THE 13TH ANNUAL MASSACHUSETTS JOBS AND WORKFORCE SUMMIT

"From Barriers to Breakthroughs"

Tuesday, October 25, 2022

9:15 am – 4:00 pm

Devens Conference Center, Devens, MA

THE WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GROUP

EMPath (Economic Mobility Pathways)
I Have a Future
Massachusetts AFL-CIO
Massachusetts Association for Community Action
Massachusetts Business Roundtable
Massachusetts Communities Action Network
Massachusetts Workforce Association
SkillWorks: Partners for a Productive Workforce
United Way of Mass Bay

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THE 13TH ANNUAL MASSACHUSETTS JOBS AND WORKFORCE SUMMIT

"From Barriers to Breakthroughs"

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Secretary Rosalin Acosta
MA Executive Office of
Labor and Workforce Development

Kim Janey
President and CEO of EMPath
Former Mayor of Boston

Senator Jason Lewis
Senate Chair
Joint Committee on Education

Represenative Alice Hanlon Peisch
House Chair
Joint Committee on Education

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THE 13TH ANNUAL MASSACHUSETTS JOBS AND WORKFORCE SUMMIT

"From Barriers to Breakthroughs"

Tuesday, October 25, 2022

Registration & Breakfast – 9:15 AM

Program – 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Networking Reception – 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

SUMMIT SCHEDULE

10:00 AM **Welcoming Remarks**

Tim Sullivan
Project Director, Workforce Solutions Group

10:10 AM **Trends in the MA Labor Market**

Secretary Rosalin Acosta
MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Jill Ashton
Regional Administrator of the U.S Department of Labor, Women's Bureau

10:40 AM **How Accessible, Affordable Child Care Impacts Massachusetts Jobs**

Turhan Dorsey
Chief Impact Officer, Eastern Bank Foundation

Eve Gilmore
Executive Director, Edward Street Child Services

Senator Jason Lewis
Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Education

MODERATOR: Eileen McAnneny
President, Massachusetts Taxpayers foundation

Representative Alice Hanlon Peisch
House Chair, Joint Committee on Education

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THE 13TH ANNUAL MASSACHUSETTS JOBS AND WORKFORCE SUMMIT

"From Barriers to Breakthroughs"

SUMMIT SCHEDULE

11:25 AM **How to Scale Effective Programs to Build Future Talent**

Joan Christel
Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Citizenship & Global Inclusion, State Street

Nancy Luc
Deputy Director, Building Pathways

MODERATOR: Joanne Pokaski
Assistant Vice President of Workforce Development, Beth Israel Lahey Health
Chair, Massachusetts Workforce Board

Laura Z. Stout
Director of Contract Operations, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
President, Empowering Abilities Employee Resource Group

12:00 PM **LUNCH PROGRAM – Award Ceremony:**

2022 Lifetime Achievement Award ..... **Representative Joseph F. Wagner**
2022 Employer of the Year Award ..... **Citizens**
2022 Rising Workforce Leader Award ..... **Amelia Diaz,** I Have A Future
WSG Announces New Award and Recipient

1:10 PM **Overcoming Post-Pandemic Recruitment Challenges: Connecting with Untapped Talent**

Maura Geary
Executive Director, MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center

MODERATOR: Rachel Kaprielian
Global Government Relations & Public Policy Director, U.S. Government Relations, McDonald's Corporation

Ramona Rivera-Reno
Executive Director, Reentry & Recovery Programs, MassHire Holyoke Career Center

Tamara Soraluz
Chief Program Officer, UTEC

1:50 PM **Creating Equity in Workforce Development**

Kim Janey
President and CEO, EMPath | Former Mayor of Boston

3:00 PM **NETWORKING RECEPTION**

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ...

Kathie Mainzer

Vice President, Non-Profit Practice, The Strategy Group

The Workforce Solutions Group (WSG) would like to give a special thank you to Kathie Mainzer, former Executive Director. Her dedication to workforce equity manifests itself in many forms. Most notably, Kathie has advocated for resources to improve education and training for low wage earners and accessible career pathways and employment opportunities for under-resourced youth.

Working closely with WSG's Executive Team, Kathie focused on establishing a line item and permanent funding stream for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, increasing funding for YouthWorks, Learn to Earn, the Career Technical Initiative (CTI) and many other programs that upskill youth and adult learners. With her leadership, WSG has successfully advocated for over $80 million in new resources for workforce development, including sector-based training, apprenticeships and career technical education, resulting in thousands of jobs and increased wages.

Alongside the Executive Team, Kathie has spearheaded 11 Annual Massachusetts Jobs and Workforce Summits, bringing together employers, unions, youth leaders, legislators and policy makers to build a better, more inclusive economy. WSG could not be more honored to have had the opportunity to work alongside Kathie. She is greatly appreciated for her many years of service and the contributions she has made to the betterment and transformation of our workforce development system. Wishing Kathie all the best on this next chapter and success in all her future endeavors!

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Google Cambridge is proud to be an annual supporter of the Massachusetts Jobs & Workforce Summit. In partnership with many providers in the region, Google offers professional career certificates, digital skills, resume help and more.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Secretary Rosalin Acosta

MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Rosalin Acosta is the Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In her role, Secretary Acosta manages the Commonwealth's workforce development and labor departments to ensure that workers, employers, and the unemployed have the tools, training, and safety resources needed to succeed in the Massachusetts economy. Secretary Acosta also Chairs the Workforce Skills Cabinet alongside the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Housing and Economic Development.

Prior to joining the Baker-Polito Administration, she was a widely respected financial and banking service professional with over thirty years of experience in Greater Boston financial institutions. Secretary Acosta was a Director and Planning Committee Member of the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board and was appointed a Northern Essex Community College Trustee by Governor Baker. She has been named one of Boston's Most Influential Women by the Women of Harvard Club and El Planeta's Top 100 Most Influential Hispanics in Massachusetts. She has also been awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA). Born in Cuba, she earned a Bachelor of Arts from Wesleyan University in Connecticut where she was a member of the Women's Varsity Ice Hockey Team. She is the proud mother of five children.

