GLOBAL CORPORATE SERVICES

Buffalo Niagara Regional Labor Market Study

December 2, 2022

Prepared for: INVEST BUFFALO NIAGARA

NEWMARK

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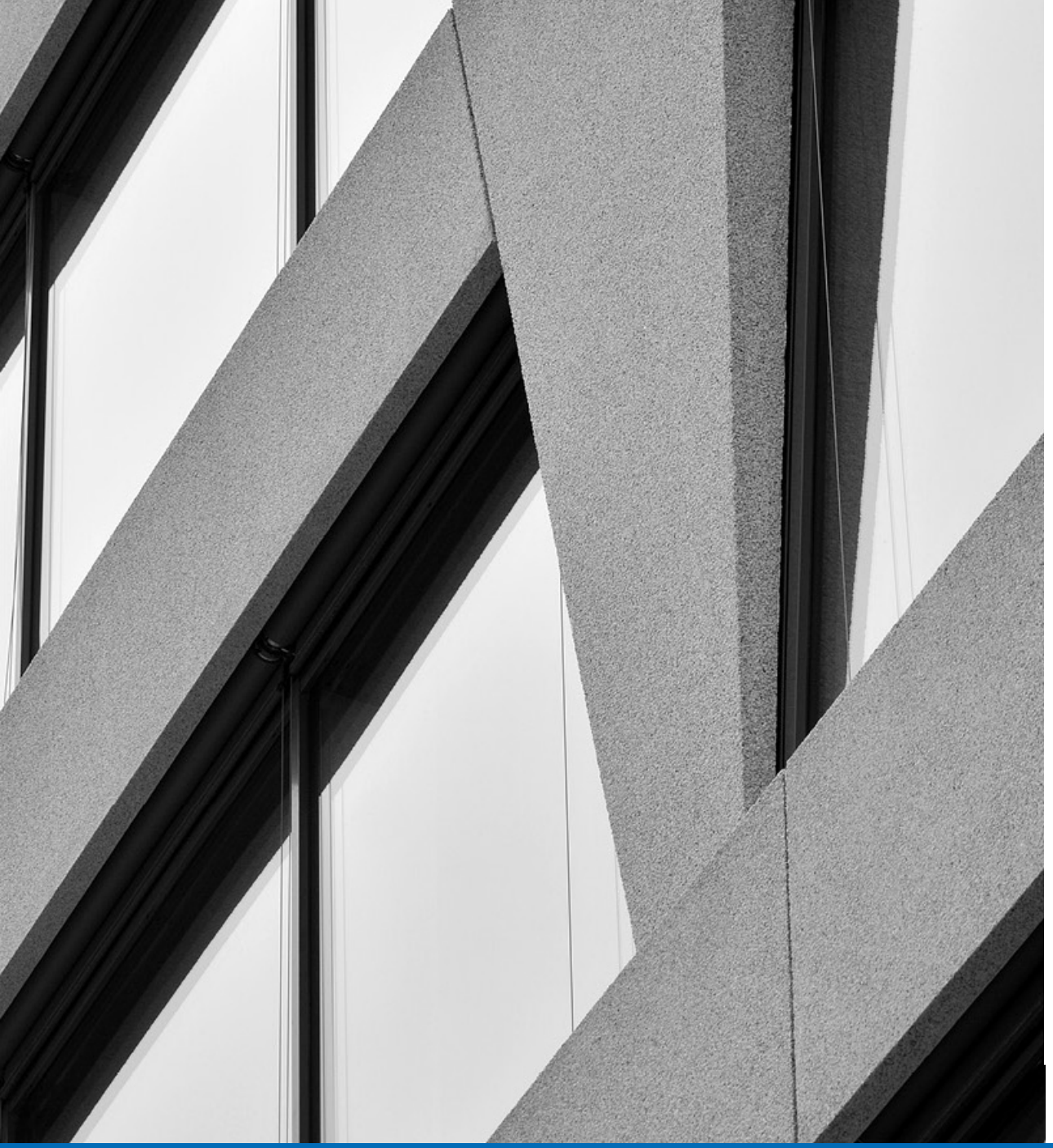
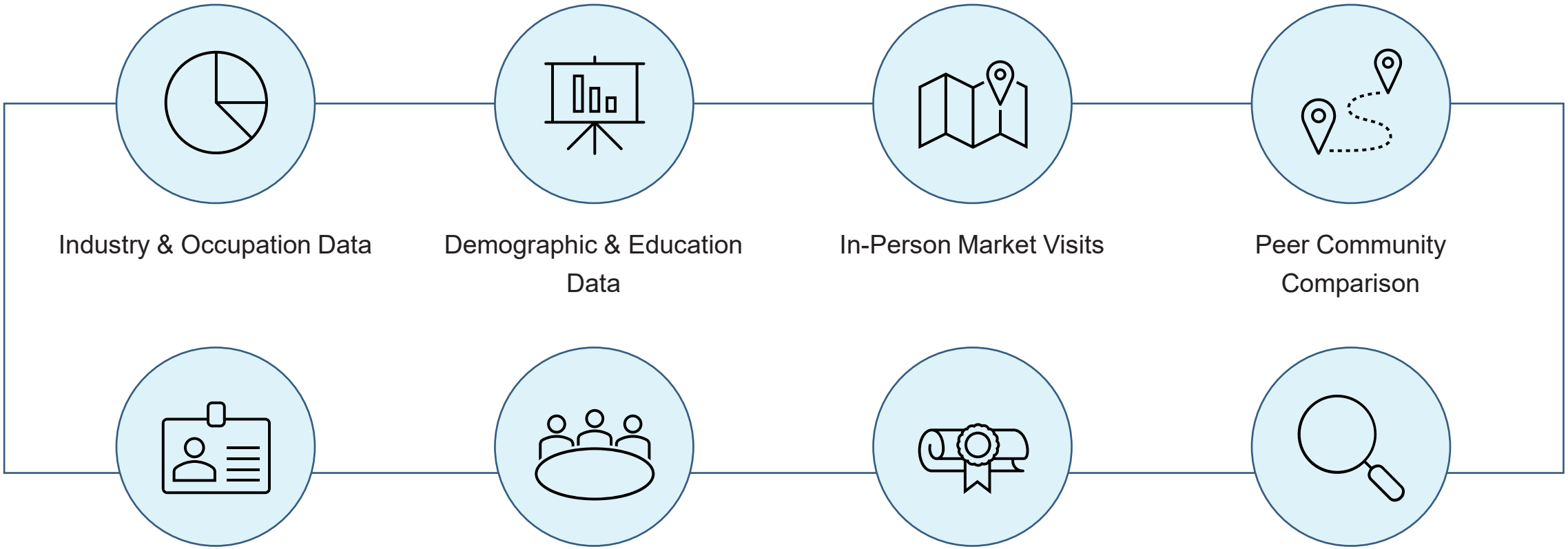


Executive Summary

Executive Summary – Labor Market Study Foundations



Executive Summary – Methodology

Newmark developed primary and secondary data through six key processes:

1. Detailed forecasts of all 4-digit NAICS industries based on past performance and major forecast drivers that are most likely to influence accuracy.
2. Comprehensive forecasts of all 6-digit SOC occupations based on prevailing occupation mix by target industry.
3. Thorough analysis of demographic, socioeconomic and education data.
4. One-on-one interviews of employers, workforce providers and other stakeholders.
5. Roundtable focus groups with business, workforce and education members.
6. Community tours to evaluate workforce and educational infrastructure, housing stock, amenities and other assets.

Newmark analyzed and integrated the data through two frameworks:

1. Comparison and contrasting of the InBN region to peer cities, New York state, and the U.S.
2. Evaluation of findings through Newmark's case experience with business site selection projects and economic development consulting engagements across the U.S.

