Workforce Development Systems Assessment, Strategy, and Implementation
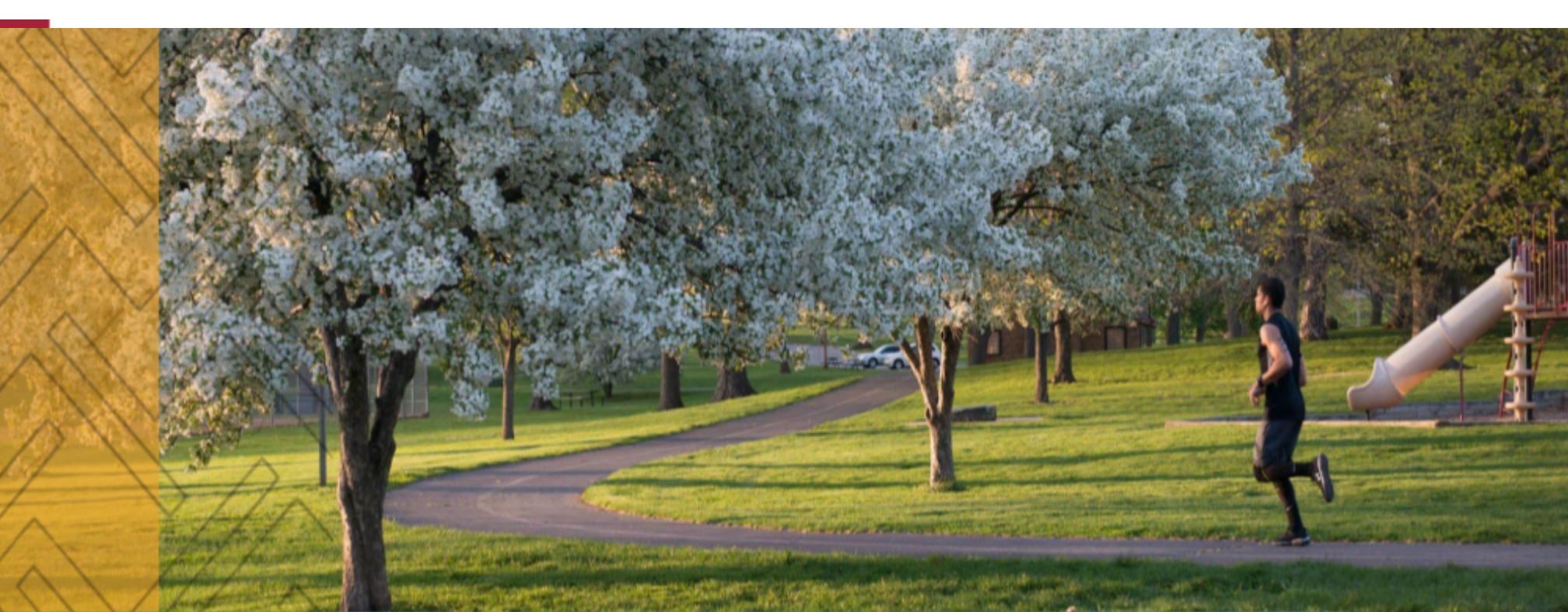
City of Decatur and Macon County, IL

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INTRODUCTION

This report was commissioned by the The City of Decatur Economic and Community Development Department and Macon County. The Request for Proposal was issued in 2021 with guidelines to conduct a Workforce Development Systems Assessment, Strategy and Implementation Plan for the City and County. Key Strategic was selected as the principal contractor and completed the engagement in September 2022.

The engagement focused on three key objectives:

1. Work with the City of Decatur Economic and Community Development department, Macon County staff and key stakeholders representing the region's workforce ecosystem to establish a contemporary profile of the demographic, social and economic characteristics of target residents with a priority focus on low/moderate-income and minority populations.

2. Recommend a model for collaborative infrastructure encompassing non-profit organizations, training providers, employers, workforce development and government agencies to:

    a. Adopt training, education and support programs that are agile and responsive to a comprehensive, process-driven systems approach to workforce development;

    b. Introduce innovative tools and methods for building a comprehensive ecosystem;

    c. Implement a process and structure to improve efficiency, inter-organizational connectivity and effectiveness;

    d. Introduce best practice client and organizational management models suitable to all partnering organizations.

3. Work with key stakeholders and partnering organizations to identify training and support programs that capitalize on innovations and efficacy generated by a broad-based collaborative workforce ecosystem.

    a. Design a sustainable support infrastructure to staff and meet the operational needs of the collaborating participants

Current Workforce Landscape
A look at the regional data

Supply
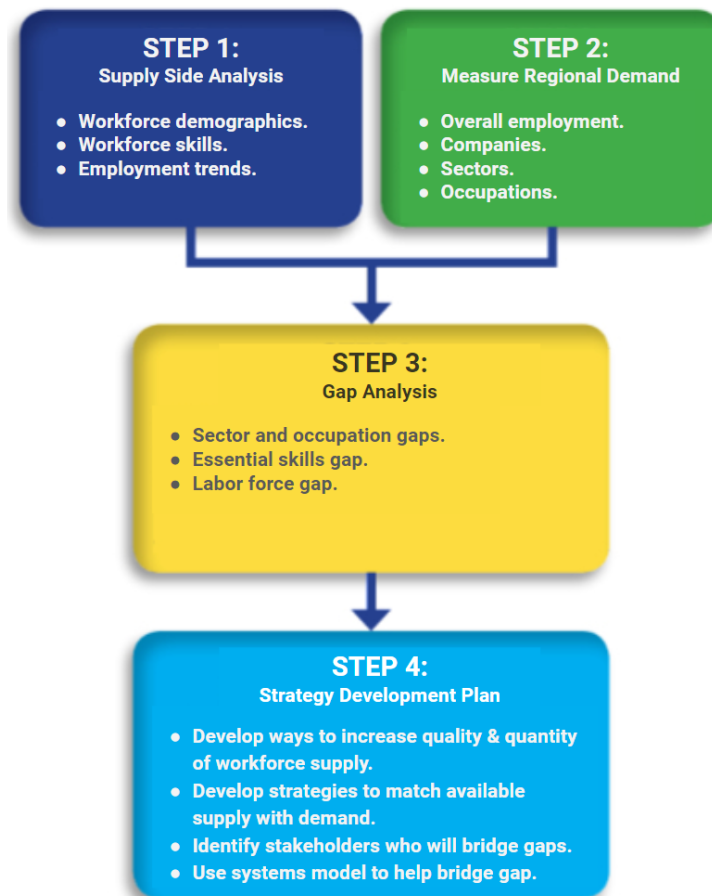*Who makes up the current workforce?*

CURRENT WORKFORCE LANDSCAPE

This data analysis examines the workforce development system in Decatur and Macon County and analyzes gaps and needs in that system. The system is defined as a set of functions that facilitate a job seeker's access to resources that allow them to obtain the information, skills, and education necessary to find employment. Figure 1 displays a four-step framework for our analysis adapted from the State of Wyoming's Workforce Gap Analysis[1].

The four components of the process are as follows:

1. Supply Analysis: Research on the workforce.

2. Demand Analysis: Research on available employers, industries, and occupations.

3. Gap Analysis: Identification of skill, occupation, and sector shortages.

4. Strategy Development: Identification of how the workforce development system can ameliorate the gaps and focus on workforce development providers and intermediaries.

This data analysis will focus on data for the Supply Analysis and Demand Analysis and will include some discussion of the Gap Analysis and Strategy Development.

STEP 1:
Supply Side Analysis

- Workforce demographics.
- Workforce skills.
- Employment trends.

STEP 2:
Measure Regional Demand

- Overall employment.
- Companies.
- Sectors.
- Occupations.

STEP 3:
Gap Analysis

- Sector and occupation gaps.
- Essential skills gap.
- Labor force gap.

STEP 4:
Strategy Development Plan

- Develop ways to increase quality & quantity of workforce supply.
- Develop strategies to match available supply with demand.
- Identify stakeholders who will bridge gaps.
- Use systems model to help bridge gap.

State of Wyoming Planning Model

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[1] *Wyoming Workforce Planning. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://wyomingworkforceplanning.state.wy.us.*

Data and Methodology

For the Supply Analysis and Demand Analysis, both primary and secondary data will be referenced. The purpose of the Supply Analysis is to summarize the workforce supply in Decatur and Macon County using public domain data that are available online, from other organizations, and from data requests. All data is sourced from the 2020 US Census unless otherwise noted.

Supply-Side Analysis

As noted in the introductory diagram, Figure 1, the supply-side analysis focuses on workforce demographics, skills, and employment trends.
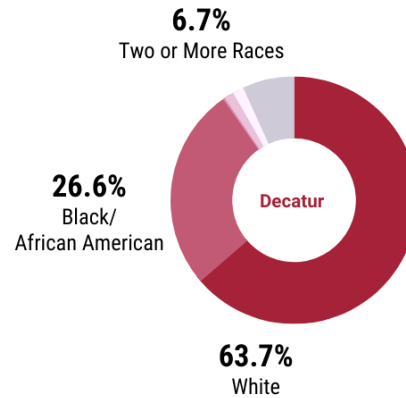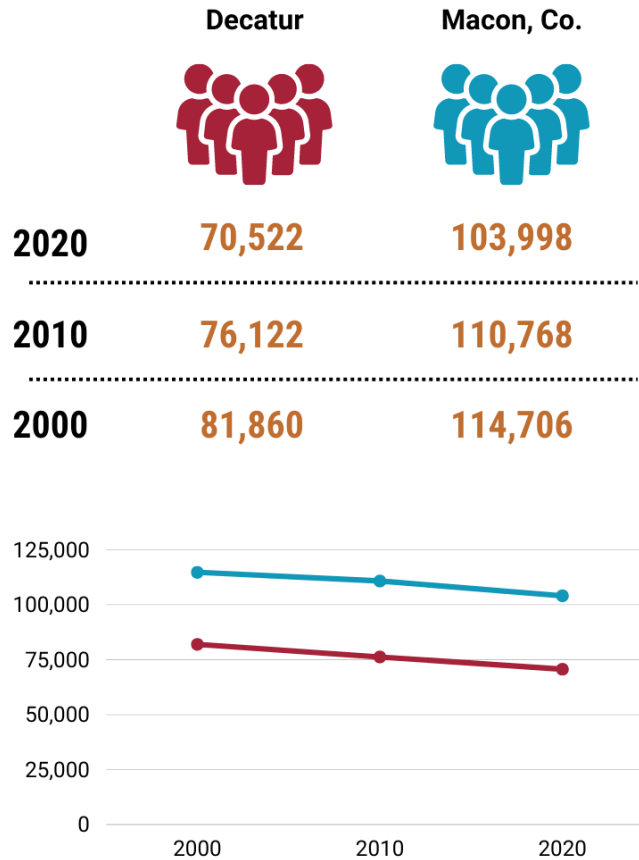
Population

The population in Decatur and Macon has been on a decline, as evidenced by the data in Figure 2. The data shows the change in population from 2000 to 2010 and from 2010 to 2020. When looking at Decatur, from 2000 to 2010, there was a population loss of 5,738 individuals. From 2010 to 2020, there was a population loss of 5600 individuals. When comparing population numbers from 2000 to 2020, there was a decline in population by 13.9%. When comparing population numbers from 2010 to 2020, there was a decline in population of 7.4%.

When looking at Macon County, from 2000 to 2010, there was a population loss of 3,938 individuals. From 2010 to 2020, there was a population loss of 6770 individuals. When comparing population numbers from 2000 to 2020, there was a decline in population by 9.3%. When comparing population numbers from 2010 to 2020, there was a decline in population of 6.1%.

The region's shrinking population calls for the development of an approach to workforce development that aims to not only attract new talent to the region but to also develop the talent that is still present within the region. When looking at the region based on age of the population, Figure 2, roughly 20% of the population of both Decatur and Macon County are below the age of 18 (21.3% and 22.3% respectively). A majority of the population is between the ages of 18 and 64, with Decatur's population in that range at 59% and Macon County's population in that range at 58.3%.

Figure 2 on the following page depicts the makeup of race in the region, with a majority White population in Decatur and Macon County (62.9% and 72.2% respectively). The population of Black residents follows as the next largest racial group with 26.4% of the population in Decatur and 18.2% in Macon County.

Figure 2: 2000-2020 Population Change of Decatur and Macon County, 2020 Population by Race, and 2020 Population by Age

Decatur

	Decatur	Macon, Co.
2020	70,522	103,998
2010	76,122	110,768
2000	81,860	114,706

By Race

Decatur

- **6.7%** Two or More Races
- **26.6%** Black/African American
- **63.7%** White

Macon, Co.

- **5.9%** Two or More Races
- **18.3%** Black/African American
- **72.9%** White

By Age

Decatur

- **65 to 74** 12%
- **< 18** 23.2%
- **55 to 64** 15.2%
- **18 to 24** 10.9%
- **45 to 54** 11.9%
- **25 to 34** 15.1%
- **35 to 44** 11.7%

Macon, Co.

- **65 to 74** 12.1%
- **< 18** 24.4%
- **55 to 64** 15.5%
- **18 to 24** 9.5%
- **45 to 54** 12.8%
- **25 to 34** 13.2%
- **35 to 44** 12.5%
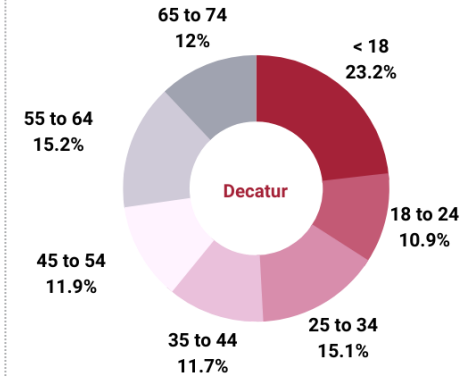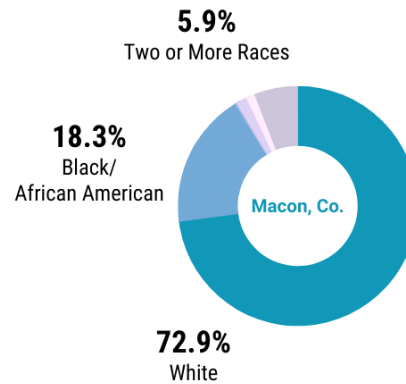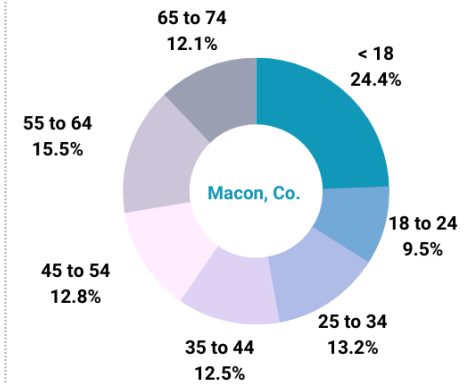
Unemployment

Data from Figure 3 shows the level of unemployment in the region. In Decatur, Black unemployment sits at 14.7% of the overall Black population while Latino unemployment sits at 15.8% of the overall Latino population. White unemployment in the city is at 7.1%, less than half of the percentage of Black and Latino unemployment. Male unemployment is 11.3% of the total male population while female unemployment is at 7.1% of the total female population in Decatur.

