

Welcome from the CEO and newsworthy happenings from the past year

Highlights from the culinary training program and the regional response to the pandemic

Highlights from the construction training and a success story you don't want to miss

This past year by the numbers

ISSUE 2020

A proud partner of the AmericanJobCenter® network

NORTHWEST NEWS

PUBLISHED AS THE ANNUAL PROGRAM YEAR
2019 REPORT AND SUMMARY

A welcome and recap of the NWWIB's impact over this past year

2020 has been a year to remember

Program Year (PY) 2019 (July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020) was the most dynamic in my twenty-year career as a Workforce Development Professional

The ten-county region of northwest Wisconsin is rapidly changing. It is important that as the convener of our local Workforce Development System that we focus on growth and needs of the rural communities as well as our primary urban city of Superior. The NWWIB is governed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) compliant board of directors comprised of 26 talented, intelligent volunteers from our local area representing labor, business, government, and education. After great input, discussion, and consensus from the NWWIB Board and Board Staff, we updated and implemented our new Strategic Plan in January 2020. Little did we know just a few months in we would have a dramatic economic shift that would require us to quickly adapt our plan under a completely different set of assumptions.

Just a few months into 2020, we began hearing words regularly that were not familiar in our society. Coronavirus, Pandemic, COVID-19, Social Distancing, and Personal Protective Equipment, to name a few. I think we can all agree that our current state is unlike any other we have experienced in our lifetimes. The NWWIB is committed to contributing to solutions related to this crisis by addressing the crippling effects of widespread unemployment by obtaining resources that support getting people back to work. To date, the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development has secured a little over an additional five million dollars in Disaster



Recovery National Dislocated Worker Funding from the Department of Labor through a competitive grant process. This by no means is enough; however, it is a start, and we will continue to find opportunities to help. For those seeking services, please reach out to our American Job Centers. You can find the location nearest you at <http://www.wisconsinjobcenter.org/directory/default>. Job Centers are currently operating virtually or by appointment only so please give the location a call and they will be happy to assist you.

The NWWIB and EverGrow Learning Center was recently recognized for our excellence in the area of inclusiveness and received the Duluth-Superior Community Foundation Touchstone Award. Although we are proud of this achievement, we know there is always more that can be done when it comes to inclusion and accessibility for all. I would be remiss if I did not mention the racial injustice and inequality happening throughout our Nation. Engaging in honest dialogue, while needed, will not solely create system change. More people of color and LBGTQ must have a seat at the decision-making tables in our community. When NWWIB board seats become vacant, I commit to encouraging a more diverse representation, and I challenge my peers in throughout

the region to do the same. This is one step forward with many more to follow.

In closing, I would like to share words I carry with me that resonate and I frequently find myself repeating these days. The first, my mother, who always encourages kindness and a generous heart and reminds me often that “this too shall pass”. An optimist even in times of struggle, I have used her perspective and strength to focus on what is next during challenging times and affirm that the future will be better than today. The second, author Claire Cook who said “If plan A doesn't work, the alphabet has 25 more letters – 204 if you're in Japan.” We find ourselves in a constant shift to acclimate under current conditions while still innovating. While we may not be on the exact path we envisioned as 2020 rang in, we have found ourselves meandering through even more interesting solutions and twists of fate as the year ends. New partnerships have been developed and programs have been tweaked as we explore new uncharted realms of possibility through technology.

Until next year, be kind, stay healthy, and know we will get through this together.
~ Mari Kay-Nabozny
Chief Executive Officer

05 Workforce Waves making a Splash in the Podcast World!

Workforce Waves celebrated the release of our 30th episode and a total of 1,956 downloads! Workforce Waves explores smart, strategic, and unique solutions to meet the workforce needs in Wisconsin and the Midwest. New episodes release each month to inform and inspire you. Some of our top performing episodes include EP 2: So Many Things and EP 29: Coping with the Mental Health impact of COVID-19 Strategies for Employers. Workforce Waves is available wherever you get your podcasts. Subscribe today to not miss an episode!



