



It is past time to rev up the American talent pipeline. Workforce accelerators and dynamic worker-centric efforts can be deployed to support and cultivate a steady supply of work ready talent for 21st Century jobs.



## Revving Up the American Talent Pipeline

### Workforce Development Accelerators

June 2022



## Reving Up the American Talent Pipeline

In January 2020, the United States rung in the new year enjoying its longest economic expansion on record. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, “The job market remains tight in 2019, as the unemployment rate fell to the lowest level since 1969.”<sup>i</sup> Then, the COVID-19 Pandemic arrived and ended a record 128-month economic expansion.



As mentioned in our Pandemic Recovery Playbook, the pandemic created a massive demand on unemployment insurance (UI) and public workforce officials and highlighted the need to work with government officials and business stakeholders to engage in bold planning efforts that build-in flexibility and capacity during these utterly unprecedented times: The Pandemic has shown that UI and public workforce officials must be ready to serve and execute on a scale akin to the Great Depression. When the nation was in the grips of the Great Depression and 15 million workers became unemployed in one year – approximately 25 percent of the workforce – the public workforce system registered 12.5 million individuals for work as UI programs were being stood up across the United States.<sup>ii</sup>

The pandemic’s impact on unemployment rippled across the country. During the pandemic lockdown, the adjusted unemployment rate reached 24.9%.<sup>iii</sup> Two years later, the unemployment rate and labor participation rate have nearly fully rebounded to pre-Pandemic levels, but “monthly job openings are near historically high levels”<sup>iv</sup> with 1.8 job openings for every 1 unemployed person.<sup>v</sup> This means that while the pandemic interrupted ratcheting up labor demand, now, post pandemic, the increase in current demand for work-ready talent is even more acute.

Time Period	Unemployment Rate	Labor Participation Rate	No. Unemployed Persons/ Job Opening	Unemployment Claims
January 2020	3.5%	63.4%	0.8	2.3 million
March 2022	3.6%	62.4%	0.55	1.7 million





## A 21st Century Shift to Optimize U.S. Economic Capacity

In the last century, American workers, unemployed and underemployed alike, regularly visited their local unemployment office to apply for jobs or file UI claims, and local businesses worked with public sector partners to recruit qualified candidates for open jobs. Then, in the latter part of the century, as funding for the public workforce development system and staffing levels decreased, it had to be more selective and focused on its support of private sector economic development efforts.

Additionally, the era of remotely delivering social safety net programs via Call Centers, over the Internet, and in a decreasing number of geographically sparse “One Stop Centers” was borne. The goal of this era was to make it more convenient for American workers and their employers to virtually engage with a decidedly smaller public sector workforce via technology. Simultaneously, however, labor force participation continued its downward trend begging the question whether the “private sector’s loss of its public sector partner”<sup>vi</sup> peripherally contributed to falling labor force participation and a troubling inability to rev up the American talent pipeline to meet 21st Century employer demand.

We are now at a point when it is crucial for workforce development ecosystems, public and private, to intentionally invest and, again, become actively engaged partners in the concept that, “long-run economic growth ... depends on the growth of productive skills and abilities among workers—what economists call “human capital”—and the pace of technological progress (Romer 2019). These factors together determine the capacity of the U.S. economy.”<sup>vii</sup>

To optimize the capacity of the U.S. economy, therefore, we must gear up our workforce development teams with 21st Century tools to grow and enhance human capital. Our workforce development teams need quicker and better ways to identify, recruit, and cultivate not only unemployed individuals, who are in crisis, but also those workers who are under employed and/or who need some support. The trends show it has never been more urgent for state and local governments to reimagine not only matching unemployed workers with job openings, but how to reach underemployed workers quickly and persistently and curate personalized career paths and supports.





## WORKFORCE SERVICES REIMAGINED

Imagine if. . .

- Rather than waiting for unemployed workers or citizens in crisis to come to you for help, you instead took the jobs or training opportunities to them?
- You had insights into wraparound service needs prior to engaging the citizen – and had ideas on how to solve for them when you initially reach out to the citizen?
- You could more acutely understand the specific needs of underserved communities who historically have had limited opportunity for upward mobility?
- You could identify citizens best positioned to upskill or reskill and intentionally build workforce pipelines through persistent case management that align with economic growth while promoting healthy communities?