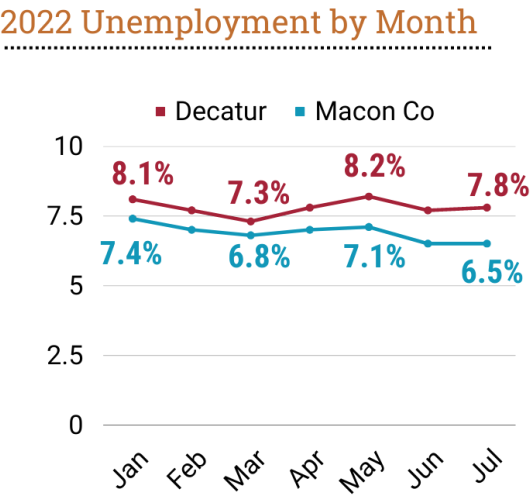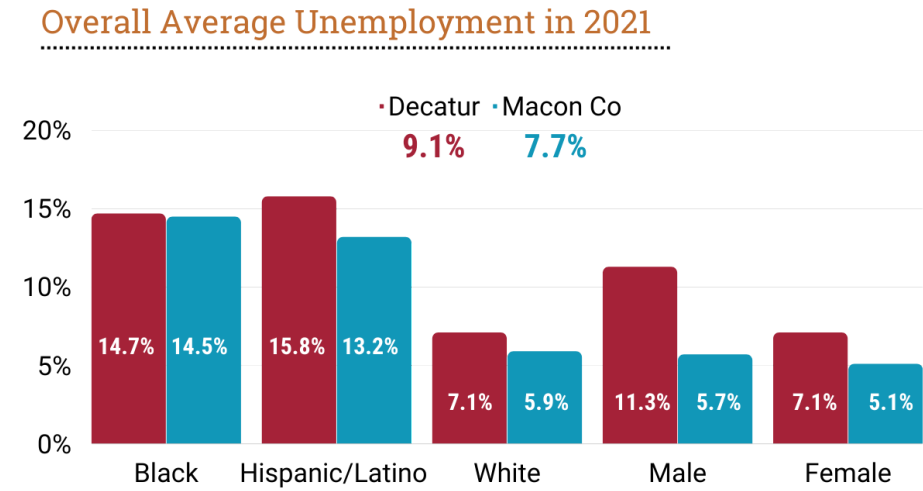In Macon County, Black unemployment sits at roughly 15% of the overall Black population (14.5%) while Latino unemployment sits at 13.2% of the overall Latino population. In Macon County, White unemployment sits at 5.9%: almost a third of the percentage of Black and Latino unemployment in the county. Male unemployment is 5.7% of the total male population while female unemployment is at 5.1% of the total female population in Macon County.

Figure 3: 2021 Unemployment by Race and Gender, Total 2022 Unemployment Rate by Month

Overall Average Unemployment in 2021

·Decatur ·Macon Co
9.1% **7.7%**

	Decatur	Macon Co
Black	14.7%	14.5%
Hispanic/Latino	15.8%	13.2%
White	7.1%	5.9%
Male	11.3%	5.7%
Female	7.1%	5.1%

2022 Unemployment by Month

■ Decatur ■ Macon Co

Decatur: Jan 8.1%, Mar 7.3%, May 8.2%, Jul 7.8%
Macon Co: Jan 7.4%, Mar 6.8%, May 7.1%, Jul 6.5%

Poverty

Poverty in the region, as shown in Figure 4 on the following page, indicates some disparities when disaggregated by race. The overall poverty rate in Decatur is 19.4% and 15.2% in Macon County. When examining poverty percentages in Decatur, there is a considerable difference between poverty rates of White residents, Black residents, and Latino residents. The white poverty rate sits at 13.8% of the overall white population, the Latino poverty rate is 27.5% of the overall Latino population, and the Black population shows the highest poverty rate at 33.2%.

When examining poverty in Macon County, the same considerable differences by race can also be seen. The white poverty rate is 11% of the overall white population, the Latino poverty rate is 22.3% of the overall Latino population, and again, the Black population shows the highest poverty rate at 32.5%.
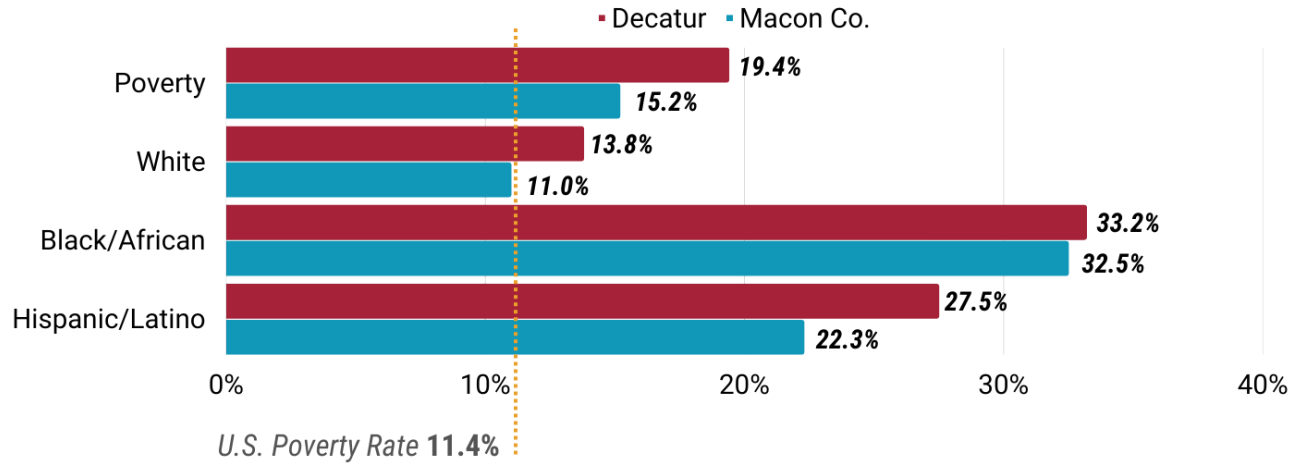
Child poverty is also shown in the region, with 30% of children in Decatur experiencing poverty while 22.3% of children in Macon County overall experience poverty.

Income

Also shown in Figure 4, there is a wide spread of various income levels in both Decatur and Macon County. In Decatur, roughly half of households earn below $39,999 (47.5%). In Macon County, just over half of households earn above $50,000 (50.5%). When looking at median household income, in Decatur, the income is $42,701 while in Macon County, the income is $50,480. When further disaggregating the data by race, White and Latino median incomes fall closely to the median incomes of the city and the county. However, when looking at Black median family income, that number is nearly half of the median income in Decatur and Macon County. Maps 1 and 2 show income distribution by race, by census tract within the greater Decatur MSA. While low income residents are concentrated in certain census tracts, the discrepancies in income by race can still be seen in these low-and-moderate income tracts.

Figure4: Poverty & Household Income

2020 Poverty Rates

■ Decatur ■ Macon Co.

Poverty
- Decatur: 19.4%
- Macon Co.: 15.2%

White
- Decatur: 13.8%
- Macon Co.: 11.0%

Black/African
- Decatur: 33.2%
- Macon Co.: 32.5%

Hispanic/Latino
- Decatur: 27.5%
- Macon Co.: 22.3%

(0% — 10% — 20% — 30% — 40%)

U.S. Poverty Rate **11.4%**

Decatur Child Poverty:
30.0%

Macon Co. Child Poverty:
22.8%

U.S. Child Poverty Rate **16.1%**

2020 House Hold Median Income

2.2 = Avg. HH Size

Decatur
$42,701

- White: $47,854
- Black: $25,250
- Latino: $42,143

2.3= Avg. HH Size

Macon Co
$50,480

- White: $55,031
- Black: $25,846
- Latino: $50,200

Map 1: Median Income, White Households

Map 1: Median Income, White Households — **Median Household Income: White, Non-Hispanic Householder**

Legend:
- < $15,000
- $15,000 to $20,000
- $20,000 to $25,000
- $25,000 to $30,000
- $30,000 to $35,000
- $35,000 to $40,000
- $40,000 to $45,000
- $45,000 to $50,000
- $50,000 to $75,000
- $75,000 to $100,000
- > $100,000

Source: US Census American Community Survey (2020), retrieved via Social Explorer

Median Household Income — Black Householder
Source: US Census American Community Survey (2020), retrieved via Social Explorer

Figure 5: MIT Living Wage Scale for Decatur MSA

MIT Living Wage Scale for Decatur MSA

HOURLY

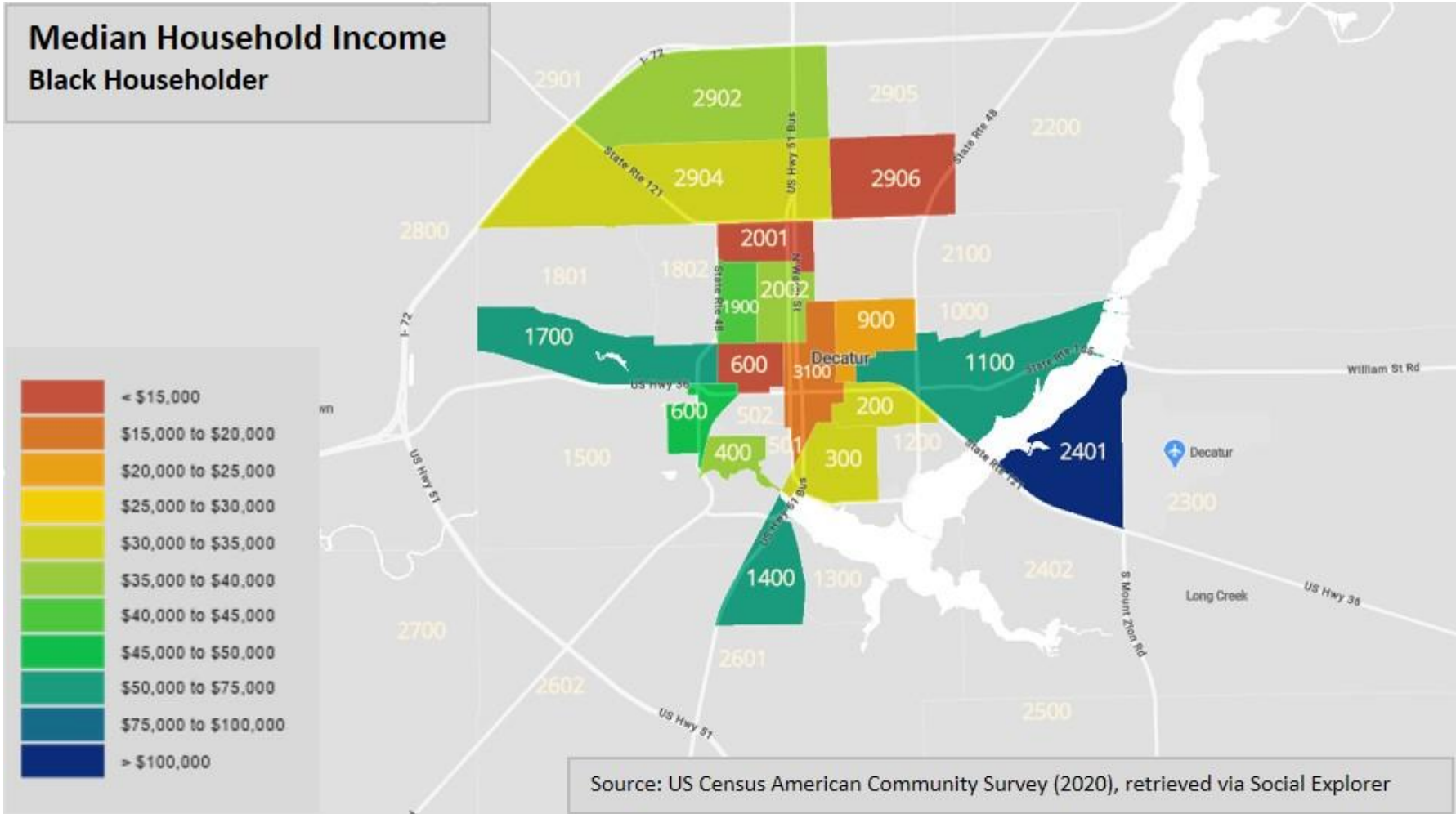|	One Adult				Two Adults (1 working)				Two Adults (both working)			
	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
Living Wage	$14.23	$28.80	$36.15	$47.92	$22.78	$27.57	$32.81	$35.49	$11.05	$15.96	$20.76	$24.29
Poverty Wage	$6.19	$8.38	$10.56	$12.74	$8.38	$10.56	$12.74	$14.92	$4.19	$5.28	$6.37	$7.46
Minimum Wage	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00

ANNUALLY

	One Adult				Two Adults (1 working)				Two Adults (both working)			
	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
Living Wage	$29,598	$59,904	$75,192	$99,674	$47,382	$57,346	$68,245	$73,819	$22,984	$33,197	$43,181	$50,523
Poverty Wage	$12,875	$17,430	$21,965	$26,499	$17,430	$21,965	$26,499	$31,034	$8,715	$10,982	$13,250	$15,517
Minimum Wage	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960	$24,960

