



workforce
SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

ABOUT US

Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW) is a nonprofit organization that invests in the economies of Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. The programs we fund help residents of Southwest Washington **get jobs that support families, strengthen our region's businesses and create a diverse workforce and strong economy.** Since 2003, we've invested more than **\$100 million to get people working** in Southwest Washington.

We fund programs and activities that prepare youth and adult workers for living-wage jobs

- For example, we manage "Next," Clark County's **first and only youth employment and training center**

We consult local businesses to recruit, train, and retain employees and to inform the programs we invest in

Benefits to the community include:

- **For people:** Programs that fund jobs that provide a living wage with room for growth
- **For businesses:** A workforce that is highly trained and motivated
- **For partners:** The opportunity to connect with like-minded organizations

QUALITY JOBS

The Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative (CWWC) is developing a Quality Jobs Strategy. We are committed to designing and developing a regional approach with our stakeholders:

- Employers
- Job seekers + employees
- Community-based organizations
- Economic developers + local municipalities

Together, we will define, support and promote quality jobs. There are many successful quality jobs programs taking shape around the country that are inspiring businesses to succeed by investing in their employees and helping workers thrive.



PURPOSE | OBJECTIVES | FRAMEWORK

Purpose and Objectives:

1. Prioritize workforce equity
2. Ensure the region's workforce system is preparing and supporting customers to transition to high-quality jobs
3. Include and elevate partners and companies committed to promoting and meeting job quality standards
4. Provide a blueprint for companies to improve their workforce

The Quality Jobs Framework will:

1. Define a quality job for our region
2. Provide a set of job quality standards & guidance that regional employers can adopt
3. Incorporate stakeholder feedback, including different job seeker perspectives
4. Include a toolkit of practical resources to support employer implementation steps



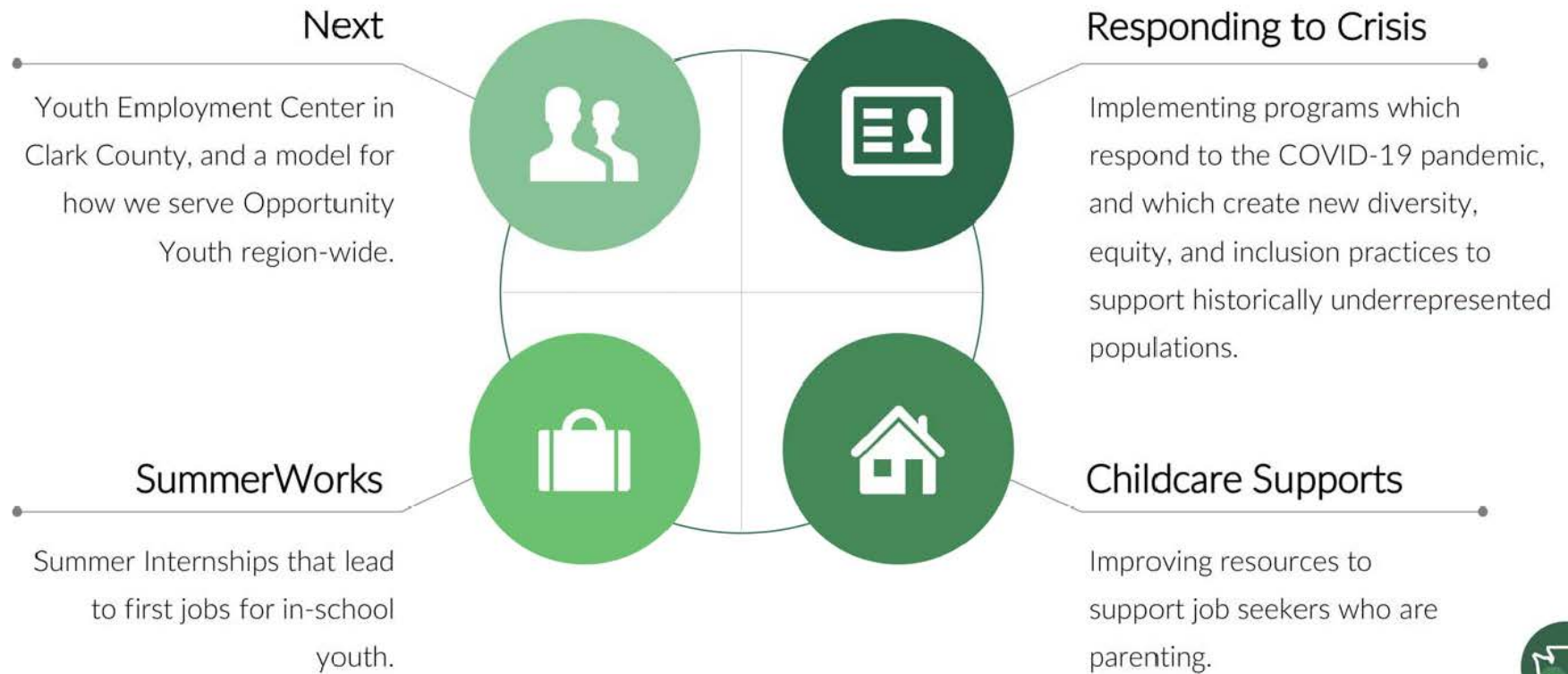
QUALITY JOB STANDARDS

1. Pay living wages (“self-sustaining” wages)
2. Provide safe working conditions, free from discrimination and harassment, and responsive to workers’ concerns
3. Have predictable and guaranteed work hours
4. Provide comprehensive benefits
5. Provide training and advancement opportunities
6. Provide equitable and accessible hiring and onboarding processes
7. Provide a diverse workplace



KEY EFFORTS & INITIATIVES

WSW manages dozens of programs and investments to support job seekers and industry. Here are some of our program highlights



COVID RECOVERY / EQUITY

Responding to Crisis

COVID Response/Economic Recovery

\$1.1m for services for Adults and Dislocated Workers at WorkSource (American Jobs Center).

