

Workforce Connections

Your monthly digest of resources, events, and all things Workforce Development in Lancaster County



February 26, 2021 | Issue XX

In the News...

[Governor Wolf unveiled his Back to Work PA plan, as part of his 2021 budget initiative to boost workforce development and economic recovery](#)

[Costco To Raise Minimum Wage To \\$16 An Hour: 'This Isn't Altruism'](#)

[Gen Z and millennials seeking flexibility are changing corporate America, Upwork CEO says](#)



With millions looking for work, stigmas create a dearth of skilled tradespeople. Jobless claims were high again this past week with more than 860,000 people filing for unemployment benefits for the first time. Millions of people are still looking for work, but some employers say they can't find enough skilled workers for certain jobs. That is due in part, they say, because of stigmas that need to change. Paul Solman reports for our series "Work Shift."



Never miss an opportunity to apply for funding through the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board! By signing up [here](#), you will be notified any time Requests for Proposals (RFP's) are released.

COVID-19 RESOURCES

- Find [food assistance resources near you](#).
- [Mental health and substance use disorder help](#) is available.
- If you are unable to work due to COVID-19, you may be eligible for [unemployment benefits](#).
- Learn more about COVID-19 testing and [find a testing center](#).
- See the latest [COVID-19 guidance and resources](#) for Pennsylvanians.
- Download the [COVID Alert PA mobile app](#) for exposure notifications.
- See which restaurants are [Open & Certified](#) as COVID-compliant businesses.



The **Pennsylvania Office of Equal Opportunity** recently recognized the **Workforce Connections** newsletter as a **Best Practice** of 2020. We are honored!



Join Smart Talk for a virtual watch party to discuss Career & Technical Education in the midstate. The Watch Party streamed LIVE on WITF's YouTube channel Thursday, February 25 at 9am.

LCWDB secures additional funding to prepare jobseekers for entry level success, increased access to financial literacy



Financial education is an essential part of being able to successfully compete in any job market, maintain employment, and advance in a career. These skills not only help increase job skills, but also form a strong foundation for a stable home life. The Financial Empowerment Center of **Tabor Community Services** will seek to offer one-on-one, group, and prerecorded videos to offer financial education support virtually to adult and dislocated workers. Its overarching goal is to create compelling and engaging virtual, in person, and prerecorded content that is accessible to those needing services; and to build awareness of resources for support and guidance for clients working to address their financial concerns.



Many of the currently unemployed may be seeking jobs outside of the sector that they just left (e.g. Manufacturing or Food Services) but lack skills that can transfer into more stable jobs that are less susceptible to COVID-19 disruption.

Lancaster-Lebanon IU13 offers pre-vocational courses that lead to three high-demand jobs: Teacher Assistant, Administrative Support Professional, and Direct Care Provider. Courses are currently being offered virtually, with 15-20 students per course. Students who complete the course will be assisted by staff at PA CareerLink Lancaster County to find full-time employment



WorkPath is an introductory level program that combines training and employment opportunities to serve its target audience: the unemployed and the underemployed. The program's key focus is to look at the labor pool and turn "what we have" into "what we need", all while rewarding learners for taking the leap of faith. Currently the program has both manufacturing and logistics industry curriculum, depending on the needs of the participating employer. Funding will support 10 new hires with paid training at \$13/hr and full-time employment starting at \$15/hr.



March is National Women's Month!



March is International Women's Month and the [Lancaster County Workforce Development Board](#) is celebrating women in the skilled trades! In March and April, we are supporting and empowering the women in our community to discover rewarding career pathways and training programs related to skilled trades.

Check out the [#WomeninSkilledTrades](#) Experience with [Edge Factor](#)! There are 5 Days of FREE high impact media & interactive resources to CELEBRATE [#women](#) in [#manufacturing](#), [automotive](#), [agriculture](#), [construction](#) and so much more! Take virtual fieldtrips, listen how soft skills come alive in the workplace, and explore a variety of skilled careers featuring women.

Special Preview: Watch this career profile of [Alex, an Electrical Apprentice](#) at ArcelorMittal Dofasco. Alex works to maintain machinery that creates steel slabs and coils. See how STEAM comes alive in Alex's job daily.

This specialized content is available free throughout the months of March and April.

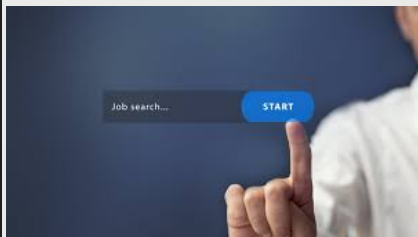
Register today for your FREE Women in Skilled Trades Experience

Want to host an awesome virtual event to celebrate [#WomeninSkilledTrades](#)? Check out our specialized Educator and Business toolkits to help you plan your event!

