

WORKING TODAY FOR TOMORROW'S SUCCESS



IMPACT REPORT 2021-2022

# REIMAGINING THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

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# A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERS

*DEAR PARTNERS,*

After overcoming a difficult 2020, the constant shifting and hardship of the past two years have provided opportunities to innovate in the face of the unknown. The pandemic forced everyone to make big changes. In the post-COVID workforce development space, Employ Milwaukee is positioned in an exciting spot of **reimagination, rediscovery, and reinvention**.

Over the past two years, many people have talked about The Great Resignation – The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that more than 4.3 million people voluntarily left their jobs in December 2021 alone. This Great Resignation has offered the opportunity for **The Great Reinvention**, as job seekers who craved change are now taking their futures into their own hands. In turn, Employ Milwaukee's strategies had to be **reimagined** to continually serve the rapidly changing needs of job seekers and employers.

As COVID-19 forced many workers home, digital literacy skills became a requirement for many jobs that did not need this before. Employ Milwaukee recognized this gap and launched our **Digital Literacy Lab** in February 2021 with Kohl's and EveryoneOn. This training is the first of its kind in our city and since launching, is serving a diverse population of community members ages 19 to 86 and providing them with the skills and equipment needed to succeed in the 21st century.

With youth staying home and feeling disconnected, we had an opportunity to think creatively on how to engage Milwaukee youth and support our future workforce. In June 2022 we launched *Camp RISE* to provide enrichment, career exploration, and stipends to young men aged 10-14 along with partners at Milwaukee Public Schools, City of Milwaukee, and Voices of the Elders. As you will find on page 5, the **Camp RISE** pilot program was a smash success, and we look forward to serving more boys and girls this summer with the skills needed to be future leaders of their community.

We also expanded our work-based learning programs because, what better way to learn than by *doing*? **Skillful Transitions** serves adult community members who were impacted by the pandemic by training and upskilling job seekers while filling jobs at local businesses and supplying them with wages to push back into the community.

The worker shortage has made employers **reimagine** labor pools and tap into areas they may not have considered before. Employ Milwaukee works side by side with employers to help them meet their needs. One way we do this is by investing heavily in connecting formerly incarcerated individuals to pre- and post-release employment services, allowing them to obtain quality jobs and economic prosperity while reducing recidivism rates and filling employers' essential job openings.

We are in an exciting time of innovation for our city. The difficulties we've faced since 2020 have been a catalyst for restructuring and rethinking service delivery strategies that have long needed revamping. We have the resources, now one Milwaukee must come together to create the best outcomes for our diverse community. We hope you will walk beside us at Employ Milwaukee as we continue to **reimagine, rediscover, and reinvent** what it means to succeed as a community.

*SINCERELY,*



Chytania Brown  
President & CEO of EMI



Don Layden  
Board Chair



Cavalier Johnson  
Mayor of Milwaukee  
Chief Local Elected Official

### Goals of the Reentry Simulation

- Educate the public about the challenges returning prisoners face and why the rate of return to prison is so high
- Share JustDane's mission and vision with the wider community to connect with future volunteers, supporters, and advocates for change

# OUR IMPACT

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2022

**18,290** *Individuals Served*

**1,656** *Individuals Placed in Employment*

**1,277** *Individuals Trained*

**\$16.47** *Average Wage*

**30** *Number of Programs*

Employ Milwaukee Efforts to Outcomes participant data, 7/1/20-6/30/22



# WHO WE ARE

## VISION

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Employ Milwaukee is the local workforce development board serving Milwaukee County. By convening leaders from business and industry, economic and workforce development, education and training as well as community partners and policy makers, our **vision** is to develop workforce solutions that promote regional economic growth and employment opportunity for all job seekers.

## MISSION

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Our **mission** is to build a strong workforce development system by planning, coordinating, collaborating and monitoring workforce initiatives with businesses, partners and community stakeholders at the local, regional and state level to ensure a skilled and productive workforce for the 21st Century.

## GOALS

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Our **goals** are to connect job seekers to employment opportunities, to provide education and training options in high-growth, high-demand sectors, and to provide a skilled and sustainable workforce to attract, retain and grow diverse businesses in our Milwaukee 7 region.



