

**WORKFORCE • HEALTHCARE • LEADERSHIP • ADVOCACY • MARKETING • NETWORKING • RESILIENCY**



# WORKFORCE TOOLKIT



**A 2021 ARVADA CHAMBER GUIDE**



# CONTENT

**02** OUR VISION

**03** ARVADA WORKS:  
A HISTORY

**04** WORKFORCE DATA

**06** WHERE WE'RE GOING

**07** CASE STUDY

**09** ACTION PLANS

**11** WORKFORCE KAPS COUNCIL

# WHAT IS THE PROBLEM THAT NEEDS TO BE SOLVED?

- Collective messaging and commitment that leads to community-wide support of improving the talent pipeline.
- Convening of active participants from business and supplier partners to dedicate aligned and meaningful capacity to improving the talent pipeline.
- Systemic action and policy change must occur to drive meaningful change toward improving the talent pipeline.
- Identify opportunities to test, prove and scale resources needed to improve our talent pipeline.

## OUR VISION

Our talent pipeline will be successfully aligned between education, non-profits, community and businesses leading to a top-notch workforce for employers and improved economic mobility for all.



**In its fourth year, the Arvada Chamber's workforce initiative, Arvada Works, continues to focus on helping our members find, develop and retain the top local talent by leveraging and improving area partnerships. Many local businesses and community partners have joined Arvada Works to contribute to conversations that are crucial to identifying the challenges, gaps and opportunities associated with a workforce readiness paradigm shift for youth and adults.**

Through extending lessons learned from innovations in supply chain management, this is a call for employers to play an expanded leadership role as "end-customers" of education and workforce partnerships. Arvada Works is modeled off a program from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation that has successfully launched in over 100 communities across the country and the Arvada Chamber is lucky enough to be one of the selected sites to continue this demand-driven work.

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 78% of hiring managers say the skills gap persists across industries. Arvada Works is designed to help our businesses keep pace with the needs of the economy by enacting a talent strategy to clearly communicate the most critical job needs to partners in education. This approach builds external pipelines to prepare talent that has yet to walk through the door, as well as long-term strategies for backfilling, upskilling, career pathway development, and succession planning.



According to our annual business challenges surveys, the #1 issue identified by small and large employers in Arvada is the lack of a qualified workforce. This skills and people gap means that employees are not prepared to meet the needs and grow the economic base of Arvada and Jefferson County. With engagement from our businesses and education partners, Arvada Works will have major implications on our local economy long-term.





# WORKFORCE DATA

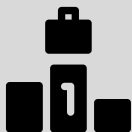
## COLORADO 2020 TALENT PIPELINE REPORT



Colorado had the eighth-highest share of “vulnerable” jobs of any state at 21.4%, with half of those jobs concentrated in the hospitality sector, which includes restaurants, bars and hotels, and a third in retail. Vulnerable jobs are defined as those that pay low wages and do not provide benefits.



**Where has hiring been happening?** Colorado employers posted the most job ads between March and September for the following occupations: heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, registered nurses, software developers and analysts, retail salespersons and stockers and order fillers.



**88.8% of Tier 1 Top Jobs require a credential past high school.** Tier 1 is a median hourly earning living wage benchmark of \$25.88 or above; a level that supports two adults—one working—and one child. 77% of all jobs require digital skills.



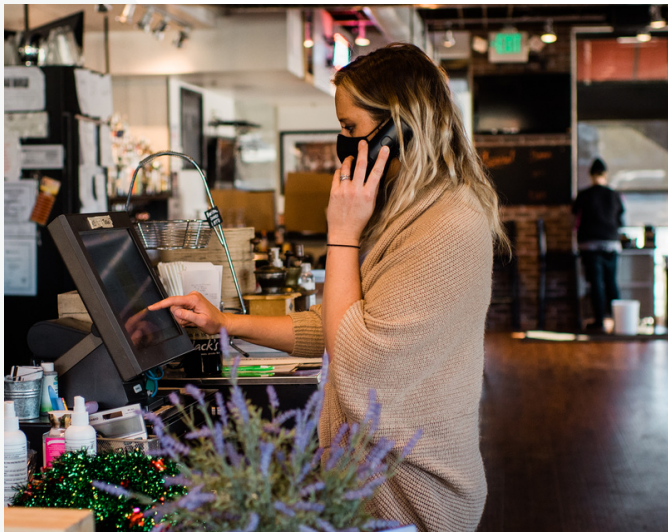
**57.6% of Coloradans have a certificate, associate degree, bachelor's degree, and/or a graduate or professional degree.**