Newmark formulated a series of recommendations to improve workforce development outcomes in the InBN region:

1. Identified key challenges for the region based on desktop research, interviews, and in-market visits.
2. Identified solutions to these challenges based on team's experience conducting workforce analysis in other communities across the country, along with research on leading best practices nationwide.

Executive Summary – Key Terms

- **InBN Region:** The 8-county region of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming counties.
- **Western New York:** Same as InBN Region.
- **Buffalo MSA:** The two-county region of Erie and Niagara Counties.
- **Target Industry:** Industry targeted for economic development efforts by InBN and regional partners. Includes Advanced Business Services, Advanced Manufacturing, Agri-business, Cleantech, Life Science, Logistics, and Tourism as defined in 2017 Labor Market Assessment.
- **Peer Region:** A region similar in demographic or economic composition to the Buffalo MSA. Peer regions are defined by their Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) boundaries.

Executive Summary – Target Industries

InBN Region Target Industries

Industry Name	Description	InBN Region Employment
Advanced Business Services	Advanced Business Services offers professional support services to businesses. These include telecommunications, data processing, banking, insurance, payroll and financial.	53,145
Advanced Manufacturing	Advanced Manufacturing utilizes production processes that automate goods and parts production with innovative techniques facilitated through R&D and high-tech facilities.	72,328
Agri-business	Agri-business involves all aspects of food and beverage production, from food processing to food and drink manufacturing and the production of machinery needed to support the food producing industry.	11,796
Cleantech	Cleantech offers an umbrella for the range of industries that are potentially involved in green manufacturing and construction, alternative energy and renewable resources.	64,524
Life Sciences	Life Sciences covers the research and development of medicine, medical equipment, and biomedical supplies that support human life.	14,448
Logistics	Logistics involves getting goods from one place to another. The industry is comprised of wholesalers, warehousing, trucking and other forms of transportation (air, rail, water, and couriers).	39,704
Tourism	Tourism encompasses services aimed at attracting and accommodating visitors. It includes gaming, recreation and entertainment, as well as lodging, eating and travel.	84,291

Source: Invest Buffalo Niagara 2017 LMA, JobsEQ.

Executive Summary – Peer Regions

In collaboration with the InBN team, Newmark identified a set of peer Metropolitan Statistical Areas that represent a combination of economic and demographic benchmarks, competitive relationships, and aspirational characteristics. These peers provide context to interpreting InBN region data.

	InBN Region	Grand Rapids	Indianapolis	Louisville	Milwaukee	Rochester
Peer Role and Context	Client	Healthy Midwest manufacturing competitor	Aspirational; Manufacturing hub with diversifying service sector, emerging “tech” hub	Slower-growing Upper South competitor	Great Lakes industrial city showing urban revitalization	Collaboration opportunity; Same-state tax and regulation environment
Total Employment (Q1 2022)	674,773	587,235	1,106,962	674,206	836,804	506,329
10-Yr Employment Change	-9.1%	10.5%	25.7%	14.8%	-0.6%	-3.2%
Average Wage	$55,872	$55,539	$59,448	$58,417	$61,183	$57,946
10-Yr Wage Change	36.7%	38.0%	33.8%	36.0%	36.6%	35.9%
Higher Ed. Enrollment per 1000 Population	66	52	81	44	51	65
Advanced Manufacturing LQ	1.3	2.4	1.1	1.2	1.7	1.0

Executive Summary – Major Workforce Milestones Since 2017 Labor Market Assessment

2018

- Northland Workforce Training Center opens
- Employ Buffalo Niagara launched
- P-Tech Academy launched in Dunkirk
- Automotive Trades P-Tech launched in Lackawanna, West Seneca, Hamburg

2019

- Buffalo Manufacturing Works opens at Northland Workforce Training Center
- “Be in Buffalo” campaign launched
- P-Tech Academy launched in Springville
- Say Yes Buffalo launches College Success Network

2020

- Trocaire Jumpstart IT program launches
- M&T Tech Academy opens
- P-Tech BUILD Construction Trades opens in Cheektowaga
- Be in Buffalo Relocation Guide published

2021

- WNY Tech Skills Initiative
- Forge Buffalo launched

2022

- Data Analytics Bootcamp
- Say Yes CareerWise launched
- Bitwise opens Buffalo location
- Goodwill Goodskills Career Builder launched

Executive Summary – Top Five Regional Challenges

1. **Aging workforce.** The region has an older workforce relative to peers and the U.S. overall. In upcoming years, retirements across all industries will lead to workforce shortages, especially in skilled trades. This challenge will be especially severe in the InBN region.
2. **Diversity, equity, and inclusion.** The racial composition of the region's population is not reflected in its workforce. This is especially true for mid- and senior-level positions. Lack of diversity in these positions indicates limited upward potential for portions of the region's workforce.
3. **Lack of skilled trade training opportunities for diverse communities.** Skilled trades programs are mostly offered in areas that are predominantly white and are not served by public transit. Opportunities have improved with the launch of Northland Workforce Training Center.
4. **Employer/employee spatial mismatch.** Job growth occurring in periphery of region or in areas not served by public transportation. Areas of available labor in urban core unable to get to work.
5. **Talent retention.** The region has strong production of talent, especially in 4-year and postsecondary programs. Much of this talent leaves the region after graduation, however, leading to local talent shortages.

Executive Summary – Demographics and Peer City Comparison

The InBN region is home to an **aging population and a declining labor force**. These trends separate the region from **its peers, which are younger, growing economies**.

The region's economy is also distinguished by its **higher poverty rate and lower household income** among its counterparts. This suggests that a significant portion of the **region's workforce is unemployed, underemployed, or employed in lower paying occupations**.

InBN and Peer Region Key Demographic Statistics

Metric	InBN Region	Buffalo MSA	Grand Rapids	Indianapolis MSA	Louisville MSA	Milwaukee MSA	Rochester MSA	New York	U.S.
Median Age	41.2	40.8	35.9	36.7	39.1	38.3	40.3	39.0	38.2
10-Yr Labor Force Size Change (%) (2011-2021)	-4.9%	-3.7%	+18.5%	+16.1%	+12.5%	+1.2%	-3.3%	+4.4%	+11.1%
Median HH Income	$57,417	$59,052	$66,351	$66,023	$61,696	$65,809	$61,775	$71,117	$64,994
Poverty Rate	13.9%	13.5%	10.3%	11.5%	12.1%	13.0%	13.2%	13.6%	12.8%