# Earn & Learn

*Every career starts with a first job. Workplace learning introduces youth to the world of work and helps them develop critical skills for success.*

Summer youth programming is an essential piece of Employ Milwaukee's services, and since 2022 is proud to now serve youth as young as 10 through young adulthood at age 24. The Earn & Learn Summer Youth Employment Program began in 2007 and provides meaningful work experiences and career exposure to young adults ages 14-24 years old, residing in Milwaukee County. Earn & Learn matches youth participants with subsidized employment at local worksites that span a diverse assortment of private, non-profit, faith-based, and small businesses. Aside from work experience, programming provides role models, skill building, and opportunities for future employment.

Thanks to the City of Milwaukee and numerous community partners and stakeholders, Earn & Learn has been a pillar for youth development in Milwaukee for the past 15 years.



**1,564**

Youth completed the work experience



**108**

Employer worksites



**\$12.21**

2022 wage



# 40,000

young adults in the community completed Earn & Learn work experiences through Employ Milwaukee to date

# CAMP RISE

*offering youth the tools to become community leaders  
and contribute to a better society.*

In 2022, Employ Milwaukee launched Camp RISE, an innovative youth development program created to provide enriching positive experiences to Milwaukee boys aged 10-14. Campers participated in city beautification projects, enrichment workshops, and speaker visits from local community leaders. Programming included culturally-based activities to promote confidence and leadership, and integrated career exploration through hands-on job site visits.

For many youth this is their first “job”: campers receive stipends of up to \$200 per week to learn financial skills, personal responsibility, and boost the local economy. Camp RISE was launched in partnership with the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Schools, Voices of the Elders and the State of Wisconsin.

**192** Campers

**636** Completed interest forms

**\$200,291** Earned by campers



# CREAM CITY YOUTHBUILD



## 75%

*of participants earn their HSED while engaging in paid occupational skills training that provides industry-recognized construction credentials.*

Employ Milwaukee's Cream City YouthBuild is rooted in over a decade of partnerships and staff expertise delivering occupational skill training, paid hands-on work experience, and leadership development learning for opportunity youth in high poverty, high unemployment neighborhoods in the city of Milwaukee. Cream City YouthBuild teaches youth skills in high-demand industries while also providing community service through rehabilitating affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their own neighborhoods. Participants can feel a sense of fulfillment for helping their community while gaining essential skills that will allow them to obtain family-sustaining wages in a high-growth career.

In tandem with Cream City YouthBuild construction curriculum, Employ Milwaukee includes a Healthcare Pathway option with the goal of attaining industry-recognized Certified Nursing Assistant licensure and placement for employment or further training in the healthcare industry.

YouthBuild programming uses a 50/40/10 model of training to ensure participants are receiving a well-rounded education:

### 50% EDUCATION

HSED and other remedial education to improve basic skills, post-secondary exploration, cultural history, current events, mental toughness, and career readiness.

**PARTNERS:**

- Literacy Services of Wisconsin
- Journey House

### 40% SKILLS TRAINING

Supervised paid work experience at construction worksites within the city of Milwaukee. HBI PACT and CAN/CBRF trainings.

**PARTNERS:**

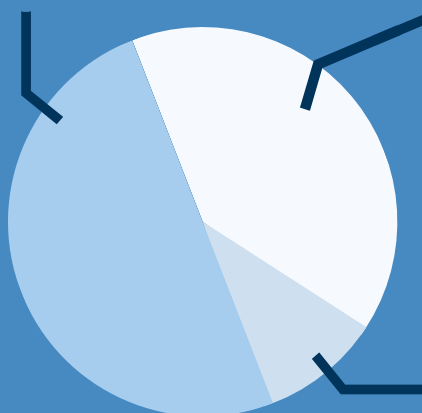
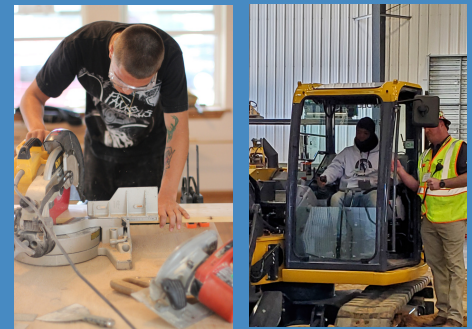
- Milwaukee Christian Center
- Housing Authority of Milwaukee
- Northcott Neighborhood House
- Johnson Education Center
- WIOA Title I OSY Providers

### 10% LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Community service learning projects to inspire and motivate participants while benefiting their community, such as community gardens, neighborhood clean ups, and small home and yard improvements.

