



*workforce* **CONNECTIONS**  
PEOPLE. PARTNERSHIPS. POSSIBILITIES.

# 2020

# HIGHLIGHTS

SOUTHERN NEVADA'S  
ONE-STOP  
DELIVERY SYSTEM

# LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

## LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS (LEO) CONSORTIUM

- Varlin Higbee**, Chair  
Commissioner - Lincoln County
- Scott Black**, Vice Chair  
Councilman - City of North Las Vegas
- Oliva Diaz**, Vice Chair-Elect  
Councilwoman - City of Las Vegas
- De Winsor**  
Commissioner - Esmeralda County
- Leo Blundo**  
Commissioner - Nye County
- Michelle Romero**  
Councilwoman - City of Henderson
- Tick Segerblom**  
Commissioner - Clark County
- Judith A. Hoskins**  
Councilwoman - City of Boulder City

## WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS (WC) BOARD

- Valerie Murzl**, Chair  
(Chair, term ended October 2020)  
People Culture Consulting, LLC
- Jack Martin**, Vice Chair  
(Vice Chair, term ended October 2020)  
Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services
- Jerrie Merritt**, Chair  
(Appointed Board Chair November 2020)  
Bank of Nevada
- Cecil Fielder**, Vice Chair  
(Appointed Board Vice Chair November 2020)  
Keolis Transit America, LLC
- Leo Bletnitsky**  
Health Technology Solutions, LLC
- Renee Boyce**  
My Next Career Path Staffing
- Lou DeSalvio**  
Southern Nevada Laborers Local #872
- Drazen Elez**  
Vocational Rehabilitation Division I  
Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation
- Jesus Jara**  
Clark County School District
- Duana Malone**  
Tech Queen Systems, LLC
- Guy Martin**  
Martin Harris Construction
- Brenda Flank**  
Alliance for Education and Liberty
- Linda Gerstenberger**  
Dignity Health  
St. Rose Dominican Hospitals
- Dan Giraldo**  
Bank of America
- Peter Guzman**  
Latin Chamber of Commerce
- Rebecca Henry**  
Allegiant Air, LLC
- Jill Hersha**  
Las Vegas-Clark County Library District
- Lynda Parven**  
(Appointed November 2020)  
Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation
- Jeff Proffitt**  
Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Local #88
- Mary Beth Sewald**  
Vegas Chamber
- Jared Smith**  
Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA)
- Tommy White**  
Southern Nevada Laborers Employers Cooperation Education Trust (LECET)
- Federico Zaragoza**  
College of Southern Nevada

# COVID-19 Pandemic Response

On March 17, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Steve Sisolak issued an order to close all gaming and non-essential businesses. All physical One-Stop Centers were temporarily closed on March 17, 2020, and career center staff were re-allocated to assist with the high volume of unemployment claims. By the end of 2020, Nevada reported nearly 747k initial claims and a peak insured unemployment rate of nearly 25%. Although unemployment has somewhat subsided, Clark County's unemployment rate ended the year at 13.8%. The local area's initial response to the order focused primarily on increased communication and coordination; continuing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I services through virtual delivery; understanding the impact on businesses; implementing layoff aversion strategies; applying for National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG); and advocating with National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) and Congressional Leaders regarding WIOA funding legislation.

## Layoff Aversion Pilot

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in early April, Workforce Connections (WC) was awarded \$344k in funding from the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) to implement layoff aversion activities. WC developed a strategy to address the needs of our two primary customers: the employer and the employee. To achieve the goal, WC worked with the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA) and ten local chambers of commerce to identify small businesses that were struggling to retain their employees. As a result of the initial success of the pilot, an additional \$350k was awarded by DETR and \$100k by Bank of Nevada. The combination of private and federal funding expanded the pilot to almost \$800k. This public-private partnership helped 88 businesses retain 351 employees across the counties of Clark, Esmeralda, Lincoln and Nye.

# Virtual Service Delivery

A virtual enrollment process for WIOA Title I services was implemented at One-Stop Centers on March 23, 2020. All WIOA Title I staff rapidly adjusted to a virtual service delivery model in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although physical centers were temporarily closed, virtual service delivery continued. The transition was quick, and workshops, support services, and funding for training services were made available. Utilization of the virtual model has allowed the local area to minimize service disruptions and maintain enrollments at 85% of pre-pandemic levels.