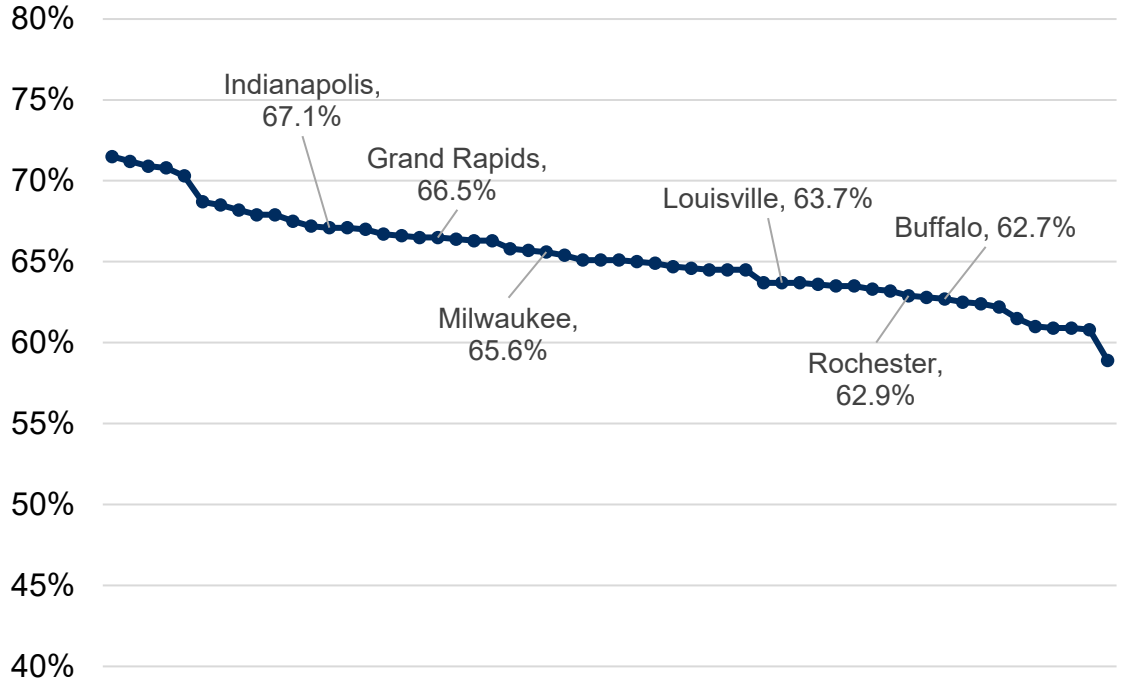
Source: JobsEQ.

Executive Summary – Demographics and Peer City Comparison

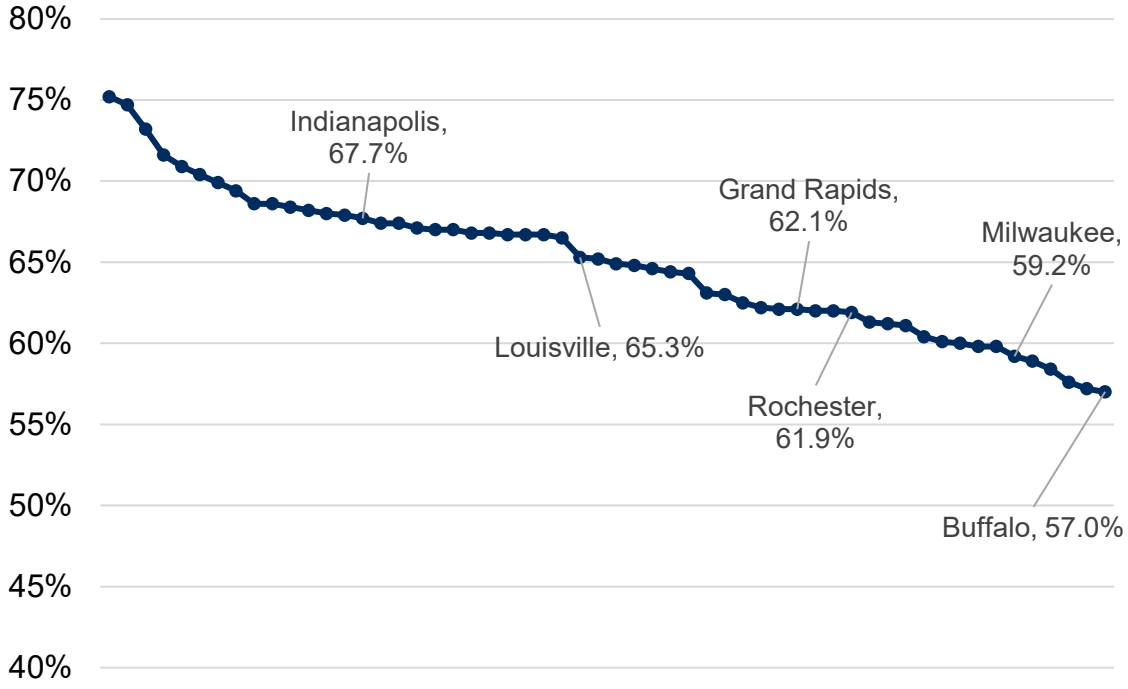
Labor force participation rates in the Buffalo MSA lag participation rates in peer metros and in most large metropolitan areas nationwide.

The Buffalo MSA has the lowest black labor force participation rate among metropolitan areas with a population over 1 million.

Labor Force Participation Rate for Metropolitan Statistical Areas with 1 Million+ Population, 2021



Black or African American Labor Force Participation Rate for Metropolitan Statistical Areas with 1 Million+ Population, 2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Executive Summary – Labor Force

The region's demographic struggles are reflected in the underlying labor force data. A **declining workforce** has been coupled with a consistent **unemployment rate that exceeds rates in the peer regions and the U.S. overall** for more than ten years.

Despite the region's reputation as a production-based economy, a close examination of occupational composition show that the region has a higher level of **specialization among its peers in several professional occupations like Business & Financial Operations, Life, Physical & Social Sciences, and Office & Administrative Support**.

At the same time, the region has **lower levels of specialization relative to its peers in occupations like Production, Construction, and Transportation and Materials Moving**.

InBN Region Location Quotient for Select Occupations

Occupation	Location Quotient	Rank among Six Peers	Occupation	Location Quotient	Rank among Six Peers
Business & Financial Operations	1.00	1st	Architecture & Engineering	0.89	5th
Life, Physical, & Social Sciences	1.03	1st	Production	1.07	6th
Legal	1.24	1st	Construction	0.78	6th
Office & Administrative Support	1.08	1st	Transportation & Materials Moving	0.92	5th

Source: JobsEQ.

Executive Summary – Stakeholder Interviews

The Newmark team conducted in-person and virtual interviews as well as roundtable discussion with over 150 stakeholders throughout the region. Interviewees included representatives from government, private sector employers, workforce development, and higher education. These conversations focused on workforce development challenges and opportunities.

Key findings from interviews indicate:

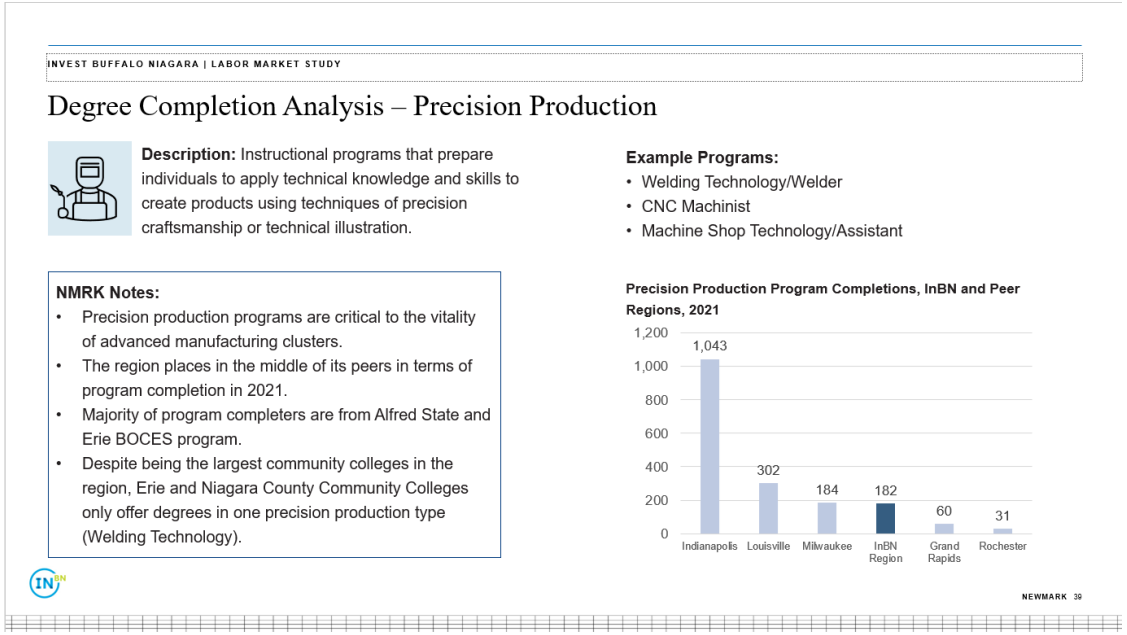
- The region is experience acute shortages in several positions, including skilled trade occupations and some technology positions.
- Many employers noted that workforce shortages are a “severe” threat to their future growth.
- Attracting outside talent to the region is challenging due to negative perceptions about weather and culture.
- Employers are having difficulty finding mid-level management talent, and often look outside the region to fill these positions.
- Despite the region’s diversity, upper and senior level management positions at most businesses are racially homogenous.
- Small and mid-sized businesses typically did not consider diversity, equity, and inclusion in hiring decisions.
- Employers believe talent at UB is not aligned with employers in the region. More needs to be done to build the relationship between employers and UB in order to keep talent local.
- Negative perception of some public schools. Employers had limited understanding of CTE programming.
- Most employers have limited understanding of the structure of the local workforce development system.
- Broad recognition that workforce does not reflect the demographics of the region, especially in middle and upper-level positions.

