# NORTHWEST ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD Wednesday, December 2, 2025, 1:00 p.m. Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District Highway 62-65-412 North, Harrison, Arkansas

# **Agenda**

Call to Order – Introduce Guests	Bo Phillips
Business Services and Staff Report	Patty Methvin
Consent Agenda – Committee Reports and Agenda Items 1 – 5	
Committee Reports  Youth Committee Report  Disability Committee Report  One-Stop Operator Committee Report	.Jennifer Ragsdale
Agenda Item 1 – Action Updated Workforce Budget	2
Agenda Item 2 – Action Title 1 Program Provider	
Agenda Item 3 – Action Annual Report	3
Agenda Item 4 – Action One-Stop Operator Report – James Moss	17
Agenda Item 5 – Action Minutes of September 3, 2025 NW WDB Meeting	24
Agenda Item 6 - Action Eligible Training Provider Programs	26

#### Announcements/Other Business

Mark your calendars for these upcoming meeting dates:

- NW Workforce Development Board Meeting Wednesday, March 4, 2026
- NW Workforce Development Board Meeting Wednesday, June 3, 2026
- NW Workforce Development Board Meeting Wednesday, September 2, 2026

# **Workforce Grant Status**

	Active	Active	Active	Active	Available	Available	Available
Grant	YOUTH PY 2024	ADULT FY 2025	DLW FY 2025	NDWG AR-25_a	YOUTH PY 2025	ADULT PY 2025	DLW PY 2025
Grant Start Date	4/1/2024	10/1/2024	10/1/2024	5/21/2025	4/1/2025	7/1/2025	7/1/2025
Grant End Date	6/30/2026	6/30/2026	6/30/2026	5/20/2027	6/30/2027	6/30/2027	6/30/2027
Allotment	654,729.00	456,099.00	316,367.00	248,392.66	578,505.00	116,677.00	76,088.00
Spent	413,543.77	273,106.15	145,585.23	8,897.99	-	-	756.74
Balance	241,185.23	182,992.85	170,781.77	239,494.67	578,505.00	116,677.00	75,331.26
Average Spend	29,906.76	36,515.54	38,485.93	4,449.00	29,906.76	36,515.54	756.74
Months Left (est.)	8.1	5.0	4.4	53.8	19.3	8.2	104.0
Fund Start (est.)	9/25/2024	3/7/2025	8/15/2025	10/22/2025	7/29/2026	4/29/2026	11/21/2025
Fund End (est.)	7/29/2026	4/29/2026	12/26/2025	3/24/2030	3/1/2028	12/31/2026	6/6/2034
Penetration Rate	63%	60%	46%	4%	0%	0%	1%

Allotments Received \$ 2,446,857.66

	TBD	TBD	TBD
Grant	NDWG AR-25_b	ADULT FY 2026	DLW FY 2026
Grant Start Date	10/1/2025	10/1/2025	10/1/2025
Grant End Date	5/20/2027	6/30/2027	6/30/2027
Allotment	751,607.34	482,968.00	270,873.00

Allotments Pending \$ 1,505,448.34

Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Development Board

**Annual Report for Program Year 2023** 

July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024

**Arkansas Workforce Centers** 

Arkansas Workforce Center at Fayetteville, Comprehensive 2153 E Joyce Blvd Suite 201, Fayetteville, AR 72703

Arkansas Workforce Center at Harrison, Affiliate 818 Highway 62-65-412 North, Harrison, AR 72601

Each center provides a "no wrong door" access point for job seekers and employers. The comprehensive center in Fayetteville offers the full range of partner and WIOA Title services, the affiliate center in Harrison offers partner services and extends access to more rural counties through outreach.

### **WIOA Implementation Activities**

A description of the activities in which the local board has engaged to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The description should include partner engagement, partner and board meetings, and efforts to integrate services to employers and jobseekers.

Northwest Workforce Board and partner staff continue to work vigorously to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Staff of the Northwest WIOA Team (Core Four and Core Four Plus) partners have been meeting regularly since March 2015 to ensure that the partners are coordinating activities within the Workforce System of Northwest Arkansas. These regular meetings have deepened the relationships and understanding of the law and guidance around the WIOA as well as the programs' benefits and needs.

With partners as Board members, the opportunity to educate and interact with the Board is ensured at a minimum quarterly; however, Board members are continually involved with several of the partners throughout their communities.

Northwest has supported secondary Career and Tech Education (CTE) through Educational Cooperatives with their regional employer partnership councils. Board members and staff have helped in the organization and participation in Education Cooperative Summits which bring students, educators and employers together to build the talent pipeline we need for the future.

# **Employer Services**

A description of the programs and strategies for serving employers at the local level.

The Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District Business Services Team meets regularly to implement and deliver business services, with the objective of addressing unmet workforce needs and narrowing employment and skills gaps.

The Business Services Coordinator seeks to assist employers and in-demand industry sectors with overcoming the challenges of recruitment, retention, and development of qualified candidates. Patty Methvin has served as the primary point of contact and support for targeted businesses while connecting public resources, job seekers, and business sectors to achieve a shared understanding of industry needs and opportunities.