11 New Staff Join the NWWIB in 2020

Meet the new additions to the NWWIB staff on page 4!

21 Board Members Contribute to Workforce Advancement

For a full list of NWWIB board members, see page 4.

ECONOMY



Cooking up Culinary Careers

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN IS A HOTSPOT FOR THIS KIND OF JOB. THE NATIONAL AVERAGE FOR AN AREA THIS SIZE IS 1,286* EMPLOYEES, WHILE THERE ARE 1,601 HERE. THE 2019 MEDIAN WAGE IN OUR AREA IS \$25,210

During March 2020, the NWWIB hosted two Culinary Academies. Participants who successfully completed the training earned industry recognized certificates in Kitchen Cook and Guest Services from the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute as well as ServSafe certification. Participants received training on how to perform key tasks correctly, along with the general knowledge and soft skills needed in the culinary and

hospitality industry. The Culinary Academies took place at the Superior Business Center, Inc. and the Northland College Hulings Rice Food Center. A total of 16 individuals took part in the academies.

This training was made possible through a partnership of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board and Workforce Resource, Inc. and funded by the Wisconsin Fast Forward Grant Program.



“The class has been amazing. Students have been bringing their A game to the class everyday.”
~ Arlene, Culinary & ServSafe Instructor

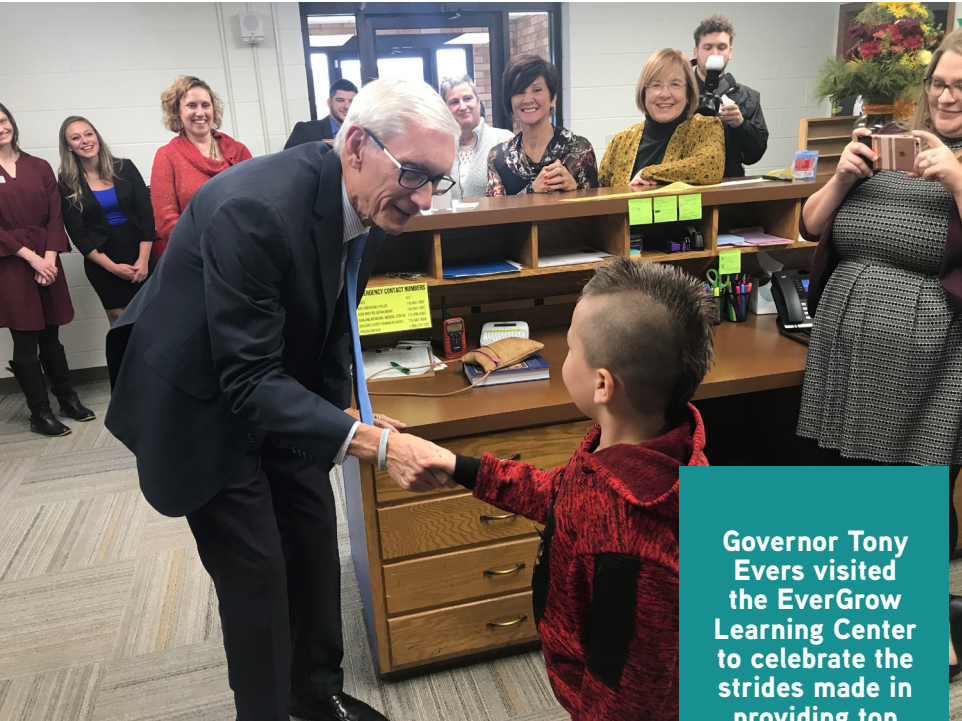
NWWIB RESPONDS TO THE PANDEMIC

In March, NWWIB staff were quick to respond to the economic crisis and offer assistance to businesses and jobseekers. Up to date information was posted in real time on our website as it was release. This was also disseminated through our social media networks, which experienced a wide breadth of exposure. The NWWIB also partnered with the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce on a series of webinars on how to engage socially distant customers through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

The podcast industry also experienced a boost in listenership when the pandemic first hit. Several of our podcast episodes have been dedicated to issues surrounding COVID-19 and its impact on both employers and jobseekers.