Executive Summary – Workforce Ecosystem

Newmark assessed the opportunities, challenges and capacity of local workforce development organizations. This assessment included the perspectives of the business community and system-wide features such as planning, collaboration, awareness building, and training by providers and workforce groups overall.

Key findings from the analysis indicate:

- The region benefits from the presence of a variety of higher education institutions with respected programs in many fields; however, the region fails to retain enough graduates to support more dynamic growth.
- Public school performance is improving, with City school districts making gains in academic and vocational education outcomes. CTE programs are given insufficient attention by most districts.
- The State and the InBN region have an overwhelming number of training programs, tools, and funding sources. The sheer number of programs makes it difficult for businesses and job seekers to easily discover and access these resources. There is a critical need for greater centralized information, referrals and collaborations.



Executive Summary – Degree Completion

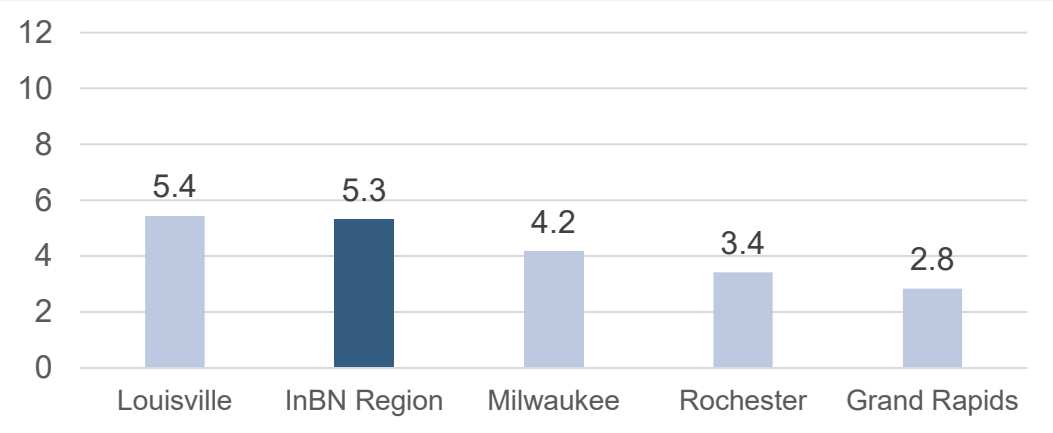
The region's workforce has multiple avenues to advance their skills and careers, including postsecondary programs. The region is producing talent in many white-collar occupations at a similar or faster rate than its peer communities.

Although data show the region performing well in degree programs like Engineering and Computer Science, employers still reported challenges in filling these occupations, suggesting that more can be done to retain talent locally.

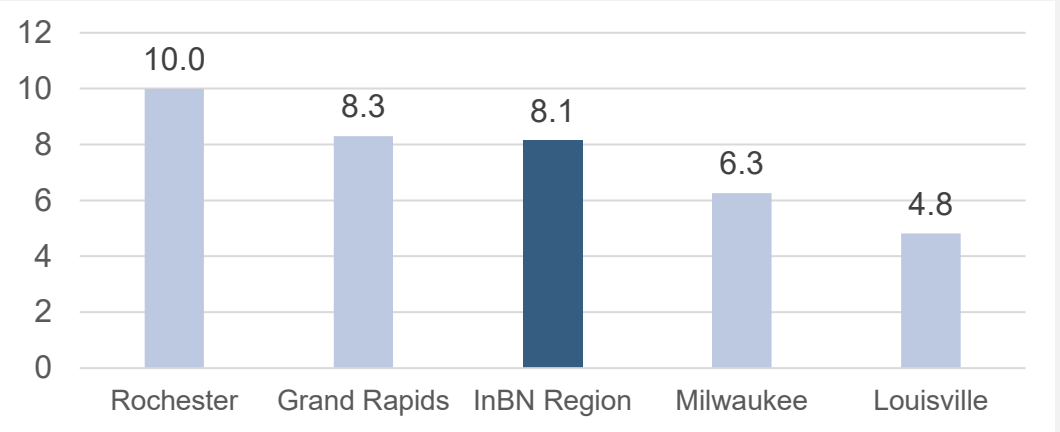
Opportunities also exist to improve the region's skilled trades pipeline by adding programs in Industrial Machinery Mechanics and Carpentry.

InBN and Peer Region Program Completion, per 1,000 Population, 2021

Certificates & 2-Year Degrees



4-Year Degrees



Source: JobsEQ.

Executive Summary – Industry Forecast

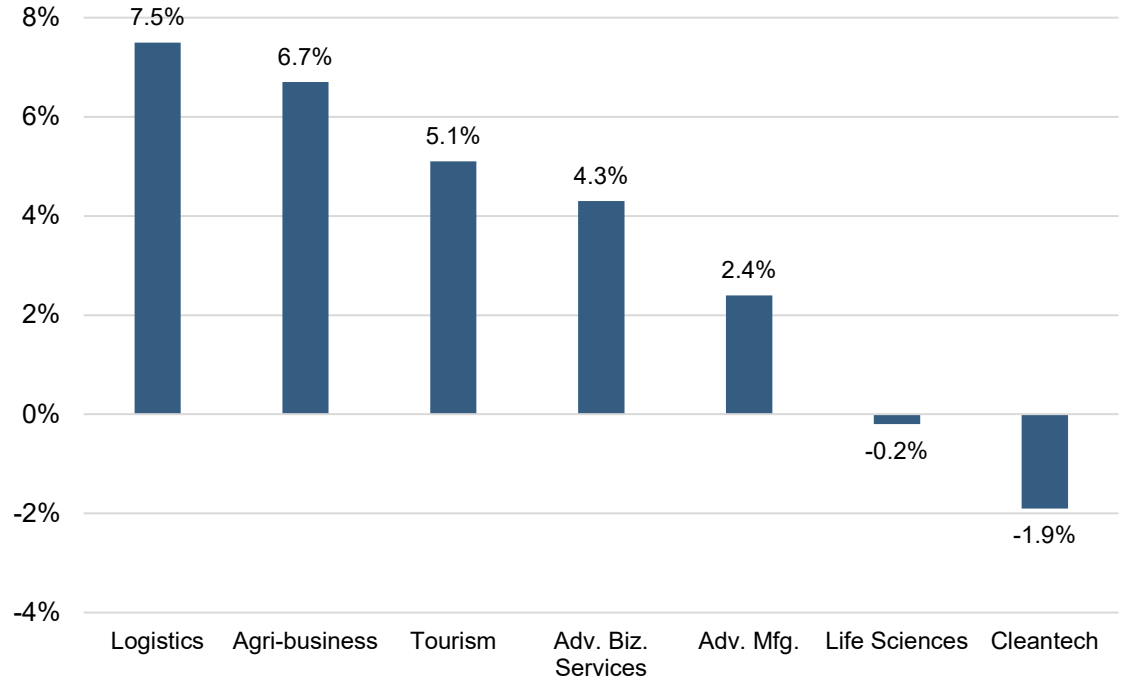
The Newmark team created baseline and recession scenario forecasts for the InBN region. The forecasts include all 4-digit NAICS codes and summary forecasts for each target industry. Seven drivers have the most impact on forecast accuracy: local business cycle trends, local industry structure, demographic trends, net migration, automation risks, wage competitiveness and national macroeconomic trends. The forecast covers year-end employment from 2022 to 2027.