Jill Ashton

Regional Administrator, U.S Department of Labor, Women's Bureau

Jill Ashton serves as the Northeast Regional Administrator for the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. She is a leader and activist in the women's advancement community. From 2009-2021, Jill served as the executive director of the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women. In the 2015-2016 Massachusetts legislative session, Ashton led the coalition of organizations that successfully stewarded the passage of the Equal Pay Act, a piece of groundbreaking economic justice legislation that, among other provisions, prevents hiring managers from inquiring about salary history. Jill is committed to developing talent among young women and men, having mentored more than 200 students through the commission's robust internship program and beyond. She currently serves as the Previous Past President of the National Association of Commissions on Women, with which she has increased peer-to-peer learning opportunities to encourage the success of member commissions. A graduate of the Program for Women in Politics and Public Policy at UMass-Boston, she now proudly serves as a member of the Center's advisory board.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Joan Christel

Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Citizenship & Global Inclusion, State Street

Joan is Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Citizenship & Global Inclusion for State Street. In this role, she oversees State Street's global commitment to corporate citizenship and social responsibility; inclusion, diversity and equity; employee engagement; and culture transformation. She serves as President of State Street Foundation and also represents State Street on the Boston Women's Workforce Council and the Massachusetts Business Roundtable.

Previously, Joan held the role of Chief Administrative Officer for Global Human Resources & Corporate Citizenship. Prior to joining State Street in 2017, Joan worked for a large health insurer and several consulting firms where she assisted clients undergoing significant transformation with a focus on organizational change, human capital management, and operational excellence.

Joan holds Master of Business Administration and Master of Social Work degrees from Boston College and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. An active community volunteer, she chairs the Board of Advisors for Boston Ballet.

Turahn Dorsey

Chief Impact Officer, Eastern Bank Foundation

Turahn Dorsey is a researcher, policymaker and strategist whose career has focused on systems change and civic innovation. Dorsey is currently Eastern Bank Foundation's Chief Impact Officer focusing on investing in economic inclusion and mobility solutions, including the transformation of early care and learning systems. Additionally, he is the co-founder of the Jazz Urbane Cafe, a new arts hub and full service restaurant slated to open in Boston's Nubian Square in 2023 and is the current board chair for the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology. Finally, Dorsey is the former Chief of Education for the City of Boston, having served in Mayor Martin J. Walsh's cabinet from September 2014 to November 2018.

Maura Geary

Executive Director, MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center

Ms. Geary is in her first year as the Executive Director of the MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center (MHFHCC), where she leads a dynamic team of workforce professionals who improve employment outcomes for job seekers and employers in the largest and most rural region in Massachusetts. Previously, Maura was the Director of Workforce Services at MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, where she managed initiatives designed to strengthen collaboration between workforce, education, and community partners.

Following a successful rowing career at the University of Washington, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in English literature, Maura was a rowing coach in Seattle, then relocated to her home state of Massachusetts where she taught GED classes to young parents in Springfield. Her passion for increasing access to education and employment opportunities for disadvantaged populations led her to pursue a Master's degree at the School of Public Policy, UMass, Amherst.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Eve Gilmore

Executive Director, Edward Street Child Services

Eve Gilmore is the Executive Director of Edward Street, having worked throughout the past decade to advance awareness, professionalism and the importance of high-quality early education and care for young children and their families. A non-profit professional for 40 years, she has also held positions at the United Way of Central Massachusetts and the YWCA of Central Massachusetts and remained active with multiple boards and committees in the fields of early education and care and social services. A Worcester resident, she graduated from the College of the Holy Cross, has a MSW degree from Boston College School of Social Work, and has raised three children. She is a recent recipient of the YWCA's Katharine F. Erskine Award.

Kim Janey

President and CEO, EMPath | Former Mayor of Boston

Kim Michelle Janey is the President and CEO of Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath), a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families living in poverty to dramatically improve their economic mobility. EMPath offers a unique combination of direct services; a learning network of human services organizations; and research and advocacy for what works. This "virtuous circle" allows each part of the organization's work to inform what it knows, does, and shares with others to seed systemic change. Janey made history when she was sworn in as Boston's first woman and first Black mayor, successfully leading the city through a multitude of unprecedented challenges, including the COVID-19 global pandemic. Janey began her tenure with a citywide agenda of recovery, reopening, and renewal to address systemic inequities exposed and exacerbated by the Covid- 19 pandemic. Janey re-opened Boston's economy and its public schools by centering equity and prioritizing health and wellness. She invested millions to support small businesses, expanded protections for renters and homeowners, and launched fare-free public transit. Under Mayor Janey's leadership, Boston experienced its safest summer in 5 years and became one of the most vaccinated big cities in America.

Prior to becoming Mayor, Janey made history in 2017 when she was elected to the Boston City Council as the first woman to represent District 7. In 2020, she was elected by her peers to serve as President of the most diverse City Council in Boston's history. Devoting her life to public service, Janey has 25 years of experience in the non- profit sector. In her role at Massachusetts Advocates for Children, Janey championed systemic policy reforms to increase equity, excellence, access, and opportunity in Boston Public Schools. Prior to that, Janey worked as a Community Organizer, advocating for affordable, quality child care.