Figure 5 highlights both the hourly wage and annual income breakdown in the region based on living wage, poverty wage, and minimum wage calculations. This tool was developed by an MIT initiative to help communities and employers determine a local wage rate that allows residents to meet minimum standards of living based on household composition.
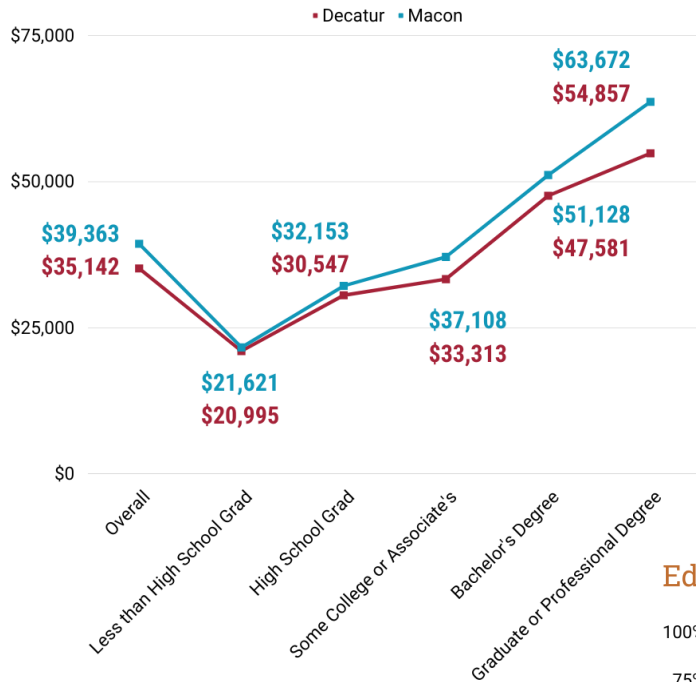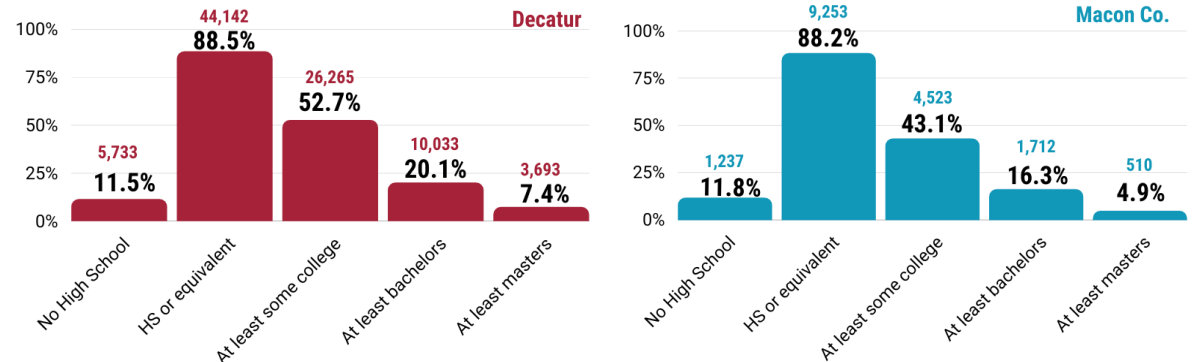
Annual Wages by Education Level

Legend: ■ Decatur ■ Macon

- Overall: $39,363 / $35,142
- Less than High School Grad: $21,621 / $20,995
- High School Grad: $32,153 / $30,547
- Some College or Associate's: $37,108 / $33,313
- Bachelor's Degree: $51,128 / $47,581
- Graduate or Professional Degree: $63,672 / $54,857

Figure 6: 2020 Annual Wages by Education
Figure 7: Education Levels for Age 25+

Education & Earnings

Figure 6, shows the median earnings as well as the increase in earnings based on education level for year 2020. In both Decatur and Macon County, there is a positive correlation between educational attainment and increased earnings, with the two largest percentage jumps occurring with achieving a high school diploma or equivalent ($9,552 or 45% increase in Decatur and a $10,532 or 49% increase in Macon County) and receiving a Bachelor's degree ($14,268 or 43% increase in Decatur and a $14,020 or 38% increase in Macon County).

When looking at education in the region, roughly 90% of the population has a high school diploma or equivalent. In Decatur, 52.7% of residents have completed some college while 20.1% have earned a Bachelor's degree. In Macon County, 43.1% of residents have completed some college while 16.3% have earned a Bachelor's degree. See Figure 7.

Education Levels, Population Age 25+

Decatur

- No High School: 5,733 / 11.5%
- HS or equivalent: 44,142 / 88.5%
- At least some college: 26,265 / 52.7%
- At least bachelors: 10,033 / 20.1%
- At least masters: 3,693 / 7.4%

Macon Co.

- No High School: 1,237 / 11.8%
- HS or equivalent: 9,253 / 88.2%
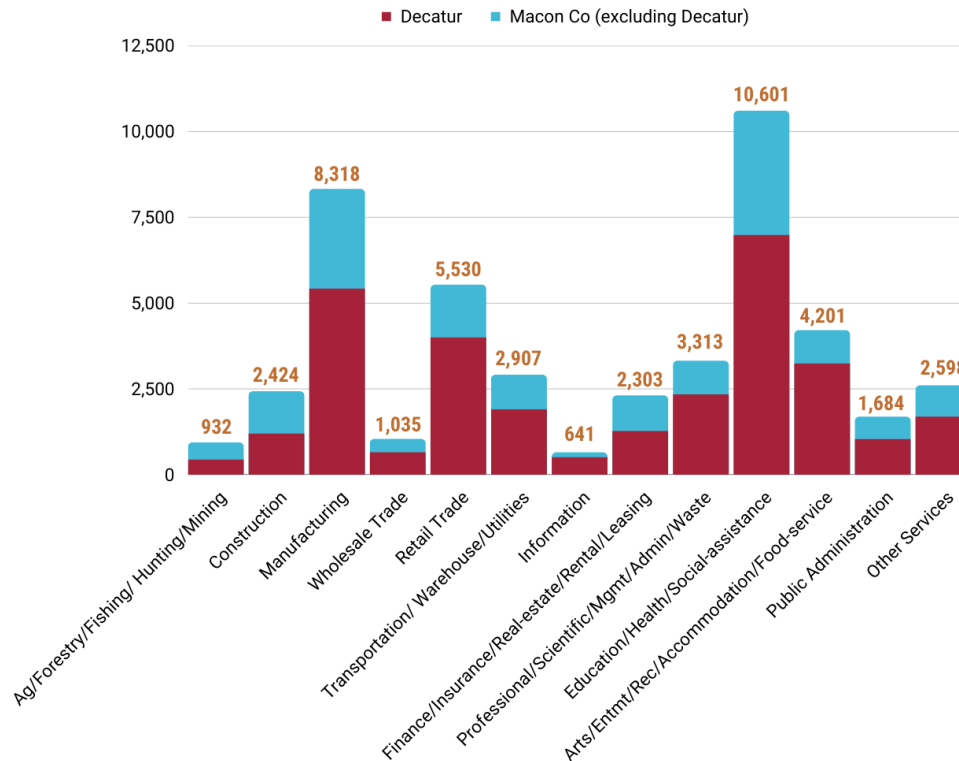- At least some college: 4,523 / 43.1%
- At least bachelors: 1,712 / 16.3%
- At least masters: 510 / 4.9%

Employment & Industry Sectors

As depicted in Figure 8, the Education/Health/Social-Assistance industry makes up the largest share of employment in Macon County with 10,601 jobs or 22.8% of all jobs. The City of Decatur houses 66% or 6,979 of these jobs, while 3,622 are located outside Decatur in Macon County. The next highest employment industry is Manufacturing with 8,319 jobs or 17.9% of all jobs in Macon County, attesting the region's rich history of processing and manufacturing. Again, 65% or 5,420 of these jobs are located in the City of Decatur with the remaining 2,898 jobs located in Macon County.

Employment Industries, 2020

Legend: ■ Decatur ■ Macon Co (excluding Decatur)

Values shown: 932, 2,424, 8,318, 1,035, 5,530, 2,907, 641, 2,303, 3,313, 10,601, 4,201, 1,684, 2,598

Categories: Ag/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining, Construction, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Transportation/Warehouse/Utilities, Information, Finance/Insurance/Real-estate/Rental/Leasing, Professional/Scientific/Mgmt/Admin/Waste, Education/Health/Social-assistance, Arts/Entmt/Rec/Accommodation/Food-service, Public Administration, Other Services

Employment Sectors, 2020

Decatur

Private Sector	22,820	74.5%
Public Sector	3,435	11.2%
Nonprofit	3,166	10.3%
Self-Employed	1,208	3.9%
Unpaid Family Workers	0	0.0%

All Macon Co.

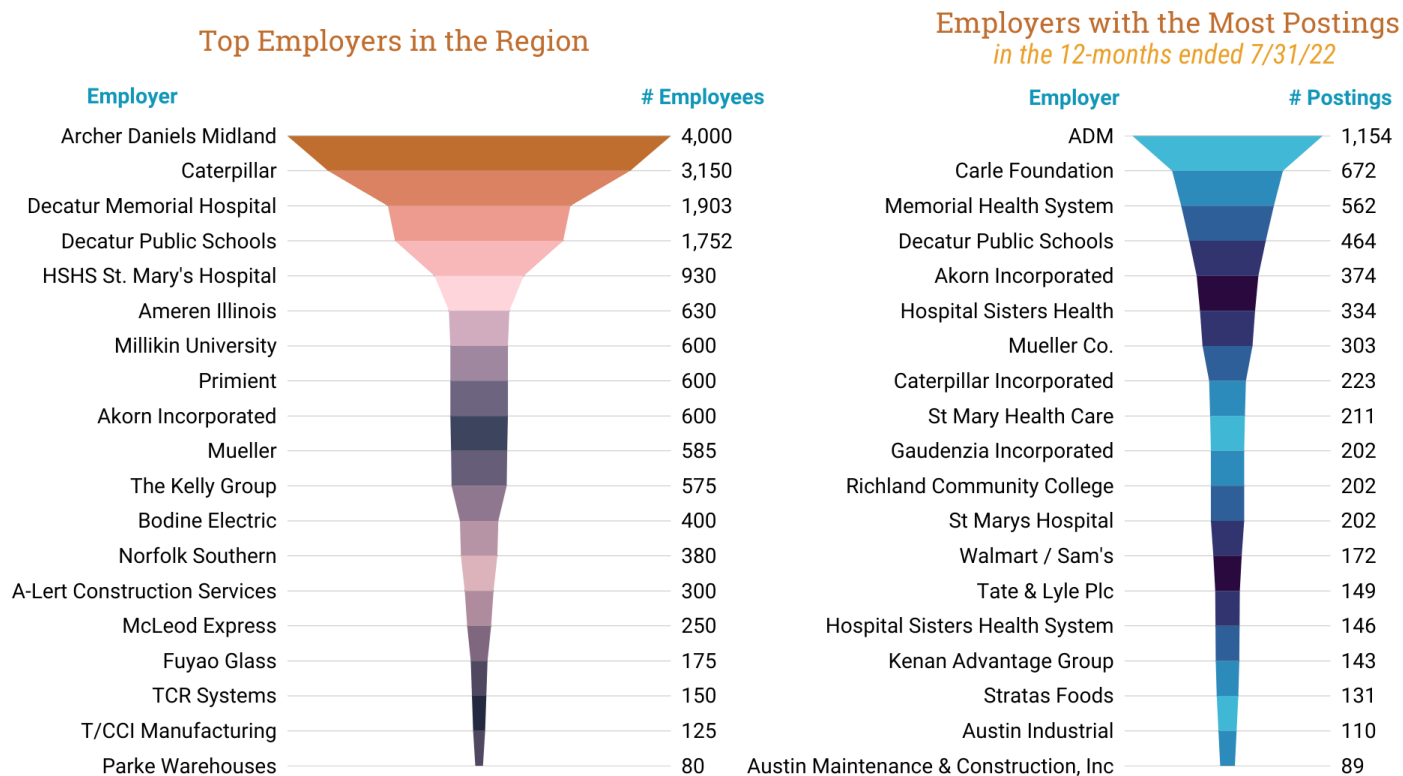|		
Private Sector	33,751	72.6%
Public Sector	5,307	11.4%
Nonprofit	4,606	9.9%
Self-Employed	2,809	6.0%
Unpaid Family Workers	14	0.0%

Figure 8: Employment by Industry Sectors, 2020

Demand
A look at occupation and skills demand

Employment Demand

The top employers in the region are in the manufacturing industry with Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) employing nearly 4,000 people, followed closely by the Decatur Memorial Hospital, Decatur Public Schools, and HSHS St. Mary's Hospital. Employers with the most job postings within a 12-month period ending in July 2022[2] are again by ADM and the healthcare industry employers but also show employers who are not among the top job producers, indicating higher turnover rates at these businesses.

Figure 9: Top Employers in the Region and Employers with Most Job Postings in a 12-Month Period

Top Employers in the Region

Employer	# Employees
Archer Daniels Midland	4,000
Caterpillar	3,150
Decatur Memorial Hospital	1,903
Decatur Public Schools	1,752
HSHS St. Mary's Hospital	930
Ameren Illinois	630
Millikin University	600
Primient	600
Akorn Incorporated	600
Mueller	585
The Kelly Group	575
Bodine Electric	400
Norfolk Southern	380
A-Lert Construction Services	300
McLeod Express	250
Fuyao Glass	175
TCR Systems	150
T/CCI Manufacturing	125
Parke Warehouses	80

Employers with the Most Postings
in the 12-months ended 7/31/22

Employer	# Postings
ADM	1,154
Carle Foundation	672
Memorial Health System	562
Decatur Public Schools	464
Akorn Incorporated	374
Hospital Sisters Health	334
Mueller Co.	303
Caterpillar Incorporated	223
St Mary Health Care	211
Gaudenzia Incorporated	202
Richland Community College	202
St Marys Hospital	202
Walmart / Sam's	172
Tate & Lyle Plc	149
Hospital Sisters Health System	146
Kenan Advantage Group	143
Stratas Foods	131
Austin Industrial	110
Austin Maintenance & Construction, Inc	89

[2] *Sources: Burning Glass; Macon County Economic Development Corporation*

Skills Demanded in the Region

Skill Cluster	No. Occupations Wanting the Skill	Posting Demand	Posting Demand Benchmark	Projected Growth (2021-2026)	Avg. Salary	No. Employers	Time to Fill (days)
Scheduling	30	1,954	Very High	4%	$43,000	267	32
Microsoft Office and Productivity Tools	29	1,904	Very High	6%	$46,000	296	29
People Management	27	954	Very High	5%	$55,000	176	31
Quality Assurance and Control	23	850	High	4%	$49,000	98	30
Operations Management	23	296	Average	2%	$58,000	64	37
Budget Management	21	815	High	5%	$64,000	170	37
Basic Patient Care	21	2,103	Very High	7%	$63,000	98	31
Training Programs	20	343	Average	5%	$60,000	68	38
Advanced Patient Care	20	851	High	6%	$63,000	97	36
Employee Training	20	566	High	52%	$50,000	111	27
Procurement	19	568	High	1%	$61,000	90	33
Emergency and Intensive Care	19	1,395	Very High	4%	$66,000	117	33
Business Process and Analysis	18	726	High	3%	$68,000	108	33
Project Management	18	711	High	5%	$78,000	88	27
Public Health and Disease Prevention	16	259	Average	5%	$43,000	49	36
Social Media	16	359	Average	28%	$53,000	53	33
Basic Living Activities Support	16	858	High	48%	$60,000	77	50
Process Improvement	16	307	Average	4%	$65,000	57	33
Medical Support	16	1,112	Very High	11%	$47,000	98	37
General Accounting	15	455	Average	3%	$55,000	92	33
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	15	283	Average	18%	$46,000	85	34
Teaching	14	704	High	5%	$50,000	75	58

Figure 10: Regional Skills Demand

To understand skill demand in the region for living wage jobs, data was gathered for the following criteria:

1) time to fill a position based on the skill, 2) skills with a posting demand of 50 or more, 3) projected growth in the skill is neutral or growing, and, 4) skills with a salary of $40,000 or more.

