

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GOOD JOBS ECONOMY LAUNCHES STATE-LEVEL PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

Good Jobs Economy is a centerpiece of Incoming National Governors Association (NGA) Chair Governor Kevin Stitt's "Reigniting the American Dream"

July 30, 2025 — Today, the national nonprofit organization America Achieves launched [Good Jobs Economy](#) partnerships to work alongside governors, states, and local regions to connect residents to good jobs while helping employers access skilled talent. The goal is to help hundreds of thousands of Americans reach and stay in the middle class by accessing good jobs and advancing their careers. These partnerships build on America Achieves' prior work helping local regions advance economic and workforce development.

Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt announced his NGA Chair's initiative, *Reigniting the American Dream*, and [introduced](#) *Good Jobs Economy* as a core partner in the initiative's work to modernize talent systems and launch good jobs funds. Governor Stitt and Maryland Governor Wes Moore, NGA's Vice Chair, announced that Oklahoma and Maryland will be the first states to work with Good Jobs Economy to scale effective programs and modernize talent systems — and prepare to make effective use of newly enacted Workforce Pell Grant funding. Workforce Pell was recently enacted by Congress to help students, for the first time, pay for short-term job training programs starting July 1, 2026; this new law also empowers governors to shape which programs in their state are eligible for workforce Pell funds. Our initial work in Oklahoma and Maryland will expand to support additional states while creating playbooks and tools to help other interested states and communities launch Good Jobs Funds, modernize talent systems, and best leverage Workforce Pell funding.

"A Good Jobs Economy is essential to reigniting the American Dream. This year, I am challenging every governor to build strong bridges between millions of Americans seeking good jobs and the employers eager to hire them. We need to think boldly and act urgently," said **Governor Stitt**. In his remarks at the NGA summer meeting, Stitt said, "I'm going to partner with

organizations like Good Jobs Economy...to help states build modern talent systems—ones that connect people to real opportunities.”

“We are excited to partner with Good Jobs Economy, launched by America Achieves as part of the National Governors Association Chair’s Initiative, to expand access to high-quality jobs for more Marylanders,” said **Governor Moore**. “We’ll deploy state, philanthropic, and federal funding to scale what works, modernize our talent systems, and ensure Marylanders can access good jobs while giving employers the talent they need.”

“This effort is about turning economic promise into real opportunity,” said **Jon Schnur**, CEO of America Achieves. “It’s about expanding the middle class, and ensuring businesses can build and grow by accessing the talent they need, and ensuring that more Americans can achieve the dignity and security of a good job.”

Across the country, employers face talent shortages, including more than 2 million unfilled manufacturing jobs projected by 2030, threatening over \$1 trillion in economic output. At the same time, nearly half of full-time workers don’t earn enough to be self-sufficient. For many young people, the path forward feels out of reach: 60 percent say the American Dream is either not real or unreachable, according to the [Broken Marketplace](#) study. Meanwhile, AI and other technologies are accelerating workforce changes faster than current systems and strategies are adapting.

In response to this need, Good Jobs Economy will work in close partnership with Oklahoma and Maryland, and other select states and local regions, to draw on that work and lessons learned into practical playbooks, tools, and other resources shared through a national learning network. We will leverage the data, research, and insights from these early efforts to help governors and cross-sector coalitions launch Good Jobs Funds and modernize talent systems that deliver real results:

Create and Scale Good Jobs Funds. These funds will identify and fund the development, and growth of evidence-based, scalable models that connect employers, job seekers, and education and training providers in local regions. Our goal: 10,000 people identified, trained, and hired into good jobs by 2030.

