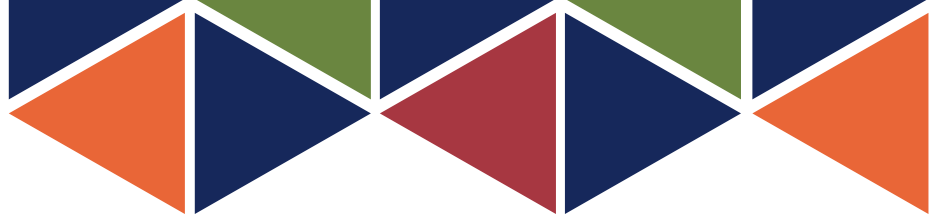




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Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB)

“We provide businesses with sustainable, no-cost, low-cost strategies to recruit, hire, train, and retain a skilled workforce needed to thrive.”

<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Pages/IWIBGuide.aspx>

Career Pathways for Targeted Populations Committee (CPTP) Accomplishments, September 2024 – December 2024

Charge:

- **Charge 1:** Create opportunities for job seekers within specified targeted populations of all ages and abilities, understanding that creating equitable access to career pathways for target populations creates a more robust workforce system. Our goal is to enhance career awareness, career skills, career retention, and life skills through experiences with education and training, work-based learning, and essential skills leading to in-demand, high-wage occupations for target populations.
- **Charge 2:** Serves as the intersection between job seekers, businesses, the education system, local workforce agencies, community-based organizations, and other interested stakeholders.

Priorities:

- **Continuous Improvement:** Linking the IWIB and the Local Workforce system to impact and improve the lives of Illinois citizens particularly those that are identified as WIOA-targeted populations, recognizing the equity implications of this work.





- **Service Integration:** Integration and comprehensive involvement of all partners, including the four core partners, business sector, secondary and postsecondary education, workforce labor, legislative, and local implementation partners. There is a need for a holistic approach for target populations.
- **Collaboration:** Act as a resource regarding career pathways for target populations across the state, and in partnership with the committees and task forces of the IWIB. Participate in grant Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) as relevant.
- **Support Career Pathways Development for Target Populations:** Our three workgroups, the Justice-Impacted Employment Workgroup, Disability Workgroup, and Opportunity Youth Workgroup work to advance career pathways opportunities for target populations.

Leadership:

- David Friedman [Disability Workgroup Chair and CPTP Co-Chair], Founder/CEO, AutonomyWorks, dave@emailautonomy.com, 312-953-1221
- Marci Johnson [Opportunity Youth Workgroup Co-Chair], Director of CTE and Innovation, Director CTE Department, Illinois State Board of Education, marjohns@isbe.net,
- Kraig Kistingner [Opportunity Youth Workgroup Co-Chair and CPTP Co-Chair], Director of Human Resources, National Tube Supply, kkistingner@nationaltubesupply.com, 708-746-3015
- Mark Lohman [Justice-Impacted Employment Workgroup Chair], mark@lohman.info, 563-209-7067





Accomplishments and Progress Toward Workplan:

To ensure alignment with the forthcoming IWIB Strategic Plan (2025-2030), CPTP postponed their CPTP Winter Quarterly Meeting to January 23, 2024, from 12:30-2:30 pm. The Winter Quarterly Meeting will be a virtual annual review and realignment of the standing committee's work per the Plan. CPTP has scheduled an additional virtual meeting on December 17, 2024, from 10:00-11:00 am, after the ratification of the new plan, to update committee members on changes and answer member questions.

