



Jobs and Workforce Development Workgroup Minutes  
June 25, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM  
Boone Electric Community Building (1413 Rangeline, Columbia, MO) and Zoom

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**Meeting Objective:** Progress in workgroup efforts focused on upwardly mobile business practices

**Attendees:** Lisa Driskel-Hawxby, Facilitator (Regional Economic Development (REDI)), John Scalise (Job Point), Terra Eavenson (Connections to Success), Jasmine Ramirez (Missouri Department of Corrections), Alaina Joyner (Flourish Initiative), Miles Gibson (First Last Mile), Lisa Buxman (Love Columbia), Nikki Chilton (St. Louis University Transformative Workforce Academy), Priscilla Rose (Dream Tree Academy), Joanne Nelson (Boone County Community Services Department (BCCSD)), Gina Jenkins (BCCSD), Verna Laboy (BCCSD)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lisa Driskel-Hawxby and Verna Laboy opened the meeting, inviting all to introduce themselves while also providing partner updates to start the meeting.

- Lisa Driskel-Hawxby with REDI provided an update on some shifts in their staffing, including a new Business Development Specialist position currently posted. Lisa gave an overview of REDI strategic plan development with integration of different aspects of their work as well as a bit about the local impact with retail trends and sales tax revenue levels.
- Lisa Buxman with Love Columbia gave an update on the Career Next Steps Website development occurring with group community involvement, noting their current areas of focus.
- Joanne Nelson with Boone County Community Services Department announced Enola White has been selected as the new Upward Mobility Program Director. Verna Laboy will retire from this position effective July 11, 2025.
- Miles Gibson with First Last Mile shared they have recently entered an agreement with MFA Oil and Breaktime and will help with getting their employees to work soon. Miles shared he is transitioning roles soon.
- Priscilla Rose with Dream Tree Academy shared that she started as their new Program Director in March 2025 and gave updates on their programming and new partnerships. With further details to be announced later, an open house in August 2025 and a ribbon cutting in September 2025 are planned.
- John Scalise with Job Point reported a successful fundraising event to assist with basic needs of individuals in their trade programs. John explained some updates to their rehab services team, reminding everyone of staff available to discuss benefits planning.
- The workgroup discussed The Heist at Flat Branch Bank has opened and offers Tuesday morning events to help connect investors and nonprofits.
- Terra Eavenson with Connections to Success gave an update on a grant they recently received to expand their work to anyone unemployed or underemployed needing coaching and support.

2. Spotlight: Supports for upwardly mobile business practices

Lisa Driskel-Hawxby referenced the 2025 Workgroup Plan Overview document to guide the discussion. She provided background on the original goals of the group compared to the changing landscape of needs and what is available. She noted that the strategic actions and structure of future meetings may need to be updated to reflect shifting priorities. Lisa reminded the workgroup of a shared document being used to gather input on reenvisioning strategies related to both youth and those with justice involvement.



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3. Workgroup Planning

a. 2025 Workgroup Plan Review and Updates Next Steps

The focus for this workgroup session was discussing upwardly mobile business practices. Challenges related implementation were noted, including regulatory barriers such as drug screenings despite marijuana legalization and Occupational Safety and Health Administration safety requirements in certain fields. The group acknowledged the need for realistic, adaptive strategies when working with employers. This included the potential to get broader feedback on the working definition of upwardly mobile business practices developed by the workgroup.

Building on last month's focus, the expansion of community resources available were highlighted. The group discussed the importance of moving from a resource inventory approach to identifying gaps and assessing what is still needed, while keeping in mind the overall capacity of the workgroup.

Pricilla mentioned the need for an entrepreneurial youth focus for those who are not interested in traditional employment. The group emphasized the importance of engaging youth voices to help shape strategies that align with generational preferences and opportunity pathways.

The workgroup shared interest in identifying what this group can do to make a meaningful difference through collaboration. This included the potential to collectively create a message to share with employers. Nikki Chilton introduced [KC360](#) as a program model worth exploring where groups work together. She offered to have a colleague more familiar with the group present at the July meeting.

The workgroup plans to use the next meeting as a time for the full workgroup to come back together to reassess how to approach the result statement (Boone County is a flourishing community where everyone can live, learn, and grow) given the conditions and capacity previously discussed.

4. Closing

a. Partner Updates

Information on an upcoming Geoscience Summer Camp for youth was shared on behalf of someone unable to attend the workgroup meeting.

b. Comments and Questions

The next workgroup meeting is August 27, 2025\*. Discussion will include recruitment of new workgroup members, reflecting on capacity, and clarifying the workgroup vision. The focus of future meetings is to be determined.

**Next Workgroup Meeting:** August 27, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM at REDI (500 E. Walnut, Suite #102, Columbia, MO) in person or via [Zoom](#)

**\* The workgroup meeting originally scheduled for July 23, 2025 has been canceled.**