**PARTNERS:**

- W RTP/BIG STEP
- WIOA Title I OSY Providers





# Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act



As the designated administrator of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs in Milwaukee County, Employ Milwaukee oversees the workforce system that provides job seekers and workers with services to help them successfully meet the skill requirements of local employers. Job seekers and workers who participate in WIOA are paired with Career Planners who use individualized services and assessment tools to develop an action plan for the participant's career success.

WIOA Title I B is comprised of two programs: *WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker* and *WIOA Youth*. WIOA Youth serves high school students (In-School Youth), and opportunity youth (Out of School Youth). **Opportunity youth** are individuals ages 16 to 24 who are disconnected from school and work: a disconnection that Employ Milwaukee recognizes can be harmful during this developmental time period of young lives. WIOA Out-of-School Youth focuses on preparing opportunity youth participants to employment opportunities that are in high-demand occupations to ensure jobs are available and local jobs are being filled with quality candidates.

Employ Milwaukee will serve any youth attending secondary school in Milwaukee County and has dedicated staff at the following schools with partner *Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee*:

1. Bradley Tech High School
2. Hmong American Peace Academy
3. Milwaukee Academy of Science
4. Bay View High School
5. Messmer High School

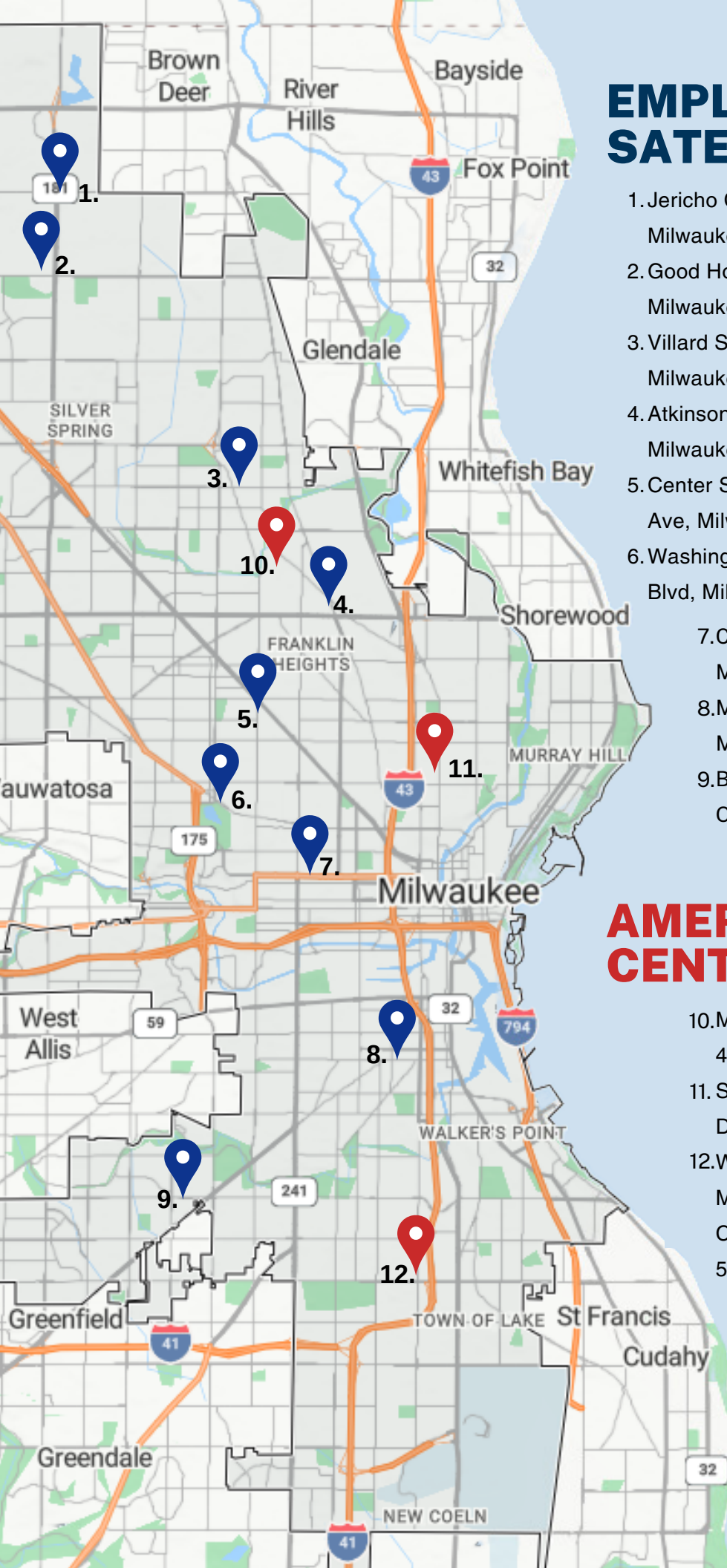


# EMPLOY MILWAUKEE SATELLITE LOCATIONS

1. Jericho Church Without Walls | 8086 N 76th St, Milwaukee, WI 5322
2. Good Hope Library | 7715 Good Hope Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53223
3. Villard Square Library | 5190 N 35th St, Milwaukee, WI 53209
4. Atkinson Library | 1960 W Atkinson Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53209
5. Center Street Library | 2727 W Fond Du Lac Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53210
6. Washington Park Library | 2121 N Sherman Blvd, Milwaukee, WI 53208
7. City on a Hill | 2224 W Kilbourn Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53233
8. Mitchell Street Library | 906 W Historic Mitchell St, Milwaukee, WI 53204
9. Bellies & Babees, Inc. | 5757 W. Oklahoma Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53219