MILWAUKEE’S CREAM CITY CATERING SING PRAISES FOR THE NWWIB BUSINESS SERVICES

We were referred to the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) by our consultant with the Small Business Development Center, Cheryl Mitchell. We needed to change our LLC structure from single member to multi-member and provide an operating agreement. Melissa Rabska at NWWIB was so quick to get in touch with me. From the time the referral was given, to the time I received the documents needed to close on our business loan, it was 3 days. I did need some additional edits done, but Melissa was so quick in getting back to me. Everything was prepared efficiently and professionally. We could not be more pleased and appreciative of the services provided to us.” - Melissa and Tristan Twitty



Governor Tony Evers visited the EverGrow Learning Center to celebrate the strides made in providing top notch childcare.

EverGrow opens to Community and Statewide Fanfare!

The EverGrow Learning Center opened in November 2019. Under the NWWIB’s leadership, the NWWIB and several partners collaborated to bring to life this creative solution to address the lack of childcare available in Ashland, WI, and surrounding communities.

The EverGrow Learning Center would not be here today if it were not for the collaboration of many community and regional partners, including Ashland Area Development Corporation, Small Business Development Center at UW-Superior, Memorial Medical Center, City of Ashland, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and many, many others who have donated time, energy, and resources to make the EverGrow Learning Center a reality in the Ashland community.

The EverGrow Learning Center is a non-profit childcare center with the capacity to serve 94 children with an emphasis on assisting low to moderate income families through the Wisconsin Shares Subsidy program.

This endeavor has received state and national recognition. Governor Tony Evers and Wisconsin Department of Children and Families Secretary Emilie Amundson toured the center.

The NWWIB continues to work with communities interested in replicating this model. Consulting services are now available to Wisconsin residents and organizations in need of assistance with developing their childcare business. This is made possible through a consulting program operated by the Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers.

Building New Beginnings through Construction Foundations

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN IS A HOTSPOT FOR THIS KIND OF JOB. THE NATIONAL AVERAGE FOR AN AREA THIS SIZE IS 930 EMPLOYEES, WHILE THERE ARE 1,239 HERE. THE 2019 MEDIAN WAGE IN OUR AREA IS \$33,452. JOB POSTING ACTIVITY IN OUR REGION IS HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.



Becca was a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participant who found tremendous success working along the construction career pathway. In Spring 2018, Becca participated in Construction Foundations, which is a short-term credentialed training that is part of targeted programs by the NWWIB and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC). After completing the course, Becca had an idea of what she really loved to do. Together, Becca and Jane Thompson, a Career Planner at Northwest Wisconsin

CEP, discussed and explored what her options were to further her education through the WIOA Adult Program. Becca enrolled at WITC in the Architectural Commercial Design Program. After her graduation in May 2020, Becca was soon hired by Centerline Architectural Supply in Weyerhaeuser, WI, as an Assistant Project Manager and CAD Technician.

To hear Becca tell her own story, check out our interview with her on the NWWIB's YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfEhFMTlyGQ>

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To have these programs available and to actually take advantage of them is amazing and life changing.

~ Becca, WIOA Adult Program Participant

Students in Construction Foundations gain the knowledge and skills necessary for job success in the construction industry. The training is focused on the fundamentals of building design, energy efficiency concepts, construction basics, layout operation, print reading, and estimating and materials of industry. Students in the training not only gained the technical skills needed on the job, but also developed valuable soft skills as well. After successfully completing the training, students earn an industry recognized certificate for Career Connections Skill Level 1 & 2 from the Carpenters International Training Fund and are certified in OSHA 10 and CPR. Over the course of the 12-week program, students worked together while learning about and applying various carpentry skills and techniques to build a garden shed, pergola, picnic table, and Adirondack chairs. This program was done in partnership with the NWWIB, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters (Local 361), and Northwest Wisconsin CEP.