Educator Toolkit: How to host an awesome virtual event

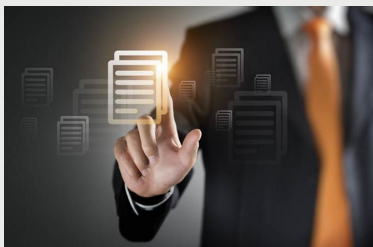
Business Toolkit: How to host an awesome virtual event

Services for Jobseekers



Subscribe to [Career Corner](#), a newsletter for jobseekers issued by PA CareerLink Lancaster County that includes hot jobs, recruitment events, and more!

Services for Employers



Does your company want to support 2 local students with their STEM based idea? Donate to the [Believer Grant](#)

Services for Students/Educators



New Now enrolling youth ages 12-15 into an incentivized [Career Awareness](#) program. Youth can earn up to \$600 while building employability skills

Need Resources? Get tons of help without leaving your car at one of our 3 **Community Drive-Thrus**

Meet with a PA CareerLink® Lancaster County team member from the comfort of your vehicle! A team member will greet you from the passenger side window to learn about your employment and training needs. Our team member will then be able to make recommendations, discuss PA CareerLink® Lancaster County services, and share other community resources with you.

Check out our "Introduction to PA CareerLink® Services" video during the event. The video will be projected at the top of every hour.

Locations:

Liberty Plaza – March 29th 3110 Liberty Plaza, Lancaster, PA 17601 Show dates: April 1st	Eschholz Public Library – March 26th 2801 Eschholz Road, Harrisburg, PA 17103 Show dates: April 2nd
--	---

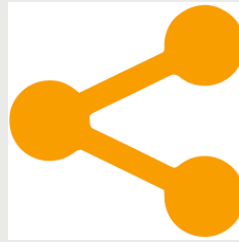
Columbia High School – March 27th
500 Columbia Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601
Show dates: April 3rd

11:00 AM – 5:00 PM each day!

Questions? Call (717) 394-4552
*Not for residents of any jurisdiction other than our homebased employer.
*For updates on cancellations, show dates subject to change.

Available while supplies last. Availability subject to change. *Not for residents of any jurisdiction other than our homebased employer. PA CareerLink® Lancaster County

Join the **Edge Factor Community Directory**. Students, parents, educators and jobseekers browsing the platform will have direct access to your company website and logo. Videos welcome too!



and awareness of career pathways.

Free Training Opportunity for a career in Construction in partnership with **Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology**. Limited Spots for **Framing Futures!**

Free Training Opportunity for a career in information technology. Earn a **CompTia Fundamentals Certificate** in partnership with **NuPaths**. Limited spots for a March start.

Learn anytime, anywhere with **SkillUp Lancaster**. Over 4,500 Business, Desktop and IT courses. This e-learning platform is free to any Lancaster resident.



Check out the latest version of the **PA CareerLink® Business Services Monthly Update**

We are currently **accepting applications** for Incumbent Worker Training grants.



Explore **Edge Factor** for access to 1,000's of cinematic e-learning tools to showcase industries and careers, teach soft skills, show how STEAM comes alive in the real world, and highlight local training and career opportunities



Did You Know?

The Lancaster County Workforce Development Board is your *premier* source for Labor Market Information.

We can provide resources and links for self-service access to local, state, and federal labor market information, as well as customized reports for your business, at no charge!

To discuss your Labor Market needs, please contact **Valerie Hatfield**.

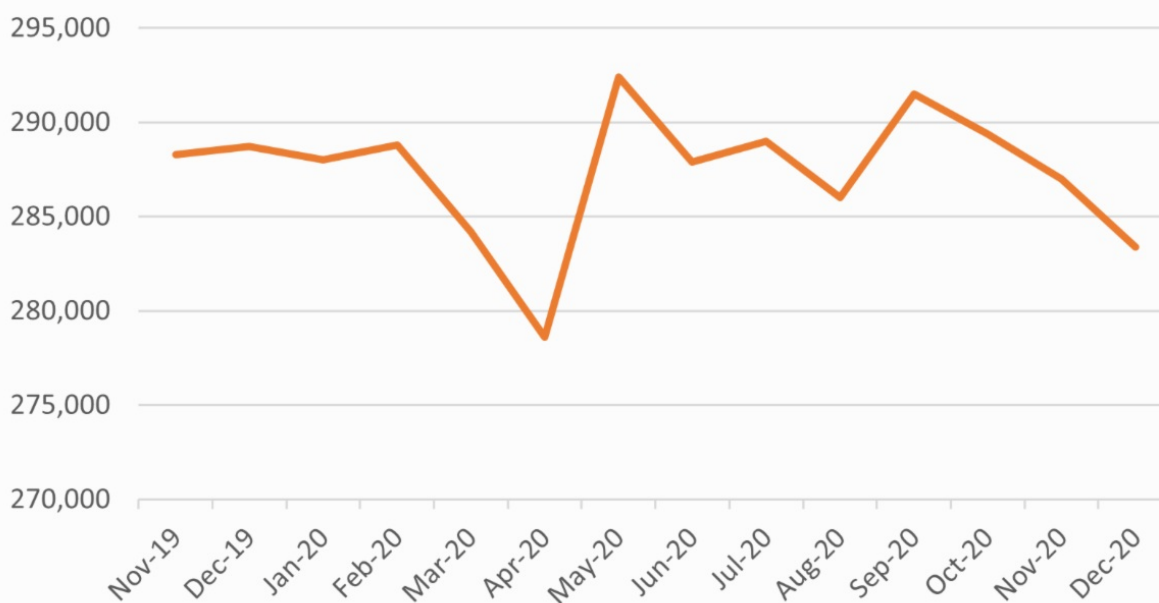
Check out the **NEW Weekly Unemployment Claims Interactive Dashboard** to see up-to-date local information