Employers are served through Arkansas Workforce Centers and have access to customized recruitment and hiring, human resource consultation, workforce development training, free job listings, labor market information, small business resources and referrals for aspiring entrepreneurs, layoff aversion strategies, tax credit information, and work-based learning opportunities such as on-the-job training, registered apprenticeship, and work experience. To market these services to the public and increase brand awareness, a business services webpage was created as well as WIOA rack cards for local distribution. Flyers and rack cards for Northwest were also translated into Spanish and Marshallese

The One-Stop Operator remains in contact with all Core 4 Partners throughout the district to supply quarterly reports to the Workforce Board, address any pressing issues that may have developed, and review client success stories.

The Northwest Disability committee, Northwest Youth Committee and Northwest One Stop Operatory committee meet regularly to discuss how to better serve our participants.

# **Innovative Service Delivery**

A description of the local area's unique programs and recent accomplishments. The local area should highlight any innovative service delivery strategies, including program activities that support dislocated workers, low-skilled/low-income adults and disadvantaged youth.

Northwest's strategy for serving the out-of-school youth population, who are dropouts, is to partner with the Adult Education programs providing GED training and directing a work component. Typically, an individual will attend GED classes for half day and be in a work experience the other half. Participants are paid a wage for work experience. Staff secure an employer for the work experience and closely monitors both the training and work activities, if either is being neglected or there are issues then the Career Advisor works to resolve the issue. This has been extremely successful because of close oversight, and the young person has financial resources to stay focused on completing the GED while gaining valuable experience in the world of work. This has shown greater performance success for both the Adult Education and Youth programs. Many started as high school dropouts and are climbing the career ladder via higher education.

Northwest partnered with O.U.R. Educational Cooperative, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Harrison Regional Chamber of Commerce and Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce to create the "See it AND Be It" Youth summits. The target audience was High School juniors and seniors, and Out of School Youth. The vision of this conference was to get those students at the end of their high school career or out-of-school youth to come into a conference setting to figure out more about themselves and how to get them into the workforce.

Northwest Workforce is a partner of the Carroll County Collaborative (C3 and C4) which brings together employers, community leaders, educators, the elected officials, workforce and economic developers to find and implement solutions that have allowed Carroll County to work together to begin to address the unmet needs of the employers and communities. Carroll County is 'where Woodstock meets livestock' and this innovative partnership is manifesting with the addition of a new tech center for high school students at the old Armory with all three high schools in partnership with business.

### **Services to Targeted Populations**

A description of the programs, initiatives, and strategies for serving Veterans at the local level, including a description of how veterans' priority of service is being implemented for all training programs. A description of efforts and strategies employed by the local board to increase enrollments of individuals on public assistance, disabled individuals, out-of-school youth, at-risk youth, ex-offenders, high-school dropouts and other groups that may be identified by the local board as priority populations.

- a) Veterans
- b) Social Security Insurance (SSI)
- c) Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- d) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- e) UI Claimant
- f) Long Term Unemployed
- *g)* Low-Income Persons
- h) TANF Recipients
- *i)* Receives Public Assistance (not TANF)
- *j)* Ex-offenders
- k) Single Parent
- *l)* Displaced Homemaker
- m) Migrant
- n) Homeless
- o) Foster Care
- p) Out-of-School Youth
- q) Basic Skills Deficient Youth
- r) Limited English Partnerships

### **Targeted Populations and Priority of Service**

The Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (NWA WDB) continues to ensure that individuals with barriers to employment receive priority access to all WIOA-funded services and training programs. Priority of service is implemented consistently across all workforce centers in accordance with federal and state guidelines, emphasizing Veterans, recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

# Implementation of Priority of Service

All Arkansas Workforce Center staff receive annual training on identifying and documenting targeted populations during the intake and eligibility process. Priority of service is built into the case management system, ensuring that eligible participants are coded correctly and receive expedited access to career, training, and supportive services. Outreach materials, intake forms, and orientation sessions clearly communicate that individuals from targeted groups receive priority consideration for enrollment in training and employment programs.

# Programs, Initiatives, and Strategies by Target Population

- a) Veterans The Northwest region partners closely with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services Veterans Representatives. Veterans are given first priority for individualized career services, training opportunities, and referrals to employers. Local centers host *Veterans Career Fairs* and provide specialized résumé and interview workshops focusing on translating military experience into civilian careers.
- **b)** SSI/SSDI Recipients Through partnerships with *Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)* and *Disability Rights Arkansas*, individuals receiving disability benefits receive customized career counseling, assistive technology evaluations, and supported employment opportunities.
- c) SNAP Recipients WIOA staff collaborate with the *Department of Human Services* to cross-refer SNAP recipients who express interest in employment and training programs. Participants may receive occupational training, job placement, and supportive services such as transportation and work clothing.
- d) UI Claimants and Long-Term Unemployed Unemployment Insurance claimants are automatically referred to WIOA staff for reemployment services. The *Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)* program helps identify skill gaps and directs individuals to short-term training in high-demand sectors such as manufacturing, logistics, and healthcare.
- **e)** Low-Income Persons & Public Assistance Recipients (TANF and non-TANF) The WDB partners with *Career Pathways Initiative* programs at local colleges and DHS caseworkers to align supportive services with education and employment goals. Participants often receive financial literacy workshops, childcare assistance, and tuition support for short-term credentials.
- f) Ex-Offenders Through collaboration with local reentry programs and county probation offices, ex-offenders receive targeted outreach and support for job readiness, credential attainment, and

placement in transitional jobs. Employers willing to hire justice-involved individuals are connected to federal bonding and tax credit programs.

