying to take this model statewide.
- e. Other opportunities:
 - [COTY/MOSOC](#) Higher Education and Workforce Development Board – David Johnson Launched MOSOC: 8-week Physical Security Technology training for youth (18–24), including hands-on work with surveillance, robotics, and drones. Paid weekly stipends and job placements with salaries starting at \$40K/year.
 - University of Missouri Healthcare System – Dr Nikki Carter Coordinates Tomorrow’s Healthcare Experts Expo (November 7, 2025), focused on middle to high school youth. Works in collaboration with City Care Program and multiple local school districts.



BOONE COUNTY
UPWARD MOBILITY

Jobs and Workforce Development Workgroup Minutes

April 23, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM

Boone Electric Community Building (1413 Rangeline, Columbia, MO) and Zoom

- Job Point – John Scalise [Youth Build Program](#). Partnering with CPS on high school equivalency programs. Provides continued education and workforce pathways for school dropouts.
- First/Last Mile Program – Dr Lester Woods Provides [transportation](#) for youth programs, supported by the City of Columbia and Boone County. [The Cycle of Success Training Program](#) partnered with Moberly Area Community College to deliver career and workforce training.
- Millstone Weber – Arisa Calvert Shared details about Project PAVE and Legacy Scholarships for students pursuing careers in civil engineering and construction. Hosted a project tour for Job Point and Missouri Works students, with candidate interviews scheduled.

3. Workgroup Planning

a. 2025 Workgroup Plan Review and Updates

Facilitator Lisa Driskel-Hawxby led a planning session, reflecting on changes since 2021:

Context Shift: Significant increase in youth opportunities.

Proposed Strategic Shift: From “increasing opportunities” to “increasing youth participation” in current programs.

Expanded Definition of Youth: Now includes out-of-school youth (not learning or earning), in recognition of systemic barriers.

b. Next Steps

A collaborative Google Doc will be developed to update the strategic action and be shared to allow email-based collaboration leading to a revised plan by the July 23, 2025, meeting. A consideration includes a central hub/resource for employers to connect with youth focused on coordination, not duplication.

The current statement— “To increase youth leadership opportunities to expose youth to careers in middle and high school”—will be revised to reflect the new direction and implementation capacity.

4. Closing

a. Partner Updates

Due to time constraints, there were no partner updates

b. Comments and Questions

Dr Katie Siegel asked that all would consider volunteering for the Senior All Night Party May 23, 2025. They are in need for volunteers for the games and entertainment to make this night a success for our students.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A4DAEAD23A1F4C61-55609592-senior?useFullSite=true#/>

Upcoming Workgroup Meeting Dates and Content Focus (at Boone Electric Community Building and via [Zoom](#))

- Wednesday, May 28, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM – Enhance supports for justice-involved individuals
- Wednesday, June 25, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM – Implement upwardly mobile business practices
- Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM – Increase youth leadership opportunities