



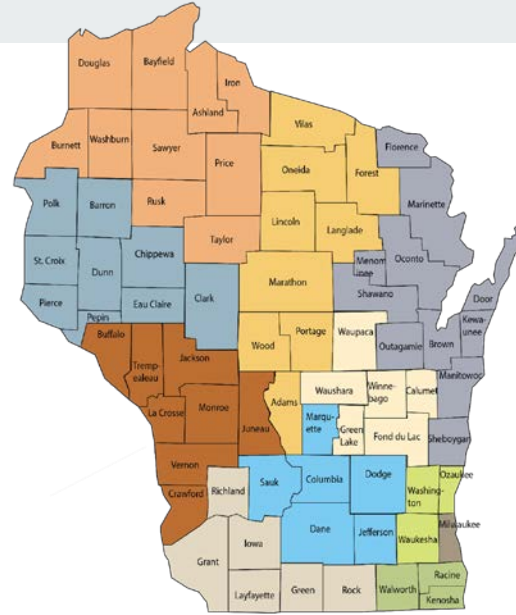
# Wisconsin Legislature's Study Committee on Increasing Offender Employment Opportunities

South Central Wisconsin and Milwaukee County  
Workforce Development Boards  
Reentry Programs, Services, and Initiatives  
September 29, 2022



# Workforce Development Boards

- WDBs 101
  - WIOA 101
  - Workforce System partners
  - WDB's Entrepreneurial Nature
- WWDA
  - Map and Contacts
- WDB Strengths
  - Infrastructure
  - Experience
  - Data and outcome driven
  - Fiscal accountability



Workforce Area	Director	Website	Phone Number
Southeastern	Doug Bartz	<a href="mailto:Doug.Bartz@kenoshacounty.org">Doug.Bartz@kenoshacounty.org</a>	262.697.4586
Milwaukee	Chytania Brown	<a href="mailto:Chytania.Brown@employilmilwaukee.org">Chytania.Brown@employilmilwaukee.org</a>	414.270.1783
W-O-W	Laura Catherman	<a href="mailto:lcatherman@waukeshacounty.gov">lcatherman@waukeshacounty.gov</a>	262.896.8312
Fox Valley	Anthony Snyder	<a href="mailto:asnyder@fvwdb.com">asnyder@fvwdb.com</a>	920.850.2032
Bay Area	Matt Valiquette	<a href="mailto:mvaliquette@bayareawdb.org">mvaliquette@bayareawdb.org</a>	920.327.8732
North Central	Jane Spencer	<a href="mailto:jspencer@ncwdb.org">jspencer@ncwdb.org</a>	715.204.1640
Northwest	Mari Kay-Nabozny	<a href="mailto:mari@nwwib.com">mari@nwwib.com</a>	715.685.1427
West Central	Jon Menz	<a href="mailto:jmenz@wdbwcw.org">jmenz@wdbwcw.org</a>	715.235.8393
Western	Melisa Myers	<a href="mailto:myersm@westernwdb.org">myersm@westernwdb.org</a>	608.789.5499
South Central	Seth Lentz	<a href="mailto:slentz@wdbscw.org">slentz@wdbscw.org</a>	608.249.9001
Southwest	Rhonda Suda	<a href="mailto:r.suda@swwdb.org">r.suda@swwdb.org</a>	608.314.3300

For more information, and resources about Wisconsin's Workforce System please visit [www.wwda.org](http://www.wwda.org)

# Justice-Involved and Re-Entry Experiences



## Common Programs

- **Windows to Work - DOC Collaborative**
  - South Central Facilities - Oakhill Correctional, Fox Lake Correctional & Columbia Correctional Institution
  - Milwaukee Facilities - Racine Correctional Institution (RCI) and the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility (MSDF)
- **U.S. Dept. of Labor Pilot: Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release (LEAP)**
  - Employ Milwaukee received a 2015 award - created sustainable partnership with the Milwaukee House of Correction
  - SC was Second - Dane County Jail
- **Technical Skills Trainings**
  - Employ Milwaukee and House of Correction ARPA Project 2023: Construction, Welding, Food Service, Masonry and Barbering/Cosmetology as targeted occupations
  - South Central: Carpentry and Electro Mechanical