- g) Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers Workforce staff coordinate with *Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Northwest Arkansas* to ensure participants receive both educational and financial support. Training is often focused on high-wage, family-sustaining careers in healthcare and IT.
- h) Migrant Workers and Limited English Populations The Board works with *Community Clinic, Catholic Charities Immigration Services*, and *Ozark Literacy Council* to provide bilingual outreach, ESL instruction, and contextualized job training programs.
- i) Homeless Individuals and Foster Youth Partnerships with *7hills Homeless Center, Children's Safety Center*, and local youth organizations provide wrap-around supports such as housing referrals, mental health services, and transportation to training.
- j) Out-of-School and Basic Skills Deficient Youth WIOA Youth programs prioritize re-engagement of out-of-school youth through paid work experiences, apprenticeships, and GED or postsecondary pathways. Career Navigators work closely with schools, juvenile courts, and community organizations to identify and recruit youth most in need of services.

#### **Efforts to Increase Enrollment**

To expand participation among these populations, the Northwest Workforce Board:

- Conducted targeted outreach campaigns in collaboration with DHS, ARS, and community nonprofits.
- Increased co-enrollment between Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs to ensure seamless access to training and supportive services.
- Utilized social media and community events to reach underrepresented populations, especially youth and ex-offenders.
- Enhanced partnerships with employers willing to provide on-the-job training and transitional employment opportunities for targeted groups.
- Created flyers, rack cards and social media campaigns that included translation into Spanish and Marshallese.

Through these collective strategies, the NWA WDB continues to meet its mission of ensuring that all residents, especially those facing significant barriers to employment, have equitable access to workforce services and opportunities leading to sustainable employment.

#### **Partnerships and Collaboration**

The Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (NWA WDB) continues to prioritize collaboration among all WIOA-required and additional partners to ensure seamless, customercentered service delivery across the region. The Board's vision is to strengthen an integrated workforce system that meets the needs of both job seekers and employers by leveraging the expertise and resources of local partners.

# **Collaboration with WIOA Partners**

Northwest Arkansas maintains strong relationships with its required partners, including:

- Adult Education and Literacy providers North Arkansas College, Northwest Technical Institute, Arkansas State University Mountain Home, Northwest Arkansas Community College collaborate on shared referrals and co-enrollment strategies for individuals needing basic skills improvement or GED attainment before entering occupational training.
- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Joint case management and co-enrollment ensure that individuals with disabilities have full access to training, assistive technology, and employment supports.
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and SNAP Employment & Training programs – Cross-referral agreements allow TANF and SNAP participants to enter WIOAfunded training and receive supportive services such as transportation, childcare, and work tools.
- Employment Services/Unemployment Insurance (UI) Co-located staff work together to provide RESEA workshops and reemployment planning for UI claimants and dislocated workers.

### **Collaboration with Additional Partners**

Beyond required partners, the NWA WDB engages with numerous **community-based organizations**, **governmental agencies**, **and educational institutions** to expand reach and enhance outcomes:

- Community-Based Organizations: Partnerships with 7hills Homeless Center, Samaritan Community Center, and Single Parent Scholarship Fund help identify and support job seekers with significant barriers, including homelessness, food insecurity, and single parenthood.
- **Governmental Entities:** Coordination with county judges, economic development offices, and chambers of commerce strengthens alignment with local and regional economic priorities.
- Educational Institutions: The Board partners closely with North Arkansas College, Northwest Technical Institute, Arkansas State University Mountain Home, Northwest Arkansas Community College to design short-term, industry-driven credentials in healthcare, advanced manufacturing, IT, and logistics.
- **Employers and Sector Partnerships:** Local employers serve on the Board and sector partnerships, ensuring training programs align with evolving labor market needs.

#### Processes for Co-Enrollment, Referrals, and Common Intake

To streamline customer service, the region employs integrated intake procedures across partners, using **case conferencing** and **referral tracking** within the Arkansas Workforce Connections system. Case managers meet regularly to identify shared customers and coordinate wraparound supports.

Participants are often **co-enrolled** in Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, or dual-enrolled with TANF or Vocational Rehabilitation, maximizing both service access and funding efficiency.

# **Leveraging Resources**

The Northwest Board places a high emphasis on **braiding and leveraging resources** to enhance program impact. Examples include:

- Joint funding of occupational training with Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, allowing shared tuition and supportive service costs.
- Employer partnerships through **Work Experience** agreements, where employers contribute a portion of training costs, providing a direct return on investment.
- Collaboration with local colleges to use **Perkins**, **Adult Education**, **and state training funds** to expand equipment and credential opportunities.
- Partnering with nonprofit organizations to secure grants supporting supportive services, including transportation stipends, digital access, and work attire.
- Coordination with regional transportation providers and housing authorities to align supportive resources for participants facing barriers to employment.

These efforts ensure that WIOA funds are strategically leveraged to reach more individuals, reduce duplication, and strengthen the overall workforce system.