**The top essential skills in job postings were Communications, Management, and Customer Service.**

Source: "Colorado Talent Pipeline Report," Colorado Workforce Development Council

## JEFFERSON COUNTY ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS DURING COVID-19



- Jefferson County had an estimated 27,201 unemployed individuals in December 2020, the highest number since June 2020.
- December 2020 was the 3rd-worst month for COVID-related job losses in the Tri-County area. Prior to December, the area had recovered about 2/3 of the jobs it lost.

### Top 10 Occupations of Dislocation (March 2020 - February 2021)

1. Waiters and Waitresses
2. Cashiers
3. Customer Service Representatives
4. Retail Salespersons
5. Bartenders
6. Sales Representatives, Services
7. Managers
8. Office and Administrative Support
9. General and Operations Managers
10. Sales Managers

### Labor Shortages (December 2020)

1. Professional and Business Services
2. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities
3. Information
4. Education and Health Services
5. Financial Activities

### Top Unique Job Postings (January 2021)

1. Heavy Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
2. Registered Nurses
3. Software Developers and Analysts
4. Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
5. Retail Salespersons

Source: "TriCounty Economic and Employment Indicators during the COVID19 Pandemic," Jefferson County Business & Workforce Center

# WHERE WE'RE GOING

## Workforce Trends We're Watching



### Future Jeffco Occupation Demand\*

1. Artificial Intelligence Developers & Engineers
2. Business Intelligence & Operations Analysts
3. Data Analysts & Scientists, Cloud-Based Engineers
4. E-Commerce Sales and Development-Green
5. Energy Techs (Biofuel, Wind, Solar, Recyclables)
6. Medical Equipment Specialists
7. Physical, Radiation, and Respiratory Therapists
8. Product and Software Quality Assurance Technicians
9. Scrum Masters and Agile Software Developers
10. Social Media, Digital Marketers & Content Developers

---

# 24.4%

---

of businesses plan to hire new employees in the next six months, according to Census Small Business Pulse Metro Denver (January, 2021)

---

### Future Skills Demand\*

- Analytics
- Cognitive
- Communication
- Cultural
- Emotional
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Social
- Technology



\*Source: "TriCounty Economic and Employment Indicators during the COVID19 Pandemic," Jefferson County Business & Workforce Center



# CASE STUDY Well Works, LLC

## **What is your unique workforce challenge? What are the underlying challenges in the construction industry around workforce?**

Amy Powell, Founder: Well Works concentrates on training within the construction industry, helping companies to start a training program, revamp it or change it based on how adults learn. I'm also building my own content that teaches leadership skills, communication skills, and teamwork. I'm trying to improve our workforce in almost any capacity within construction.

I concentrate on the people side of it, not necessarily the technical aspect. I understand that there's the people side of building and the building side of people. We have started concentrating so much on the processes—on the actual building, on the money, on the new technology coming out—that we forget that there are humans involved and that is our biggest and best asset.

## **How were you introduced to Arvada Works?**

When I was working for my previous company, the biggest problem was we needed to find some qualified field personnel. How do we do that?



So I started this outreach program within our company and developed a presentation for high schools to explain and get them excited about construction.

I went to Red Rocks Community College with this program and they mentioned the Arvada Chamber of Commerce and ever since then I've just been attracted to your community because you guys actually do something. There's a lot of talk or how could we do this or planning meetings but it never gets out of the meeting phase. You can actually see the results and see that you're doing something. I wanted to be a part of that and I saw the potential for that, especially for construction.