Modernize talent systems. These talent systems will scale and sustain pathways to good jobs, give employers access to the skilled talent they need, and advance economic development and national security. Our goal: connect hundreds of thousands of people to good jobs over a decade, earning billions in additional wages. This intensive work with states and regions will build the evidence base on what works and inform playbooks and tools that communities across the country can use to guide their work. These statewide talent systems will:

GOOD JOBS ECONOMY

- **Generate ongoing labor market analyses** and validate them by engaging employers to ensure an actionable, specific understanding of employers' demand for good jobs, the supply of talent, and critical gaps.
- **Set and track measurable outcome goals**, including for people hired into good jobs, wage gains, and attainment of valued credentials that meet demonstrated employer needs, especially in key industries and occupations.
- **Fund and scale programs and career pathways** that meet the hiring needs of employers, have strong industry partnerships, and are evidence-based or have strong track records of leading to good jobs.
- **Build the capacity of industry partnerships and workforce intermediaries** and fund them to connect employers, job seekers, and education and training providers to meet local hiring needs.
- **Establish strong, adequately resourced governance structures** that coordinate across agencies, fund and support intermediaries, and hold partners accountable

As part of this effort, Oklahoma is launching a **Good Jobs Fund** with an initial commitment of \$19 million to identify, develop and grow successful programs in Oklahoma. This includes \$4.5 million in existing public funds through the Oklahoma Workforce Commission for high-impact programs. Additionally, the George Kaiser Family Foundation is committing at least \$15 million in aligned funding to prepare residents of Tulsa for good-paying jobs in industries like manufacturing, advanced air mobility, and healthcare. These investments are designed to catalyze larger philanthropic and public funding to create pathways for Oklahomans to reach and stay in the middle class. Governor Stitt will issue an executive order to prepare Oklahoma to make effective use of newly enacted Workforce Pell Grant funding and is expected to establish a task force to develop a statewide implementation roadmap for Workforce Pell in Oklahoma. Read the [Oklahoma Fact Sheet](#) →

Maryland will identify and fund the development, implementation and growth of evidence-based, scalable programs and pathways that train and place residents into good local jobs in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, information technology, cybersecurity, life sciences and aerospace. This will include \$25 million in public funding through Governor Moore's nationally recognized EARN program and the Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act, \$15 million in aligned philanthropic funding, with additional public and private investments to be made in the future. Maryland's strategy includes building a revolving workforce fund to support low-cost nursing pathways, a statewide strategy for high

GOOD JOBS ECONOMY

school career counseling, and employer connections for underrepresented tech talent, and improving high school career counseling.

Maryland will also partner to build a more integrated and responsive talent system that adapts more quickly to changes in the job market and supports inclusive economic growth. At the same time, the partnership will develop a policy framework and process designed to ensure the effective deployment of recently expanded Pell Grants that become available July 1, 2026 for short-term workforce training programs. Read the [Maryland Fact Sheet](#) →

[Good Jobs Economy](#) is a bipartisan effort launched and operated by the national nonprofit organization America Achieves, in partnership with the Chair's initiative of the National Governors Association. Its work is grounded in America Achieves' experience with regional economic and workforce intermediaries, leading policymakers, and other experts. Over the last ten years, America Achieves has:

- Launched high-performing initiatives like [Merit America](#), which has served over 10,000 low-income adults, with emerging evidence of substantial impacts on wage gains.
- Created [Accelerate](#) to respond to urgent educational needs sparked by COVID-19 with high-dosage tutoring for hundreds of thousands of students – raising \$65 million, recruiting leadership, generating evidence about what works, and launching partnerships with seven states to institutionalize public funding for this work.
- Helped design and champion over \$2 billion in bipartisan economic and workforce programs, including helping to secure \$500 million from Congress for bipartisan Regional Tech Hubs.
- Worked closely with dozens of communities to develop plans and funding applications — helping local partners win almost \$250 million in funding to support economic and workforce development.

Philanthropic funding for the planning and early stages of Good Jobs Economy has been provided by Blue Meridian Partners, the George Kaiser Family Foundation (GKFF), MacKenzie Scott, Strada Education Foundation, and others. This effort builds on America Achieves' efforts to help Tech Hub applicants develop their plans — funded by the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, GKFF, and others. We are in active discussions, and welcome additional conversations, with national and in-state funders to support scaling the Good Jobs Economy work and partnerships.