# Justice-Involved and Re-Entry Experiences



## Unique Initiatives

- **Employ Milwaukee**
  - Wisconsin Partnership Project - MKE Reentry Rising
  - Benedict Center Women's Reentry Program
  - CFSSDOORS
  - Marquette Trinity Fellow - Milwaukee Reentry Network Entrepreneur Program
- **South Central Workforce Development Board**
  - BJA - ARES Grant with DOC
  - PHP - Sauk County
  - United Way Journey Home
  - DOC Educational and Career Pathway Efforts

# Employ Milwaukee: Milwaukee Reentry Rising

- Milwaukee Reentry Rising is an initiative comprised of a wide range of organizations and professionals within the corrections, health and human services, and reentry/transition planning fields that seek to decrease recidivism and improve health outcomes of returning citizens.
- Funded through the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Wisconsin Partnership Program.
- Employ Milwaukee is convening partners to develop:
  - Purposeful Dialogue training curriculum for reentry service providers and corrections staff
  - Virtual road map of targeted key service areas
  - Reentry simulations
  - University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee research project of post-release outcomes of incarcerated individuals

REENTRY SIMULATION  
A JustDane Initiative

IS COMING TO  
EMPLOY MILWAUKEE

A proud partner of the [AmericanJobcenter](#) network

JUSTDANE'S REENTRY SIMULATION GIVES PARTICIPANTS AN "UP CLOSE" VIEW OF WHAT IT'S LIKE TO COME HOME FROM PRISON.  
SIGN UP TO WALK IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES.

"A MUST FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO DESIRE TO LEARN AND CREATE CHANGE"

APR 27 2022  
1PM - 4PM

EMPLOY MILWAUKEE  
2342 NORTH 27TH STREET  
MILWAUKEE, WI 53210

THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY THE WISCONSIN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM THE UW-MADISON SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

SCAN TO REGISTER

# Employ Milwaukee: Women's Reentry Program



- Partnership with the Benedict Center designed to support women while incarcerated at the Milwaukee County House of Correction and their transition back into the community.
- Specially designed curricula to address trauma, substance use, and interpersonal violence.
- Participants increase skills and self-efficacy through groups, individual sessions, and strength-based case management.
- Includes job readiness training, digital literacy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, wraparound supports, transitional jobs, and placement assistance into unsubsidized employment.
- 50 justice-involved women to be served over 12 months with 20 engaged in transitional jobs.

# Employ Milwaukee: Developing Occupational Opportunities Resources Supports (DOORS)

---

- In partnership with the Center for Self-Sufficiency (CFSS), Employ Milwaukee will provide career readiness and job placement for Milwaukee County residents ages 16+ recently released from the Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility and Milwaukee House of Correction, as well as referrals from the Milwaukee County DA's Office as an alternative to prosecution.
- DOORS will provide comprehensive workforce strategies to prepare 71 individuals for occupations, primarily within the high growth, high demand industries of healthcare, food service, and construction.
- DOORS participants will obtain employment in these sectors through the integration of employment planning, education/training, and holistic case management support.

# Employ Milwaukee: Milwaukee Reentry Network (MRN)

- The Milwaukee Reentry Network (MRN) has many members and is co-chaired by the Director of the Milwaukee Community Justice Council, Mandy Potapenko, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Employ Milwaukee, Chytania Brown.
- MRN plans and coordinates integrated neighborhood-based diversion, reentry, and employment strategies, and works to provide opportunities to reduce criminal thinking and increase vocational training and employment opportunities for reentry individuals.
- Employ Milwaukee recently brought on a Marquette Trinity Fellow to assist MRN in developing an entrepreneurship program for returning citizens.
- The program will develop business ownership as a viable post-release option and potential antidote for recidivism.