Skills highlighted in green represent highest project growth at 18% or above, while skills highlighted in orange indicate high posting demand above at or 950.

Labor Shortages in the Region

In order to determine an estimated labor shortage by occupation for living wage jobs in the region, the following criteria was used:

- Number of postings greater than 15
- Salary greater than $40k
- Projected growth rate -5% or higher

Based on that criteria, 32 occupations were selected from the overall pool of postings sourced from Burning Glass data. It is noted that some occupations experiencing a shortage may have the same title but different degree requirements.

When looking at labor shortages in the region, a majority of occupations that fit the above criteria require a Bachelor's degree or above. The occupations that have high growth potential that require an Associate's degree are Teacher Assistant, Registered Nurse, Maintenance/Service Supervisor, and Radiological Technician: four of the 32 listed occupations. Occupations that have a high growth potential that require less than an Associate's degree are Teacher Assistant, Surgical Technician, Production Supervisor, Construction Foreman, Recruiter, Maintenance/Service Supervisor, Electrical and Electronics Technician, and Coating/Industrial Painter: eight of the listed 32 occupations. In total, 20 of the listed occupations require a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Occupation	Degree Level	Postings	Employment (2020)	Proj. Growth (2020-2030)	Salary
Coating / Industrial Painter	High School	18	N/A	N/A	$42,000
Electrical and Electronics Technician	High School	20	0	N/A	$51,000
Recruiter	High School	21	68	4.41%	$45,000
Construction Foreman	High School	23	309	49.19%	$58,000
Production Supervisor	High School	26	626	-2.88%	$52,000
Maintenance / Service Supervisor	High School	32	120	2.50%	$54,000
Surgical Technician / Technologist	High School	32	1	0.00%	$40,000
Teacher Assistant	High School	49	380	8.16%	$43,000
Maintenance / Service Supervisor	Assoc degree	15	120	2.50%	$54,000
Teacher Assistant	Assoc degree	31	380	8.16%	$43,000
Radiologic Technician / Technologist	Assoc degree	43	83	-1.20%	$49,000
Registered Nurse	Assoc degree	529	836	-3.35%	$71,000
Marketing Manager	Bachelor's degree	15	24	-4.17%	$69,000
Data / Data Mining Analyst	Bachelor's degree	16	N/A	N/A	$74,000
IT Project Manager	Bachelor's degree	18	N/A	N/A	$84,000
Product Manager	Bachelor's degree	20	13	15.38%	$77,000
Marketing Specialist	Bachelor's degree	21	58	10.34%	$63,000
Middle / High School Teacher	Bachelor's degree	27	125	7.20%	$46,000
Network Engineer / Architect	Bachelor's degree	35	0	0.00%	$86,000
Recruiter	Bachelor's degree	39	68	4.41%	$45,000
Coach	Bachelor's degree	40	40	10.00%	$47,000
Medical Scientist	Bachelor's degree	40	N/A	N/A	$54,000
Family / School / General Social Worker	Bachelor's degree	43	190	19.47%	$51,000
Software Developer / Engineer	Bachelor's degree	46	0	0.00%	$79,000
Chemist	Bachelor's degree	47	N/A	N/A	$54,000
Elementary School Teacher	Bachelor's degree	49	455	-1.98%	$48,000
Operations Manager / Supervisor	Bachelor's degree	52	351	3.70%	$57,000
Supply Chain / Logistics Manager	Bachelor's degree	60	16	6.25%	$67,000
Intensive / Critical Care Nurse	Bachelor's degree	92	146	15.75%	$85,000
Registered Nurse	Bachelor's degree	604	836	-3.35%	$71,000
Clinical Nurse Educator	Master's degree	21	1	0.00%	$79,000
Nurse Practitioner	Master's degree	83	0	0.00%	$100,000

Occupations that have the highest rates of job postings are the following occupations: Registered Nurse (Bachelor's and Associate's degree levels), Intensive/Critical Care Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, and Supply Chain/Logistics Manager. These occupations are in line with the top employment industries in the region: Healthcare and Manufacturing.

Figure 11: Regional Snapshot of Labor Shortage by Occupations with Living Wages

Labor Shortage by Occupation

Registered Nurse
Salary: **$71,000**
Postings:
604 - Bach. Degree
529 - Assoc. Degree
2020 Employment: **832**
Projected Growth: **-3%**

Supply Chain Manager
Salary: **$67,000**
Postings:
60 - Bach. Degree
2020 Employment: **16**
Projected Growth: **6%**

Operations Manager
Salary: **$57,000**
Postings:
52 - Bach. Degree
2020 Employment: **351**
Projected Growth: **4%**

Software Developer
Salary: **$79,000**
Postings:
46 - Bach. Degree
2020 Employment: **0**
Projected Growth: **0%**

Social Worker
Salary: **$51,000**
Postings:
43 - Bach. Degree
2020 Employment: **190**
Projected Growth: **19%**

Maintenance Supervisor
Salary: **$54,000**
Postings:
32 - High School
2020 Employment: **120**
Projected Growth: **3%**

Critical Care Nurse
Salary: **$85,000**
Postings:
92 - Bach. Degree
2020 Employment: **146**
Projected Growth: **16%**

Teacher Assistant
Salary: **$43,000**
Postings:
49 - High School
2020 Employment: **380**
Projected Growth: **8%**

Labor Force Supply & Demand, 2022 Estimates

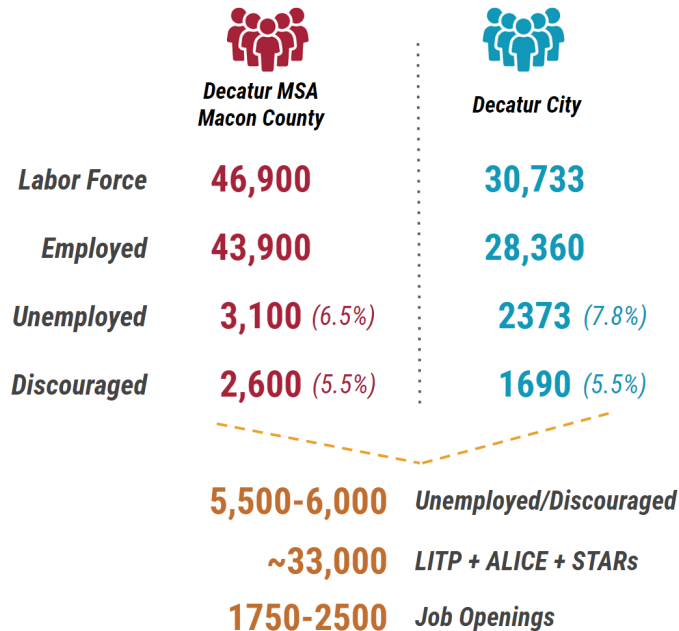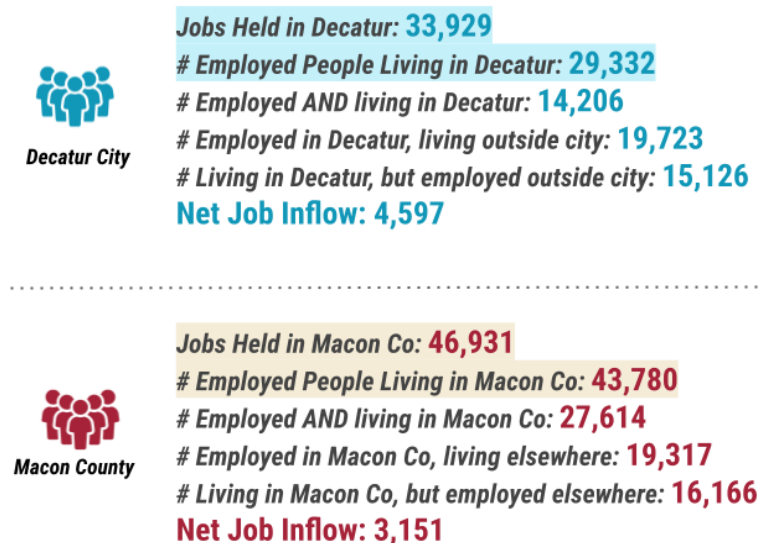*Figure 12: Labor Force Supply Analysis by Place*

	Decatur MSA Macon County	Decatur City
Labor Force	**46,900**	**30,733**
Employed	**43,900**	**28,360**
Unemployed	**3,100** *(6.5%)*	**2373** *(7.8%)*
Discouraged	**2,600** *(5.5%)*	**1690** *(5.5%)*

5,500-6,000	*Unemployed/Discouraged*
~33,000	*LITP + ALICE + STARs*
1750-2500	*Job Openings*

Figure 13: 2019 Inflow & Outflow Data by Place

Decatur City

Jobs Held in Decatur: **33,929**
 # Employed People Living in Decatur: **29,332**
 # Employed AND living in Decatur: **14,206**
 # Employed in Decatur, living outside city: **19,723**
 # Living in Decatur, but employed outside city: **15,126**
Net Job Inflow: 4,597

Macon County

Jobs Held in Macon Co: **46,931**
 # Employed People Living in Macon Co: **43,780**
 # Employed AND living in Macon Co: **27,614**
 # Employed in Macon Co, living elsewhere: **19,317**
 # Living in Macon Co, but employed elsewhere: **16,166**
Net Job Inflow: 3,151

The labor force analysis depicted in Figure 12 highlights the estimated number of discouraged workers, or those who are unemployed, but have stopped actively looking for work. Using available 2019 data, Figure 13 indicates that of the 33,929 jobs held in Decatur, only 14,206 of those jobs are held by residents of Decatur, while 19,723 are held by workers who live outside the city. Macon County houses 46, 931 jobs with the majority, or 27,614 jobs, held by residents in the county while 19,317 are workers who live elsewhere. Figure 14 on the following page highlights components of these workers in further detail.

Figure 14: Labor Force Supply & Demand by Location with Worker Age, Wages, and Industry

Decatur City

Jobs Held in Decatur: 33,929

#Residents Working Outside Decatur: 15,126

Workers Employed in Decatur	Decatur Jobs Filled By:			Residents Working Outside Decatur
	Residents	Outside Workers	% Residents	
Aged 29 or younger	3,122	4,385	41.6%	3,695
Aged 30 to 54	6,987	10,384	40.2%	7,965
Aged 55 or older	4,097	4,954	45.3%	3,466
Earning $1,250 per month or less	4,026	4,415	47.7%	3,700
Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	4,925	5,749	46.1%	4,923
Earning More than $3,333 per month	5,255	9,559	35.5%	6,503
"Goods Producing" Industry Class	2,693	4,181	39.2%	3,907
"Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	2,123	4,832	30.5%	3,284
"All Other Services" Industry Class	9,390	10,710	46.7%	7,935

Macon County

Jobs Held in Macon Co: 46,931

#Residents Working Outside Macon County: 16,166

Workers Employed in Macon County	Macon Co Jobs Filled By:			Residents Working Outside Macon Co
	Residents	Outside Workers	% Residents	
Aged 29 or younger	5,502	4,607	62.9%	4,130
Aged 30 to 54	14,411	10,140	62.0%	8,343
Aged 55 or older	7,701	4,570	54.9%	3,693
Earning $1,250 per month or less	6,796	4,006	54.4%	4,254
Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	8,498	5,205	58.7%	5,388
Earning More than $3,333 per month	12,320	10,106	62.8%	6,524
"Goods Producing" Industry Class	7,544	5,672	57.1%	2,446
"Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	3,808	5,738	39.9%	4,227
"All Other Services" Industry Class	16,262	7,907	67.3%	9,493

Based on 2019 Census Data from On The Map for All Jobs (one worker could hold two jobs)

Occupational Skill Cluster Demand in the Region

In order to clearly define successful career pathways, it is important to recognize the relevant skills that correlate with specific occupations and the ways in which those skills can be applied across occupations. As an example, two of the top requested skill clusters in the region are listed below. These skills are required in a high range of occupations, indicating training opportunities with potential for high return on investment. Defining a clear bridge between skills-adjacent occupations will enable participants in the workforce system to retool their skills toward higher earning occupations.

Scheduling

- Registered / Practical Nursing
- Truck and Bus Drivers
- Operations Managers
- Sports (Education & Training)
- Office and Building Administration
- Property and Facilities Managers
- Energy and Sustainability Specialists
- Client Support and Sales
- Youth and Career Counseling
- Recreation and Gaming

- Healthcare Administrative Support
- Marketing Specialists
- Network and Systems Support
- Construction Managers
- Dental Assistants and Hygienists
- Vehicle Mechanics and Technicians
- Healthcare Patient Support
- Production Technicians and Assistants
- Food Service Managers
- Security

- Merchandising
- Housekeeping and Cleaning
- Administrative Assistants
- Laborers and Warehouse Workers
- Maintenance and Repair
- Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians
- Non-Technical Sales
- Customer Service Representatives
- Retail Managers
- Retail Sales and Service

People Management

- Registered / Practical Nursing
- Operations Managers
- Sports (Education & Training)
- Office and Building Administration
- Occupational Safety and Compliance
- Property and Facilities Managers
- Client Support and Sales
- Teaching Support and Enrichment
- Youth and Career Counseling

- Recreation and Gaming
- Healthcare Administrative Support
- Marketing Specialists
- Network and Systems Support
- Construction Managers
- Vehicle Mechanics and Technicians
- Healthcare Patient Support
- Production Technicians and Assistants
- Food Service Managers

- Security
- Merchandising
- Housekeeping and Cleaning
- Administrative Assistants
- Laborers and Warehouse Workers
- Maintenance and Repair
- Customer Service Representatives
- Retail Managers
- Retail Sales and Services

Opportunities

Where is there room to grow & shift?