Most recently, Ms. Janey served as a Spring 2022 Resident Fellow at the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School where she designed and led a study group entitled Racial Justice and Recovery: Leading American Cities to a More Equitable Future. She also served as an Inaugural Fellow at the Berry Institute of Politics at Salem State University. Kim Janey has been recognized for her years of service with a number of awards, including the Boston NAACP Difference Maker Award in 2015, the Sapphire Award in 2017, a Community Leadership Award in 2018, and the Hubie Jones Award in 2020. In 2021 Janey was named one of Boston's Most Impactful Black Women and listed in Boston Magazine's 100 Most Influential Bostonians. A proud fourth generation Roxbury resident, Janey comes from a long line of educators, entrepreneurs, artists, and advocates. Janey was raised with values that guide her to this day: the importance of education, the power of community organizing, and the fundamental principles of equity and justice.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Rachel Kaprielian

Director, Global Government Relations & Public Policy, U.S. Government Relation, McDonald's Corporation

Rachel Kaprielian works for McDonald's Corporation where she is Director, Global Government Relations and Public Policy for U.S./East. She came to the corporate sector after a distinguished career in federal, state and municipal government.

She was appointed by President Barack Obama to the role of US HHS Regional Director for Region 1 (New England) where she worked with public and private sector stakeholders on federal health care policy including the Affordable Care Act's implementation, its policy innovation models, and active demonstration grants. Prior to that she served in executive and legislative roles in Massachusetts as Secretary of Labor and Workforce; as Registrar of the MA Registry of Motor Vehicles; and as a 6-term member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives where she focused on health care policy and economic development. She began her political career the year after she graduated from college when she was elected City Councilor-at-Large in her hometown of Watertown, Massachusetts.

A lifelong Massachusetts resident, Rachel earned her B.A. from the College of the Holy Cross, her J.D. from Suffolk University Law School and her M.P.A. from Harvard University's Kennedy School. In 2020, she received the McDonald's "President Award" an award given annually to the top 1% of performers from around the globe.

Rachel also serves on several boards which presently include Ronald McDonald House Charities, Suffolk University Law School and Triangle, Inc.

Senator Jason Lewis

Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Education

State Senator Jason Lewis proudly represents the people of the Fifth Middlesex District of Massachusetts, which includes the cities and towns of Malden, Melrose, Reading, Stoneham, Wakefield, and parts of Winchester. First elected to the Senate in 2014, he has delivered results for his district and been a progressive leader for the Commonwealth.

Senator Lewis has long championed educational equity and led the effort to pass the Student Opportunity Act in 2019, landmark legislation to ensure that every child in Massachusetts has access to a high quality public education. Senator Lewis also led the effort in 2018 to raise the state's minimum wage to $15 an hour and to create a new universal paid family and medical leave program. He was recognized for this achievement by being named an Honorable Mention for the 2018 Bostonians of the Year by the Boston Globe.

Senator Lewis is a member of Senate President Karen Spilka's leadership team. He serves as the Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Education, the Assistant Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means and the Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Reimagining Massachusetts: Post-Pandemic Resiliency. He also co-founded and co-chairs the legislature's Prevention for Health Caucus and Zero Waste Caucus.

The Boston Foundation is pleased to support *From Barriers to Breakthroughs*, the Workforce Solutions Group's 2022 Annual Massachusetts Jobs & Workforce Summit. We are proud that our own workforce initiative, SkillWorks: Partners for a Productive Workforce, is a member of the Workforce Solutions Group. TBF has a deep commitment to breaking through all barriers and advocating for the state's agenda for skills training and workforce development.

For more about the Boston Foundation and SkillWorks, visit tbf.org.

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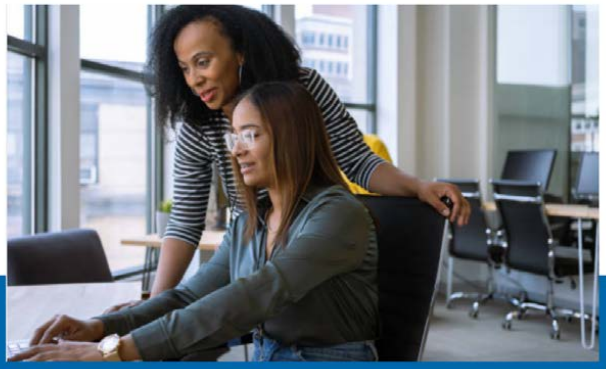

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Nancy Luc

Deputy Director, Building Pathways

Nancy is the Deputy Director of Building Pathways. She is a native of Boston and a first generation Haitian-American. She credits much of her grit and determination to her parents and her upbringing. Often described as a mission driven problem solver passionate about the community, Nancy has garnered praise and attention for her work, winning both national and local awards in leadership and community development. Currently, Nancy spearheads Building Pathways diversity, equity, and inclusion work through the Rise Up Curriculum and works to reduce barriers to entry into the building trades through work with Care that Works. By investing in changing the culture of the construction industry while also eliminating barriers, her aim is to create an environment that fosters a shift in the industry so women, people of color, veterans, and other people traditionally left out of the building trades can reach their full potential. Her belief is by giving our community access to a network, resources, and skills they will provide for both their family and the community exponentially.

Eileen McAnneny

President, Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation

Eileen McAnneny joined the staff of the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation as its President in February, 2015. Founded in 1932, the Taxpayers Foundation is widely recognized as the state's premier public policy organization dealing with state spending, tax and economic policies. The Foundation's record of high quality research and non-partisan analysis has earned the organization broad credibility on Beacon Hill and across the state.