#### Waivers

During Program Year 2024, the Northwest region utilized state-approved waivers as applicable to support flexibility in service delivery.

- **Incumbent Worker Training Waiver:** The Board leveraged this waiver to upskill employees within key regional industries, including logistics, healthcare, and manufacturing. The waiver allowed local flexibility to dedicate a portion of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to employer-based training, resulting in improved job retention and productivity.
- Individual Training Account (ITA) Cap Flexibility: This waiver permitted the Board to extend ITA funding caps for participants enrolled in longer-term, high-demand programs such as nursing and mechatronics, ensuring completion without financial hardship.

Progress toward outcomes shows strong employer engagement, higher credential attainment, and improved participant completion rates for training programs supported by these waivers.

#### Continuous Improvement and Customer Feedback

The Northwest Workforce Development Board is committed to continuous improvement through systematic evaluation of customer satisfaction, staff development, and partner collaboration.

- Customer Satisfaction Surveys: Surveys are distributed electronically and in-person at all workforce centers. Results are reviewed quarterly to identify trends and improvement areas related to service accessibility, staff responsiveness, and program value.
- Partner Meetings and Case Reviews: Regular cross-agency meetings allow partners to share feedback and implement best practices. Customer flow and referral processes are refined based on partner input and performance outcomes.
- **Staff Training and Development:** Ongoing professional development is provided on trauma-informed care, customer service excellence, and WIOA performance standards.
- **Performance Data Review:** The Board analyzes performance measures quarterly to identify areas for improvement and to celebrate high-performing staff and programs.

Through these efforts, the Northwest Arkansas Workforce System continues to deliver high-quality, customer-focused services that adapt to changing community and labor market needs.

#### **Northwest WIOA Performance Measures**

WIOA Adult	PY24 - PY25 Performance Goals			
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	82.2%			
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	83.9%			
Credential Attainment Rate	75%			
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$8,068.00			
Measurable Skills Gains	81.9%			
WIOA Dislocated Worker	PY24 – PY25 Performance Goals			
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	85%			
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	834.9%			
Credential Attainment Rate	77%			
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$9,200.00			
Measurable Skills Gains	75.6%			
WIOA Youth	PY24 - PY25 Performance Goals			
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	78.6%			
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	79%			
Credential Attainment Rate	64.5%			
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$3,950.00			
Measurable Skills Gains	67.5%			

# **Northwest Arkansas WIOA Success Stories**

❖ Local Workforce Development Area: Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area

❖ Participant Name: Conner Matthew Boehme (190119)

Training Activities and Completion Date(s): 6/20/2024

Job Title: Mechanic Service Tech

Employer: Walmart Automotive Service, Elkins AR

❖ Starting Salary: \$17.00 per hour, full-time

Employment Start Date: March 17, 2024



# Participant Background:

Conner was an 18 year old OSY with a disability. When he first enrolled. His goal was to obtain his GED. He struggled during that time and felt discouraged about his progress. Eventually things turned around an he obtained his GED.

Conner felt a scene of accomplishment and was ready to pursue a career. He tried a few, but decided that automotive mechanic was the way to go

because his father is a mechanic. That journey started out at a mechanic shop in an apprenticeship positive. That wasn't a good fit for him, but another option was available to him and he decided to attend NWTI's automotive mechanic program. There was a delay in enrolling at the time. CA called the school to ask that they remember Conner when another spot was available. A few weeks later, he called with the good news that a spot had opened for him. ARS paid his tuition and WIOA helped with motivation, encouragement, referral of other resources and documenting his journey. He attended classes regularly, completed all assignments, kept in contact with both case managers, passed his exams, graduated, completed an apprenticeship with ARS and accepted a permanent, full-time job at

"one of the world's largest and most successful companies in the U.S." according to the Fortune Global 500 list.

# Services Received Through WIOA:

Adult Education, ARS, Rudy's Auto Repair Service

### Outcome(s):

A few weeks later, he called with the good news that a spot had opened for him. ARS paid his tuition and WIOA helped with motivation, encouragement, referral of other resources and documenting his journey. He attended classes regularly, completed all assignments, kept in contact with both case managers, passed his exams, graduated, completed an apprenticeship with ARS and accepted a permanent, full-time job at "one of the world's largest and most successful companies in the U.S." according to the Fortune Global 500 list.

❖ Local Workforce Development Area: Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area

❖ Participant Name: Cassie Watkins

Training Activities and Completion Date(s): RN at NWACC, August 18, 2023

❖ Job Title: RN

Employer: Vantage Point Behavioral Health

Starting Salary: \$33 to \$37.50 an hour

Employment Start Date: November 8, 2024



#### Participant Background:

Cassie qualified for WIOA services as an Adult participant. She was a Single parent of two children and the family received SNAP and HUD Housing Assistance.

# Services Received Through WIOA:

Cassie received Supportive Services for car repairs and maintenance, Books and Fees and required laptop and stethoscope. Cassie also received

information on Financial Literacy and other available resources.

# Outcome(s):

Cassie graduated from NWACC Cum Laude with a Nursing AAS the Summer of 2023. She passed the NCLEX on the first attempt. Cassie has been employed full-time as an RN at Vantage Point Behavioral Health since November 2023 earning well-above self-sufficient wages. The family no longer receives Public Assistance.