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS: LOW-INCOME, ALICE, AND STARS CENSUS TRACTS

Through research, data, and interviews, three population groups were identified as key target populations regarding the workforce development ecosystem: low-income households, Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs) individuals, and Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) households. Low-income households were households defined as having a median household income below $33,200 (the living wage for a family with 2 working adults and 1 child). STARs are defined as individuals at least 25 years old, currently active in the workforce that have a high school diploma but do not have a bachelor's degree[3]. ALICE households are defined as families with limited resources that inhibit them from affording the basics of housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology[4]. These three populations lie at key turning points in the workforce ecosystem and represent strategic intervention points to promote financial, economic, and social growth.

Low-Income Target Populations

With income being a significant factor in terms of livability and placement in the workforce development system in the region, the following table below maps the 11 census tracts in the region with the lowest income. The data also took into account race and education level to further analyze the in the region. Low-income census tracts can be identified based on median household income and personal income per capita, relative to a particular living wage cut-point. In general, low-income tracts are likely to be non-white, less educated, have younger workers, and have less access to vehicles.

ALICE Populations

There are 9 tracts with more than 300 ALICE households (see the ALICE Map tab for a visual). Some of these overlap with the low-income tracts we've noted in earlier analysis, but there are also some uniquely ALICE tracts as well. We estimate roughly 7,600 ALICE households in Macon County, which is approximately 17% of all households (roughly on par with the 20% rate we expected).

STARs Populations

For the STARs census tracts, we calculate the number of individuals over 25 years old with a high school education but no bachelor's degree. We multiply that number by the % Civilian Employed Rate (column I) as a percent of the total population (this is for ages 16+, but it should be a reasonable approximation). There are 9 tracts in Macon County estimated to have more than 1,000 STARs (see the STARs Map tab for a visual). These tracts tend to be outside of the city center. We estimated just over 26,000 STARs for Macon County (a bit more than half of the labor force, which is a similar percentage cited by the STARs report for the nation overall).

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[3] https://opportunityatwork.org/stars/
[4] https://www.unitedforalice.org/overview

Tract	City/County	LITP	ALICE	STARs
200	Decatur only	X	X	
300	Decatur only	X	X	
400	Decatur only	X		
501	Decatur only	X		
600	Decatur only	X		
900	Decatur only	X		
1100	Decatur only		X	X
1802	Decatur only		X	
2001	Decatur only	X		
2002	Decatur only	X	X	
2100	Decatur only	X		
2200	Mostly County		X	X
2402	Mostly Decatur			X
2500	County only		X	X
2601	Mostly Decatur			X
2800	County only			X
2902	Mostly Decatur		X	X
2904	Mostly Decatur			X
2906	Decatur only	X	X	
3000	County only			X
3100	Decatur only	X		

High Impact / High Return Target Populations

A selection of 21 Census tracts were chosen based on three main criteria for targeted workforce development programs and outreach:

Low Income Targe Population

These census tracts have the lowest median incomes in the county.

ALICE

ALICE is an acronym for **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**, and represents the growing number of families who are unable to afford the basics of housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology. These workers often struggle to keep their own households from financial ruin, while keeping our local communities running. Households of color are disproportionately ALICE.

STARs

STARs are defined as individuals at least 25 years old, currently active in the workforce, and having a high school diploma, but not having a bachelor's degree. STARs are talented individuals **Skilled Through Alternative Routes**, rather than a bachelor's degree.

Figure 15: Map of Target Census Tracts by Category
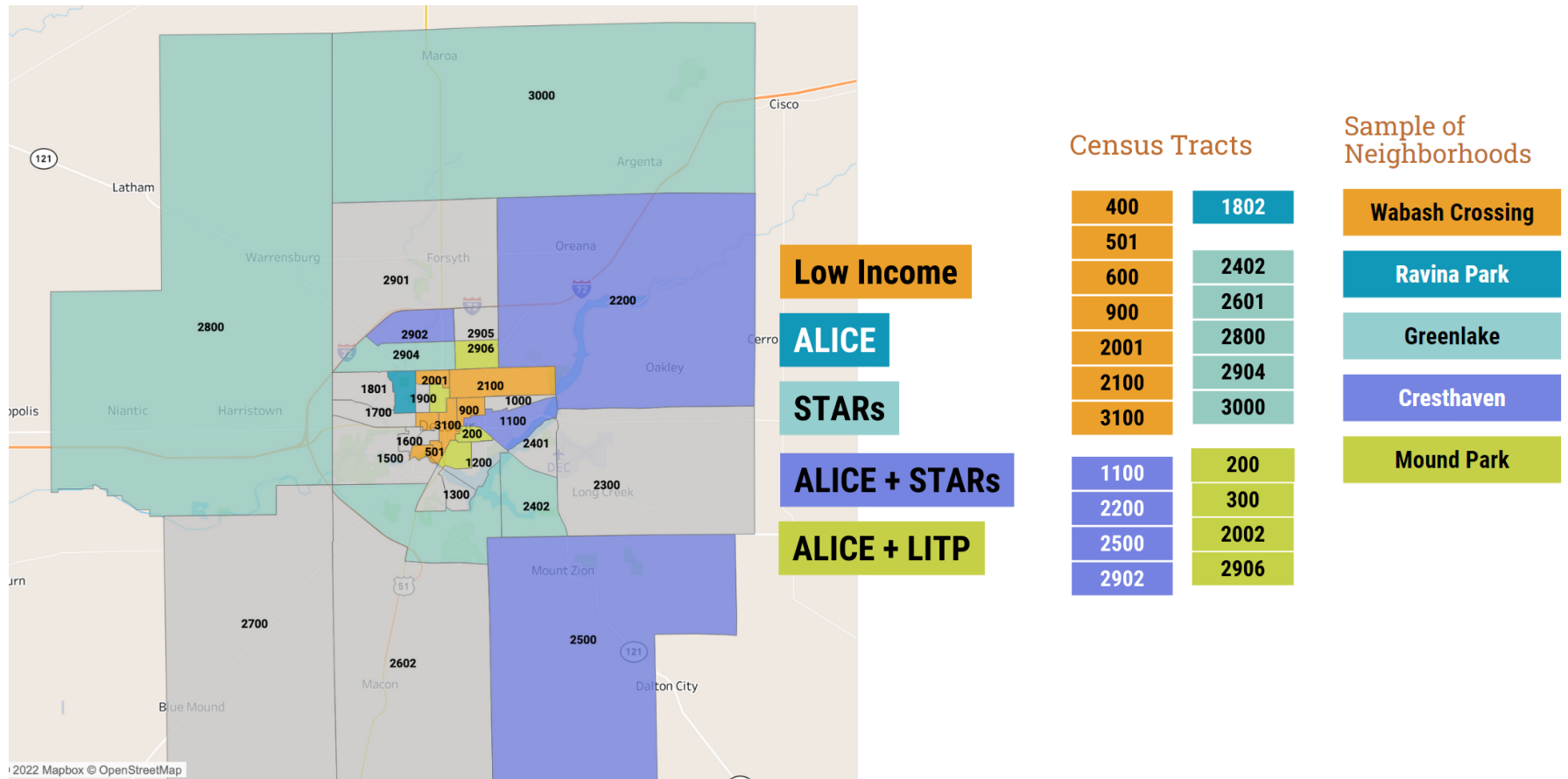
Demographics of Low-Income, ALICE, and STARs Census Tracts

Population

Within the target tracts, nearly all experienced population decline between 2010 and 2020. The three tracts that showed a population increase are 2402, 2500, and 2902, all of which are designated as ALICE and STARs census tracts. No LITP tracts experienced growth with an overall population decline of 14.4% across all LITP tracts. The largest decline by percent was tract 3100 in Downtown Decatur with a loss of 31.2% or 790 residents.

Population by Race

In the three designated population groups, race varies across the three. In the low-income tracts, a majority of residents are Black. In ALICE and STARs tracts, a majority of residents are White.

Population by Age

In the low-income, ALICE, and STARs tracts, a majority of residents fall within the working age of 18-64 years of age. Roughly 60% of Low-Income census tract residents are between the age of 18-64 years old. Roughly 55% of ALICE and STARs tracts are between the ages of 18-64 years old.

Figure 16: Population Data for Target Census Tracts by Category

Population Change, Count

LITP — ALICE — STARs

	2010	2020
STARs	43,388	42,002
ALICE	35,775	33,761
LITP	24,111	20,645
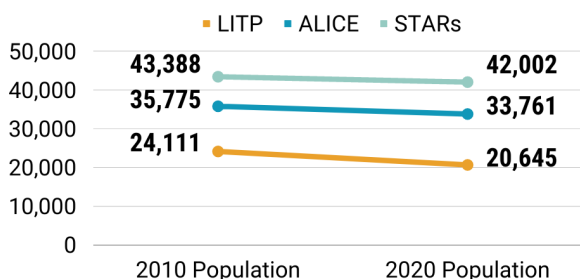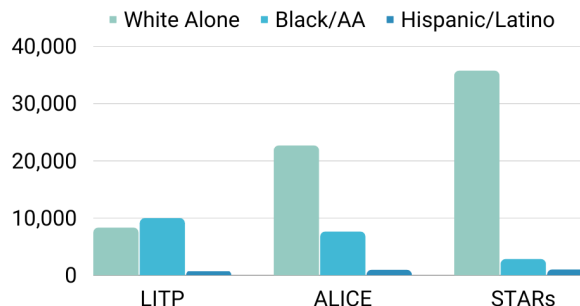
Population Change, Percent

LITP — ALICE — STARs

LITP: -14.4%
ALICE: -5.63%
STARs: -3.20%

% Change

Population by Race

White Alone — Black/AA — Hispanic/Latino

(LITP, ALICE, STARs)

Population by Age

LITP — ALICE — STARs

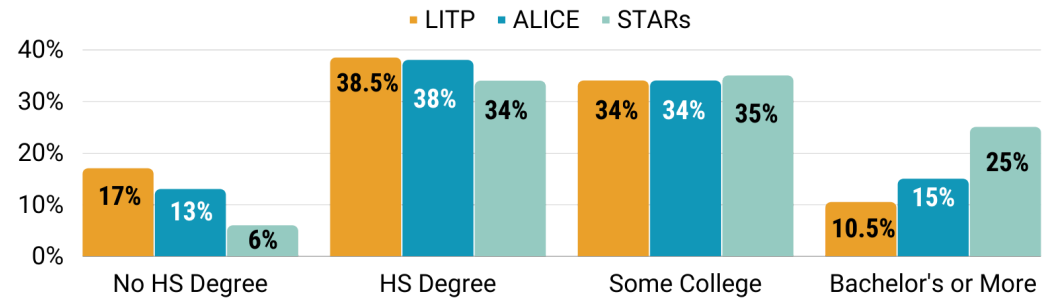(Age groups: 15-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74)
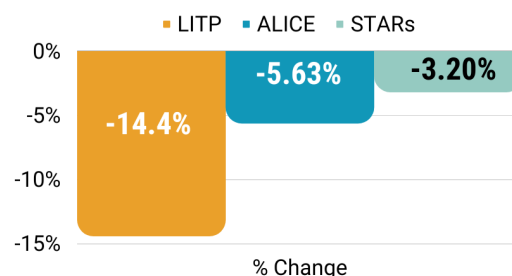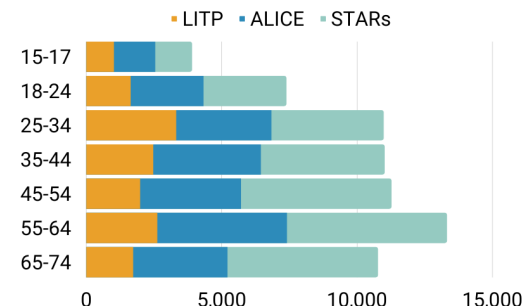
Educational Attainment

Education attainment in the three population groups varies. When looking at the percentage of those with a Bachelor's degree, in the low-income tracts, just over 10% have attained the degree. In ALICE tracts, just over 15% have acquired a Bachelor's degree. Finally in STARs tracts, roughly 25% have acquired a Bachelor's degree. When examining the percentage of those who have experienced some form of college or specialized training, the number increases but still shows room for additional support and growth. In low-income tracts, 44% have experienced some form of college. In the ALICE tracts, nearly 50% have experienced some form of college education or specialized training. In the STARs tracts, nearly 60% have experienced some form of specialized training.

Household Income

Household income also varies between the three population groups. In the low-income tracts, 75% of households have a household income of less than $50,000. In the ALICE tracts, over 50% of households have a household income of less than $50,000. In the STARs tracts, just over one third of households have a household income of less than $50,000.