Ms. McAnneny, an attorney, comes to the Foundation after more than 20 years of government relations, public policy, advocacy and managerial experience in both the public and private sectors in Massachusetts. She held executive level positions at the Massachusetts Society of CPAs, serving as its President and CEO; at Fidelity Investments as a Director of Public Policy; and at Associated Industries of Massachusetts as its Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and Associate General Counsel. In recognition of her tax expertise, McAnneny served as an appointee of the Speaker of the House to the 2007 Tax Commission. McAnneny is co-founder of the Massachusetts Employers Health Coalition, an organization dedicated to reducing health care costs by using education and information to affect employer and employee purchasing decisions. She is a Commissioner of the Group Insurance Commission, on the Board of the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education and the Secretary of the National Taxpayers Conference. She is a past Director of the Cooperative Central Bank and the Massachusetts Health Quality Partnership. Ms. McAnneny is a cum laude graduate of Tufts University from where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science. She earned her juris doctorate in law from Suffolk University Law School.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Representative Alice Hanlon Peisch

House Chair, Joint Committee on Education

Alice Hanlon Peisch is a lawyer and state representative for the 14th Norfolk District that includes her hometown of Wellesley, the town of Weston, and Precinct 4 in Wayland. After practicing law for several years, Representative Peisch became involved in Wellesley's town government. During the 1990's she served on and chaired both the Advisory (i.e. Finance) Committee and School Committee, and in 2000 was elected Town Clerk. With a strong desire to improve public education across the Commonwealth and ensure the district had strong representation in the Legislature, Representative Peisch ran for an open seat in 2002 and entered the Massachusetts House of Representatives in January 2003. She has been the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Education since 2011. In 2016, Representative Peisch was appointed to a four year term to fill the Democratic Legislator seat on the National Assessment Governing Board by US Education Secretary John King, and was re-appointed to another four year term in 2020. She is currently serving as Vice Chair of the Board.

During her tenure as Chair of the Education Committee, laws relating to the oversight and governance of education collaboratives, improvements to the anti-bullying statute and reform of the state's English Learner program requirements have been enacted. During the 2015-2016 session, Representative Peisch co-chaired the Foundation Budget Review Commission, which was charged with reviewing the state's formula for calculating funding for school districts. The Commission's recommendations ultimately led to the enactment of the 2019 Student Opportunity Act, a $1.5 billion increase in state education funding aimed at closing the achievement gap and providing school districts with additional resources for all of the Commonwealth's students. During the 2021-22 legislative session, Representative Peisch co-chaired the Early Education & Care Economic Review Commission along with her committee co-chair Senator Jason Lewis. This Commission held public meetings and developed legislative and policy recommendations aimed at reforming the early education and child care sectors to expand access to affordable, high-quality and sustainable care for the Commonwealth's children and families.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Joanne Pokaski

Assistant Vice President of Workforce Development, Beth Israel Lahey Health
Chair, MassHire State Workforce Board

Joanne Pokaski is the Assistant Vice President of Workforce Development at Beth Israel Lahey Health system, the second largest private employer in Massachusetts with over 35,000 employees. Her team sponsors employees' training and promotion to hard-to-fill roles, supports all BILH employees in their career development, and partners with community organizations to connect community members to jobs and careers at BILH.

Prior to her current role, Joanne served as Senior Director of Workforce Development and Community Relations at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC). Prior to BIDMC, Joanne served as director of Boston Career Link, a one-stop career center based at Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries. She has also worked at the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Clinton White House and as Special Assistant to the Administrator of the Medicare and Medicaid programs during the Clinton Administration. Joanne earned a Bachelor's degree in Government from Harvard College and a Master's degree in Public Affairs from Princeton University.

Joanne is the Chair of the Massachusetts Workforce Board and a member of Boston's Workforce Board. She serves on the board of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. Joanne founded and for seven years chaired the Boston Healthcare Careers Consortium, which convenes Boston's healthcare employers, academic institutions and workforce system to improve training pathways that lead to healthcare jobs. Joanne was a founding member and for three years chaired the executive committee of CareerSTAT, an initiative of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions encouraging more US healthcare employers to invest in frontline workers.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Ramona Rivera-Reno

Executive Director, Reentry & Recovery Programs, Masshire Holyoke

Ramona Rivera-Reno is the Executive Director of the Regional Reentry & Recovery Program of MassHire Holyoke, a collaborative effort between the Hampden County Workforce Board, the Hampden County Sheriff's Department and two MassHire Career Centers in Holyoke and Springfield, MA. A community leader with an expertise in building partnerships, developing programs, and strategic planning, Ramona has designed, implemented and presented effective employment readiness programs for ex-offenders for over 20 years.

In recent years, Ramona has broadened the scope of her work to include customized programming in support of individuals with substance use disorders. These efforts include, co-creating the curriculum Paths to Empowerment (P2E), a program designed to support people in early recovery build confidence and obtain work readiness skills to re-enter the workforce. She has been partner and consultant to Access to Recovery (ATR) since 2010, training facilitators of P2E and collaborating on program deliverables.

In March 2022, Ramona and her team successfully launched the "Recovery Ready Workplace" (RRW) initiative. The RRW Initiative is a voluntary program to enable local businesses to support employees and their family members who are in recovery from addiction. The mission of the RRW Initiative is to create a culture of support for employees who have been impacted by substance use. MassHire Holyoke's RRW team will help businesses build this culture through educational tools, resources, and coaching so they can establish an environment where people in recovery feel valued and people with addiction have the support they need to get better.

Ramona has been one of the region's front-runners to address workforce development issues for adult offenders using a holistic approach. Her program has received state recognition and has served as a model for re-entry programs under the Massachusetts Department of Labor. By working closely with government, business, labor, educational institutions and training providers, she has leveraged funds for on-the-job training opportunities that have been extremely successful for ex-offenders. In addition, for over a decade, Ramona has fostered strong relationships with hundreds of employers to expand workforce opportunities by informing potential employers of the financial benefits available through various hiring incentives such as: Work opportunity Tax Credits, Hiring incentives, On-the- Job Training Programs, and Federal Bonding.

Tamara Soraluz

Chief Programs Officer, UTEC

Tamara Soraluz is a Peruvian immigrant who has worked with young adults for over 10 years. She received a Master in Social Work degree from Boston University and later in her career became the Principal of an alternative charter high school in Lawrence, MA. In her current role as Chief Programming Officer Tamara oversees all youth-facing programming which includes education, workforce and intensive coaching support for Lowell, Lawrence and Haverhill young adults. Throughout her career Tamara has found that supporting young people's success must include supporting the whole person and allowing young people to make mistakes while helping them build a strong safety net from which they are able to navigate barriers and opportunities.