Local Workforce Development Area: Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area

❖ Participant Name: Daytona Oldham

Training Activities and Completion Date(s): Attended NWACC for AAS in Nursing. Earned May 2024

❖ Job Title: Registered Nurse

❖ Employer: Washington Regional Medical Center - Fayetteville, AR

❖ Starting Salary: \$31.00

Employment Start Date: August 12, 2024



#### Participant Background:

Daytona had completed pre-requisites for the RN program at NWACC and was accepted into the program that started 8/2022. She was low-income at the time due to not working while in school, and was receiving SNAP benefits. This qualified her for WIOA Title 1-B Adult funding. Due to her age and limited work experience, she lacked job skills. Daytona had a high school diploma and college credits, but did not have any occupational skills certifications or a post-

secondary diploma. She required training to secure employment opportunities offering self-sustaining wages. WIOA Career Advisor referred her to the Upskill NWA Scholarship program. Daytona applied and was awarded an Upskill NWA scholarship.

#### Services Received Through WIOA:

WIOA provided Supportive Services: Laptop, tablet, book, CPR class, uniforms, background checks, transportation assistance, testing fees, NCLEX & licensing fees. Daytona was also in the UpSkill NWA scholarship program which covered her all of her tuition and most of her books and fees.

### Outcome(s):

Daytona completed training on schedule and graduated with an Associate of Applied Science in Nursing from NWACC. She passed her NCLEX exam in July 2024 and obtained her RN license. She accepted a job as an RN with Washington Regional Medical Center and started work on 8/12/2024.

# **One Stop Operator Report**

July 1, 2025 through September 30, 2025

# Stepping Into Her Future: Ahnawae's Journey to the GED – Story provided by Nicholas Ryburn, Northwest Technical Institute – Adult Education

Ahnawae Newman began her GED journey with the Adult Education Division at Northwest Technical Institute in Springdale on December 1, 2025. Inspired by a close friend who had recently earned her GED at the Center, she found the courage to return to school and commit to her own success.

From the start, Ahnawae was an enthusiastic and dedicated student. Her confidence grew quickly as she passed the GED Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science official tests in

rapid succession.

Then came the challenge of Math. Throughout the summer, Ahnawae studied diligently, despite transportation issues and a demanding work schedule that limited her classroom attendance. She remained determined, using Essential Education and paper study packets to continue learning at home whenever she couldn't be on campus.

Her perseverance paid off. In early October, she passed the GED Math Ready test. She shared that she was so excited she "went outside, jumped up and down, and threw [her] shoes into the air in joy." Shortly after, she passed the GED Math Official on her first attempt.



GED completer, Ahnawae Newman

When she returned to the Center, there were hugs all around. Ahnawae's success is a powerful testament to resilience, commitment, and the life-changing impact of adult education.

# Teaching Her Purpose: Nadia's Path to the Classroom – Story provided by Teshia Smith, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

Nadia Harris is a first-time client of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), beginning her journey through Transition Services. With ARS support, she successfully completed her bachelor's degree in General Studies from the University of Arkansas–Fort Smith. ARS also assisted with the cost of her Praxis exam and provided study materials to help her prepare.



Greenland Middle School teacher Nadia Harris

After passing the Praxis, ARS continued to support Nadia by funding her participation in the Arkansas Professional Educator Pathway (ArPEP)—a two-year program that enables individuals with a bachelor's degree to become licensed and employed as classroom teachers while completing the requirements for a Standard Arkansas Teaching License.

Nadia's dedication and persistence led to a life-changing outcome. She has accepted a teaching position at Greenland Middle School, where she will begin serving as a 7th and 8th Grade Science Teacher in August 2025. To help her launch her career with confidence, ARS also provided assistance for classroom setup and school supplies.

Reflecting on her experience, Nadia shared: "When I first started working with ARS, I didn't have much of an idea of how my journey would look. Fast forwarding to now, I have my dream job... Working with my counselor, Teshia, has been such a great experience and I am so blessed to have been supported by her throughout the past few years."

Nadia's story highlights the power of partnership, perseverance, and the transformative impact of ARS services.

# Finding His Place: Anthony's Path to Purpose and Independence – Story provided by Kevin Cook, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

When Anthony first began exploring employment, he was unsure whether he could work in a public setting. However, his determination—and the right support—propelled him forward. With assistance from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), Anthony attended North Arkansas College in Harrison and worked steadily toward his career goals.

Today, Anthony is thriving as a Radiologic Technologist with Clearview Digital Images. The role is an ideal fit, allowing him the independence he values while still providing access to colleagues who can assist when needed. This balance supports both his abilities and his comfort level, creating an environment where he can excel.

For his ARS counselor, supporting Anthony has been a rewarding experience. He has shown resilience, professionalism, and a strong commitment to his craft. Clearview Digital Images considers him an asset, and Anthony is proud to make a meaningful difference for the patients he serves—fulfilling his dream of "working more with things rather than people."

His counselor shared that ARS is proud to play a part in helping Anthony build a more enjoyable, confident, and fulfilling daily life. Anthony's story demonstrates how individualized support, matched with personal perseverance, can open the door to independence and purpose.

