



Geared Toward The Future
NORTHWEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

WORKS

Fall '22 /Winter '23

The Workforce Board covering Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee,
Ogle, Putnam, and Whiteside Counties

Congratulations to BEST's December 2023 Graduates!!!

Castor Health Institute: CNA recipients: Hannah, Katelyn, Kayla, Cassandra, Helen, Kayleigh, Gabi, Paige, Violet, Lainie, Miranda, Lena, Todd, Lane. Medical Assistant: Kaitlynn

Illinois Valley Community College: Medical Coding/Billing: Emily, AAS Marketing: Toni, CDL: Kyle, CNA Refresher: Christy

Kishwaukee Community College: Radiological Technology: Autumn, Taylor, Bailey, Amber

Sauk Valley Community College: CDL: Josh, Shawn, Brandon, Omar

160 Driving Academy: CDL: Michael

Dixon High School: Diploma: Morgan

Rock Falls High School: Diploma: Liberty

Step Ahead Program: GED Completion: Damion, Allyson, Trent

Illinois High School Diplomas: Kailey, Nicholas, Keaton, Brandon, Mykwana, Matthew,



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Leadership Changes for NCI Works!



NCI Works members accepted the resignation of a long-time member, Linda Burt. Linda was appointed to NCI Works in March 2005 and became chair of one of the standing committees in June 2007. In November 2012 Linda became Chair of NCI Works and in 2013 she was elected as Co-Chair serving with Cary Robbins. In November 2022 Linda stepped down from NCI Works leadership and recently resigned from the Board. Members wish Linda success in her future endeavors.

NCI Works! Elects New Officer for 2023

Co-Chairs: Cary Robbins and Patty Head

Vice-Chair: Abby Farrell

Secretary: John Spencer

NEW Chief Elected Officials for LWIA #4

In December 2022, the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) for Local Workforce Area #4 welcomed new members. They include, Chris Flikkema (Carroll County), Keane Hudson (Lee County), Michael McEmery (LaSalle County), Kerwin Paris (Bureau County) and LaDon Trost (Jo Daviess County). Mr. Flikkema replaced Kevin Reibel and Mr. McEmery replaced Randy Freeman. Both Kevin and Randy served on the CEO Board for 10 years.

What is WorkShare IL?

WorkShare IL is a voluntary program that provides employers, facing a decline in business, with an alternative to layoffs. The program allows an employer to reduce the hours of workers in any unit of their business in order to avoid permanent layoffs of workers. Each worker in an affected unit continues to work, but experiences a reduction in hours that ranges from 20% to 60%. Workers receive a portion of their unemployment benefits during the period of the temporary reduction to offset the reduction in earnings.

For more information regarding the WorkShare IL program, please visit: WorkShare.ides.illinois.gov To learn more about unemployment insurance in the State of Illinois, please visit: [IDES \(illinois.gov\)](http://IDES.illinois.gov) Contact Information Special Units Program: (217) 558-8150 DES.WorkShare@illinois.gov

Local Contact: Jane Verplaetse, IDES Business Service Coordinator. Jane.Verplaetse@illinois.gov 309-794-3619

NCI Works meets at 12:00 p.m. on the 1st Tuesday of the following months.

January	July
March	September
May	November

Meetings are open to the public.

(Dates & Locations are subject to change. Please consult the NCI Works website, www.nciworks.org, for meeting information)

Northwest Central Illinois Works (NCI Works) is a locally appointed workforce board that oversees workforce development programs that are funded by millions of federal tax dollars for an eight-county area (Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle,



Laura Olson, Business Service Representative: BEST, Inc., Honored as one of Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce’s “40 Under 40”

The Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce recently announced their 40 under 40 award winners. The staff at BEST, Inc is proud that one of their very own was chosen a one of this year’s recipients.

Laura is the Business Service Representative at the Business Employment Skills Team serving LaSalle, Bureau and Putnam counties. She attended Illinois Valley Community College for two years where she graduated Cum Laude with an Associates in Art and Science. She then transferred to Illinois State University and completed her Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice. Although she truly enjoyed her time in Bloomington she knew that she needed to come back home to the Illinois Valley. Out of college Laura was a paraprofessional for LaSalle School District for 4 years before moving on to be a Foster Care Caseworker for The Center for Youth and Family Solutions. Laura was then given an opportunity to try something new and ended up at the Business Employment Skills Team where she started off as a career advisor. Workforce Development was entirely new to her but she quickly found her niche for helping the citizens of the communities we serve. In the last two years she has moved on to become the Business Service Representative. In total she has spent 8 years with BEST and has received her Certified Workforce Development Professional license in the process. She is currently serving as an Ambassador for the Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, Laura sits on the NCAT Advisory committee, and works closely with the LaSalle County Probation in the Adult Redeploy program. Laura also has a seat on the LaSalle County Specialty Courts panel. Outside of work Laura enjoys staying active by playing softball in the summer and bowling in the winter. She has been married for 6 years and has a terrific 4 year old son who keeps her very busy.



Access to services provided by each of the member agencies is available by contacting:

NCI Works One-Stop Center
1550 First Avenue
Ottawa, IL
815-434-3111

BEST, Inc.
2605 Woodlawn Rd.
Sterling, IL 61081
815-625-9648
TTY: 800-526-0844

December 2022 Unemployment Rate	
Most Recent Available:	
National	3.3%
State of IL	4.2%
LWIA 4	4.2%
Bureau Co	4.4%
Carroll Co.	3.6%
Jo Daviess Co	3.6%
LaSalle Co	4.8%
Lee Co	3.8%
Ogle Co	4.7%
Putnam Co	5.1%
Whiteside Co.	3.7%

Check out the NCI Works! Podcast Series: Getting to Work!
Available at nciworks.org or on your favorite podcast app!

“Labor Market Demographics are a necessity for those of us involved in Economic Development. We use this information when responding to “requests for information” such as: state site searches, industrial broker inquiries, retail leads, grants, etc. Companies deciding where to locate need to know if our area has the workforce to staff their needs. Though you would think all would seek the same information, this is not the case. Even more important is having the staff at BEST available to help us find the information needed. All of this allows us to continue to attract new business into the area.”

Dave Noble, Director of Community Development, City of Ottawa

Additional Labor Market Information is available at the NCI Works website at www.nciworks.org and BEST, Inc website at www.best-inc.org

Labor Force Data	UI % Current Month (Dec, 2022)
Employment	123,500
Average Annual Wage	\$50,469
Percentage Change Over 2021 3rd Quarter	2.1%
Unemployment Rate: Dec. 2022	4.3%
Industry	3rd Quarter 2022
Ag, Fishing, Forestry/Hunting	4,364
Mining/Quarrying/Oil/Gas	903
Utilities	1,490
Construction	6,068
Manufacturing	19,415
Wholesale Trade	4,871
Retail Trade	14,016
Transportation/Warehousing	8,550
Information	849
Finance/Insurance	3,348
Real Estate/Rental and Leasing	1,362
Professional Science/Technical	3,782
Management	307
Administrative Support	4,937
Educational	10,504
Health Care/Social Assistance	13,490
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	1,623
Accommodation/Food Service	10,335
Other Services	5,730
Public Administration	7,655
Unclassified	1
Total All Industries	123,500
LWIA 4 Industry Employment Data/Source: Jobseq (2022Q3)	