## Virtual Job Fairs

WC and DETR partnered with local elected officials on multiple virtual job fairs during the pandemic. The Henderson Job Fair took place on August 7, 2020 and was in collaboration with Congresswoman Susie Lee, Commissioner Jim Gibson and Councilwoman Michelle Romero. It featured eight employers and approximately 1,400 job seekers. The Fall Job Fair Virtual Series occurred throughout October 2020 and was in collaboration with Commissioners Jim Gibson and Tick Segerblom. The series included four sector-focused job fairs (Warehouse/Logistics, Work-From-Home, Customer Service/Call Center and Healthcare) and approximately 1,200 job seekers. The Southern Nevada Works Job Fair occurred on November 5, 2020 and was a collaboration with WC LEO Consortium members Councilwoman Judith-Hoskins, Councilwoman Michelle Romero, Councilwoman Olivia Diaz and Councilman Scott Black. It featured 15 employers from the four municipalities and approximately 1,000 job seekers.

## U.S. Department of Labor's National Dislocated Worker Grant

Nevada applied and was awarded two National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) for Disaster Recovery and Employment Recovery funding. These will be instrumental in assisting dislocated workers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The grants were a collaborative effort between DETR and both local boards: Nevadaworks and WC. The two grants will provide \$10.4 million in critical funding in Southern Nevada to provide individuals disaster-employment to address the COVID-19 impacts, as well as employment and training activities.

*"Despite the most challenging year we've ever had, Workforce Connections had tremendous impact in our community. We set in place the recovery framework needed in 2021 to help connect employers to a ready workforce."*

**Jaime Cruz**  
Executive Director,  
Workforce Connections





## Aligning Workforce & Economic Development

WC partnered with the LVGEA and the Vegas Chamber to embed workforce development experts in those organizations. The new Directors of Workforce Development align workforce development efforts to support Nevada's economic development strategies. In addition, they work directly with employers to connect them to the resources and services of the One-Stop System, such as talent recruitment, on-the-job training and and other resources. Interaction with employers will increase the number of activities in the system, such as work experiences and internships for youth.

### Employ NV Business Hubs

In September and October, two Employ NV Business Hubs were created to help businesses better connect to the resources available through the One-Stop System. These employer-focused One-Stop Centers will help businesses recover and grow again post-pandemic. The hubs are a coordinated effort between WC, DETR, the Nevada Department of Business and Industry, the Vegas Chamber, and the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. Located inside the Vegas Chamber and the Sahara West Library, the hubs are staffed with workforce development professionals who help employers with recruiting, hiring, training, talent development, and more. The hubs provide businesses access to a suite of high-impact services including business tools and workforce development.

### Thriving Communities

WC was selected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Family Assistance to lead a collective impact initiative: Thriving Communities for a Better Southern Nevada. In collaboration with local elected officials and other community stakeholders, in January, the initiative convened diverse partners from across multiple sectors around a single goal: to develop and implement a strategic plan addressing critical obstacles that block the upward economic mobility of individuals and families in Southern Nevada.



#### Laurie Moran Partnership Award

In June of 2020, during the first-ever virtual National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Forum, WC and the Vegas Chamber were officially presented the prestigious Laurie Moran Partnership Award. This recognition is presented annually to one out of 550 local workforce boards across the nation. It recognizes an effective partnership with a local chamber of commerce that best advances workforce and economic development in their region.

### Investment Strategy

WC expanded its system-integration strategy by continuing to leverage partnerships and engage local economic development agencies and chambers of commerce to increase collaboration. The results have been impactful and include supporting Nevada's targeted industry sectors through the Workforce Blueprint 2.0, embedding WC Directors of Workforce Development into the Vegas Chamber and LVGEA, continuing the collaborative work around ACT Work Ready Communities by adding 11 ACT Authorized Job Profilers, and continuing to capitalize on opportunities to co-locate with system partners in "no-cost" buildings.



### Deferred Infrastructure Costs

WC continued capitalizing on "no-cost" locations to increase system integration and customer access to the One-Stop System. The estimated value of the "no-cost" space is approximately \$500k annually.

## Hire the Right Worker

As the largest ACT Authorized Work Ready Community in the country, Clark County has added new resources to help employers "Hire the Right Worker the First Time". This helps businesses avoid the unnecessary expenses of recruiting, hiring, and training associated with employee turnover. In the summer of 2020, 11 workforce development professionals in Clark County became ACT Authorized Job Profilers. These Job Profilers provide employers skill analysis for emerging and in-demand occupations in Southern Nevada, aligned with the Workforce Blueprint 2.0. In the fall of 2020, profilers teamed up to complete a job analysis for five local employers within the public and private sectors. In 2021, Job Profilers will continue to work with local public and private sector employers in completing job analysis for in-demand occupations to enhance and meet the needs of employers.