2022	2027
Employment All Targets*	
272,116	280,753
Share of All Employment	
38.8%	39.4%

Key findings from the analysis indicate:

- InBN regional employment will grow by 1.6% through 2027 under the baseline forecast and will decrease by 2.5% through 2027 in the recession forecast.
- Five of the InBN target industry clusters will grow faster than total regional employment: Advanced Business Services (4.3%), Advanced Manufacturing (2.4%), Agri-business (6.7%), Logistics (7.5%), and Tourism (5.1%).
- Cleantech (-1.9%) and Life Sciences (-0.2%) will lose employment.
- In recent target industry trends, the InBN region has generally performed worse than peer regions and the U.S.

InBN Region Employment Growth Forecast, 2022-2027 (baseline scenario)



Source: Newmark forecast, JobsEQ.

*Unduplicated target industry employment.

Executive Summary – Target Occupation Analysis

Newmark's analysis of target industry growth forecasts show that white collar occupations in target industries typically do not have supply deficits. In fact, some occupations in Engineering and Computer Science have large surpluses.

Skilled trade occupations tend to show forecasted deficits, however rapidly-changing entry-level job requirements and incomplete data make it difficult to quantify the extent of these shortages.

Like other communities, the InBN region's skilled trade occupations tend to be gender and racially homogenous. Efforts to attract new demographic groups to these occupations could help alleviate forecasted shortages.

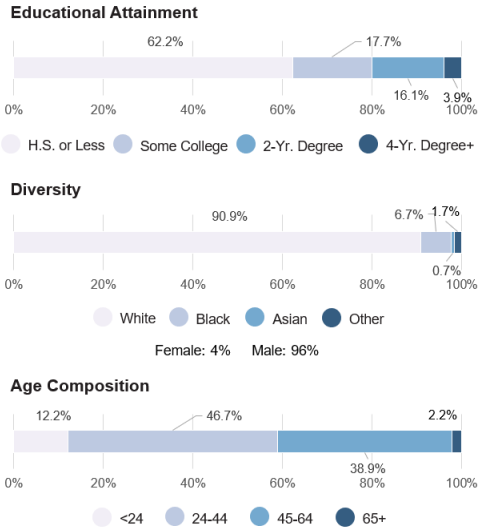
Target Occupation: Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers

Description: Use hand-welding, flame-cutting, hand-soldering, or brazing equipment to weld or join metal components or to fill holes, indentations, or seams of fabricated metal products.

Total Jobs:	1,612	5-Year Completions:	600
Average Wage:	$49,100	5-Year Demand:	772
		Surplus/Deficit:	-172

NMRK Notes:

- Most workers do not have formal education. Highest earners have credentials or postsecondary degree in welding technology.
- High rate of gender and racial homogeneity – 91% white and 96% male. Occupation could be marketed toward new communities to encourage growth.
- Identified as a difficult to fill position among employers interviewed.



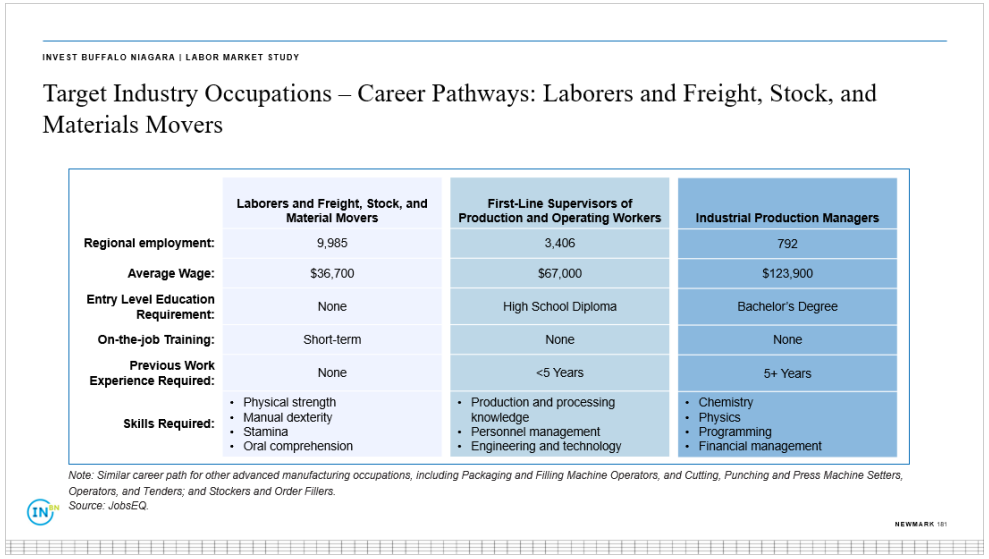
Executive Summary – Reskilling and Cluster Pathways

The Newmark team identified occupations with the largest projected decline over the next five years across all occupations and across occupations in target industries. For each set of declining occupations, the team identified what alternative occupations those workers could transition to (sometimes referred to as a "willing and able" analysis).

The team also reviewed career pathways in common target industry occupations to identify how workers in those occupations might increase their compensation.

Key findings from the analysis show:

- Occupations with the largest forecast decline over the next five years typically have low earnings and little to no entry level education requirements.
- Some of the fastest declining occupations are part of target industries, especially Advanced Business Services and Advanced Manufacturing.
- The typical career path in Advanced Manufacturing, Cleantech, Life Science, Logistics, and Agri-business occupations entails working from an entry level position toward a first-line supervisor position. This typically does not require additional postsecondary credentials, but does require a number of new skills (personnel management, financial) that must be acquired through internal training.
- Advanced Business Services workers typically begin their careers in generalist occupations. These workers can obtain additional education to become specialists in a specific career field in order to advance their earnings.