CPTP continued to work on their Illinois Career Pathway Resource Guide (ICPRG), an online resource repository. This repository will be categorized using a human-centered approach, grouping resources by audience for ease of use. In July, CPTP Leadership determined that [Illinois workNet](#) would be the best platform for this resource and that it should be integrated into the [Work Success Support Resources](#) (WSSR) search engine. WorkNet will create a front page with clickable icons with all the target audiences for which resources have been gathered. This resource is slated for an early 2025 release. This quarter, a thorough review of all previous minutes and featured speaker slides from the past three years was conducted to extract any:

- Relevant Data Points to Future Work
- Featured Speakers with Company and Area of Expertise
- Best Practices in Illinois Programming for Targeted Populations
- Resources to Add to the ICPRG

This information was then gathered into a Featured Speaker Excel document, a Best Practices in Illinois Programming Excel document, a Data from Minutes Word document, or integrated into the ICPRG. Once the IWIB Strategic Plan is ratified, this information will be shared to aid the IWIB's work in service integration and further resource-gathering.





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Workgroups of the Committee

Disability Workgroup

Charge:

- Identify and provide strategies and recommendations for eliminating barriers to ongoing employment for individuals with disabilities.

Priorities:

- **Service Integration:** Highlight opportunities for funding, collaboration among agencies, best practice business models, referrals, etc.
- **Career Pathways Awareness:** Align focus and priorities around career pathways that support ongoing employment for individuals with disabilities.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Identify opportunities for ongoing improvements in collaborative efforts, awareness-raising opportunities, and advocacy.

Workgroup Timeline:

The Disability Workgroup meets monthly every third Tuesday from 10 am to 11 am, emphasizing the creation of resources for employers looking to hire individuals with disabilities. The CPTP reviews the work of each workgroup annually and aligns workgroups with target population needs.

Workgroup Accomplishments and Progress Toward Workplan

- This quarter, the Disability Workgroup continued work on the Meeting Accessibility Guide. The guide uses a “wiki-style” format: the body of the text is concise and easily navigable while using in-text hyperlinks to provide users with more in-depth resources. A copy of this Guide was sent to partners at the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) for their input, and their edits were incorporated. The guide aligns with national standards such as





those listed in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508, which requires that electronic elements be accessible to individuals with disabilities. In September, the workgroup determined that [Illinois workNet](#) would be the best platform for this resource. This work aligns with the group's continuous improvement priorities.

- In September, David Friedman, AutonomyWorks, presented the [Disability:IN Conference](#), which he attended. From that presentation, the workgroup added the Disability Employment Index to the ICPRG. This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.
- In September, the workgroup met with Brian Richard, NIU, to discuss its future data needs in collaboration with the Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC). This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.
- In October, John Hill, Risk Analyst for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, member of the Board of Directors for the Education Center for the Visually Impaired, Disability Workgroup Member, and State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Member, gave a presentation titled "Blind Not Broke." During this presentation, he talked about his own success story and the work of the Education Center for the Visually Impaired. This work aligns with the group's career pathways awareness priorities.
- On October 30th, Antonio Gomez, ICSPS, and Heather Speth, Bureau of Customer and Community Blind Services, co-presented the Workforce Wednesday Webinar ["How to Create an Accessible Meeting – In-Person and Virtual"](#) on behalf of the Disability Workgroup. This webinar presented the content of the Meeting Accessibility Guide. As the guide is in draft form, a copy of the guide was not distributed to attendees, but the slides and a recording are available on the [Illinois Workforce Academy](#). 68 people attended the webinar. Attendees were given a link to a [suggestions form](#) for any improvements. The workgroup then made improvements to the guide based on feedback from the webinar. This work aligns with the group's continuous improvement priorities.





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- In November, Dr. Aimee Julian, ICSPS, presented an overview of the IWIB Strategic Planning Process, general IWIB structure, and expectations of workgroups and committees. The workgroup then brainstormed possible areas of interest for 2025 to be re-evaluated once the new IWIB Strategic Plan is in place.

Opportunity Youth

Charge:

- Using an equity and trauma-informed lens, identify and provide strategies, recommendations, and best practices to increase and expand youth access and support to career pathways, industry-recognized credentials, and career opportunities.