# CASE STUDY

## Well Works, LLC

### **What partnerships and resources are critical for your business to improve workforce development?**

I've adopted the Chamber as my hub. I've gained a pretty deep connection with Jeffco Schools. Jeffco Schools encourages and supports life after high school, not just college. That's huge. It fits our industry very well because you don't have to have a college degree.

There's just a certain type of intelligence needed; people who think and see the world differently. This includes those with an artistic eye, or those with street smarts and spatial awareness, or people who speak different languages and who can help us see problems that we don't see so we can tackle them before they become bigger problems. We're a huge problem-solving industry and we can't do that with one type of thinking.

### **What do you think is most helpful to get kids into construction and it not be such a stigma of having to go to college?**

This was challenging but it's the perception of everybody, not just high school students, but the parents and the other community members who see it as an option. Something that I wish everybody knew about construction is the choices. You've got so many choices and it doesn't lock you into one type of career. You learn different trades, work with different people, and gain so many skills just by working in construction. It's been fascinating to see what people get out of the construction industry.

### **Why do you think this priority (workforce) is so critical for Arvada small businesses?**

Often in our industry, we bring people in and put them through a meat grinder and they just come out the other end. We're missing workforce development or people development. We don't continually improve processes unless we're mandated or forced to. We expect them to learn what they need to in high school or in college and then after that point, you're on your own for learning.

We need to be able to encourage, educate, and give our employees resources so that they know what their advancement opportunities are. Directing employers or giving them expectations is critical and crucial in order to keep and maintain our current workforce.

# WORKFORCE

## *The Chamber's Action Plan*



### **Convene industry leaders**

The Arvada Chamber and our partners are working on new and improved strategies for employer convening to improve the understanding around industry demand, skill requirements and opportunities.



### **Launch of Seamless WBL**

Database to better support the needed connections between employers and local partners.



### **Launch of a data dashboard**

This new program will help drive better understanding for partners and the community at large around gaps and opportunities.



### **Employer demand assessment**

Survey will help us improve communication around high-demand careers.



### **Development of a business toolkit**

Documentation that helps increase awareness and upskilling around successful work based learning.



### **Tracking and advocacy of workforce related legislation at the Capitol**



### **Partnerships with Jefferson County Schools**

Part of a necessary strategy to increase career awareness within schools.



### **Additional tactics in the works!**

# WORKFORCE

## *Your Action Plan*

- ☐ **Complete the workforce engagement survey to become a preferred employer partner in improving the talent pipeline.**

Take the survey at [bit.ly/WorkforceSurvey2021](https://bit.ly/WorkforceSurvey2021).

- ☐ **Join an Industry Action Team**

- Construction and Trades
- Healthcare
- STEM and Manufacturing
- Professional Services

- ☐ **Learn more about additional opportunities to support improvements to the talent pipeline by contacting Kami Welch at [kami@arvadachamber.org](mailto:kami@arvadachamber.org).**



# ARVADA CHAMBER WORKFORCE KAPS COUNCIL

**Chris Adams**, Thrive Workplace

**Angela Baber**, Jeffco Schools Foundation

**Larry Barker**, Sonsio

**Liz Cox**, Red Rocks Community College

**Kat Douglas**, Jefferson County Workforce Center

**Diedra Espinoza**, Careerwise

**Jennifer Falkoski**, Realizing Aptitudes

**Angela King**, Red Rocks Community College Foundation

**Tracy Kraft-Tharp**, Jefferson County Commissioner

**Adrienne Martinez**, Metropolitan State University of Denver

**Marna Messer**, Jeffco Public Schools

**Jennifer Nuhfer**, Spearca Communications

**Brad Rupert**, Jeffco Public Schools Board of Education

**Daniel Ryley**, Arvada Economic Development Association

**Jansen Tidmore**, Jeffco Economic Development Corporation

**Katie Winner**, For The Win Communications

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS WORK!

---

## ARVADA CHAMBER CONTACTS

**Kami Welch** | [kami@arvadachamber.org](mailto:kami@arvadachamber.org)

**Molly Kust** | [molly@arvadachamber.org](mailto:molly@arvadachamber.org)