Figure 17: Education Attainment & Wages by Target Tracts

Median Household Income
by Range, by Target Tracts

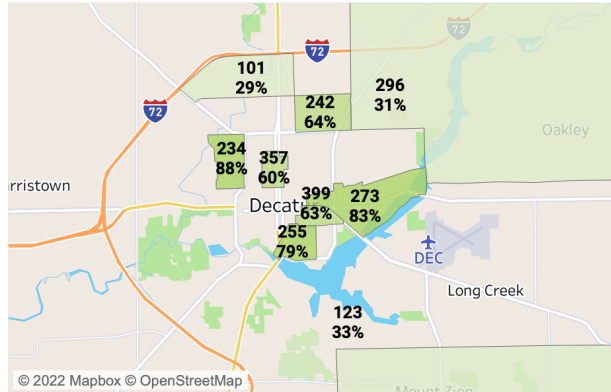|	Low Income Tracts	ALICE Tracts	STARs Tracts
Total Households:	8,868	14,023	17,845
Est. Qualifying Households	6,473	3,463	11,873
Median HH Income	$26,814	$47,613	$66,648
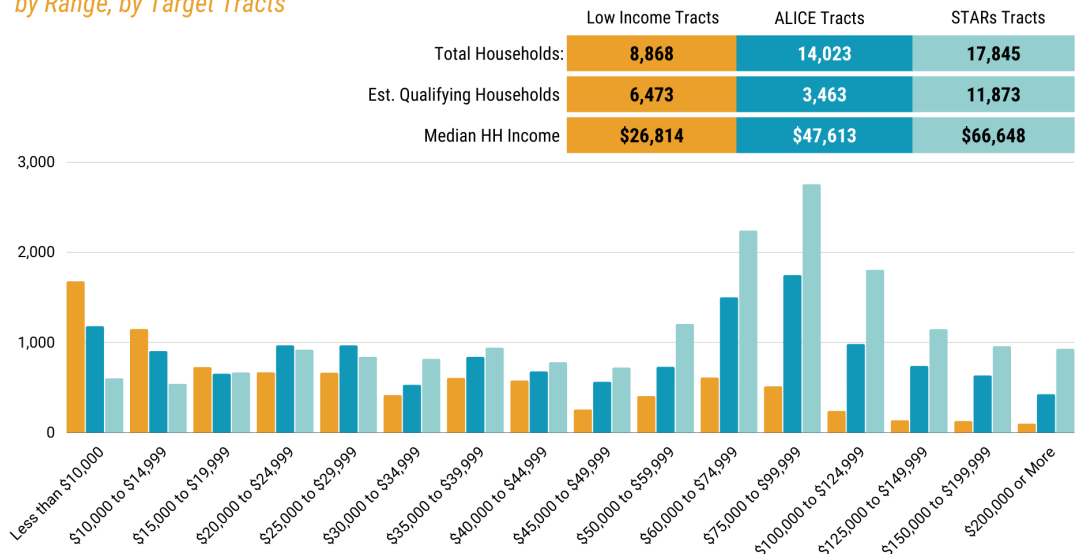
Childcare Indicators

Figure 18 explores the overlap between populations over age 25 without a high school degree and single-parent households with children under the age of eighteen. The figure also displays counts of households by target census tracts with children under eighteen by age and by parent status.

Nearly every census tract in the Low Income group has a single-parent household rate at 50% or above, some reaching as high as 99%. For ALICE designated census tracts, we see some lower percentage numbers at 29% and even lower at 16% with STARs tracts.

Overall, more than 6,900 family households in the target census groups have children under age 18 and 3,222 of those are single-parent households. Overall, more than 12,000 children under age 14 live in these tracts. This indicates a need for childcare support for equitable education, training and career access.

Figure 18: Population with No HS Degree and Single-Parent Households with Children Under 18

Employment by Occupation & Industry Sectors

In the three designated target population groups, employment by occupation groups and industry sectors is similar across all tracts. In alignment with the top regional employers, individuals in these tracts find a majority of their employment in the Healthcare and Manufacturing sectors.

Figure 18: Target Census Group Employment by Occupation & Industry Sectors

The third highest sector varies per group. In the low-income population group, the third highest employment concentration is in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services occupation group. In the ALICE and STARs tracts, Retail Trade is the third highest occupation and industry sector.

Figure 19: Target Census Group Employment by Occupation & Industry Sectors
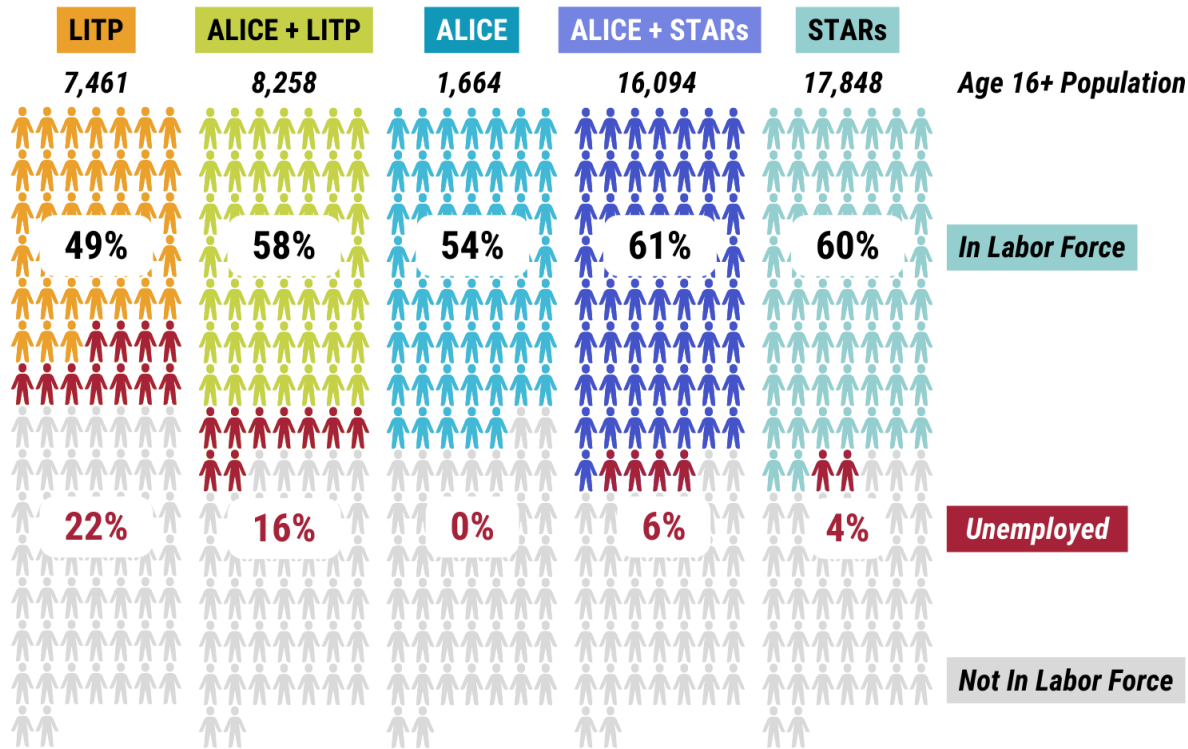
Unemployment

Employment status varies across the target census tract groups for the population ages 16 and above. In the low-income census tracts, roughly 22% of workers in the labor force are experiencing unemployment. The number drops to 16% for those tracts that are designated both low income and ALICE qualified, while the numbers fall significantly in the remaining tracts with ALICE at 0%, ALICE and STARs qualified tracts at 6%, and STARs only qualified tracts at 4% unemployment. Figure 20 demonstrates this breakdown, revealing that lower income tracts tend to have less of the working age population as active participants in the workforce.

Age 16+ Labor Force Employment by Target Census Groups

LITP	ALICE + LITP	ALICE	ALICE + STARs	STARs	
7,461	8,258	1,664	16,094	17,848	Age 16+ Population
49%	58%	54%	61%	60%	In Labor Force
22%	16%	0%	6%	4%	Unemployed
					Not In Labor Force

Key Findings
Workforce Development System Assessment

KEY FINDINGS

The Workforce Development System Assessment can be summarized in a few key points:

→ The assessment and gap analysis finds that workforce development initiatives throughout the City of Decatur and Macon County tend to be unintentionally disconnected.

→ There are several productive workforce development initiatives that operate in the region without a collective community-wide strategy or equity plan.

→ Training and workforce development programs struggle to develop pragmatic and sustained efforts to engage effectively within low/moderate income and minority communities.

→ Large segments of the population are disconnected from career pathway knowledge and access to opportunities to advance their skills, experience and earnings.

→ There is a large and growing population of youth and young adults who are disillusioned and disconnected from regional workforce development initiatives, jobs and career paths that provide a living wage.

→ Job placement is seldom followed by retention and advancement support.

"We Have a Lot of Good People Doing a Lot of Good Things."

Heard repeatedly in interviews & conversations

"We Need to be better Connected."

➔ There is no common or shared service in place to collect and analyze data regarding labor market supply and demand.

➔ There is an absence of structured and sustained career literacy initiatives that highlight family sustaining occupations in multiple industry sectors.

➔ Education and training initiatives are centralized in a few institutional locations.

➔ Socio-economic barriers prevent many residents from accessing training and gaining and sustaining employment:

- ◆ Lack of childcare
- ◆ Access to transportation
- ◆ Counseling for mental health and trauma
- ◆ Employment drug screening for legal substances
- ◆ Generational poverty
- ◆ Digital Divide

➔ Undertones and perceptions that exacerbate these barriers:

- ◆ "It's not our job to get people here"
- ◆ "I did it, why can't they"
- ◆ "The region is failing at equity"
- ◆ "Academic institutions tend to cater more to the rural and white populations"

Paradigm Shift
A New Approach to Workforce

Paradigm Shift

Adopt a Process-Driven Workforce Development System Model

To effectively address gaps and continuously improve performance, a process-driven workforce development system should be deployed and embraced as a "common operating model" by all active stakeholders and organizations operating in the workforce ecosystem. Establishing a shared process and flow of activities will result in sound and effective recruitment, training, employment, and retention programs.

This common operating model will:

1. Provide a shared language and vision for the workforce development systems operating architecture.

2. Outline and document methods and procedures to develop and match the skills and competencies of the individual to the specific needs of hiring employers.

3. Develop a pipeline of qualified candidates equipped and able to successfully navigate the multiple paths to jobs and careers.

4. Develop alternative, non-traditional points of entry to jobs and advancement along career paths.

5. Engage employers committed to hiring, placing, retaining, and advancing individuals along career pathways.

The process-driven system will serve as a platform to continuously identify key barriers to employment and enable the development of interventions to overcome these barriers.

PROCESS-DRIVEN SYSTEM

IDENTIFY → TARGET → ENGAGE → SCREEN → TEST → SUPPORT → TRAIN → PLACE → DEVELOP → ADVANCE

SUPPORT > > >

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

START

STAGE 1
IDENTIFY & TARGET
Career/Job Opportunities & Potential Labor Pool

STAGE 2 — ENGAGE
Outreach
Potential Candidates
Interested!

STAGE 3
SCREEN & TEST
Screening
↓
Assessment
↓
Interview
↓
Skills & Readiness Assessments
Career Literacy
Candidates

STAGE 4 — SUPPORT
Project Team Works With Candidate
Life Needs Planning
Referral to Service Providers
Career Planning
Industry-Specific Training/Employment-Ready

STAGE 5
TRAINING
Industry-Specific Training
Training Follow-Up
Refer to Other Providers

STAGE 6 — PLACEMENT
Employer 1
Employer 2
Employment Referral
Post-Employment Follow-Up
Accepted?
YES
NO
Follow-Up Interview
Employer 3
Employer 4

STAGE 7
DEVELOP & ADVANCE
Continued Training
Current Employer Career Ladder/Lattice
Other Employer Skilled Position

SUPPORT

This process-driven workforce development system model will identify and document improvement processes in three essential areas of operation: recruitment, training, and retention.

Recruitment elements involve three steps:

1. <u>Identification</u>: Segmenting the labor force by social, economic, geographic, and other characteristics.

2. <u>Targeting:</u> Selecting those groups most likely to be interested in pursuing career pathways.

3. <u>Engagement:</u> The set of activities that communicates a compelling training and/or employment offer, establishes contact, and concludes with an interested person entering a training program or a job/career path.

Training elements contain the following processes:

- <u>Assessment/Testing:</u> Ensures that individuals meet the minimum requirements necessary to learn new skills and participate in the labor market.

- <u>Training:</u> Imparting new knowledge and skills to those selected via screening and testing.

Retention elements involve three processes:

- <u>Placing:</u> Placing people in each job within a participating employer.

- <u>Retaining:</u> Keeping new workers on the job.

- <u>Advancement:</u> This step goes beyond activities focused on the individual—it encompasses designing an organizational environment that stimulates learning and rewards performance.

Deploy an Enhanced Workforce Ecosystem

The findings of this report clearly demonstrate that new models and systems are required to meet the challenges of sustainable career employment for City of Decatur and Macon County residents. The assessment has found that most training and education institutions serving residents offer programs that respond to general employer needs and high-demand occupations. These efforts however, are not reaching many residents 'where they are' or at the scale required to have meaningful impact.

Developing an enhanced, process-driven and shared practice approach to workforce development will address critical gaps and deficiencies. This approach will focus on:

1. Engaging youth and young adult residents to provide structured assessment and career planning to achieve individual learning and employment objectives.

2. Developing a pipeline of qualified candidates equipped to successfully navigate the multiple paths to jobs and life long career pathways.

3. Organizing a select network of employers committed to hiring, placing, retaining, and advancing individuals along career pathways.

4. Matching the abilities, skills, and competencies of the individual resident to the specific requirements of the occupation and employer.

This approach will include community and labor organizations working alongside workforce development agencies and training providers to ensure that unemployed and underemployed Decatur/Macon County residents acquire the knowledge, tools, skills, and support needed to find and advance along career paths associated with family-sustaining wages.

Opportunities for New Efficacy through Collaboration

The following list of issues, ideas and actions that have been culled from the regional workforce development assessment and best practice research. We are highlighting a list of "key findings" that should be considered, evaluated and/or implemented. The list is presented in no specific ranking or order. Each item is briefly presented to prompt discussion and exploration.

1. Work with training and education providers to develop remedial and work ready programs for disconnected youth. Programs should focus on those youths who are close to meeting the academic requirements necessary to be trained for middle-skill jobs. The program should be practical/applied in nature, delivering a "condensed" high school curriculum (math and reading) in one year or less.

2. Develop a set of specialized short-term skill based and certificate programs to prepare qualified candidates for placement in high-demand occupations in industry sectors that offer pathways to family-sustaining wages.

3. Develop a compelling offer to entice low/moderate income and minority residents to engage and participate in workforce development programs. The offer should include guided career pathway counseling, free training, earn and learn training opportunities and for those whose entrance test scores meet or exceed a predetermined threshold and should include a guarantee of employment to students for successful program completion.

4. Consider providing students in remediation or in specialized training with stipends and/or internships funded by employers.

5. Work with subject matter experts to identify assessment tools that are best suited to support seekers in preparing for specific career development and training programs and activities.

6. Identify innovative social media and leading edge communication technologies to develop career exploration and career exposure models that promote career knowledge and literacy across the community spectrum.

7. Embrace and expand a holistic developmental training program that provides residents with the "essential skills" required to support successful career path advancement and connect that program with counseling and service initiatives that stay with the resident as they traverse employment opportunities and challenges.

8. Offer night and alternative schedule classes for both the remediation and specialized industry training programs. Convenience is a key element in increasing participation.