# WDBSCW: Bureau of Justice Affairs - Adult Reentry and Employment Strategies

2-Phased collaborative project with DOC

- **Focused on 7 counties** - Dane, Rock, Columbia, Sauk, Jefferson, Dodge and Marquette
- **Planning Phase** - Comprehensive resource mapping community based partners and resources
  - 47 Community-based partners engaged
  - Multi-pronged approach including surveys, interviews site visits and group engagements
- **Implementation Phase** - Highlighting best practices and offering capacity building training
  - 33 unique agencies
  - 149 professionals participated in trainings
  - Topics included - Evidence-based practice, core correctional practices, and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Employment

# WDBSCW: People Helping People (PHP) - Sauk County



Grassroots community collaborative

- **PHP is a community-based organization**
  - Experienced working with justice- involved on employment readiness
  - Collaborative partner with Workforce System programs, county government and business community
  - Launch planned for August 2023
- **Approached by local industry leaders to create a Career Academy**
  - Construction and manufacturing career pathways
  - Justice involved - Huber, drug court, probation and parole and general public
- **Contributions**
  - Space donated by local business
  - County used ARPA funds to renovations
  - Local industry completing renovation work
  - Local industry professionals leading skills trainings
  - Workforce partners to provide wrap around supportive services

# Highlights and Appreciations



- Employ Milwaukee's industry partnership with **Advocate Aurora Healthcare (AAH)** has produced deep discussions about the returning citizen population and how the healthcare industry has struggled to leverage this pipeline of talent. As a result, AAH developed a **Returning Citizen Project pilot program** to adapt their processes to focus on specifically attacking, recruiting, and retaining talent from the reentry population. By the end of 2020, AAH was welcoming new talent from this population and has hired Community Health Workers from Employ Milwaukee's referral pool.
- WDBSCW recently graduated the **MATC Carpentry cohort**. This training resulted in the award of a **Technical Diploma and a Certified Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate**. Employers at the graduation expressed a willingness to mitigate the DOC transportation burden and change their workforce scheduling practices to comply with DOC worksite requirements.

# Employer Feedback



- **Why do employers choose or not choose to work with those with convictions?**
  - Lack of experience or misconceptions
  - Industry or business Image
  - Good News
    - Economic conditions are changing screening and hiring practices
- **Customer and/or co-worker concerns?**
  - Industry image may require to be silent champion (Ex. Hospitality)
- **Are employers aware of work release options?**
  - Huber (county level)
  - DOC Work Release Facilities are not available in all communities
- **Other barriers**
  - Transportation - Institutional capacity
  - Driver's License needed for employment
  - Adequate preparation and transition support

# Recommendations for Legislative Changes



## Continue Strategic Partnership Engagements between WWDA and WDBs

- WDBs are an experienced resource (programs and relationships)
- Collaborate on resource pursuits for Wisconsin

## Require Workforce Investments to Align with Workforce System

- Support integration and efficiency
- Capitalize on existing infrastructure, data integrity and fiscal accountability
- Increase system stability and initiative sustainability

## Opportunities

- Align institutional Job Center services to individuals with closer release dates
  - Continuity of services and community connectivity
- Continue to invest and diversify skill training platforms
  - Inmate movement opportunities to align with training and release date
  - Cultivating opportunities with the Bureau of Correctional Enterprises
- Capitalize on Work Release Facilities
- Investment of Driver's License attainment

# Contact Information



## **Chytania Brown**

Chief Executive Officer  
Employ Milwaukee, Inc.  
2342 N. 27th Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53210  
O. 414-270-1783  
E. [Chytania.Brown@employmilwaukee.org](mailto:Chytania.Brown@employmilwaukee.org)

## **Seth Lentz**

Chief Executive Officer  
Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin  
3513 Anderson Street, Suite 104  
Madison, WI, 53704  
O. 608-249-9001  
E. [slentz@wdbscw.org](mailto:slentz@wdbscw.org)