# From Second Chances to New Beginnings: Paige's Path to Purpose – Information Provided by Nadine Sewak, WIOA 1B

Paige Moody entered the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area determined to rebuild her life. At 33, she was a high school graduate receiving SNAP benefits, recently released from incarceration, and residing at Magdalene Serenity House in Fayetteville. Despite significant challenges, Paige demonstrated strong motivation to regain stability and pursue meaningful employment.

Through WIOA Title I-B, Paige accessed Basic Career Services and supportive services that helped her address outstanding fines and obtain her driver's license—an essential milestone in her journey toward self-sufficiency. With reliable transportation in place, Paige enrolled in the Veterinary Assistant program at Petra Allied Health. She excelled in the program and earned her national Certified Veterinary Assistant (CVA) credential on July 17,

2025.

Following completion of her training, Paige secured employment as a Pet Care Associate with Paws 'n' Rec, beginning work on September 10, 2025. Her success embodies the mission of WIOA: to remove barriers, build skills aligned with local demand, and support individuals in obtaining sustainable employment.

Paige is now thriving in the pet care field and building a stable, hopeful future.



Certified Veterinary Assistant Paige Moody

# Driving Toward a New Future: Shawn's Road to Opportunity – Information provided by Nadine Sewak, WIOA 1B

At 42, Shawn Talley was working in the food industry earning \$13 an hour, striving to support himself while receiving SNAP benefits. A high school graduate with a strong work ethic, Shawn knew he needed a new direction—one that would allow him to achieve stability, increase his earning potential, and build a long-term career.

Through WIOA Title I-B, Shawn engaged in Basic Career Services and received supportive services for fuel, automobile insurance, and his phone bill. These critical supports ensured Shawn could fully participate in training without interruption. With determination and consistent effort, he enrolled in the Class A CDL program at 160 Driving Academy and

successfully completed training on August 19, 2025.

Shawn's hard work quickly paid off. He secured full-time employment as a CDL Driver with Ozark Sash and Door in Springdale, beginning September 9, 2025. His new position offers significantly improved wages and a clear pathway for advancement in an in-demand industry.

Shawn's journey exemplifies the mission of WIOA: empowering individuals to upskill, overcome barriers, and obtain meaningful employment. He is now on the road to a stronger, more stable future.



CDL Driver Shawn Talley

# Resilience in Every Breath: Kadiatou's Journey to Becoming an RRT – Story submitted by Rose Sparrow, WIOA 1B

Kadiatou Amy Keita's journey with the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Area began in 2020, when she first enrolled as an Out-of-School Youth pursuing her CNA. As a young single woman facing academic hurdles and frequent transitions between advisors, Kadiatou's determination never wavered. She earned her CNA certificate on July 25, 2021, and continued to push forward, even when her attempt at an LPN program did not work out as planned.



Respiratory Therapist Kadiatou "Amy" Keita

In 2023, Kadiatou was assigned to Career Advisor Rose Sparrow, who supported her through a new pathway: the Respiratory Therapy program at NWACC. WIOA Title I-B provided Basic Career Services, financial literacy support, referrals, and targeted supportive services such as car insurance assistance—removing barriers that could have disrupted her progress.

Kadiatou successfully completed her Respiratory
Therapy program on May 14, 2025, demonstrating
exceptional perseverance. Shortly afterward, she
accepted a position as a Registered Respiratory
Therapist at St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa, beginning
July 21, 2025. In her new role, she prepares
treatment equipment, administers vital respiratory
therapies, and responds to patients experiencing

breathing difficulties—directly contributing to lifesaving care.

Kadiatou's transformation reflects the heart of WIOA: empowering individuals to overcome obstacles, develop in-demand skills, and achieve meaningful employment. Today, she is thriving in a healthcare career that brings hope and healing to others—just as her own journey has inspired all who supported her.

# **Core Partner Numbers**

# Title 1 Core 4 NWAEDD

(Services Include - In-School Youth, Out-of-School Youth, Adults and Dislocated Workers)

Location	1st Quarter	Participants	Year to Date Participants		
	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25	
Fayetteville	4	39	4	39	
Harrison	13	27	13	27	
Total	17	66	17	66	

Title 2
Core 4 Adult Education Northwest District

(Services Include - English Language Learners, U.S. Civics preparation, Adult Basic and Secondary Education, Workplace Education, Family Literacy, Integrated Education and Training)

1st Quarter Year to Date 1st Quarter Year to Date Location Reportable Reportable **Participants Participants** Individuals Individuals PY 25 PY 24 PY 25 PY 24 PY 25 PY 24 PY 25 PY 24 Arkansas State University at 95 87 64 58 95 87 64 58 Mountain Home Favetteville Public 196 196 157 152 196 196 157 152 Schools North Arkansas 254 226 192 210 254 226 192 210 College Northwest Arkansas Community 910 612 910 612 College Northwest 725 610 470 389 725 610 470 389 Technical Institute Ozark Literacy 120 54 120 54 60 100 60 100 Council 1,390 1,390 937 2,089 937 1,521 Total 2,089 1,521