9. Develop a set of "guided career paths"—alternative ways that residents can enter the system to be created (beginning with training and leading to entry-level employment and advancement). People with different qualifications, background, experience and skills will access the system in different ways and follow different paths on their way to employment.

10. Develop and deliver training programs in scattered site locations throughout the City of Decatur and Macon County including both existing programs and new programs to be created. Accessible locations may increase resident participation significantly.

11. Create "community engagement" outreach and marketing efforts that combine resident census and labor market data with social and community relationship data to identify the most effective methods of communicating with residents.

12. Develop a community network of "job champions" to disseminate information on jobs and career pathways and provide support and encouragement to residents.

13. Develop a network of experienced professionals, managers and executives to operate as volunteer career literacy "mentors," paired with residents seeking to access guided career training and education to enter the labor force.

14. Develop information materials and training content to coach career literacy "mentors" and community "job champions." A short training course for both groups would be created and delivered by a local education institution.

15. Work with local academic, education and training institutions and social service agencies to develop "test prep" programs for residents seeking employment. The idea would be to "teach to the test(s)," seeking to remedy the low levels of performance of residents in assessment and skill tests.

16. Develop affordable more childcare within the area and build a childcare worker training and advancement program, to be funded by employers and federal and state grants.

17. Develop an expansive database of households with names, addresses, and basic demographic information. This database would become the foundation of engagement outreach and marketing efforts to the community and an important tool for corporations and educational programs seeking to recruit residents.

18. Form a network of stakeholders composed of teams representing employers, training and educational institutions, workforce and economic development organizations, social services, government agencies and community-based organizations. Develop an organizational framework and staffing for the stakeholder coalition. Implementation will require dedicated capacity responsible for outreach to the community, outreach to employers, program and funding development, and database management.

19. Work with education and training providers to create alternative models and offerings for skills based and/or certificate training distributed throughout the region in alternative locations that maximize proximity to targeted low/moderate income and minority population areas.

20. Work with a data collection service, agency, or academic institution to build an interactive labor market data center. This center would combine available public and private information with community and agency-generated neighborhood data, performance and impact data from key stakeholders, and other social data to enable the utilization of analytics to identify opportunities and risks for residents seeking to enter and/or advance in the labor market.

Pivot Strategies

Adjusting the approach using current strengths

Pivot Strategies

In order to foster the development of a robust, process-driven workforce development systems model, the following pivot strategies have been developed. These strategies aim to address key opportunities of growth for the region in order to foster a strong workforce.

1. Target Untapped and Underserved Populations

As previously stated, there are three specific target groups identified as ideal candidates for equitable investment opportunities in the process-driven workforce development systems model: Low income individuals; Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) households; and Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs) individuals. Individuals in these groups are impacted by all levels of the workforce process. From individuals who lack access to individuals who are stuck in employment with little opportunity for advancement, these three groups highlight the struggles as well as the opportunities present within the region. With roughly 33,000 individuals that fall into these three categories, the region has a large base of employees waiting to be equitably brought into and advanced in the workforce system. Through effective targeting, adequate assessment, consistent support, appropriate training and development, and focused advancement, the region has a chance to positively impact the lives of these three groups and grow its workforce.

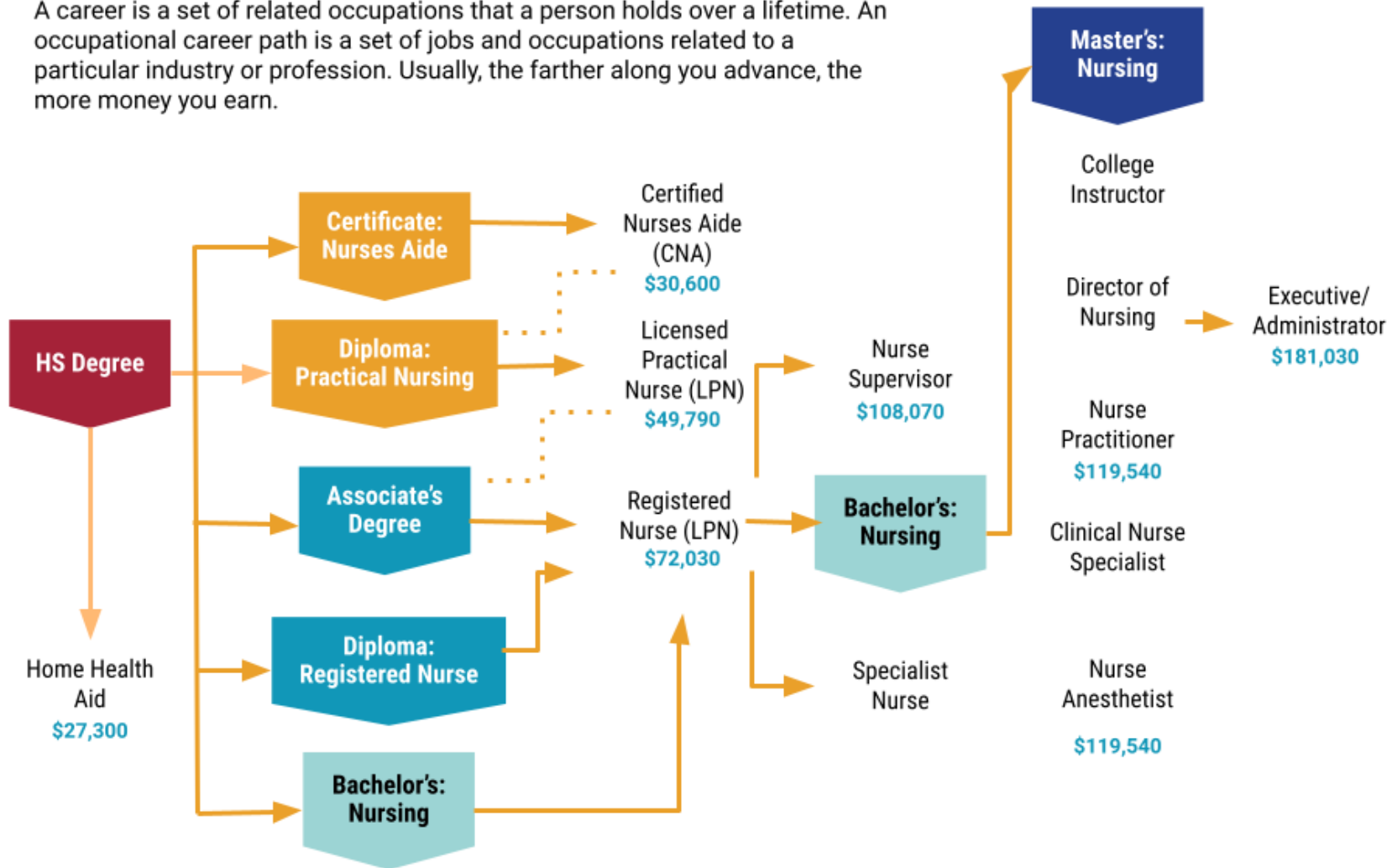## 2. Map Quality Career Pathways as a Guide for Residents and Employers

Career pathway models are foundational to the workforce ecosystem. Pathway models introduce candidates to careers and the various journeys individuals can take in order to land a specific career. Having an in-depth career pathway model provides a succinct outline for curious learners interested in joining a field for the first time while also acting as a guide for those looking to shift or change careers. Pathway models have a history of being deployed in schools, but expanding those models to the public gives individuals outside of the educational system the opportunity to view pathways of potential careers they may be interested in joining. By including employers in the development of pathway models, they can more effectively design career pathways at the regional and local level.

# WorQ Career Pathways
A look at the Healthcare Industry

A career is a set of related occupations that a person holds over a lifetime. An occupational career path is a set of jobs and occupations related to a particular industry or profession. Usually, the farther along you advance, the more money you earn.

HS Degree

Home Health Aid
$27,300

Certificate: Nurses Aide

Certified Nurses Aide (CNA)
$30,600

Diploma: Practical Nursing

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
$49,790

Associate's Degree

Registered Nurse (LPN)
$72,030

Diploma: Registered Nurse

Bachelor's: Nursing

Nurse Supervisor
$108,070

Specialist Nurse

Master's: Nursing

College Instructor

Director of Nursing

Executive/ Administrator
$181,030

Nurse Practitioner
$119,540

Clinical Nurse Specialist

Nurse Anesthetist
$119,540

Top 25 Occupations for Black STARs

Opportunity @ Work identifies these 25 occupations[5] as the greatest potential for economic advancement, particularly for Black STARs.

These occupations are divided into three categories: Origin, Gateway, and Destination which help define the path for advancement. Like the WorQ Career Pathways, STARs utilizes common skills across occupation and industry to move workers along a path to advancement. The diagram on the following page outlines this pathway through the retail sales occupation category.

# of Black STARs
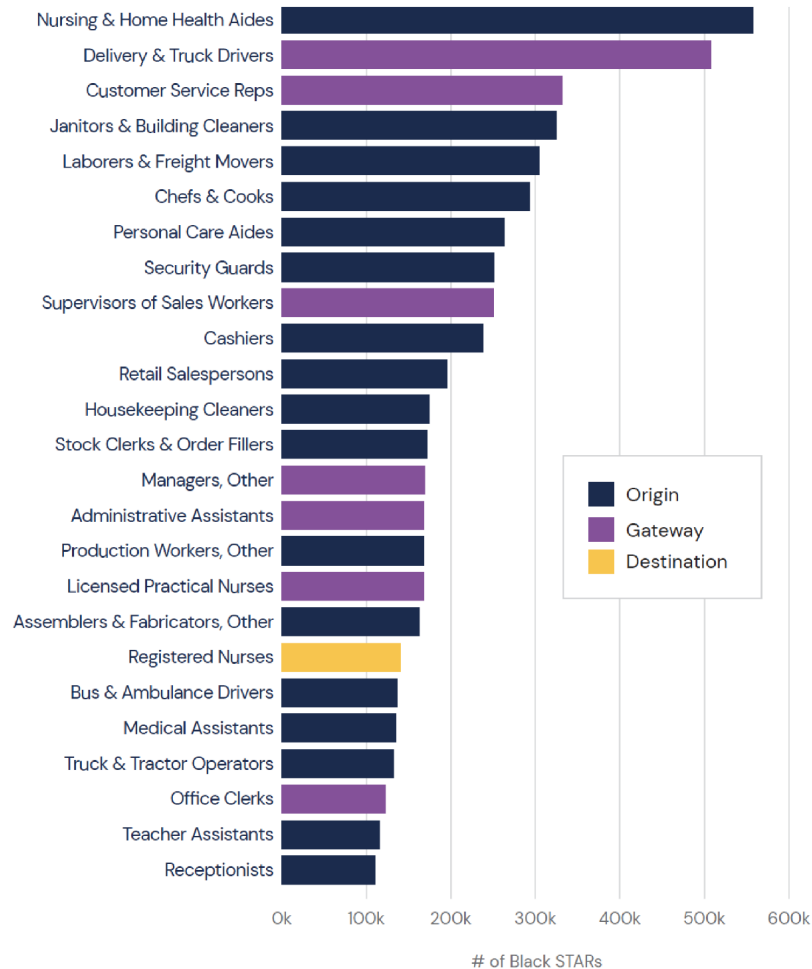
Origin Occupations: Common, entry-level, low-wage jobs

Gateway Occupations: middle-wage jobs that are accessible from common entry-level origin jobs and offer access to other higher-paying jobs

Destination Occupations: jobs that are typically found at the end of a series of transitions that yield higher wages

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[5] *Source: Opportunity@Work analysis of 2019 1-year ACS, iPUMS data.*

STARs Pathways Through a Gateway Job
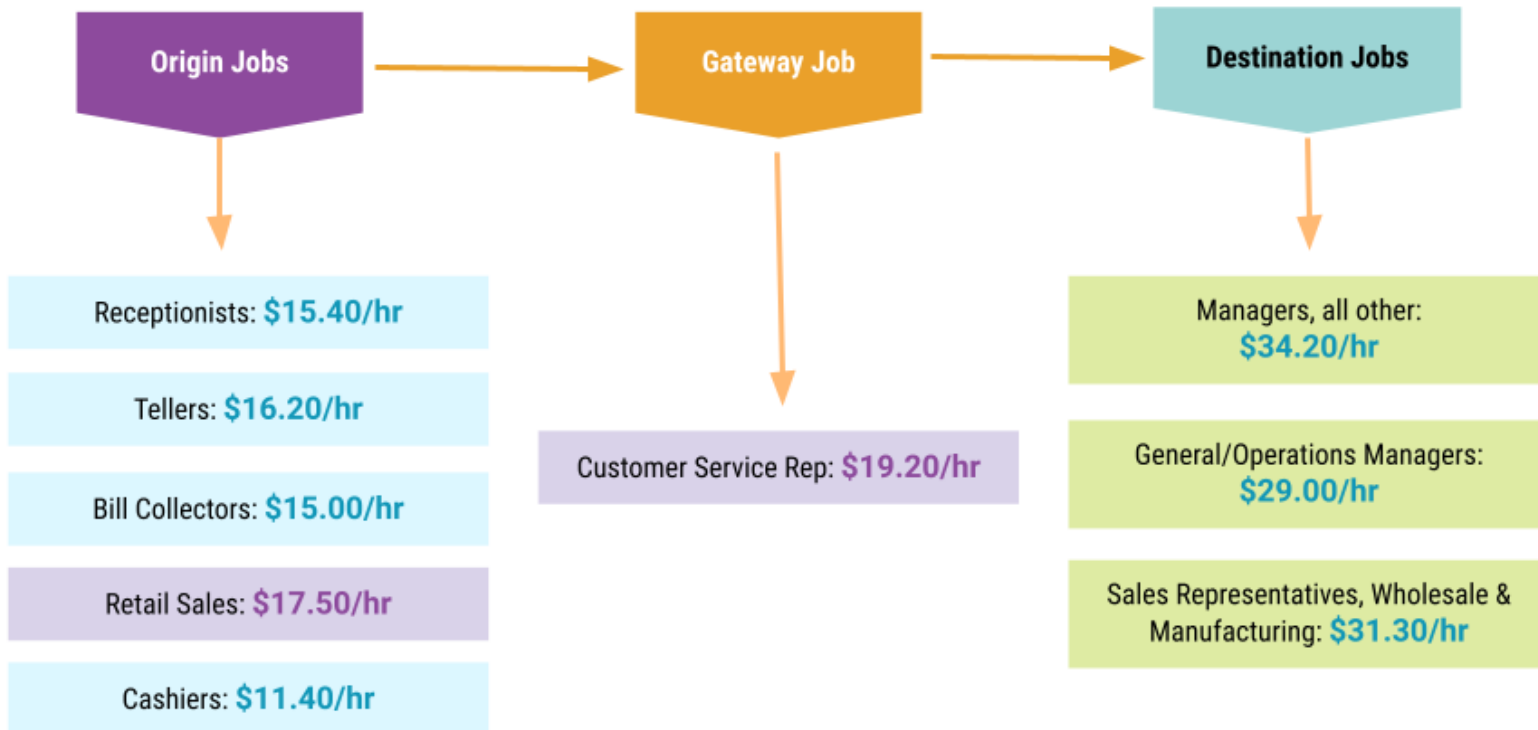## A look at the Retail Sales Industry

In the STARs model from Opportunity @ Work, there are more than 50 jobs that are considered "Gateway Jobs". These jobs fall on the path between an origin position and a destination position and provide valuable skills and experience needed to make the next move to a higher wage job.