SkillWorks is a proud member of the Workforce Solutions Group and sponsor of the

13th Annual Massachusetts Jobs & Workforce Summit

"From Barriers to Breakthroughs"

SkillWorks is committed to deep engagement in policy advocacy work to raise the visibility of the workforce development system in Massachusetts and its necessary role in supporting workers and employers, and driving equitable systems change. We could not be more proud of our partnership with the WSG and our shared leadership on these issues!

SkillWorks

SkillWorks is a workforce development funders collaborative focused on bringing stakeholders together to build an economy that works for employees and employers alike. SkillWorks is unique as a workforce development convener, grantmaker and thought leader in the Greater Boston Area.

Please follow us at www.skill-works.org or on twitter @SkillWorks_MA

Laura Z. Stout

Director of Contract Operations, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
President, Empowering Abilities Employee Resource Group

Laura Stout is Director of Contract Operations at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts leading an operations team responsible for the implementation and maintenance of provider contracts. Laura is President of Empowering Abilities, the company's disability inclusion Employee Resource Group. This cross-functional team of associates and leaders is dedicated to promoting and evolving disability awareness and programs company wide. In July 2021, Blue Cross was named one of the Best Places to Work for Disability Inclusion on the Disability Equality Index. She has held previous director roles at Blue Cross in the Provider Education and communications team and in the Executive Office, where Laura supported the company's Chief of Staff and the President and CEO in executing a variety of business and organizational activities. Laura is a strong advocate for the disability community, bringing a passionate voice and working closely with those who are disabled to achieve their personal and professional goals. She's been actively involved in the Disability In Work Without Limits Executive and Business Advisory Board which is a statewide network of engaged employers and innovative, collaborative partners that aim to increase employment among individuals with disabilities.

Laura was recently honored as Governor Charlie Baker's sole appointee to a special commission tasked with helping prepare Massachusetts for its economic future as the state begins to emerge from a global pandemic that has evolved how people work. The Massachusetts "Special Commission to Conduct a Comprehensive Study Relative to the Impact of Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Global Trade, Access to New Forms of Data and the Internet of Things on the Workforce, Businesses and Economy," (aka Future of Work Commission). Laura is the sole member from the health care sector, with a special lens towards how the future of work will impact individuals in the disability community.

Also, Governor Charles Baker appointed Laura to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination Advisory Board in September 2018. The Commission is focused on eradicating discrimination in the Commonwealth by investigating and prosecuting complaints of discrimination that occur in employment, housing, public places, access to education, lending, and credit. Attorney General Maura Healey appointed Laura to the Disability Rights Advisory Committee. The committee c onsults with and advises AG Healey and her staff on matters pertaining to inclusion, access, and equality for individuals with disabilities.

Laura was honored by Blue Cross in May 2019 with the Excellence in Service award. This is the pinnacle award who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to service both internally and externally and embodies the core values of inclusion, compassion, and leadership. Laura was recognized by Working Mother magazine as a Working Mother of the Year for 2019.

Laura is a member of the Lurie Institute for Disability Policy / Brandeis Heller School for Social Policy and Management Parent Empowerment Project Advisory Group and Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project Disability and Pregnancy Advisory Group. Laura is also a member of the Brandeis University Center for Disability and Pregnancy Research. Laura works with Little People of America, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides support and information to people of short stature and their families. Laura is a parent mentor in the Massachusetts Family Ties Program, a network for families and professionals supporting children and youth with special needs. At home, Laura and her husband Therin enjoy parenting their two teenage daughters.

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The **Workforce Solutions Group (WSG)** is a statewide advocacy coalition that brings together business, labor, community, and workforce organizations to advance a clear and unified policy agenda for workforce development. WSG advocates for systems change and alignment among workforce, education, and economic development agencies in Massachusetts, and serves as the leading advocate for skills training for lower income adults and youth across the Commonwealth.

WSG works with policy makers, stakeholders, training providers, young people, and employers to better align the workforce system and increase resources so residents can earn sustaining wages and employers can access a skilled workforce needed to grow our state's economy. Over the years, WSG's advocacy, in partnership with the Legislature, has added over $135 million in new funding for workforce development and has helped spearhead changes in policy and programs that continue to impact Massachusetts' workforce and education systems.

WSG MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- **Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath)**
- **I Have a Future**
- **Massachusetts AFL-CIO**
- **Massachusetts Association for Community Action (MASSCAP)**
- **Massachusetts Business Roundtable (MA Business Roundtable)**
- **Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN)**
- **Massachusetts Workforce Association (MWA)**
- **SkillWorks**
- **United Way of Mass Bay and Merrimack Valley**

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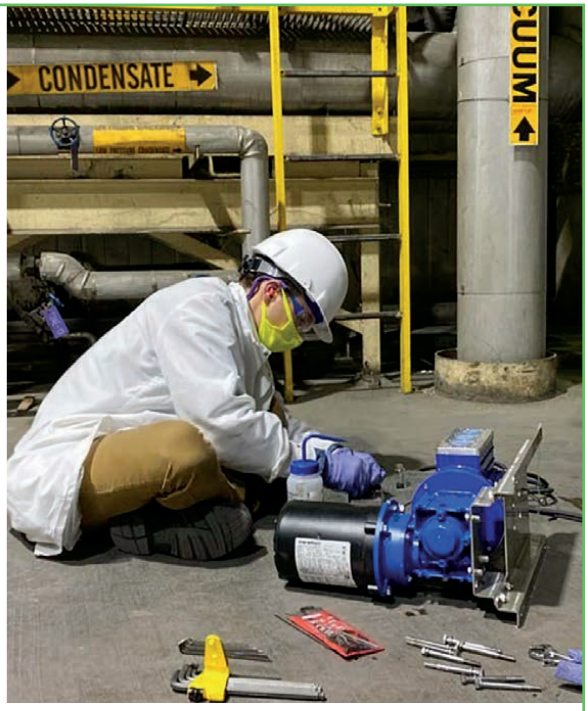

