

# A WORK IN PROGRESS

## Putting the Learning in WBL



As we consider the daunting task ahead of us in response to the pressure on the availability of a workforce, many are seeking both short-term and long-term solutions. With over a quarter of a million Ohio job openings (per [ohiomeansjobs.com](http://ohiomeansjobs.com)) and the anticipation of the many thousands more coming to our state, HR and talent professionals are seeking connections to educational providers as early as the lower grades to build a pathway from school to work.

When we talk about Work-Based Learning (WBL) in 2022, the view shared by the business community has changed drastically. In 2006, a study by Cassner Lotto & Barrington revealed that only 20% of the businesses surveyed felt it was their responsibility to help create pathways from high school to workforce. Let's compare that statistic to our work at the Chamber Foundation. We have met with over 100 businesses this year that are seeking counsel on workforce. To date, over 43% are asking for help connecting to emerging talent or finding interns to join their company.

As a result of these consultations, we recently convened a panel of subject matter experts for our March 16th Experience Series: Power of Emerging Talent Pipelines. We sat down with Christine Boucher with Eastland Fairfield Career & Technical Schools; Angie Dye with Mid-Ohio Food Collective; John Hambrick with The Educational Service Center of Central Ohio; and Tiffany Marr with Wemblr.

### VOLUME 1

*Education That Works*

### VOLUME 2

*Get an Early Start*

### VOLUME 3

*Redefine the Work  
Experience*

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***Work with Me Here***

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[KELLYFULLER@COLUMBUS.ORG](mailto:KELLYFULLER@COLUMBUS.ORG)



## Work with Me Here

Building your talent pipeline for today and the future has never been more critical. As the battle for workers continues, each business faces the challenge of setting itself apart from all the other competitors. Building relationships early with school districts can give your business a competitive edge.

Small to mid-size companies can establish work-based learning connections with their local high schools and set the stage to become employers of choice for this emerging workforce. Preparing your workplace AND your existing workforce is important to the success of the relationship and productivity.

Angie Dye, Senior Director of Technology, with Mid-Ohio Food Collective partnered with a local high school to hire much-needed support for her IT team. She was connected to two workers through a State of Ohio grant made possible by the Ohio Department of Education, Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, and Ohio Department of Development to ensure over 100 IT high school interns would be placed in Ohio businesses.

Angie provided an opportunity for both students to explore many facets of working in IT and to actively participate in project update meetings, as well as to learn about how the whole agency worked.

*"We planned with them and gave them a wide variety of exposure from building a website to testing. All of this allowed them to see firsthand how it all works together and to contribute. It was a great relief for me to have their help!"*

**- Angie Dye, senior director of Technology, Mid-Ohio Food Collective**

### How to Prepare for High School Interns:

- Create an intern/student worker guide that includes a company profile, job description, company policies, workplace etiquette and behavior expectations, timesheets, and necessary reporting
- Send a welcome letter to intern/student that includes start date, hours to be worked, mentors and key "go-to" staffers, and how and when to communicate with management
- Notify incumbent workers that they should welcome the intern/student, short bio, and what they plan to accomplish while in your workplace
- Review parking, workstation, breaks, cell phone and internet usage, pay period, and paychecks

Remember, this is most likely their first time in a workplace and what we take for granted may be new information to them. Your local school district or Educational Service Center can be a great resource for learning more about the stages of development and what is to be expected at certain ages.

## CONTACT KELLY FULLER



**Kelly Fuller**  
VP, Talent & Workforce Development  
Columbus Chamber of Commerce  
Columbus Chamber Foundation  
[KellyFuller@Columbus.org](mailto:KellyFuller@Columbus.org)