These were once seemingly distant possibilities. No more – now they are reality. **Welcome to a new way of thinking about workforce.**

Now is the time for reenergizing workforce development ecosystems through affirming stakeholder relationships and deploying 21st Century tools and capabilities, i.e., workforce accelerators, to aggressively explore new, innovative ways to meet the demand for talent. This requires a shift in how governments, as actively engaged partners with private sector business, approach workforce development and employment. This shift may be achieved through a multifold approach:

- Reenergize and invest in workforce development ecosystems
- Deploy innovative tools to identify key talent cohorts for reskilling or upskilling
- Utilize next generation case management to provide necessary supports while upskilling or reskilling talent



## Reenergize and Invest in Workforce Development Ecosystems

The workforce development system of the recent past passively relied on simply responding to unemployed workers who engaged with the local workforce office to apply for jobs or file UI claims. Today offers an opportunity to shift the system into a different gear. Reimagining workforce development services to connect unemployed and underemployed individuals with good and promising jobs<sup>viii</sup> requires regular investment in the workforce development ecosystem and new tools and techniques.

Workforce development ecosystems include many partners and stakeholders that should be recognized and reenergized through investment in this effort to rev up the American talent pipeline. Using new tools and technology to better integrate community organizations, such as nonprofits or religious institutions, can help engage unemployed and under employed individuals for upskilling or reskilling opportunities. Educational institutions, whether vocational, community colleges or traditional public and private schools and universities, when persistently engaged, can also provide a steady pipeline of potential workers.

Similarly, it's critically important for workforce development ecosystems to recommit to actively and regularly meeting to provide insights into their needs and capabilities, which can continuously drive workforce curriculum and increase the likelihood of job placement. In our recent *Deloitte Insights Government Trends 2022 Future-proofing the labor force*, we stressed, "Too often, the various players in the workforce ecosystem—universities and community colleges, workforce philanthropies, government, and especially, the business community—are isolated from each other. Bringing all these groups to the table can foster win-win solutions and creative ways to pay for job-centric upskilling."<sup>ix</sup>

## Deploy Innovative Tools to Identify Key Talent Cohorts for Reskilling or Upskilling

Additionally, reenergizing workforce development ecosystem partners and stakeholders through investing in new tools and techniques should be prioritized. Specifically, data and technology tools used by commercial marketers and for-profit businesses that identify individuals to sell and market products and services can also be augmented and deployed to identify individuals for reskilling and upskilling.

These tools include PeoplePrism and Economic Opportunity Analytics (EOA), which are analytical tools supported by massive data sets, that can be mined to help identify recruits along with supports for workforce development efforts. Specifically, PeoplePrism and EOA can be used as "workforce accelerators" to identify unemployed and underemployed individuals and make predictions on the likelihood of an individual's need for wraparound services. As an example, in a Midwestern state food insecurity project, the state used PeoplePrism to identify enrollment gaps among vulnerable populations, map food insecure households to critical points of interest, and enroll individuals using contact information to facilitate outreach. In this scenario, food assistance enrollment was expanded by nearly 300,000 households creating an economic impact of \$840 million. Moreover, this same technology can be deployed to identify, within the subset of food insecure individuals, candidates for upskilling or reskilling. Once engaged, these individuals can more easily be connected to additional wrap-around supports and services as needed while they are upskilled or reskilled.



PeoplePrism and EOA can also be used to identify small business owners negatively impacted by the economic effects of the pandemic. These business owners can then be connected with services made available to them in response to the pandemic, including small business loans funded by the American Rescue Plan Act.



**Workforce Accelerators:** Quickly identify unemployed and underemployed talent and timely provide needed supports.

Considering the ever-tightening demand for work-ready talent, the workforce development ecosystem must expand candidate pools to identify and recruit workers in need of quick reskilling or upskilling, unemployed or underemployed, particularly those who have/are:

- Experienced a dramatic financial shift due to the pandemic (e.g., layoffs) and have significant unmet social and support needs. This includes women who have not returned to the workforce in pre-pandemic numbers likely due to childcare challenges
- Left the workforce voluntarily but have the potential to be upskilled/reskilled and re-employed or unretired relatively quickly
- Disproportionately impacted by equity issues and have a desire to be upskilled/reskilled
- Employed in low-paying jobs and/or jobs with limited potential for career growth (e.g., at risk of automation)
- Underemployed and under the age of 26
- Lacking a high school diploma or college degree

By equipping workforce development teams with workforce accelerators to identify, recruit, and cultivate unemployed and underemployed workers who need support, we have a fighting chance of meeting the moment. As introduced above, our PeoplePrism and EOA workforce accelerator capabilities can help employers and workforce partners quickly identify, recruit, and support a more diverse population. Importantly, PeoplePrism and EOA models are built responsibly and include processes to address privacy and bias. Through these workforce accelerators, it is possible to identify:

- Potential candidates based on a specific profile and set of attributes
- Potential high-fit applicants to streamline engagement activities by identifying individuals who are likely great fits for an organization
- Potential candidates can be identified by predictions that can occur at multiple stages in the application process
- Ways to expand recruitment efforts to a more diverse population and identify employees with a higher risk of attrition.