Title 3
Core 4 Division of Workforce Services

(Services Include - Job Service, TANF Clients, Unemployment Insurance)

Location	1st Quarter	Customers	Year to Date Customers		
	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25	
Fayetteville	2,503	3,222	2,503	3,222	
Harrison	1,837	670	1,837	670	
Total	4,340	3,892	4,340	3,892	

Title 4 **Core 4 Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Northwest** 

(DISTRICT 1- Services Include - Case Review, Career & Technical Training and Education, transition from school to work or post-secondary education, on-the-job training, ancillary support

services, and employee performance issues because of a disability in the workplace)

Location		uarter cants		arter # sed		o Date cants		Date # sed	Current Clients	
	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25
Fayetteville	357	157	174	199	357	157	174	199	799	922
Harrison	66	52	11	30	66	52	11	30	152	134
Total	423	209	185	229	423	209	185	229	951	1,056

# Title 4 **Core 4 Services for the Blind**

(DISTRICT 1- Services Include - Case Review, Career & Technical Training and Education, transition from school to work or post-secondary education, on-the-job training, ancillary support

services, employee performance issues because of a disability in the workplace)

Location	1st Quarter Referrals		Year to Date Total Referrals		Year to Date Total Served	
	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25	PY 24	PY 25
Benton & Washington Counties	20	23	20	23	111	127
Baxter, Boone, Carroll, Madison, Marion, Newton, and Searcy Counties	18	18	18	18	32	56
Total	38	41	38	41	143	183

#### NORTHWEST ARKANSAS LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

#### Meeting Minutes - September 3, 2025

818 Highway 62-65-412 North, Harrison, Arkansas

The Northwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board (NWA WDB) held its regular meeting on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, both in person and via Zoom.

#### **Call to Order**

Chair **Mr. Bo Phillips** called the meeting to order, welcomed attendees, and introduced three new Board members:

- Mr. John Jones, Regional Outreach Director, Arkansas Workforce Connections
- Ms. Katie Hull, HR Director, Baxter International
- Ms. Debbie Ackerson, CEO, Boston Mountain Rural Health Center, Inc.

#### **FOIA Compliance Discussion**

The Board reviewed recent changes to the FOIA law requiring public visibility of board member votes. Discussion centered on ensuring transparency while maintaining in-person and Zoom meeting options. The Board agreed to adopt a *consent agenda* system, allowing most action items to be approved in a single roll call vote. Exceptions will be made for the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), which requires individual votes due to abstentions.

### **Committee and Staff Reports**

**Staff/Business Services Report** – Presented by Ms. Patty Methvin

- Monitoring Overview:
  - o ADWS conducted monitoring visits in March and April; results were positive.
- Cargill Plant Closure: Approximately 1,000 layoffs in Springdale.
  - Northwest received a \$120,000 "Stop Gap" grant from Arkansas Workforce Connections (restricted to training and supportive services).
- Disaster Grant: Northwest applied for disaster funding for Searcy and Newton Counties. To date,
   \$248,392 of the \$1,082,473.39 request has been approved.
- Third-Party Monitoring: Completed by Hightower Workforce Initiatives.
- Partnerships:
  - Ms. Trish Villines connected Ms. Emillee Tucker (Perkins Grant Coordinator) and Ms.
     Methvin with Ms. Kimberly Moore, Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc., to explore pre-apprenticeship opportunities.
- Leadership Update: Mayor Tim McKinney elected as Chair of the Northwest Chief Elected Officials.

**Executive Committee Report** – Presented by Mr. Phillips and Ms. Methvin

Ms. Cherie Conner presented the One-Stop Operator (OSO) Procurement Committee report.

- The RFP for the Northwest One-Stop was distributed; five entities requested the RFP, but only one entity submitted a response.
- The proposal met the scoring threshold (70%) and the Committee recommended awarding the contract to **NWAEDD**.
- Due to only one response, the procurement is considered Sole Source. The OSO Procurement Committee signed the required documentation confirming compliance with competitive procurement procedures.

#### **Action Items**

#### Item 1 – Workforce Budget Update

Discussion included the potential impact of a federal government shutdown on WIOA funding.

#### Item 2 - Selective Service Policy

Reviewed policy for participants not registered for Selective Service but now eligible for benefits. A self-attestation form will be required, with staff verification before enrollment.

#### Item 3 - Dislocated Worker National Disaster Grant Policy

Board approved adding a definition of "long-term unemployed" as 13 weeks or longer.

#### Item 4 - One-Stop Operator Report

Mr. James Moss presented success stories and program highlights.

#### Item 5 - Approval of June 4, 2025 Minutes

No changes were noted.

**MOTION**: Mr. Kelley Sharp moved to approve Committee Reports and Action Items 1–5. Mr. Kevin Estes seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote.

#### Item 6 – Eligible Training Provider Programs (ETPL)

- Updates since the last Board meeting were included in the agenda.
- Ms. Methvin reminded the Board that all programs must be approved by the December meeting.

**MOTION**: Mr. Jason Patience moved, and Ms. Emilee Tucker seconded, to approve the ETPL updates. Motion carried by roll call vote. **Abstentions:** Cherie Conner, Diana Johnson, Kelley Sharp, and Ricky Tompkins.