Request your free occupational wage report for your company. Know how your wages compare to the local market!

The Lancaster County Workforce Development Board tracks occupation and education trends to assist jobseekers, businesses and training providers prepare to meet the demands of the future

Why Labor Force Participation Matters

Labor Force Participation in Lancaster County



Pre-Covid, Lancaster County was enjoying a pretty healthy workforce. The labor force, including all people age 16 and older who are classified as working or looking for work, stayed level from November 2019 to February 2020 at **288,000** workers. Described as a health-induced recession, we began to see people leave the labor force in March 2020, and saw the steepest decline of the of the labor force in April 2020, where over **10,000** people **exited**, and of those who stayed, **15.2%**, or **42,000** were unemployed.

The labor force participation rate is extremely important when the number of unfilled jobs exceeds the talent pool, or when there are extreme "mismatches" in education level, transferable skills, and technical skills required for the open jobs.

We experienced two short-lived peaks in the overall labor force this past year, when numbers peaked at over **290,000** in May and September, however these peaks don't have equal impact on the livelihood of the economy. In May, over **34,000**, or **11.7%** of the total labor force was unemployed, while in September that number was almost half, or **6.2%**.

As referenced in the figure above, over **5,300 people have exited the labor pool** in Lancaster County since December 2020, and 13,000 are still facing unemployment (CWIA, 12/20). Less people in the labor force means employers will continue to feel the squeeze, and find it much harder to fill the 9,767 actively open positions in the county. It is noted that a **record number of women left the labor force** in January 2021, hitting a 33 year low labor force participation rate of 57%, accounting for 80% of those ages 20+ who left the workforce.

So how do we get people to rejoin the workforce? Especially in a pandemic? It is critical for communities to come together to tackle **supporting working families**, the **critical role of workforce training**, including opportunities for workers of color, females, and those with low educational levels, **employers reassessing workplace norms** and increasing work/life flexibility, as well as **paying livable wages**. Public health and safety continues to remain key to ensuring the best recovery.

Public Comment due March 22nd

As required by the Workforce Innovation and

Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board, LCWDB, released a draft of the PY 2021-2024 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan that outlines the vision for Lancaster County's workforce initiatives.

[Learn More](#)

Requesting Public Comment

Cathy's Corner

A note from desk of the Executive Director of the Workforce Development Board

Here it is, the one-year anniversary of when we first learned of the COVID pandemic. A lot has happened in this past year and we at the Board continue to keep you, your colleagues, families and business in our thoughts and prayers. As we enter the Spring, we are looking forward to warm weather, new relationships, the walls of our new location going up, and planning for a ribbon-cutting later in the fall. While all of that is exciting, we are not forgetting the tragedies that many have faced. In conjunction with our Board of Directors, Youth Council, CareerLink® Partners and State Partners, we continue to gather input from jobseekers and businesses; to help shape workforce delivery in Lancaster County going forward. As you may have read, we are investing a significant amount of money into incumbent worker training – helping you to upskill your current workforce and making way for new entry level team members. We are looking for good work experience opportunities for young adults who are trying to find their way in employment, during one of the most challenging times of their own lives. Our Business Service Team is partnering with local delegation members in planning three “Drive-thru” events in March, to connect with unemployed individuals with opportunities in your company. And Career Ready Lancaster (CRL!) will be launching a landing page for all career exposure activities available to people in our community. These are a few the excellent and excited things we are focusing on and invite you to join in one or more of these initiatives. We believe as your workforce system, we are only as good as we are relevant to you – so join us, 2021 is going to exciting!

To learn more about any of these initiatives, please email us at support@lancastercountywib.com and one of our team members will reach out to you.

Cathy



Contact Us



Executive Director: [Cathy Rychalsky](#)
Chief Operating Officer: [Anna Ramos](#)
Strategic Innovation Officer: [Valerie Hatfield](#)
Fiscal Manager: [Anibal Aponte](#)
Quality Assurance Manager: [Jim Black](#)
Fiscal Analyst: [Rebecca DeWitt](#)
Administrative Assistant: [Rae Miller](#)



Equal Opportunity Employer/Program.
Auxiliary aids and services available to those with disabilities upon request.