Priorities:

- **Service Integration:** Highlight opportunities for funding and to increase collaboration among agencies, the business sector, and the education system.
- **Career Pathways Awareness:** Align focus and priorities around career pathways that are high-skill, high-wage, in-demand occupations for youth. Highlighting and promoting best practices and increasing knowledge of career pathways.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Improve access and delivery for all youth, including special population youth. Enhance efficient communication among stakeholders.

Workgroup Timeline: The Opportunity Youth Workgroup meets monthly on the last Thursday from 10 am to 11 am, emphasizing creating and highlighting existing resources to help minimize barriers youth experience when entering or sustaining a career pathway. The CTP reviews the work of each workgroup annually and aligns workgroups with target population needs.





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Workgroup Accomplishments and Progress Toward Workplan

- In September, the workgroup conducted an additional review of the two reports published by EdSystems that Laura Monteagudo presented in July: [Transportation-Related Barriers Impacting Student Access to Work-Based Learning](#) and [Addressing Transportation-Related Barriers Impacting Student Access to Work-Based Learning](#). Monteagudo returned in September for this continued discussion. From that discussion, the workgroup acknowledged that there is a greater need for communication between programs and brainstormed ideas regarding how to bring these organizations that produce similar work together. This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.
- In September, the workgroup continued its work to gather resources for the ICPRG, particularly tackling transportation issues downstate. The workgroup contacted Sarah Boden, a representative at Uber, to see if there were any partnerships that the workforce development system should be aware of. Boden indicated that most partnerships start within agencies, workplaces, or education centers that contract Uber's services, but no additional programming was available. The workgroup then spoke to Abigail Wilcox from Commute with Enterprise, who agreed to be a featured speaker for the workgroup in October. Lastly, the workgroup contacted Edward Perry from the 2-1-1 Human Services Hotline, which is currently looking to expand its reach to cover the entirety of Illinois by mid-2025. They have also created a search engine of available resources by area code, which was 30-60 days out from completion at the time of contact. Perry indicated that he would be interested in being a featured speaker in 2025. This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.
- In September, the workgroup discussed its future data needs in collaboration with the Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC) and relayed them to Brian Richard at NIU. This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.





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- In October, the workgroup heard from Abby Wilcox from Commute with Enterprise, who gave a program overview of their services. Commute with Enterprise is a vanpool system with approx. 10,000 vans on the road currently. Their services have been estimated to save consumers an average of \$706 monthly in commuting costs. The workgroup reviewed the program's services and discussed how best to incorporate it as a listing within the ICPRG. This work aligns with the group's continuous improvement priorities.
- In November, the workgroup heard an overview of the IWIB Strategic Planning Process, general IWIB structure, and expectations of workgroups and committees. The workgroup then brainstormed possible areas of interest for 2025 to be re-evaluated once the new IWIB Strategic Plan is in place.

Justice-Impacted Employment Workgroup

Charge:

- Create strategies and identify best practices for fair chance employment and training of individuals who are justice-impacted, with strong business engagement and coordination of government and not-for-profit agencies.

Priorities:

- **Service integration:** Highlight funding opportunities, that increase collaboration among agencies, the business sector, and the education system.
- **Career pathways awareness:** Align focus and priorities around career pathways that result in high-skill, high-wage, in-demand occupations for justice-impacted persons. Highlight best practices, such as Fair Chance employment, and increase knowledge of career pathways.





- **Continuous improvement:** Improve access and delivery for all persons who are justice-impacted. Enhance efficient communication among stakeholders.

Workgroup Timeline:

The Justice-Impacted Workgroup meets every first Tuesday of the month from 12 pm to 1 pm, emphasizing creating resources for employers looking to hire individuals with disabilities. The CPTP reviews the work of each workgroup annually and aligns workgroups with target population needs.