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Kaitlyn Bean
Deputy Director
SkillWorks at The Boston Foundation

Keturah Brewster
Executive Director
I Have A Future

Robert Bower
Special Advisor to the President
for Workforce Development
Massachusetts AFL-CIO

Marybeth Campbell
Executive Director
Worcester Community Action Council

John Drinkwater
Workforce Development Specialist
Massachusetts AFL-CIO

Lewis Finfer
Senior Issue Advisor
Massachusetts Communities Action Network

Andre Green
Executive Director
SkillWorks at The Boston Foundation

Lauren Jones
Executive Vice President
MA Business Roundtable

Ruthie Liberman, MPA
Vice President of Public Policy
EMPath

Tonja Mettlach
Executive Director
Massachusetts Workforce
Association

Christopher Mills
Deputy Director
SkillWorks at The Boston Foundation

Christine Niccoli
Director in Community Impact
United Way of Massachusetts Bay
and Merrimack Valley

Lauren Nwagboli
Deputy Director
Workforce Solutions Group

Tim Sullivan
Project Director
Workforce Solutions Group

Raija Vaisanen
Associate Director
Massachusetts Workforce Association

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GROUP MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

Kaitlyn Bean

Deputy Director, SkillWorks at The Boston Foundation

Kaitlyn Bean has nearly 10 years of experience in workforce development, spending the majority of that time as part of a team of two managing the SkillWorks workforce development funder collaborative and strategy at The Boston Foundation. Kaitlyn is currently the Senior Program Officer for SkillWorks, managing the SkillWorks grant portfolio and relationships with key partners and stakeholders. Kaitlyn also represents SkillWorks on various external partnerships and coalitions, including the Boston Healthcare Careers Consortium, Workforce Solutions Group and the National Skills Coalition's SkillSPAN initiative. Kaitlyn began her career in workforce development at Root Cause, as a social innovation researcher focused on best practices in youth and adult workforce development. She graduated from Northeastern University with a Dual Bachelor's degree in Political Science and International Affairs.

Robert Bower

Special Advisor to the President for Workforce Development, Massachusetts AFL-CIO

Robert's over 40 year career in the labor movement began on the shop floor at Raytheon, where he was an active union member and eventually Vice President of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1505. Bob joined the Massachusetts AFL-CIO in 1998, serving as Rapid Response Coordinator, then rose to Political Director in 2004.

In his current role Bob continues to direct the workforce development programs. He is the Chair of the Metro Southwest Regional Employment Board's Career Center Committee and works with Community Labor United as the Senior Political Strategist. Bob earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Labor Studies from the University of Massachusetts Boston.

Keturah Brewster

Executive Director, I Have A Future

Keturah Brewster has played various roles at I Have A Future over the last ten years and now serves as the Executive Director. Through her leadership, she supports young people and organizers around the state in order to increase youth opportunity by nurturing their leadership, challenging political leaders, and engaging with members of our communities in dialogues that shift narratives and build youth-led movements. Keturah is a certified Youth Worker, and in 2017, she and a colleague won the Advocacy Champion Award. In 2019, Keturah taught an undergraduate sociology class about the importance of organizing at UMASS Boston.

Keturah's passion is centered in the liberation of marginalized communities specifically in healing/spirituality work. Keturah lives in Dorchester and is pursuing her Bachelor's in Communications at UMASS Boston.

Marybeth Campbell

Executive Director, Worcester Community Action Council

Marybeth Campbell previously served as the executive director of SkillWorks, a public/private partnership to improve workforce development in Boston and across the Commonwealth by helping low-income residents move to family-sustaining jobs and helping employers find and retain skilled employees. She has nineteen years of experience in public policy, public education and project management in the areas of clean energy, education, economic and workforce development. From 2012-2014, Campbell served as the Commonwealth's first cross-secretariat Director of Education and Workforce Development advising the Patrick Administration's cabinet secretaries in the Executive Offices of Education, Labor and Workforce and Housing and Economic Development on workforce and education policy development, program strategy and implementation.

She also served as the state's first Workforce Development Director at the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center establishing national-leading green jobs programs by working with higher education, vocational schools, labor organizations and community based nonprofits to develop training and workforce capacity that supports the Commonwealth's growing clean energy industry. She also served as Public Education Manager for the former Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust where she oversaw two education initiatives to increase awareness among teachers, students and the public about the benefits of clean energy, and as a senior research analyst for the Massachusetts House of Representatives Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. Campbell earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Providence College and attended Suffolk University Law School.

John Drinkwater

Workforce Development Specialist, Massachusetts AFL-CIO

John Drinkwater joined the Massachusetts AFL-CIO in 2006 as a Political and Legislative Intern, and has since served the organization in a variety of roles including Chief of Staff and Legislative Director, in which he helped to pass pro-worker legislation including protections for temporary workers, a domestic workers' bill of rights, and a higher minimum wage. Currently, John serves as the Senior Workforce Development Specialist and assists with the AFL-CIO's Dislocated Worker Assistance Program and efforts to provide training opportunities and career pathways to incumbent, under-employed and unemployed workers. John is currently serving his first term on the Lowell City Council after being elected in November 2019.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GROUP MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

Lewis Finfer

Community Organizer and Senior Issue Advisor, Massachusetts Communities Action Network

Lew is a Community Organizer and Senior Issue Advisor at Massachusetts Communities Action Network where he had served as Director from 1985-January 2021. Has been an organizer in Massachusetts since 1970 with neighborhood groups in Dorchester in the 1970's, as Director of MA Tenants Organization and MA Affordable Housing Alliance in the 1980's, and then worked to form a network of 6 faith based community improvement organizations and one youth led organization, including serving as founding Director and Co-Director of Greater Boston Interfaith Organization. We are a founding member of the Workforce Solutions Group.