# AMERICAN JOB CENTER LOCATIONS

10. Milwaukee Job Center Central/Maximus  
4201 N. 27th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53216
11. Southeast Wisconsin Job Center 1915 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53212
12. Milwaukee Southeast Job Center 2701 S Chase Avenue Suite C, Milwaukee, WI 53207



# SUCCESS STORIES

## Kimberly Hall *Signature Sweets*

Kimberly's passion for baking and for investing in the Milwaukee community was the perfect combination for a partnership with Skillful Transitions!



**Read Kim's story here!**



## Ricky Smith

Ricky S., age 11, was so excited to be able to attend Camp RISE this summer and have the opportunity to earn his first paycheck.

**"I learned how to be a man. Be respectful, keep going – try and try and try again".**



**Read Ricky's story here!**



Scan here to read more inspiring stories of Employ Milwaukee's impact!



Scan here to discover the scope of programs and services offered by EMI



Scan here to see campers discuss what Camp RISE means to them!

# DIGITAL LITERACY LAB



As the COVID-19 pandemic forced many Americans to stay home, the need for online access and skills became paramount. The shift to online work widened an already-large digital divide, with **1 in 3** unemployed Wisconsin workers lacking foundational digital skills. As a solution to this issue, Employ Milwaukee, in partnership with Kohl's and EveryoneOn, launched the Digital Literacy Lab in March of 2022. The Digital Literacy Lab provides basic computer skills training taught by skilled instructors. Upon graduation from the Digital Literacy Lab, participants are given their own complimentary laptop to ensure digital success for participants and increase digital equity in the community.

**74%** of job openings in Milwaukee County require some level of digital skills

In its short tenure so far, the Digital Literacy Lab has served nearly 100 individuals in English and Spanish languages.

The 8-hour training program teaches:

- Email
- Google apps
- Video platform functioning
- Conducting internet searches
- Resume creation
- Building financial literacy
- Learning to budget
- Exploring digital content
- Accessing telehealth

## SUCCESS STORY



Hello Milwaukee,

My name is Levell, and I'd like to share with you my experience participating in Employ Milwaukee's Digital Literacy Lab course.