Our 21st Century tools, including abundant data and advanced analytics capabilities, can be used to accelerate identifying potential high-fit applicants to streamline workforce engagement activities.

Based on past data and advanced modeling, workforce partners and employers are provided insights to inform strategic decisions, such as removing barriers or offering supports, to improve worker engagement, compensation, and retention. Our broad-based capabilities incorporate near real-time current workforce measurements along with identifying potentially vulnerable populations to provide a quantitative assessment of the workforce pool. Our advanced data and analytics may also help:

- Source candidates for an industry based on their capabilities and experience
- Provide reason codes that explain why someone is/is not identified as a potentially good candidate.
- Rescore models, which means on a practical level that someone who scored lower in a prior analysis can be rescored higher if there are services provided to address the factor that impacted the initial scoring (e.g.,



providing a voucher for transportation so the individual can obtain a car, negating the lack of transportation as a barrier to employment).

- Provide salary bands (e.g., Sally makes between \$10,001 and \$20,000) and not specific salary info.

Importantly, incorporating workforce accelerators such as PeoplePrism and EOA into workforce development initiatives allows for tailored program design and consistent review and assessment of the impacts of implemented programs and supports. Below are examples of how our capabilities can help accelerate both existing workforce programs and support the advent of new talent-focused initiatives:



Increased visibility into citizen education and skills at or before initial engagement to allow for more thoughtful planning and case management as part of initial conversations.



The likelihood that certain citizens may need wraparound supports such as transportation, childcare, or broadband access so that those can be factored into case management while helping to prioritize funding



The ability to predict which citizen segments, currently unemployed or underemployed, are more likely to return to the workforce soonest for triaging and potential outreach.



An ability to nudge or influence citizen segments to effectively engage them and encourage them to return to the workforce more quickly.



A capability to predict employment fit by leveraging models that consider a range of economic, education, skills, and behavioral data points to help workforce partners prioritize training for workers and industries of greatest need or strategic importance.

## Utilize Next Generation Case Management

In 2022, individuals and workers across the spectrum expect seamless and responsive experiences when interacting service providers whether in the private or the public sector. The pandemic further revealed the human need and desire to interact with services providers, especially government, in ways that are personal, empathetic, and value added. As recognized in a 2018 report on the *Changing Landscape of Workforce Development*,

Ensuring that users can navigate workforce systems to get the services they need is a constant concern. Whether a user is an online customer or a walk-in, they expect a smooth customer experience that gives them the ability to independently complete tasks and receive help when needed. . . For customers interacting directly with workforce systems, the level of customer satisfaction is tied to the quality of the workforce system's interface, how simple and clear it is to use, and how much support a user can receive directly from the interface. And for customers who need more intensive and personal customer support, the ability of case managers to access, see, and directly and humanly respond to customer issues is key.<sup>x</sup>

Accordingly, it is past time to equip workforce case managers with 21<sup>st</sup> century or next generation tools. Specifically, by equipping workforce case managers with workforce accelerators, integrated with next generation case management solutions, the workforce development ecosystem will have better odds of timely serving unemployed and underemployed workers, who are in crisis, and connecting them with businesses who are battling for work-ready talent. Therefore, it is critically important to invest in 21<sup>st</sup> Century tools and next generation case



management, so that the small cadre of workforce case managers and staff can deliver persistent, dynamic, and empathetic case management.