DRIVE THRU JOB FAIRS HELD THROUGHOUT THE STATE



On July 15th, workforce boards, service providers, technical colleges and volunteers came together to provide Drive Thru Job Fairs across the state of Wisconsin.

With the state's mask mandate and with social distancing in mind, the drive-thru job fair served as the perfect vehicle to get information to people who have worked with the NWWIB and job center partners in the past or are utilizing the public workforce system for the first time.

In Northwest Wisconsin, the NWWIB partnered with of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College and Northcentral Technical College to host Drive Thru Job fairs at their respective Ashland and Phillips campuses. Regionally, a total of 195 job seekers were reached and 40 businesses participated in the events. Statewide over 3,294 job seekers connect with 687 employers with open positions. An additional 678 Job Seekers have been directed to online links, containing all job postings from the job fair.

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This is great! As a mom, student, and Full-Time CNA, it's hard to find time to go to a job fair, this makes it really easy! Plus, who wouldn't want to be able to live and build a career here?

~ Drive Thru Job Fair Participant

2020 Financials & Performance

Investment in Our Communities & Neighbors

	Funding Level	Percentage of Activities
Adult Services	\$446,009	27%
Youth Services	\$503,135	30%
Dislocated Workers Services	\$240,672	14%
Windows to Work	\$105,953	7%
WAGE\$	\$9,694	<1%
Admin & COVID-19 IT	\$235,601	14%
Inspire	\$42,923	2%
Fee for Service & Fast Forward	\$55,957	3%
Rapid Response	\$46,397	2%
	\$1,686,341	100%

Program Year 2019 Title I Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Performance

Adult Measures

Qtr 2 Unsubsidized Employ.	MET	Qtr. 2Unsubsidized Employ.	EXCEED
Qtr. 4 Unsubsidized Employ.	EXCEED	Qtr. 4 Unsubsidized Employ.	EXCEED
Median Earnings	EXCEED	Median Earnings	EXCEED
Credential Attainment	EXCEED	Credential Attainment	EXCEED

Dislocated Worker Measures

Youth Measures

Qtr. 2 Unsubsidized Employ. / Edu.	EXCEED	Median Earnings	Baseline
Qtr. 4 Unsubsidized Employ. / Edu.	EXCEED	Credential Attainment	UNMET



NWWIB Staff
Mari Kay-Nabozny, Chief Executive Officer

Barb Lundberg, Family Centered Employment and Consumer Services Coordinator

Melissa Rabska, Director of Operations and Communications

Scott Schultz, Director of Industry and Innovation

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Board Members Contribute to Workforce Advancement

LeRoy Forslund, Chair
Forslund Consultants

Michael Bebeau, Vice Chair
Xcel Energy

Richard Nystrom, Secretary
D & N Development

Judy Aspling
Curves

Kyle Bukovich

Northern Wisconsin Building and
Construction Trades Council

Andrew Donahue
UW-Extension Small Business
Development Center

Thomas Draghi
Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation

Brad Gast
Northcentral Technical
College

Dawn Henk
NorthLakes Community Clinic

Mic Isham
Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife
Commission

James Kehoe, Jr.
Kehoe Enterprises

Dale Kelm
Birch Haven Senior Living

Kelly Klein
Iron County Development Zone
Council

Mary McPhetridge
Ashland Area Chamber of
Commerce

Ashley Moore
Thrivent Financial

Jeff Muse
Northwest Wisconsin CEP

Brian Nelson
Iron Workers #512

Bambi Pattermann
Wisconsin Indianhead
Technical College

Kristine Porter
Wisconsin Job Service

Phil Rasmussen, Jr.
Lakewoods Resort

Cindy Rouzer
Spooner Health

Jennifer Shearer
Indianhead Community
Action Agency

MJ Sills
Unemployment Insurance

Shannon Stade
BW Papersystems

Jack Wichita
Bad River Watershed Association