#### **Announcements & Other Business**

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 3, 2025.

#### **Adjournment**

MOTION: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.

Northwest Workforce Board	Approved Eligible Training Programs
Program Name	<u>Provider Name</u>
CompTIA A+ Certification	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Electrical Apprenticeship	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Electronics Technology and Automation	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Automotive Service Technology (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Associate of Applied Science in Food Studies	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
NCCER Core, Introduction to Basic Construction Skills	The Academy - NWA
Phlebotomy	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Plumbing Apprenticeship	NorthWest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Medical Coder	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Associate of Applied Science in Registered Nursing LPN/Param	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Associate of Applied Science in Cybersecurity	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Construction Technology (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Certified Clinical Medical Assistant	The Academy - NWA
Registered Nursing (Traditional)	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Nursing Assistant	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Nursing Assistant (Certificate of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Commercial Truck Driving	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Construction Technology (Certificate of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)

Northwest Workforce Board	Approved Eligible Training Programs
Program Name	Provider Name
Technical Certificate, Dental Assistant	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
LPN (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Information Technology (Associates  Degree)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Automotive Systems Repair	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Phlebotomy (Certificate of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
AS in Business Administration - Transfer	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Business Administration Management (AAS Degree)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Computer Information Systems	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Manufacturing Technology (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Culinary Arts	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Technical Certificate - Artisanal Foods	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Practical Nursing	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Paramedic (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Certified Nursing Assistant	PETRA ALLIED HEALTH (SPRINGDALE)
Facilities Maintenance (Certificate of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Certified Retail Analyst with Prerequisites	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
<u>Funeral Science</u>	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Construction Technology	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)

Northwest Workforce Board	Approved Eligible Training Programs
Program Name	<u>Provider Name</u>
HVAC and Refrigeration Maintenance	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Certified Pharmacy Technician	The Academy - NWA
Class A CDL Program	160 Driving Academy - Northwest
CDL Training Class - 5 day refresher	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Biomedical Electronics Technology (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Welding	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Machining	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
HVAC	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Industrial Truck Operator	The Academy - NWA
Medical Assistant	PETRA ALLIED HEALTH (SPRINGDALE)
<u>Dental Assistant</u>	PETRA ALLIED HEALTH (SPRINGDALE)
Veterinary Assistant	PETRA ALLIED HEALTH (SPRINGDALE)
Medical Billing and Coding/Insurance Specialist	PETRA ALLIED HEALTH (SPRINGDALE)
Manufacturing Technology (Certificate of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Surgical Technology (Associates of Applied Science)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Truck & Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator & Instructor	MID-AMERICA TRUCK DRIVING SCHOOL INC. (MATDS) - Springdale
Registered Nursing (Associates of Applied Science)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Construction Equipment Operation (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)

Northwest Workforce Board	Approved Eligible Training Programs
Program Name	<u>Provider Name</u>
Gas Metal Arc Welding (GMAW) - (Certificate of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Associate of Applied Science in Digital  Design	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Assoc. of Applied Science in  Programming/Mobile Developmen	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Clinical Medical Assistant (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Welding Application & Procedures (Cert of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Certified Clinical Medical Assistant	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Welding (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Associate Applied Science in Computer  Technology & Network	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Paramedic(EMT) (Associates of Applied Science)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Medium Heavy Truck Technology	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Outdoor Power Equipment (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Commercial Truck Driving/Commercial  Vehicle Operator	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Information Technology (Associates of Applied Science)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Limited Licensed Radiologic Technologist	PETRA ALLIED HEALTH (SPRINGDALE)
Certificate of Proficiency in Graphic Design	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)

Northwest Workforce Board	Approved Eligible Training Programs
Program Name	<u>Provider Name</u>
Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning/Refrigeration (AAS)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Business Administration/Accounting (AAS degree)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Digital Media/Design (Associates Degree)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Associate of Applied Science in Welding	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Health Information Management	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Machining Technology CP	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
<u>Criminal Justice-AAS</u>	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Associate of Applied Science in Business Administration	Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH)
Graphic Design	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Emergency Medical Technology -AAS Paramedic	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Technical Certificate in Graphic Design	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
(CFOS/S) CERTIFIED FIBER OPTICS SPLICING SPECIALIST	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
(CFOT) Certified Fiber Optics Technician	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
CDL Training Class A	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Turf Management (Associates of Applied Science)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Technical Certificate Logistics  Management	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
AAS in Business Management	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Structural Welding	The Academy - NWA

Northwest Workforce Board	Approved Eligible Training Programs
Program Name	<u>Provider Name</u>
Radiology Technology (Associates of Applied Science)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Certification Welding (Certificate of Proficiency)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Physical Therapist Assistant	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Information Systems	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Surgical Technology	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Child Advocacy Studies	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Criminal Justice (Associates of Applied Science)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Accounting (Technical Certificate)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)
Certified Nursing Assistant	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Industrial Maintenance Technology	NORTHWEST Technical Institute (NWTI)
Child Development Associate	Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC)
Phlebotomy Technician	PETRA ALLIED HEALTH (SPRINGDALE)
Automation/System Integration  Manufacturing (AAS)	NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE - NAC (NORTH CAMPUS AND SOUTH CAMPUS)