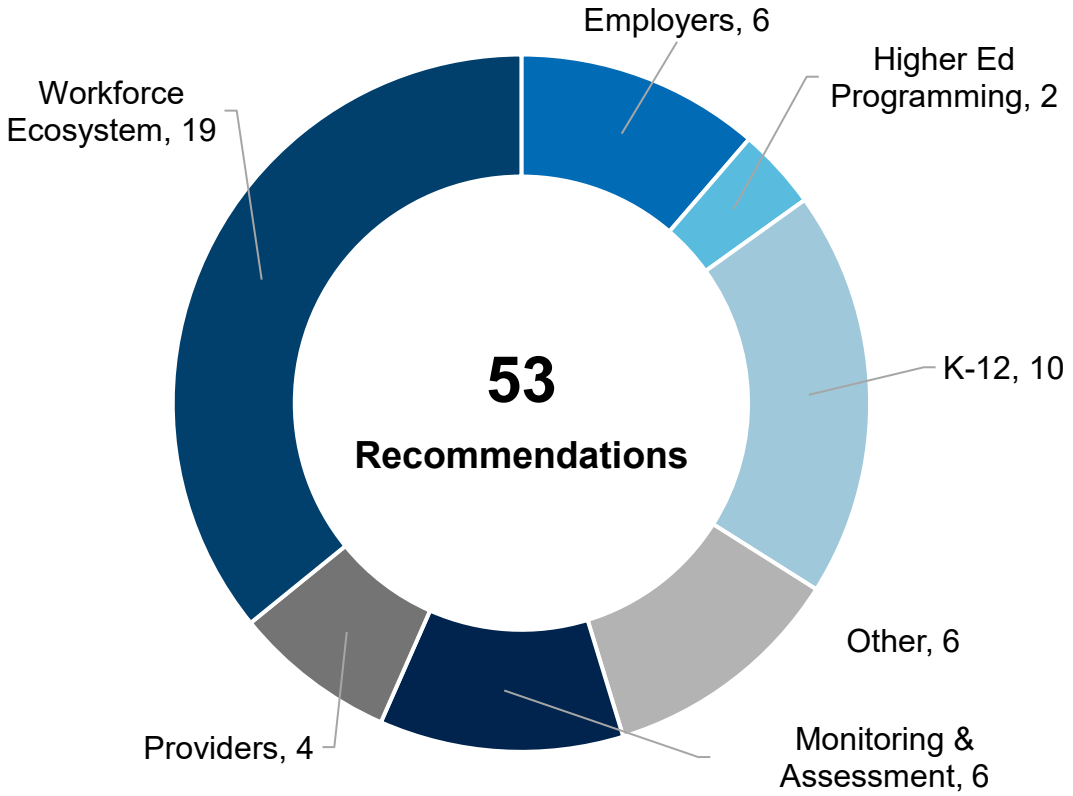
Executive Summary – Recommendations

After conducting interviews, discussions, and roundtables with nearly 150 stakeholders and completing a comprehensive data-drive analysis of the region's labor force, The Newmark team developed over 50 recommendations to improve the region's workforce.

These recommendations center on seven themes. Some recommendations address ecosystem alignment, others address K-12 education, higher education, employers, and program monitoring and assessment.

These best practices are based on our analysis of the region and Newmark's database of best practices developed through scores of engagements with communities across the country.

After formulating recommendations, the Newmark team categorized each recommendation based on priority, cost, and timeline. The team also identified stakeholder to lead and support each recommendation.



Executive Summary – Top 12 Recommendations

Category	Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics
Higher Education Programming	Implement an Industrial Machinery Mechanic higher education program. Ensure the program is accessible to diverse communities. May be offered at SUNY Erie Community College or Northland Workforce Training Center.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Local Community Colleges Northland Workforce Training Center	Major employers	Program Created Students Enrolled Degrees Granted Positions Filled Open Positions Closed
Higher Education Programming	Implement a Carpentry higher education program. Ensure the program is accessible to diverse communities. May be offered at SUNY Erie Community College or Northland Workforce Training Center.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Local Community Colleges Northland Workforce Training Center	Major employers	Program Created Students Enrolled Degrees Granted Positions Filled Open Positions Closed
Workforce Ecosystem	Create a DEI working group hosting all DEI leaders in the community to share challenges and opportunities as well as provide support.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo Oishei Foundation	InBN Local businesses	Events held Total participants Initiatives Demographic shifts

Executive Summary – Top 12 Recommendations

Category	Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics
Workforce Ecosystem	Develop DEI training materials and host DEI training sessions across the region at networking events.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo Oishei Foundation	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association Local employers InBN Higher education	Sessions held Businesses engaged Attendees Increase in diversity hiring
Workforce Ecosystem	Develop H1-B Visa training materials and host training sessions across the region at networking events.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$	★★ Moderate	Leading H1-B visa firms Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association	Buffalo Niagara Partnership InBN Immigration support services	Sessions held Businesses engaged Visas issued
Workforce Ecosystem	Establish industry advisory councils in target industries to evaluate industry training programs.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership	InBN Workforce Development Boards	Council established Programs audited Business participation

Executive Summary – Top 12 Recommendations

Category	Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics
K-12	Work to improve public school reputation and test scores.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$$$	★★★ Challenging	School Districts	Everyone	Improved test scores Increased graduation rates Improved school rankings/ratings Programs offered
K-12	Secure commitments from local businesses to create functioning trade businesses within high schools.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Public Schools Local skilled trades businesses	Community foundations	Business established Students engaged Commitments from partner businesses
K-12	Create a marketing campaign for the business community and general public highlighting the successes of public school students and alumni.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$$	★★ Moderate	School Districts Say Yes to Education	InBN Buffalo Niagara Partnership Community foundations	Campaign established Engagement with business community/general public Public perception of public school districts

Executive Summary – Top 12 Recommendations

Category	Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics
Employers	Identify a front-line supervisor training program and make it a funding a priority.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Say Yes to Education Buffalo Niagara Partnership	Area colleges Foundations	Percent of line supervisors at the 50 largest regional employers completing leadership training Number of promotions Worker retention rates
Providers	Create a fund to support five living wage pathways in target industries.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Foundations	InBN Buffalo Niagara Partnership Local business community Goodwill of Western New York Say Yes to Education	Pathway funding secured Service delivery partners identified Intake and outcome assessments

Executive Summary – Top 12 Recommendations

Category	Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics
Program Monitoring & Assessment	Create a comprehensive tracking program for area high schoolers, community college and university students. (Possibly working with the state legislature or Department of Labor).	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$$$	★★ Moderate	Pilot with local public schools, SUNY Buffalo State, SUNY Erie Community College, and UB	Other districts and universities State legislature Department of Labor	Percent of students tracked six years post completion Graduates retained in specific target occupations Graduates returning to region

Recommendations

Recommendations

After conducting interviews, discussions, and roundtables with nearly 150 stakeholders and completing a comprehensive data-drive analysis of the region's labor force, The Newmark team developed over 50 recommendations to improve the region's workforce.

These recommendations center on seven themes. Some recommendations address ecosystem alignment, others address K-12 education, higher education, employers, and program monitoring and assessment.

These best practices are based on our analysis of the region and Newmark's database of best practices developed through scores of engagements with communities across the country.

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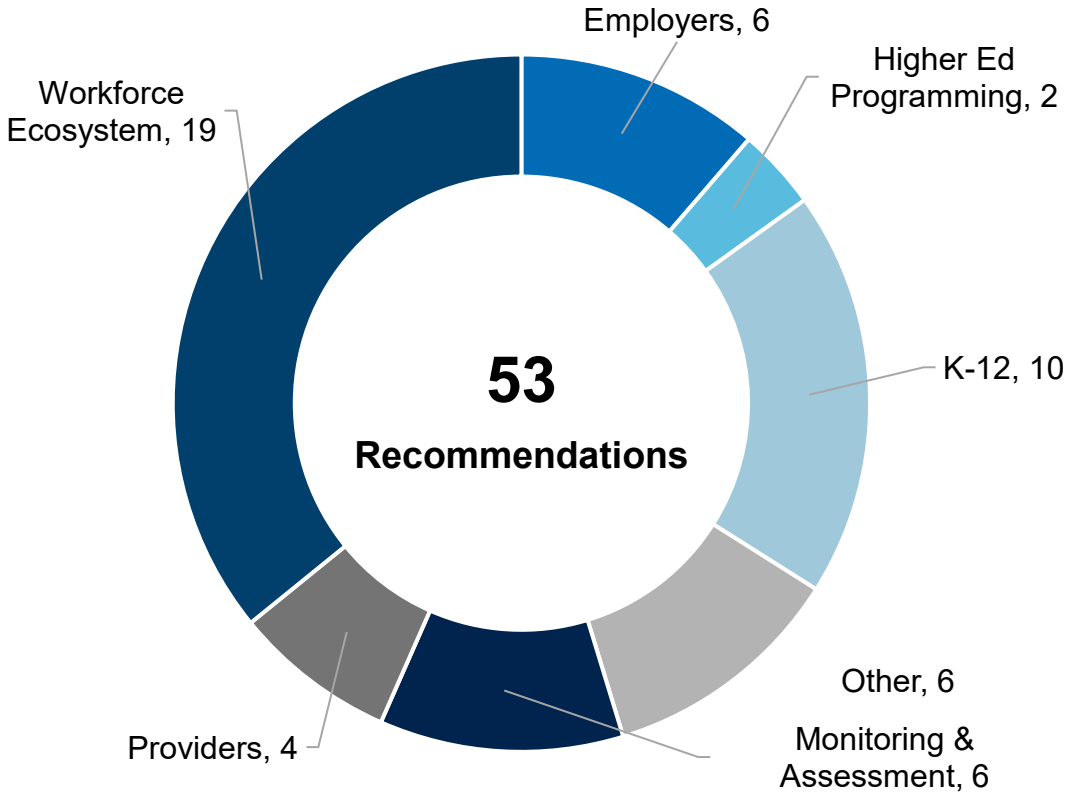