As we outlined above, while PeoplePrism and EOA can provide immediate insights into prospective talent's proclivities and barriers, workforce case managers must also be equipped with flexible and scalable next generation case management solutions. Next generation case management solutions provide easy-to-use core case management functionality, labor exchange functionality, and the capability to quickly integrate new partners in the workforce system to optimize the process. For example, our WorkPath™ case management solution leverages the strength, flexibility, scalability, and speed to execution of the industry-leading cloud solution providers, Salesforce, Dynamics and Service Now. Next generation case management solutions, such as WorkPath™, should be intuitive, agile, and comprehensive including:

- Simplified reporting against WIOA reporting requirements
- Tracking and reporting of provider and local program activities regarding each participant and employer
- Ad hoc reporting capabilities for improved development and delivery of workforce and labor market information, as well as increased accountability that enables:
  - Increased collaborative service delivery across federal programs
  - Decreased duplicative administrative costs
  - Continuous improvement to align local and state workforce development efforts to regional and state economic development priorities
  - Workforce investment board and stakeholder support for strategic planning and investments

Next generation case management solutions should also include fully integrated labor exchange, such as Eightfold and LinkedIn, and contact center solutions like our GovConnect CRM, a Salesforce-based pre-configured module for Labor and HHS agency call centers. GovConnect is a holistic solution that responds to urgent business needs, scales to spikes in demand, and connects agents and consumers in an omni-channel, AI-enabled, personalized, and responsive ecosystem. To support workforce partners, GovConnect empowers case managers with a 360 view of individuals so that they can be quickly and comprehensively served.

## Deploying Workforce Accelerators

By investing in and deploying next generation case management with integrated workforce accelerators, workforce development ecosystems can be reenergized to aggressively explore new ways to identify and expand talent recruitment pools and upskill and reskill identified candidates. When workforce development ecosystems deploy workforce accelerators, they can not only build, but also sustain a talent pipeline to meet employer demand. The diagram below is a sample of next generation workforce accelerators developed to reenergize and support the workforce development ecosystem.





### AI, RPA, and Chat bots

- AI-driven with guided workflows and next best action recommendations help agents/case managers triage and resolve complex issues with minimal training
- Menu-enabled chat bots and virtual assistants and context-based KM improve self service capabilities for potential candidates and recruits

### WorkPath™

- Holistic solutions that provide easy-to-use core case management functionality and can further empower staff with a 360 view of constituents using PeoplePrism and EOA
- Flexible, extendible, and scalable solutions
- Integrated labor exchange functionality such as LinkedIn and Eight-Fold and built-in reports that meet WIOA requirements and ad hoc dashboards



### PeoplePrism & EOA

- Uses near real-time data and advanced modeling so that employers and workforce partners can quickly identify and recruit a more diverse population
- Provides data to inform strategic decisions, such as removing barriers or providing supports, to improve worker engagement, compensation, and retention
- Behavioral Science & Nudging / Continuously Validated

### GovConnect CRM

- Comprehensive contact center solution that responds to urgent business needs, scales to spikes in demand, and integrates across the ecosystem
- Seamlessly connects agents and consumers in an omni-channel, AI-enabled and personalized solution

## Workforce Accelerators in Action



### Scenario 1: “Evan”

Using PeoplePrism and EOA, Evan’s case manager Jacob reviews his Profile in the next generation case management system which shows Evan was identified as a good candidate for “upskilling” for the following reasons:

- He scored high as a technological innovator,
- He is under 26 years old,
- Lives with his parents,
- Graduated from high school in 2020 with his diploma,
- Has access to a car,
- Has no apparent comorbidities,
- Earns just above poverty level wages as a trainer at a nearby fitness center.

Jacob reaches out to Evan and schedules him for a virtual career counseling session. During the interview, Evan explains he is still carried under his father’s health insurance and resides at home. Jacob follows up and confirms Evan’s high “technological innovator” score and Evan’s work as a certified physical trainer. Jacob also discovers that Evan was a varsity athlete and senior captain on both the basketball and baseball teams while in high school. He notes that Evan enthusiastically related his experience being a member and then leader of his high school sports teams. Jacob concludes Evan enjoys being a part of teams, physical activity, and is an early adopter of new technology. Jacob also notes Evan does not have a need for significant wrap-around supports. He narrows down two options to introduce to Evan as follows:

- Traditional registered apprenticeship opportunities



- Supports to build his personal training business

Evan favorably responds, so via next generation case management, Jacob immediately connects him with an apprenticeship contact to explore construction and trades opportunities and schedules a virtual appointment for later that day. Jacob also provides a list of courses to support expanding Evan’s personal training business to increase his income well into the future.

In the next generation case management tool, Jacob automatically schedules weekly follow-up meetings to offer continuous support while Evan explores which opportunity to pursue with an agreed-to goal for a decision by the end of the month. Evan is also provided nudges via personalized text messages or emails reminding him to connect with the local economic development agency that provides small business supports along with information about upcoming apprenticeship classes.