Andre Green

Executive Director, SkillWorks at The Boston Foundation

Andre has served on the Somerville School Committee since 2016 and is currently serving his second term as Chair. His term in office has been marked by a focus on Equity, with Somerville passing policies on Racial Equity, improving Sanctuary City Protections, and making groundbreaking protections in the protection of students and staff of nonbinary gender. Somerville also led in developing robust and equitable safety measures for COVID.

Since 2020 he has also served as the Executive Director of SkillWorks. Founded in 2003 and housed at the Boston Foundation,SkillWorks is a funder collaborative that brings together philanthropy, government, community organizations and employers to address the twin goals of helping low-skill, low-income individuals attain family-supporting jobs and helping employers find and retain skilled workers.

After spending a few years teaching 5th grade and consulting in IT, Andre began his community organizing career at YouthBuild, where he started in Data Services before moving on to serve as a Senior Manager for Field Mobilization. In this role, Andre was responsible for coordinating federal advocacy efforts of 240+ local YouthBuild programs in 45 states. Andre later served as Founding Senior Project Manager at the On Solid Ground Coalition, a group of 40 Massachusetts organizations working on comprehensive cross-sector solutions to end family homelessness. Here, Andre organized the work of the Coalition by developing legislative strategies, drafting and implementing MOUs and other governance documents, coordinating the separate advocacy efforts of member organizations, and steering the strategic planning process.

In 2016, Andre was selected to serve as the first Political Director of MASSCreative, where he led their efforts to have access to Arts Education be included in the state's education assessment plan, as well as filing the organization's first legislation, aimed at expanding public art in the state. Most recently, he has served as a transitional Executive Director with FairTest, a national advocacy organization going through a generational change as the founding staff and board move to retirement. He stepped into this role after leading a yearlong strategic planning process. In his time with FairTest, he testified before two state legislatures, found new foundation funding and launched two new campaigns to bring testing as a prominent issue in federal politics.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GROUP MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

Lauren Jones

Executive Vice President, MA Business Roundtable
Co-Chair, Workforce Solutions Group

Lauren serves as the Executive Vice President, focusing on policy and communications and working closely with the President & CEO and in collaboration with the Roundtable's Board and Executive Committee to develop strategies, initiatives, and programs consistent with the Roundtable's mission. As part of her portfolio, Lauren leads workforce development policy and strategy for the Roundtable.

Lauren has over 15 years of professional experience, spanning local and state government and the private and non-profit sectors, and specializing in economic development, workforce development, communications, and business marketing. Prior to joining the Roundtable, Lauren served as the Massachusetts State Director for Apprenti, leading the national non-profit's expansion in Massachusetts by working with companies to cultivate and diversify tech talent via registered apprenticeship. During her time in local government, Lauren created and led the Business Strategy Unit for Mayor Walsh's Office of Economic Development in the City of Boston, supporting business attraction and employer engagement. While working in state government, Lauren held multiple roles during the Patrick-Murray Administration including Director of Policy & Communications for Lt. Governor Tim Murray; Director of Communications in the MA Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development; and Senior Program Manager of the Economic Development Incentive Program in the Massachusetts Office of Business Development.

Through her leadership on the Roundtable, Lauren is the Co-Chair of the Workforce Solutions Group and serves on the Board for the Massachusetts Workforce Association, the Board of Directors for the Boston Private Industry Council, and served on the Future of Work Commission. Lauren also serves on the Board of Trustees for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's New England Chapter. Lauren holds a Master in Public Administration from Northeastern University, and has a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Providence College.

Ruthie Liberman, MPA

Vice President of Public Policy, EMPath

Ruthie serves as Vice President for Public Policy for EMPath. In this role she serves as the Chief policy strategist on national and state policy related to economic mobility. She provides leadership in the areas of education and workforce development, affordable housing, and work supports (including child care) to create public policy leading family economic stability. Ruthie has a Bachelor's Degree from Pomona College in government and public policy as well a Masters Degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Ruthie has worked in major hospital settings such as Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Brigham and Women's Hospital. She also ran a Pediatric and Family AIDS program at Dimock Community Health Center in Roxbury for 6 years. While living in California, Ruthie served as a Senate Fellow in the California Legislature and as the Director of Public Policy for Planned Parenthood Los Angeles.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GROUP MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

Tonja Mettlach

Executive Director, Massachusetts Workforce Association

Co-Chair, Workforce Solutions Group

Tonja Mettlach is the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Workforce Association and Co-Chair of the Workforce Solutions Group. Over her career, Tonja has worked in the private, public and nonprofit sectors. Previously, Tonja was the Director of Government Affairs for the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network (MNN). In this role, Tonja led MNN's state and federal advocacy efforts and collaborated with government officials and external stakeholders on policy issues impacting the nonprofit sector. Tonja previously worked at the MA State House, first as chief of staff to former Representative Tom Conroy on the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development and then as committee counsel for Representative Jennifer Benson, House Chair of the Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee. Tonja holds a B.A. and M.S. from Clark University and a J.D. from the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University.

Christopher Mills

Executive Assistant, SkillWorks at The Boston Foundation

Chris attended college at Bard College at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington, MA. In 2001 Chris joined the Army as an infantry soldier, serving in Washington state, Oklahoma, and Kentucky. They were promoted from Private to Sergeant First Class, leading anywhere from 3 soldiers to 64. Chris was awarded the Air Assault, Pathfinder, Drill Sergeant, Expert Infantry and Combat Infantry badges. They have been decorated for courage under enemy fire. In addition to that Chris conducted all human resources, operations, and logistical work for a 131-person department. Including, but not limited to managing training attendance, payroll, awards, promotions, professional record keeping, budget management, professional writing, official travel, and international project management. Chris retired from the Army in 2021. Chris joined SkillWorks in 2021 as an executive assistant, where they are excited to start a new career in workforce development. Chris is married and has two children.