Recommendations – Higher Education Programming

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Implement an Industrial Machinery Mechanic higher education program. Ensure the program is accessible to diverse communities. May be offered at SUNY Erie Community College or Northland Workforce Training Center.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Local Community Colleges Northland Workforce Training Center	Major employers	Program Created Students Enrolled Degrees Granted Positions Filled Open Positions Closed	Schools offering this programming include: Bluegrass Community and Technical College (KY) AAS Industrial Maintenance Technology Georgia Northwestern Technical College AAS Industrial Systems Technology Ivy Tech (IN) AAS Industrial Technology
Implement a Carpentry higher education program. Ensure the program is accessible to diverse communities. May be offered at SUNY Erie Community College or Northland Workforce Training Center.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Local Community Colleges Northland Workforce Training Center	Major employers	Program Created Students Enrolled Degrees Granted Positions Filled Open Positions Closed	Schools offering this programming include: Ivy Tech (IN) Carpentry Specialist Certificate Community College of Alleghany County A.S., Carpentry Jefferson County Technical College A.A.S. Construction Technology, Carpentry

Recommendations – Program Monitoring and Assessment

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Monitor outcomes of CareerWise Greater Buffalo apprenticeship program. Assist in identifying participant businesses and funding sources.	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$	★ Easy	Say Yes to Education	UB Regional Institute	Participant outcomes Participant enrollment Businesses involved Budget / funding increase New programs	Program tracking will be critical not only for understanding the programs impact and making internal changes but also to communicate the benefits of the program to potential funders.
Begin tracking where Say Yes participants go after leaving the program.	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Say Yes to Education	UB Regional Institute	Participant contact with Say Yes post completion Local placements of participants	
Create a consolidated workforce budget and scorecard for WNY.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$$	★★★ Challenging	InBN Workforce Development Boards	Higher education Training providers Local foundations	Consolidated budget developed Program metrics identified and collected	

Recommendations – Program Monitoring and Assessment

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Create a comprehensive tracking program for area high schoolers, community college and university students. (Possibly working with the state legislature or Department of Labor).	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$$$	★★ Moderate	Pilot with City schools, SUNY Buffalo State, SUNY Erie Community College, and UB	Other districts and universities State legislature Department of Labor	Percent of students tracked six years post completion Graduates retained in specific target occupations Graduates returning to region	Several states have implemented statewide tracking systems, including: Minnesota Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System Kentucky Longitudinal Data System
Create a comprehensive participant workforce feedback system.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	InBN	Workforce Development Boards	Survey respondents Annual report on feedback	
Consider supplementing the five-year workforce study with an annual tracking system.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	InBN	UB Regional Institute	Annual tracking report produced Surveys completed	

Recommendations – Employers

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Employers should audit job postings for unnecessary entry-level education requirements or other barriers that eliminate otherwise qualified applicants.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★★ Challenging	Employers	Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association InBN	Increase in qualified applicants Number of companies committing to audit Decrease in job openings Change in unemployment/underemployment	Several local companies have conducted job posting audits recently, including: Harmac Medical Products H.S. Diploma audit M&T Bank entry-level requirement audit General Motors entry-level degree audit
Develop a summer internship program for out-of-region postsecondary students. Target the program to students at schools that have a larger established alumni base in the InBN region.	● Low	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Employers Higher education providers Tech Buffalo	InBN	Internships secured Program participation Students retained Businesses participating	See Cleveland, OH “Summer on the Cuyahoga” program
Create mentoring and peer learning programs to support upward mobility in the corporate environment.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership	Buffalo Niagara Partnership members	Peer learning roundtables created Volunteer mentors recruited Program participants Business participants	See Alliance Bernstein Career Catalyst program

Recommendations – Employers

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Create a professional development program for new small business hires (including finance, people leadership, planning, networking, etc.).	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Small Business Development Center	Area Main Street programs Community ethnic business groups	Number of participants Small businesses supported	
Identify a front-line supervisor training program and make it a funding a priority.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Say Yes to Education Buffalo Niagara Partnership	Area colleges Foundations	Percent of line supervisors at the 50 largest regional employers completing leadership training Number of promotions Worker retention rates	
Encourage employers to partner on training programs.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★★ Challenging	Workforce Development Boards Buffalo Niagara Partnership	InBN	Non-employees receiving training Hosted training events Internal promotions	

Recommendations – Workforce Ecosystem

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Create a DEI working group hosting all DEI leaders in the community to share challenges and opportunities as well as provide support.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo Oishei Foundation	InBN Local businesses	Events held Total participants Initiatives Demographic shifts	
Create a Relocating Partner Assistance Program.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$$	★★ Moderate	InBN	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Local businesses	Placements Participation Out-of-region migration	
Assess the feasibility of using Jobcase software to help workers in under-served communities find open positions.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$$$	★★ Moderate	Workforce Development Boards	Foundations	Program established Participants matched with jobs Shares on social media	
Explore the feasibility of creating a BridgeEdU style program for the Buffalo region.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo State College	Local business community	Program established Student/employer participation	
Establish industry advisory councils in target industries to evaluate industry training programs.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership	InBN Workforce Development Boards	Council established Programs audited Business participation	

Recommendations – Workforce Ecosystem

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Consider becoming a SkillSmart or ACT Work Ready community.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Local school districts Local business community	Funding partners	Placements Student and business participants	Example ACT Work Ready communities include: Nevada Work Ready (Clark County, Nevada) Natchitoches Parish, LA Work Ready
Implement a standing meeting for local WDBs to discuss what is happening in their service area in terms of workforce development and labor market needs/trends. Host meeting in various locations throughout the region so WDBs can highlight innovative workforce development efforts happening in the County.	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$	★ Easy	Workforce Development Boards		Meetings held Programs integrated New programs	The Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Wyoming Workforce Development Board meets as a single region. This could be replicated with other local Workforce Development Boards.
Develop DEI training materials and host DEI training sessions across the region at networking events.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo Oishei Foundation	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association Local employers InBN Higher education	Sessions held Businesses engaged Attendees Increase in diversity hiring	

Recommendations – Workforce Ecosystem

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Develop H1-B Visa training materials and host training sessions across the region at networking events.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$	★★ Moderate	Leading H1-B visa firms Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association	Buffalo Niagara Partnership InBN Immigration support services	Sessions held Businesses engaged Visas issued	Use H1-B Grader to identify leading firms
Identify postsecondary institutions with large alumni bases in Buffalo. Engage those alumni bases and identify potential "Buffalo ambassadors" who could act as a pass-through for recruiting/marketing materials aimed at attracting professionals to the area.	● Low	1 – 2 Years	$	★ Easy	InBN	Local alumni groups	Groups engaged Ambassadors Marketing materials delivered Relocations	
Develop women-focused training programs for in-demand skilled trade occupations.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★★ Challenging	Local unions Nonprofit community	Corporate philanthropy Local employers Workforce providers	Program established Program participation, Increased diversity in qualified job applicants	Example programs in other communities include: Chicago Women in Trades Sisters in the Brotherhood Building Pathways Massachusetts
Develop career fair opportunities targeted toward immigrant communities.	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	International Institute of Buffalo Buffalo Niagara Partnership	Local business community	Events held Participation Businesses engaged Job offers made	National efforts such as Welcome.us may provide insight into programming in the InBN region.