### Scenario 2: “Marian”

Marian is identified by PeoplePrism and EOA as an at-risk individual because her income decreased post pandemic and candidate for upskilling. Marian’s case manager pulls up her Profile in the next generation case management system which shows the following:

- She received her GED in 2015
- She is single mother of a young child
- She lives in a multi-generational home
- She works two jobs, one at a local grocery store and another as a home healthcare aid
- She may have access to a car that is registered to her address
- She lives on a bus line.

Marian’s assigned case manager, Selma, puts together an interview and assessment package and calls the phone number listed for Marian. Marian does not answer so Selma leaves a message and clicks the “send text follow up” box on the screen. Marian receives a text message the next day confirming Selma’s phone message and asks her to return Selma’s call regarding potential supports available. Marian calls Selma and schedules an appointment to go the local office next Monday for an interview with Selma.

During the in-person interview, Marian indicates she contributes to household expenses and carries her own health insurance as a member of the United Food and Commercial Service Workers Union. Marian also confirms that they no longer have a car because Marian’s mother can no longer drive having suffered a recent health scare complicating Marian’s childcare needs. Marian states she relies on the bus for transportation.

Selma reviews Marian’s Interview and assessment responses which confirm she has a caretaker’s heart and satisfactory scores in the health sciences. She creates a package of available training programs paired with significant supportive services. These support services will be critical as Marian will likely need to significantly decrease or change her working hours, but still maintain her health insurance, so she can devote herself to attaining her licensed practical nurse certification and a career path to support her family.



### Scenario 3: “James”

James was part of a WARN and mass layoff when a local factory closed in 2019. He was also laid off, with recall rights, when the plant temporarily closed during the pandemic. Case manager Alex pulls up James’ PeoplePrism and EOA Profile for review which shows:

- He has his high school diploma,
- He has held long term employment with a large manufacturing company in the state,
- He scored above average as a technological innovator,
- He appears to be in good health.
- He has significant debt to income ratio – first and second home mortgages, three registered cars all financed with car loans, a registered boat nearly paid off, monthly rent payments for an apartment, no tax debt, and a small savings account.

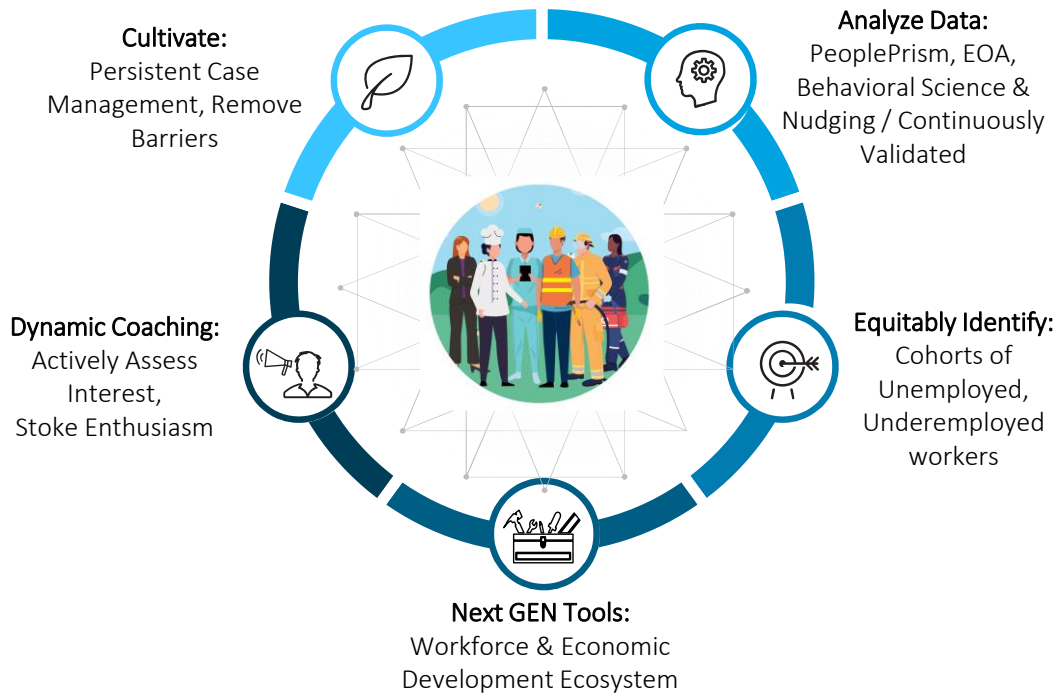
James is flagged as a candidate for reskilling, so Alex next checks James’ local office file from 2019 which shows before the local plant closed, James had been enrolled in company-sponsored robotics training. Alex decides to schedule a check-in meeting with James. It took a month to schedule a time when James was home because he rents an apartment in a city four hours away for work.