Christine Niccoli

Director in Community Impact, United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley

Christine's focus at United Way is supporting economic inclusion and wealth building initiatives. This includes capacity building for United Way's financial coaching network. Christine manages United Way's Financial Empowerment Learning Institute and financial and career coaches Community of Practice meetings. Christine comes to the United Way with several years of direct service experience in youth education and human services. Additionally, she led partnership engagement and program delivery at Rosie's Place and Science Club for Girls.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GROUP MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

Lauren Nwagboli

Deputy Director, Workforce Solutions Group

Lauren has over 3 years of professional experience building start up companies and managing operations and social media. Prior to joining the Workforce Solutions Group, Lauren served as an Operations Coordinator in the non profit sector for two years. Lauren worked at the Massachusetts State House where she attended debriefings and researched pending legislation for a state representative. Lauren holds a Bachelor's Degree in psychology and sociology from Emmanuel College.

Tim Sullivan

Project Director, Workforce Solutions Group

Tim Sullivan the Project Director of the Workforce Solutions Group. Tim has over 18 years of government relations and campaign experience. On Beacon Hill, Capitol Hill, in Boston and across Massachusetts, Tim is widely recognized as a strong advocate with a solid grasp of the issues and a unique ability to effectively articulate policy positions in a manner that resonates with people on all sides.

During his time as the Legislative & Communications Director at the AFL-CIO, Tim worked hard to pass legislation to improve the quality of life for working families and served as spokesperson for the MA AFL-CIO. He was the MA AFL-CIO's representative on the Workforce Solutions Group Executive Team for numerous years.

After 10 years at the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, Tim joined the new administration of Mayor Martin J. Walsh in the City of Boston as Chief of Staff for Intergovernmental Relations/Senior Advisor for External Affairs and later was promoted to Director of Intergovernmental Relations.

Tim currently serves as Vice President of Government Relations at the Liberty Square Group where he will also represent the Workforce Solutions Group.

Raija Vaisanen

Associate Director, Massachusetts Workforce Association

Raija Vaisanen is the Associate Director of the Massachusetts Workforce Association and has more than fourteen years of experience in workforce and economic development policy implementation and applied social science research. Previously, Raija was Director of Research at Commonwealth Corporation, Massachusetts' quasi-public workforce development agency. Raija also worked for the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development under the Patrick Administration as Project Manager for Manufacturing and Innovation. From 2007 to 2013, Raija was a researcher in the Economic and Public Policy Research unit at the UMass Donahue Institute. She is a graduate of UMass Amherst (B.A., M.P.P.A.).

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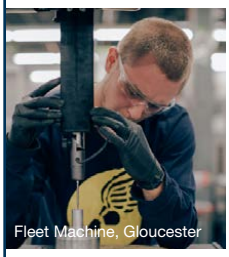
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Congratulations to WSG

on the 2022 Summit and a well-deserved tribute to Kathie Mainzer for her many years of successful advocacy for the workforce development community. We're proud to call Kathie a colleague and friend.

~ Susan, Dave & Henry

We congratulate the Workforce Solutions Group for an outstanding Annual Massachusetts Jobs and Workforce Summit.

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2022 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Representative Joseph F. Wagner

Massachusetts House of Representatives, Second Assistant Majority Leader
8th Hampden District (D-Chicopee)

State Representative Joseph F. Wagner was first elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1991 and has been a member of the House leadership since 2001. He has served as Chairman of the Joint Committee on Election Laws, the Joint Committee on Transportation and the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies.

He was most recently appointed as the Second Assistant Majority Leader this year by the Speaker of the House. A graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, he is the highest-ranking member of the Western Massachusetts state legislative delegation.

Amongst his many legislative accomplishments, Leader Wagner authored legislation to establish MassDOT, which created efficiencies by streamlining and unifying transportation agencies, as well as the 2010 Massachusetts Safe Driving Law. He also served a critical role in the passage of the 2019 Hands-Free Driving Law, which prohibits the use of handheld mobile or electronic devices in the Commonwealth while behind the wheel.

As Chair of the Joint Committee of Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, Wagner oversaw the advancement of the 2011 Expanded Gaming Act and authored four omnibus job creation bills. His efforts resulted in the establishment of a dedicated funding mechanism for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund. Leader Wagner also led the effort to reauthorize funding for the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center to stimulate job creation, private investment and workforce pipeline training in the life sciences and related industries.

Leader Wagner has secured for his district in Chicopee state funding for the construction of two new high schools, the main public library, and a new senior center, along with more than $100 million to support road, bridge and other local infrastructure improvements.

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2022 RISING WORKFORCE LEADER AWARD

Amelia Diaz

Youth Organizer, I Have A Future

Amelia Diaz was born and raised in Lowell, MA. In the summer of 2021, she moved to Hyde Park and attended Jeremiah E. Burke High School in Dorchester where she received her high school diploma. Shortly after graduation, Amelia started her position at I Have A Future as a youth organizer. Her first campaign was the YouthWorks budget campaign where she was a prominent leader in advocating for more job opportunities for young people across MA. Currently, Amelia and I Have A Future are working to help pass the Fair Share Amendment. The Fair Share Amendment is a proposal that, if passed, would generate about $2 billion in yearly support for transportation and public education. Amelia is an outstanding activist and leader and plans to continue her activism as she pursues a bachelor's degree in psychology.

THE WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GROUP

ANNOUNCES 2022 COMMUNITY AWARD

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