Recommendations – Workforce Ecosystem

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Implement social and professional worker engagement programs for newcomers, underrepresented workers.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	InBN	Local entities (clubs, churches, restaurants, sports franchises, etc.)	Professional and ethnic affinity groups created Total participation Events hosted Demographic shift	
Reorient more workforce funding into fewer employment niches, based on WNY Labor Forecasts.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★★ Challenging	Workforce Development Boards Foundations	InBN Buffalo Niagara Partnership Local government School districts	Redundant programs identified/streamlined	
Identify backbone agencies to coordinate training across each target industry (including needs assessment, data collection and performance reporting and fundraising for new training).	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Foundations	InBN Buffalo Niagara Partnership Tech Buffalo	Backbone agencies identified, staffed and funded Assessment and performance measurement infrastructure deployed Training programs created Employees trained Increase in qualified candidates	

Recommendations – Workforce Ecosystem

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Create a comprehensive workforce training resource flow chart.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Workforce Development Boards	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Employers Training providers	Flow chart created Flow chart updated	
Consider creating a centralized job seeker portal that integrates key elements of all WNY Workforce Development Boards.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Workforce Development Boards	InBN	Portal launched Use statistics developed Page visits, SEO rankings Unique visitors	
Consider reducing performance reporting requirements for provider eligibility.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$	★★ Moderate	Workforce Development Boards	Training providers	Streamlined reporting pilots identified Annual outcomes results collected Increased compliance	
Develop marketing campaign to inform major employers about existing resources for accessing "untapped" workers.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership Trade organizations	InBN	Business engaged Marketing materials created Diverse hires	

Recommendations – K-12 System

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Work to improve public school reputation and test scores.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$$$	★★★ Challenging	School Districts	Everyone	Improved test scores Increased graduation rates Improved school rankings/ratings Programs offered	
Develop and implement an annual "GLOW With Your Hands" type event within the city.	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	Workforce Development Boards City school districts	Genesee County Economic Development Center	Students engaged Attendees Businesses participating	GLOW With Your Hands has seen measurable success since its launch in 2019. This program could be adopted and targeted toward high school students in other communities throughout the region.
Explore corporate adopt a school initiatives that include staff involvement on campus, field trips for students, funding for training programs.	● Low	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership City school districts	InBN Community Foundations Local Businesses	Percent of schools with a corporate partner Volunteer hours served Businesses engaged Graduation rates	Level of engagement can range from simple activities like donating supplies or staff volunteer hours, to more formal partnerships established with the assistance of a trade organization.

Recommendations – K-12 System

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Create a marketing campaign for the business community and general public highlighting the successes of City school students and alumni.	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$$	★★ Moderate	City school districts Say Yes to Education	InBN Buffalo Niagara Partnership Community foundations	Campaign established Engagement with business community/general public Public perception of City school districts	
Secure commitments from local businesses to create functioning trade businesses within high schools.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	City school districts Local skilled trades businesses	Community foundations	Business established Students engaged Commitments from partner businesses	Motivate students to engage in all levels of business, not just skill development. See for example the McDowell Manufacturing program at McDowell High School in Erie, PA
Public Schools should engage with local businesses to make businesses aware of CTE programs. This could take place through local chamber discussions or meetings with trade organizations.	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$	★★ Moderate	City school districts	Buffalo Niagara Partnership InBN	Businesses engaged CTE enrollment and graduates New training programs created	

Recommendations – K-12 System

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Make public school parental involvement a core workforce development indicator (measuring across the region and tracking over time).	●●● High	6 – 12 Months	$$	★★★ Challenging	City school districts InBN	Community Foundations	Participation rates in key activities Improved test scores Graduation rates Parent volunteer hours	
Explore a regionwide maker initiative that includes a target industry demonstration/training opportunity at every school: manufacturing processes, school gardens, coding. Consider regional competition/fairs for students to demonstrate their work.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	InBN	Business Community	Number of City schools campuses with a maker/experience center Events hosted Products developed Student participation	
Implement programs for at-risk youth through local YMCA.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	YMCA	City schools Local business community	Students participating Business support Student advancement to postsecondary education	See the Y-AIM program in Springfield, MA

Recommendations – K-12 System

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Create an on-the-job shadowing program for high school students.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$	★★ Moderate	City school districts	Local Businesses	Program established Student and business participants Graduate rate	

Recommendations – Providers

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Create an endowment to support five living wage pathways in target industries.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	Foundations	InBN Buffalo Niagara Partnership Local business community Goodwill of Western New York Say Yes to Education	Pathway funding secured Service delivery partners identified Intake and outcome assessments	
Organize a quarterly working group including college career counselors, WDB case workers and other entities who directly engage individual job seekers.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★ Easy	Workforce Development Boards Training providers Higher education	Western New York Association of College and Career Centers	Participating entities and counselor director created Quarterly meetings held New resources developed Needs identified	

Recommendations – Providers

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
Increase WDB job seeker participation in training programs by creating entry-level awareness and training classes through local eligible providers.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Workforce Development Boards	Trocaire College Employers	Programs developed Increase in qualified candidates Increased placement	Trocaire College's Jumpstart IT program offer entry-level IT training program. This could be replicated in other career fields or expanded to other parts of the InBN region.
Help WIOA participants access other funding sources, e.g., Pell Grants.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Workforce Development Boards		Percent of job seekers participating in training	

Recommendations – Other

Functions & Tactics	Priority	Timetable to Commence	Cost	Difficulty	Responsible Parties	Supporting Entities	Success Metrics	Notes
In partnership with area and regional (NY, PA, ON) developers, fund a workforce housing study with the goal of delivering a significant increase in housing units in the City of Buffalo.	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$$$	★★ Moderate	City of Buffalo Local foundation	LISC Western New York	Study completed Affordable housing units delivered Change in occupancy rate	Identify policies/actions that can preserve or create affordable housing. Will help maintain region's affordability advantage.
Develop in-town employment hubs.	●● Medium	3 – 5 Years	$$$	★★★ Challenging	InBN Buffalo Niagara Partnership	Local employers	Total capital invested Jobs created Partnerships formed	
Engage retirees and the faith community to increase access to wraparound services.	●●● High	1 – 2 Years	$$	★★ Moderate	Buffalo Niagara Partnership	Faith communities	Individuals served Volunteers	
Differentiate WNY communities in talent retention and attraction materials.	● Low	3 – 5 Years	$	★ Easy	InBN	WNY Visitors Bureau Real estate agents	Development of community-specific content and tools to match prospect residents Relocations	
Understand the causes of low workforce participation	●● Medium	1 – 2 Years	$	★ Easy	UB Regional Institute	InBN	Completion of assessment	Suggest review of disaggregated Census data.
Review the underlying causes of low workforce participation among disabled individuals	●● Medium	6 – 12 Months	$	★ Easy	UB Regional Institute		Completion of assessment	Suggest review of disaggregated Census data.