### Employ NV Career Hubs

WC, College of Southern Nevada (CSN), and other public workforce system partners collaborated to integrate education, training, and the NDWG for Southern Nevada's dislocated workers. The new hubs provide additional access points for the large number of workers that need to return to work. CSN has created three Career Pathways for dislocated workers: Workers needing immediate employment; Workers seeking short-term training; and Workers seeking longer-term training. Each of the short-term re-skilling or trainings are aligned with emerging critical industries in Workforce Blueprint 2.0. The

first of four planned locations was opened in Fall 2020. The Employ NV Career Hub at the Historic West Side School was planned and implemented in late 2020, with an anticipated opening in early 2021. The hub, when fully staffed, will have partner access to multiple WIOA partner agencies, including Title I, Title III, and TANF.



## CCSD Workforce Fellowship

In late 2020, five Clark County School District (CCSD) high school counselors spent 14 weeks in a workforce-focused fellowship to learn and develop a strong knowledge base of the One-Stop System. Areas of concentration include service delivery and the development of career planning, comprehensive engagement strategies, and follow-up support for their student population. The high school counselors were introduced to business, community, and system partners. In December, the fellows presented their service integration plan to CCSD and WC leadership, including the CCSD superintendent, high school principals, WC Board members, and LEO Consortium members. Beginning in January of 2021, the fellows will begin implementing their plan in each of the high schools they represent. This phase will create emerging and best practices for system integration while collecting data to guide next steps. The next phase will include designing and improving the current fellowship for future fellows. This will include developing a "train the trainer" curriculum for their peers to support critical mass and scale-up for the high school and middle school populations. Post-secondary pathways will focus on high school students transitioning to post-secondary opportunities, such as college, certified occupational training, and apprenticeships.

## CCSD Apprenticeship Pipeline

WC and CCSD continued to build on the 2018 Education/Apprenticeship Summit by working with local labor unions, education leaders, and the business community to develop new partnerships and create a pipeline for students to enter trade apprenticeships. The five working groups met virtually through the pandemic and had their final meeting in December to review work, committee structure, and to identify goals for 2021. WC's strategy for coordinating and aligning secondary and post-secondary education activities is as follows: Inform and engage youth and families about careers that do not require a traditional four-year degree and prepare and engage youth in apprenticeship opportunities.

*"Our kids are the workforce of the future. We are aligning the K-12 section of the workforce development pipeline to meet the needs of business."*

**Scott Black**  
Councilman, City of North Las Vegas  
Vice Chair, LEO Consortium

## Braided Funding

WC, CSN and Nevada's Division of Welfare successfully completed the first inter-agency "train-to-hire" pilot within the Southern Nevada One-Stop System. Trainees from the welfare caseload were screened and placed into vocational training programs at CSN for allied health careers. Successful completion resulted in industry certification and recruitment into full-time professional jobs at a living wage in a growing industry.

To ensure success, the Division of Welfare and WC braided funding to cover costs including tuition, childcare, transportation, licensure, internet access and computer equipment. CSN prepared trainees with individualized academic plans and WorkKeys assessments. Staff were also available to resolve housing, mental health, family issues and other emergent barriers.

Thirteen trainees successfully completed the pilot and began employment as Dialysis Technicians and Community Health Workers locally in December 2020. Given the success of the pilot, train-to-hire programs will now be offered year-round beginning Winter 2021. Also, the pilot has been expanded to offer training in advanced manufacturing, skilled trades, information technology, allied health and commercial transportation. Wages are projected to range from \$40k-\$60k.

*"The year 2020 was difficult, but together with our system partners, we rose to meet the challenge."*

**Cecil Fielder**  
Vice Chair, Workforce Connections

## Haas Automation Talent Pipeline

WC partnered with CSN to support the strategy and execution of the \$2 million advanced manufacturing labs and training for Haas Automation. The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) approved the grant which will be funded by Nevada's Workforce Innovation (WINN) fund.

The program will expand the skilled training offerings in Southern Nevada and will result in individuals obtaining industry-recognized certifications for production technicians, logistics technicians and machining operators. The strategy includes two training sites with the goal to train 200 individuals prior to Haas Automation's arrival. WC and CSN will continue to work together to braid funding and leverage other resources to get Nevadans back to work.

*"Our community rallied together during the pandemic. Now we are ready to help Southern Nevada recover and thrive again."*

**Jerrie Merritt**  
Chair, Workforce Connections





For more information about our WIOA Title I programs,  
visit: [www.nvworkforceconnections.org](http://www.nvworkforceconnections.org)



## ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

An equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services  
are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.  
TTY (800) 326-6868 or Nevada Relay 711