\$500,000 for disaster relief employment supports for those affected by COVID-19

\$480,000 investment in poverty reduction in Cowlitz County as part of the Thrive initiative. (Economic Security for All).

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

WSW has revised its strategic plan to emphasize removing structural inequities from the workforce system and effect positive systems change.

Increasing the use of data and evaluation processes to measure progress.

Adding new targets and strategies to contracts to centralize connection with historically underserved communities, while diversifying governance of our investments, like the Next Champions Council.



NEXT – KEY ACTIVITIES

Serving Opportunity Youth



<https://nextsuccess.org/>



Workforce Academy

We work in partnership with the business community to provide career exploration opportunities for area youth and build essential skills.



Apprenticeship/Training

We prepare students for careers in our four sectors through apprenticeship preparation trainings and connect them to local area apprenticeships.



Work Experience

Our investments fund meaningful, paid work experience and internships to help young people learn and develop skills necessary to succeed in today's world of work.



Post-Secondary Connections

Youth can work with Next to complete their HS Diploma or GED, if needed, and make connections to post-secondary programs at Clark College, Lower Columbia College, and WSU-Vancouver.

SUMMERWORKS INTERNSHIPS



By the Numbers

- 306 youth completed work readiness classes since 2018
- 214 completed paid internship since 2018
- 35+ businesses hosted interns in 2021
- \$156,066 in wages earned by youth in 2021

The Importance of Summer Jobs



- Only around a third (34.6%) of American high school age youth held a summer job in 2018.



- For each year a youth remains out of the labor force, future earnings are reduced by two to three percent.
- According to JP Morgan Chase, for every year young people work, their income in their 20's rises 14-16%.

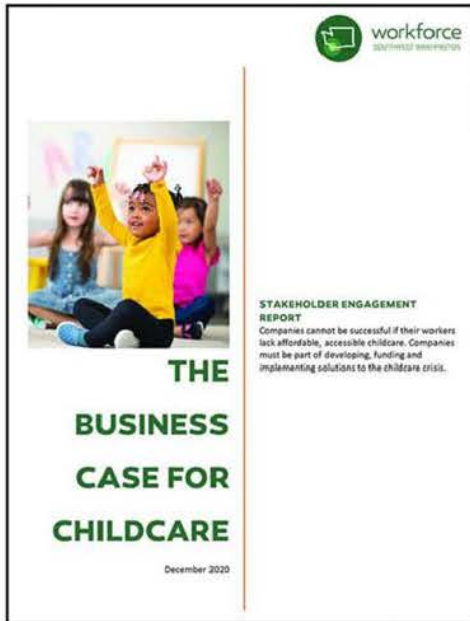
Plans and Growth



- WSW is planning another cohort in Summer 2022 and is seeking investment from local partners. Investments will help expand the cohort to more diverse and historically-underserved youth.

CHILDCARE SUPPORTS

Meeting a critical need



<https://workforcesw.org/wp-content/uploads/wsw-childcare-report-reduced.pdf>

Why Childcare?

There is a critical and reliable need for affordable and accessible childcare in Southwest Washington.

In 2020, WSW commissioned a report with Exigy Consulting to analyze the effects of the local childcare drought. The report found that one-child SW WA families pay an average of 14% of total income on childcare, and that the average cost of early care across all ages is higher than the cost to attend Clark College in Vancouver full time.

The report estimated that for the 526 businesses/employers surveyed, continuing insufficient childcare for employees could result in:

\$1.2M in potential absenteeism costs

\$840K in potential productivity loss costs

\$236K in potential replacement worker costs

\$913K in potential indirect costs (co-worker and supervisor productivity loss, etc.)

What WSW is Doing

1. WSW is raising funds to provide childcare supports for job seekers in existing programs, from businesses and municipal governments.
2. WSW is working with fellow workforce boards in Oregon to develop regional childcare navigators who can connect participants to programs.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE WORKFORCE

Financial

- Invest in a specific WSW initiative, such as SummerWorks or Childcare Supports.
- Include yearly funding for workforce development in your local budget for your community to prosper.
- Include WSW in your local COVID recovery plans.

Community

- Promote “Good Jobs” criteria, including living wages and benefits to local employers.
- Provide letters of support and partnership to upcoming WSW investments.
- Advocate for practices which lead to and encourage equitable hiring and encourage diversity and inclusion.

Communication

- Promote WSW investments to community partners.
- Encourage collaboration between local organizations and the public workforce system.
- Direct local businesses seeking talent to WSW.



CONTACT US



Darcy Hoffman | Director of Business Services
360.567.3172
dhoffman@workforcesw.org



Benton Waterous | Senior Program Manager
360.567.3182
bwaterous@workforcesw.org