% of current workers who have a four-year college degree

<25%   25-40%   >40%

Origin Jobs → **Gateway Job** → **Destination Jobs**

Receptionists: **$15.40/hr**

Tellers: **$16.20/hr**

Bill Collectors: **$15.00/hr**

Retail Sales: **$17.50/hr**

Cashiers: **$11.40/hr**

Customer Service Rep: **$19.20/hr**

Managers, all other: **$34.20/hr**

General/Operations Managers: **$29.00/hr**

Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing: **$31.30/hr**

3. Launch a Career Literacy Plan

Instilling and understanding of career literacy early will be integral to fostering a workforce ecosystem. That career literacy can best be deployed in the secondary school setting. By launching a career literacy plan starting in the 9th grade, individuals can begin to understand the connections between their current and future learning opportunities and the potential career pathways they can pursue. By implementing a literacy model that follows those individuals from 9th through 12th grade, those young learners and future workers can better prepare for the occupations they will desire. By supplementing the career literacy model with local career mentors from relevant fields, those young learners can gain first-hand mentoring experience from individuals in the field, and those career mentors can develop and foster relationships with those learners who may become future employees of their organizations. Continuing to support the career journey beyond high school of those future employees will also be critical to their growth and development. Embedding the career literacy plan with support structures that go beyond high school and follow individuals into programs such as CTE training will provide the greatest opportunity for success for those future employees.

4. Develop a Comprehensive Skills Adjacency Workforce

The process-driven workforce development systems model should incorporate the importance of skills adjacency: the ability to transfer skills acquired in one occupation and apply those skills to another. By developing a workforce ecosystem around skills adjacency, the region can better equip its workforce to shift into different careers and enable workers to weather shocks that may occur in one industry by being able to move those skills into another field or occupation. Through the skills adjacency approach, workers are given a greater opportunity to start on career pathways that better assess their skills, provide them chances to upskill, and further advance in their careers.

5. Create a User-Friendly Job Opening Board

Accessibility, awareness, and ease of use will be integral to the workforce ecosystem in the region. A user-friendly interface gives potential workers ease of access to job postings and minimizes the barriers of time spent searching for jobs. It gives potential workers the opportunity to get their foot in the door faster and gives employers the chance to meet with future candidates at a faster rate.

6. Jobs to People: Move Work to Neighborhoods

With a shifting dynamic in today's workforce, meeting potential candidates where they are not only increases worker accessibility to potential employment but also provides employers with the opportunity to increase their workforce. With a workforce system focused on skills adjacency, regional employers have the opportunity to assess common occupations and skill needs they share. Using customer service as an example, employers across multiple sectors can collaborate to create space within a community that hires local workers to fulfill those customer service needs.

With local and national programs such as Earn and Learn, Anchor Institution Initiative, Beehive, and Catalyst Kitchens, organizations and employers already have an understanding of the positive impact that occurs when they develop opportunities for future learners and employees to work within their communities. By moving work to neighborhoods, those employers both positively impact the lives of the employees who live there but also positively impact the economic and social structure of the communities they decide to move those employment opportunities to.

7. Invest, Expand, and Integrate Key Initiatives

Key initiatives geared towards training and supporting the workforce are plentiful in the region. With programs like EnRich, Hickory Point Certified Nursing Assistant Program, and the Jerry J. Dawson Civic Leadership Institute Medical Certification program to name a few, the region is already primed with an understanding of the supports necessary to skill its workforce. In order to continue to support the workforce, the region should invest, expand, and integrate these key initiatives in the process-driven model. Through investing in the following four focus areas, the region can continue to develop a workforce system aimed at supporting current and future workers.

- Essential skills training that exists in the region

- Earn and Learn opportunities for workers

- Incumbent Worker Training and On the Job Training

- Identifying and supporting quick-skilling and certificate programs for high demand occupation

8. Expand Capacity for Training by Developing Instructor Base

Without a strong instructor base for training, a robust, process-driven workforce development system falters. Fostering the development of an instructor base is a necessity for continued growth of the regional workforce. It will be key to ensuring the workforce system in the region has the capacity to continuously educate and skill its current and future workforce. The region must access the current barriers that exist that prevent the region from developing a strong workforce training instructor base and develop strategies and methodologies for dismantling said barriers.

9. Support for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

Individuals involved in the criminal justice system make up an integral piece of the workforce development system, and it will be critical to ensure their success if the workforce system in the region is meant to equitably serve all. With time away from work due to incarceration, a criminal offense on one's record, and the stigmatization of employers to hire individuals who are formerly incarcerated, the barriers to employment are compounded and can often lead to recidivism. In order to best support individuals who have been involved with the criminal justice system, a system must be in place to support those individuals holistically on their journey to reentry.

Support for formerly incarcerated individuals should target education, job training, job placement, and job retention. Support from employers include examining hiring policies and practices. Support at a systems level should examine the local and state policy around hiring of formerly incarcerated individuals as well as developing cross-sectoral partnerships for formerly incarcerated individuals to improve employment opportunities and provide social support.

Providing formerly incarcerated individuals with support at these key levels can provide them with the necessary tools and resources to continue to succeed and support the local economy on their journey of reentry.

Blueprint for Action
Next Steps for Implementation

Next Steps for Implementation

The goal of the Blueprint for Action is to position workforce development and economic development as parallel and equal regional priority initiatives. To design and implement workforce development systems with lasting results, it is imperative to:

1. Address all operational elements from recruitment through retention;

2. Build systems and and continuous improvement processes that support people's advancement and follow their progression through jobs and careers;

3. Establish broad performance outcomes and measure results;

4. Work together as a region build leverage, resources and models to achieve scale;

5. 'OWN' that the City of Decatur and Macon County is a community where all residents are embraced and supported with a multi-faceted infrastructure that provides guidance and access to family sustaining career pathways and opportunities for wealth creation.

The region has greatly benefitted through collaborative economic development led by the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur and Macon County. The EDC-DMC is prominent, proactive and highly successful in attracting investment, businesses and jobs to the region.

To sustain the economic development efforts, the region must also build a reputation for supporting and advancing residents throughout their working lives and creating a stable and growing high quality workforce that attracts and keeps employers in the region. To achieve the objectives outlined above the following collaborative model is proposed: ***the Workforce Inclusion Network of Decatur & Macon County (WIN-DMC).***

Workforce Inclusion Network of Decatur & Macon County (WIN-DMC)

The Workforce Inclusion Network of Decatur & Macon County (WIN-DMC) will be integral to developing a workforce systems model dedicated to the growth and development of the residents of Decatur and Macon County. WIN-DMC will function as collaborative infrastructure encompassing key sectors and stakeholders to lead the region in the development of a people oriented, process-driven workforce ecosystem to serve the residents of the City of Decatur and Macon County. WIN-DMC would become the epicenter of collaboration, consensus building and strategy for advancing all residents through quality career pathways, earning alternatives and opportunities for wealth creation. WIN-DMC should be a true collaborative, fully staffed with an operating budget that reflects intentionality and the resources required to become an agent for change.

Steering Group
5 Sector Reps

6 Employers Members

6 EDU/TRAIN Members

6 NPO/SS Members

6 Government Members

6 WD/ED Members

WIN-DMC Implementation Model

Implementation of an enhanced workforce development system involves working closely with select community-based organizations, workforce development agencies, training providers, and employers through a structured collaborative. The WIN-DMC solution is designed to meet these criteria based on best practices sourced from The Institute For The Future out of Palo Alto, California. This model has three critical components for success as follows:

1. **Equity**

   Ensuring equity means finding new ways to empower workers and job seekers to control their work situation, to protect them from exploitation, and to create more access points to employment and clearer paths to meaningful work.

2. **Expand Job Readiness**

   The workforce development ecosystem needs to help workers and job seekers build networks and acquire the skills to thrive in the ever- changing work world of the next decade.

3. **Catalyze Collaboration**

   Workers need to connect to government resources and to one another to find meaningful work and sustain their livelihoods. And stakeholders need to collaborate closely to create seamless experiences, spread best practices to the entire ecosystem, and ensure equal access to meaningful work and a sustainable livelihood for all residents of a region.

The goals of WIN-DMC should be as follows:

1. Educate, promote and provide tools for the region's key stakeholders regarding the adoption of a comprehensive, process-driven systems approach to workforce development.

2. Implement a process and structure to improve efficiency, inter-organizational connectivity, and operational effectiveness.

3. Introduce best practice engagement and management systems suitable to all partnering organizations.

4. Providing ongoing support to the staff and operational needs of the participants in the Network.

5. Work with employers to identify the skills and competencies needed for in-demand jobs and developing training and development content as needed

6. Build targeted activities around skills and occupation demand to address gaps in existing programs.

7. Identify and address the barriers encountered by disconnected youth, young adults and prime working age adults who are viable job candidates.

8. Develop or adopt existing interventions (i.e., advisory/mentor relationships, training and support systems) to help individuals access and navigate career pathways.

9. Customizing an online database system to track and monitor residents engaged in workforce programs.

10. Ensure that engagement, recruitment, preparation, and career guidance processes are conducted in full collaboration with all sector teams

Appendices & Resources

APPENDIX A: Stakeholders Engaged

Abby Held, *Ameren Illinois*

Andrew Taylor, *Economic Development Corporation of Decatur & Macon County*

Angel Lawrence, *Northeast Community Fund*

April Ingram, *EnRich*

Benie Kalala, *HSHS St. Mary's Hospital*

Cindy Bardelelben, *BabyTALK*

Cordaryl Patrick, *City of Decatur, Community & Economic Development*

Darsonya Switzer, *Dove, Inc.*

Debbie Bogle, *United Way*

Elizabeth Gephart, *Millikin University*

Gina Taylor, *EnRich*

Jason Doyle, *Tate & Lyle*

Jennifer Cunningham, *ADM*

John Oliver, *Richland Community College*

Jon Kindseth, *City of Decatur*

Josh Sapp, *IBEW*

Juanita Morris-Perez, *DCLI (Dept. of Labor)*

Julie Melton, *Richland Community College*

Julie Moore Wolfe, *City of Decatur*

Julie Pangrac, *Project Read Plus/ Richland Community College*

Karl Coleman, *Macon County*

Kendall Brisco, *CAT*

Kevin Greenfield, *Macon County*

Kimberly Erskine, *Ameren Illinois*

Kyle Karsten, *Salvation Army*

Lacie Elzy, *City of Decatur*

Latonya Ricks, *Memorial Health*

Lori Kerans, *Millikin University*

Mary Black, *Millikin University*

Melverta Wilkins, *Sista Girls & Friends*

Mirinda Rothrock, *Chamber of Commerce*

Natalie Beck, *Community Foundation of Macon County*

Nicole Bateman, *Economic Development Corporation of Decatur & Macon County*

Raphaella Prange, Millikin University

Rebekah Zuniga, *EnRich*

Richelle Irons, *City of Decatur, Community & Economic Development*

RJ Podeschi, *Millikin University*

Rocki Wilkerson, *Workforce Investment Solutions*

Ryan Huffer, *City of Decatur*

Scot Wright, *City of Decatur*

Stacy Young, *Ameren Illinois*

Tamara Wilcox, *Macon County*

Tamika Thomas, *EnRich*

Tara Murray, *Empowerment Opportunity Center*

Tracy Green, *Decatur Housing Authority*

APPENDIX B: Best Practices Reviewed

During the course of this project Key Strategic conducted forty-two key stakeholder interviews, analyzed data, researched best practices and reviewed contemporary workforce development, employment and career pathway practices.

Following are a list of links to the materials, papers, reports and organizations that were sourced by the Key Strategic team in the development of the strategy and recommendations contained in this report:

➔ **Opportunity@Work** https://opportunityatwork.org/

➔ **Pew Charitable Trust** https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/

➔ **Burning Glass Institute** https://www.burningglassinstitute.org

➔ **Lumina Foundation** https://www.luminafoundation.org

➔ **Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Mentor 2.0** https://www.bbbsecw.org/m2-0/

➔ **iMentor** https://imentor.org/

➔ **United for ALICE** https://www.unitedforalice.org/

➔ **Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)** https://www.cael.org

➔ **National Governors Association** https://www.nga.org

➔ **Aspen Institute** https://www.aspeninstitute.org

➔ **Jobs For the Future** https://www.jff.org

➔ **One Ten** https://oneten.org

➔ **Institute For The Future** https://www.iftf.org/home/

➔ **San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development** https://owed.org/futureofwork

➔ **McKinsey & Company** https://www.mckinsey.com

➔ **REDF Robert's Family Foundation** https://redf.org

➔ **US Department of Labor** https://www.dol.gov

- → **World Economic Forum** https://www.weforum.org

- → **Policy Link** https://www.policylink.org

- → **LaunchCode** https://www.launchcode.org

- → **Year-Up** https://www.yearup.org

- → **Social Finance** https://socialfinance.org

- → **Evergreen Cooperatives** https://www.evgoh.com

- → **WIOA Works Illinois**
  https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Pages/ProgramDesign

- → **Community College Research Center/Guided Pathways**
  https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/what-we-know-about-guided-pathways-packet.html

- → **Georgetown University Center on Education and Workforce/Jobs For All** https://www.jobsforallgeorgetown.org

- → **Stanford Social Innovation Review**
  https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how_to_build_more_resilient_networks

- → **Harvard Business School/Emerging Degree Reset**
  https://www.hbs.edu/managing-the-future-of-work/Documents/research/emerging_degree_reset_020922.pdf