Once they finally meet, Alex explores how much longer James would like to work. James indicates he wants to retire from the factory when eligible in three years, but then, he would like to continue working to help pay for his last child to attend college. James indicates he still wants to work, but somewhere geographically closer to home that provides flexibility so he and his wife can travel some. Alex begins working with James to explore his post-retirement career options, which is also an important part of sustaining the American talent pipeline.

## Reving Up the American Talent Pipeline Now to Sustain Increased Economic Capacity in The Future

The American talent pipeline is overdue for an injection of innovation and next generation tools to fire up the workforce development ecosystem. To permanently reenergize workforce development ecosystems and ensure robust economic capacity long into the 21st Century, however, workforce accelerators should be continually deployed to reduce excessive churn and curate long-term career paths for American workers. This can be achieved by using workforce accelerators to enable persistent and dynamic case management built on established relationships.

Think about it like this – much like trusted relationships built over time with healthcare professionals and service providers, workforce case managers can build similar trusted relationships through helping unemployed and underemployed workers navigate through a crisis or episodes of seasonal unemployment to secure good and promising jobs. Those same trusted case managers should regularly reengage with workers they’ve helped to provide career guidance, e.g., opportunities to enroll in skills training courses, necessary supports when there is a need indicator, and more, so workers maintain employment in good and promising jobs and employers retain trained and proven talent. In this way, case managers shift into the role of career coaches proactively helping to stoke American economic capacity in the long term. The figure below is a high-level illustration of how to rev up the American talent pipeline now and in the long run.



In sum, to spark the American talent pipeline and keep it firing on all cylinders, we must reenergize the workforce development ecosystem through investing in workforce accelerators and next generation case management solutions. Innovative new tools and technology will help the workforce development ecosystem more quickly, dynamically, and persistently cultivate human capital, which according to the Council on Economic Advisors, “is critical for economic growth and individual well-being.”<sup>xi</sup> Finally, by deploying all available tools to support the American worker, we help to insure against macro-economic and social threats as articulated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his second fireside chat on September 30, 1934:

“To those who say that our expenditures for public works and other means for recovery are a waste that we cannot afford, I answer that no country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance. Morally, it is the greatest menace to our social order.”<sup>xii</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Monthly Labor Review, April 2020, BLS, See, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2020/article/job-market-remains-tight-in-2019-as-the-unemployment-rate-falls-to-its-lowest-level-since-1969.htm>

<sup>ii</sup> Pandemic Recovery Playbook First Responder Kit, Unemployment Insurance Modernization, (Sept. 2020), p. 4.

<sup>iii</sup> 2021 UWC UI Issues Conference, Indianapolis, IN, “An Economy at the Crossroads,” (Oct. 20, 2021).

<sup>iv</sup> U.S. Job Market faces reshuffling as workers quit a near record rates, Reuters, (Feb. 3, 2022).

<sup>v</sup> “There are now a record 5 million more job openings than unemployed people in the U.S.,” CNBC, (Mar. 29, 2022) at <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/03/29/there-are-now-a-record-5-million-more-job-openings-than-unemployed-people-in-the-us.html>.

<sup>vi</sup> *Economic Report of the President, Together with the Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisors*, (April 2022), p. 22.

<sup>vii</sup> *Id.*, at p. 23.

<sup>viii</sup> Based on the Brookings Institute definition of good and promising jobs. Good jobs pay at least a metropolitan area’s median annual earnings for full-time, year-round sub-baccalaureate workers and provide employer-sponsored health insurance. Promising jobs are entry-level positions that provide career pathways to good jobs. Promising jobs do not meet the criteria for a good job but will enable an incumbent worker to reach a good job within 10 years. See, Brookings Institute. “Opportunity Industries,” (Dec. 2018).

<sup>ix</sup> *Deloitte Insights, Government Trends 2022, Future-Proofing the Labor Force, Enabling the adaptive worker of the future*, p. 6.

<sup>x</sup> *A Changing Workforce Development Landscape*, National Association of State Workforce Agencies and National Association of Workforce Boards, (June 2018), p. 12.

<sup>xi</sup> *Economic Report of the President, Together with the Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisors*, (April 2022), p. 130.

<sup>xii</sup> See, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/fireside-chat-20>

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