I took this class at the beginning of 2023 because I wanted to learn more about computers. I knew a little bit about computers, but to my surprise, there were so many things that I had never learned before. My class was filled with students of varying levels of tech comfortability. I always appreciate being able to learn and develop my skills, especially when it comes to computers. Now that technology is a part of almost every part of our lives, knowing how to navigate a computer has become a necessity. It's a skill that's needed for work, school, or keeping in touch. I like to ask a lot of questions and the instructor made sure that all of my questions were answered.

Though I learned many things, the Zoom lesson stuck with me the most. My ability to use different computer programs is something that I'm proud of. Not only do these skills help me in surfing the web, but it's something I can feature as a skill on my resume. I'm appreciative of the laptop that I received after completing the class. I use it every day!

Thanks, Employ Milwaukee for providing me with a laptop. I am so excited to show all my friends what I have learned. I'd recommend this class. You can never learn too much!

**-Levell W., 86**

# REENTRY

The term “reentry” describes individuals returning to the community from jail or prison. Employ Milwaukee partners with key stakeholders to help citizens overcome barriers and successfully reenter the community by providing employment services to justice-involved individuals including those incarcerated in jails and prisons and/or within the community on supervision.

In a time when employers are in high demand for employees, Employ Milwaukee is intentionally placed at the forefront of advanced thought leadership and is a resource to help employers **reimagine** innovative sources of talent for employers and provide employment services to justice involved individuals. Visit our Reentry page or connect with our expert staff for resources to dispel common myths about the reentry population and learn how you can fill your job needs while strengthening our community.



**EMI's Reentry Resources**

## JUSTDANE REENTRY SIMULATION



Employ Milwaukee has partnered with JustDane to host several reentry simulations at Employ Milwaukee. The simulations give participants an idea of what it is like to reenter the community after incarceration and teaches the principles of restorative justice. Each participant fills the role of a mock profile returning citizen who must meet their basic needs upon reentry, such as finding housing, employment, and parole requirements. The events allow community members to experience the realistic struggles of citizens returning to the community.

## WORKFORCE *INSIGHTS*

with  
**EMPLOY MILWAUKEE**



**Listen Here!**

Episode 28 of our podcast, Workforce Insights, features a conversation with Christopher Polk, who found meaningful employment as a formerly justice-involved individual. Christopher reveals the experiences that have molded him into the person that he is today and the importance of having someone to turn to when navigating tough times. Discover the prejudice and scrutiny that justice-involved individuals often face when searching for jobs and why employers need to give job applicants the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to change and make better decisions.



# SKILLFUL TRANSITIONS

Skillful Transitions is an American Rescue Plan Act funded program created to assist people whose previous employment has not returned post-pandemic, as well as those who were not working, or had an uneven work history prior to the pandemic. The Skillful Transitions program offers opportunities for individuals for paid work experience with local employers, and skills training for high-demand jobs. It also helps businesses who lost part of their workforce due to the pandemic and faced economic hardship, or those who are looking to grow their current workforce. Our 2023 Impact Report will include more updates on Skillful Transitions!