Workgroup Accomplishments and Progress Toward Workplan

- On November 20, the workgroup presented the Workforce Wednesday Webinar [“Shifting the Mindset: Policy and Culture Review from Those Who Understand Fair Chance Hiring”](#). The slides and recording are available on the [Illinois Workforce Academy](#). This webinar sought to give front-line workforce development staff language to discuss fair chance hiring with employers. The questions included what ROI employers experience in justice-impacted hiring, what due diligence in conducting background checks considering SB 1480 looks like, and how to find employer mentors along the way. 52 people attended the webinar. Mark Lohman, chair of the Justice-Impacted Employment Workgroup, moderated the discussion. This work aligns with the group’s career pathways awareness priorities. The webinar had the following panelists:
 - Justin Knapp, Career Planner at the McHenry County Workforce Network
 - Carlos Arevalo, Employment Attorney at KTJ Law
 - Kraig Kisting, Director of HR at National Tube Supply
- In September, the workgroup finalized questions and a description for a second webinar to follow the November 20th installment: “Shifting the Mindset: An Employer’s Guide to Justice-Impacted Employee Supports.”





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The workgroup will align panelist schedules for an early 2025 release. This second installment will cover WIOA and non-WIOA supports for justice-impacted employees and employers and will target front-line workforce development staff. Per the guidance of the WIOA PD Committee, the workgroup is looking to add a representative from the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center to talk about the programming that they offer. This work aligns with the group's career pathways awareness priorities. The confirmed panelists are as follows:

- Justin Knapp, Career Planner at the McHenry County Workforce Network
 - Kraig Kisting, Director of HR at National Tube Supply
 - Eric Anderson, Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation
 - Wendell Robinson, Executive Director of Restore Justice and founder of the Future Leaders Apprenticeship Program
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- In September, Sharon Varallo gave a program overview of the Augustana Prison Education Program and presented the success stories of two participants: Tyrone Stone and David Staples. The program is a full-time, B.A. degree-granting, accredited program with one location at Augustana College and one at the Moline Correctional Center. Currently, they have 40 students enrolled. This work aligns with the group's career pathways awareness priorities.
 - In September, Michael Cannon presented on behalf of GOT JOBS AMERICA, LLC, which is creating a training program for employers on hiring justice-impacted individuals. As the program is currently securing copyright protections for their work, they could not discuss specific programming. They, however, indicated an interest in presenting on the programming in 2025 once licensing is secured. They instead had a conversation with Paola Velasquez, from the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center, who was a partner in this process,





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regarding the journey to create this programming. This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.

- In September, the workgroup met with Brian Richard, NIU, to discuss its future data needs in collaboration with the Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC). This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.
- In October, Steph Dolan, from the Corporate Coalition of Chicago, presented Outcoming from the Fair Chance Hiring Cohort 2, which met with employers to discuss current practices regarding recruiting justice-impacted talent, background check processes, manager and supervisor training, path to promotion, etc. This work aligns with the group's career pathways awareness priorities.
- In October, the workgroup heard from Michelle Cerutti, Southern CEJA Regional Administrator, regarding CEJA's (Climate and Equitable Jobs Act) Returning Residents Program, which is still in process. Additionally, she presented the Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework. This work aligns with the group's service integration priorities.
- On November 7th, members of the workgroup visited the Kewanee Life-Skills Re-Entry Center to attend the Rotary of Galva's Employer Engagement Event. The event was an all-day professional development session for residents, including a few of the following stations: VR Goggles and Hand Controller Trials, Mock Interviews, Resume Feedback, and "Elevator Pitch" Training. This event was geared towards showing area employers the services and programming that re-entry programs such as Kewanee provide to residents' pre-release. This work aligns with the group's continuous improvement priorities.
- In November, Dr. Aimee Julian, ICSPS, presented an overview of the IWIB Strategic Planning Process, general IWIB structure, and expectations of workgroups and committees. The workgroup then brainstormed possible areas of interest for 2025 to be re-evaluated once the new IWIB Strategic Plan is in place.

