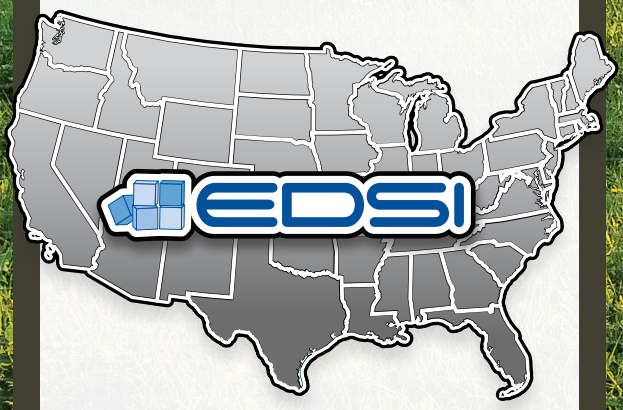
National Appeal

Local Feel

In This Issue:

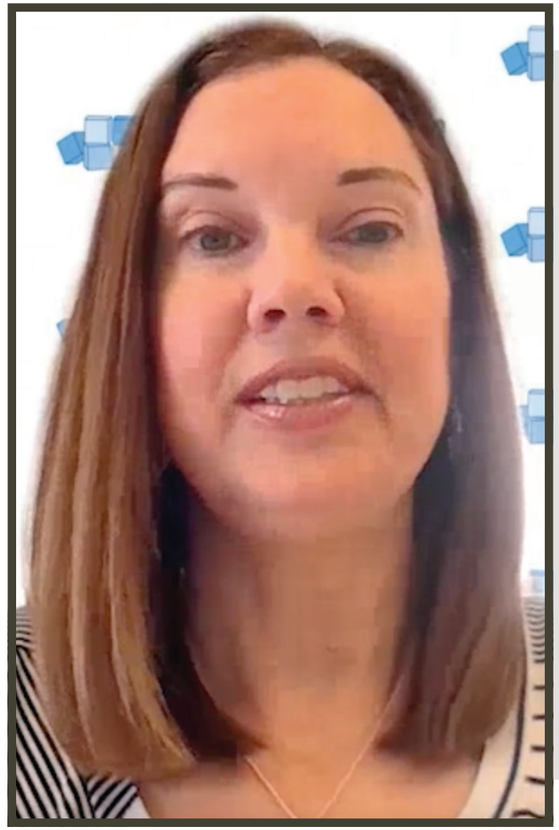
- Awards & Accolades
- Program Highlights & Innovations
- Job Fairs & Conferences
- Special Projects
- Success Stories
- Blogs Published
- New Business

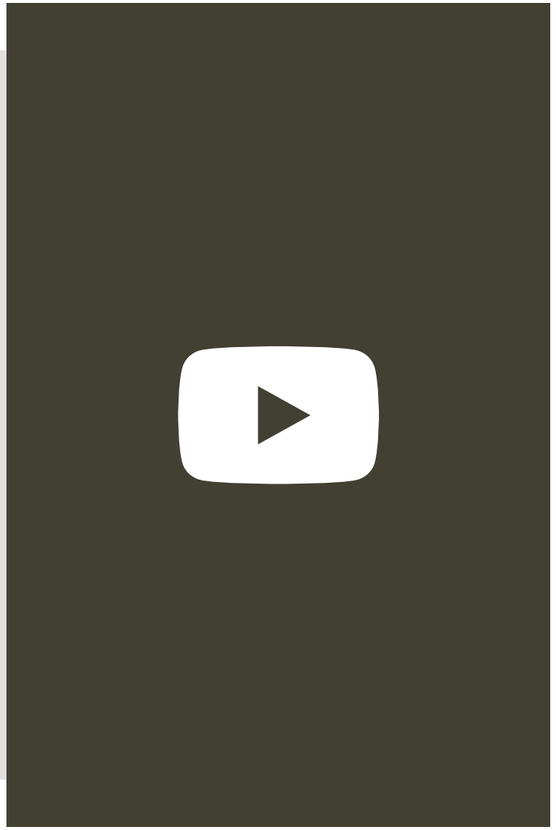
Apr. 2026 | Volume 13



EDSI.com

Introducing This Month's Issue





Click to hear from our Executive Assistant to the CEO, Jennifer Sarkisian as she introduces the April edition of *National Appeal Local Feel* and speaks on EDSI's commitment to sharing its best practices, innovations and latest updates across all our regions.