**39** *Measurable Skills Gains*

**32** *Training Completions*

**98** *Training Enrollments*

**61** *Supportive Services*

**164** *Enrollments*

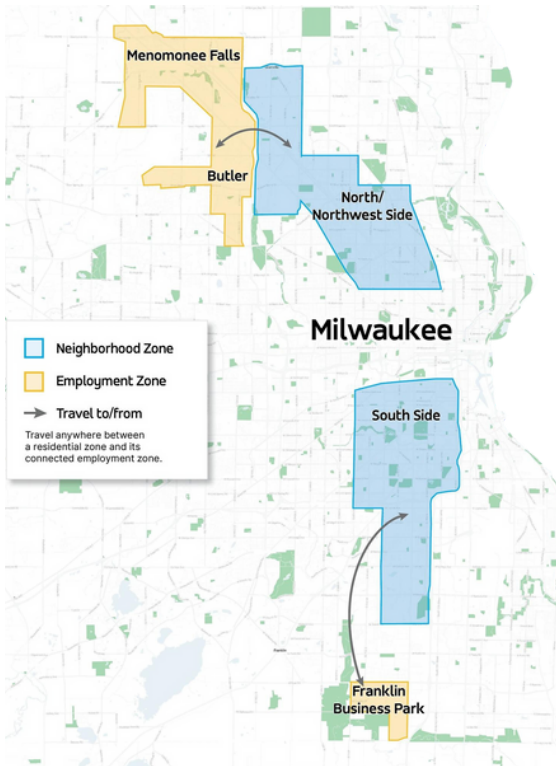
**72** *Paid Work Experience*

**149** *Employment Records*

**163** *Career Services*



# FlexRide Milwaukee



Many quality, well-paying job openings exist in the suburbs, yet job seekers lack reliable transportation to access these opportunities. FlexRide was born as an inventive solution to this issue by providing no- or low-cost rides to job seekers and employees who are looking to or already work in the Menomonee Falls, Butler, or Franklin areas. FlexRide was launched in 2022 and has helped job seekers and employers alike meet their goals. Employ Milwaukee is excited to continue this partnership with MobilISE and Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and further **reimagine** solutions to workforce barriers.



Learn More!



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community connection is the heart of Employ Milwaukee's mission. As the hardships of 2020 made it difficult to connect, the past two years have been a pathway for reconnecting with the community and reimagining how to best serve the people of Milwaukee. Employ Milwaukee Community Relations Team members canvas neighborhoods and events to connect Milwaukee County job seekers and workers to employment and training opportunities. Activities are carried out using a people-centered strategy with team members equipped with public workforce system information (technology-based, physical locations, network partner and skill development), mobile devices, and strategic collateral materials. Team members develop partners, set up satellite locations embedded in neighborhoods, onboard and refer individuals to partner services and skill development programs, and provide employer referrals.

## FIRST ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

Employ Milwaukee's First Annual Fundraiser in October 2022 joined together community changemakers to celebrate recent successes, hear from influential speakers, and gain new ideas on how to move forward with the collective mission of making Milwaukee a better place to live and work. Thank you to all attendees and the Change Agent Green and Impact Blue sponsors for their generous donations to this event. Employ Milwaukee looks forward to continuing this event for years to come.







“Meeting people where they're at and getting them what they need.”

EMI's Community Engagement team leads *The Coordinating Council*, an advisory network and partnership experience made up of major local organizations that provide workforce development and related services. The Coordinating Council offers tangible solutions to support agencies, tackle issues, develop strategies, measures outcomes and utilize combined agency resources to expand Employ Milwaukee's mission; to improve employer access to skilled workers while we address the needs of the worker in their efforts to ensure alignment with the employers needs for a skilled workforce. 2023 promises to be one of great impact and notable influence in the area of our workforce efforts — the Coordinating Council will host the first Workforce Summit in Milwaukee that will further infuse the reach of workforce into the community and educate participants.

*“Thank you to all of our community partners who have made these past two years so successful. My team and I are always looking for new community partnerships. The missing link to community opportunity may be you! If you are interested in partnering with Employ Milwaukee, reach out and let's talk.”*

**-Mildred Coby**

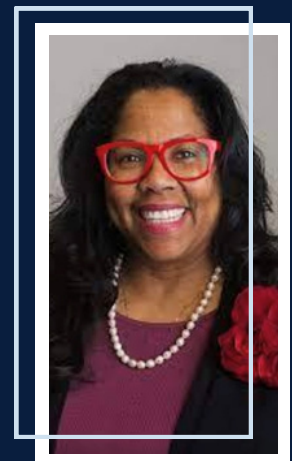
Director of Community Engagement & Agency Impact



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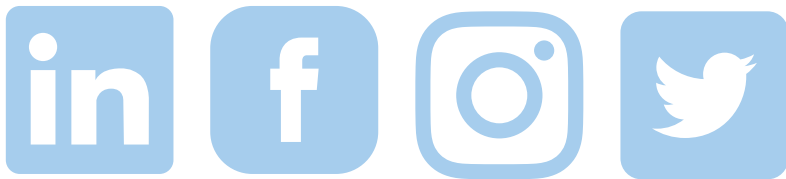
Mildred.Coby@employmilwaukee.org





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## CONNECT WITH US!



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