Awards & Accolades

Celebrating 17 Years of Recognition in Metro Detroit — and 15 Years Nationally

EDSI is proud to once again be named one of Metro Detroit's and the Nation's Best and Brightest Companies to Work For®, marking an impressive 17 consecutive years of recognition in the Metro Detroit program and 15 years on the national stage.

This honor reflects the strong, people-centered culture our team continues to build together—one grounded in engagement, professional growth, and a shared commitment to supporting one another. At the heart of this culture is our mission to Show Up, Smile, and Support—for our colleagues, our customers, and the communities we serve.

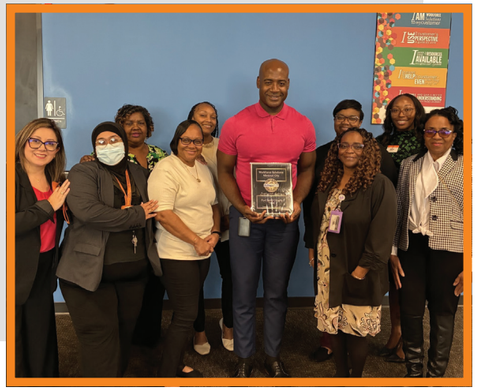
As we celebrate this milestone, we remain focused on fostering an environment where individuals feel valued, empowered, and inspired to make a meaningful impact every day.





Visit the Recent News section of our website to learn more about this recognition and explore the first wave of 2026 National winners

EDSI Missouri City, Texas Team Earns Top 3 Employment Agency Recognition





EDSI's Workforce Solutions team in Missouri City, Texas has been recognized as a **Top 3 of 2025 Fort Bend County Award Winner** in the Employment Agency category by BusinessRate. This distinction is based entirely on verified Google review data, which BusinessRate analyzes and certifies to identify organizations demonstrating exceptional customer satisfaction, brand reputation, and service excellence.

BusinessRate is an independent platform that evaluates local businesses using publicly available Google review data to provide transparent, data-driven rankings. Its Top 3 awards highlight organizations that consistently stand out among their local competitors based on real customer experiences, rather than applications, nominations, or paid placements.

This recognition reflects the authentic feedback of the Missouri City team's customers and the consistent quality of service they deliver every day. It is a meaningful testament to the team's dedication to putting people first and creating positive outcomes for jobseekers and employers across the Fort Bend County community. Congratulations to the Missouri City team on this well-earned achievement.

Pushing Progress in Philadelphia: A Community-Driven Approach to Safer Futures

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

On February 5, Pushing Progress Philly (P3) was formally recognized by the Philadelphia City Council with a Resolution honoring the program's leadership and staff for their unwavering commitment to reducing gun violence across the city. This recognition underscores the impact of a collaborative, community-centered approach to one of Philadelphia's most urgent challenges.

Funded by the City of Philadelphia's Office of Public Safety and powered by a network of dedicated community partners, P3 delivers comprehensive, trauma-informed services designed to interrupt cycles of violence and create pathways to stability. The program focuses on individuals most at risk, offering a combination of case management, workforce development, and supportive services that address both immediate needs and long-term opportunity.

EDSI has played a central role in the program's success. Serving as the coordinating agency during P3's first three years, EDSI helped build the operational framework, strengthen partnerships, and ensure alignment across service providers. Today, EDSI continues its involvement as the Transitional Jobs provider, offering job coaching, facilitating cognitive-behavioral founded group sessions, and connecting participants to meaningful work experiences that foster skill development, income stability, and renewed confidence.

P3's model recognizes that sustainable change requires more than intervention—it requires investment in people, neighborhoods, and systems. By aligning public resources with community expertise, the program creates a coordinated response that not only reduces violence but also promotes healing and economic mobility.

The recent City Council Resolution is more than a recognition of past achievements; it is a reflection of what is possible when organizations, local government, and community leaders work together toward a shared vision. As Pushing Progress Philly continues to evolve, it stands as a powerful example of how collaborative action can drive safer, stronger communities.

Click here to see the City Council Resolution.

EDSI's Shay Jones Vitale Featured on NAWDP's Workforce Podcast



We're proud to celebrate EDSI Behavioral Health Coordinator Shay Jones Vitale, LCSW, who was recently featured on **Episode 18 of the Workforce on the Mic podcast** hosted by the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP).

During the episode, Shay shared insights into EDSI's Wellness to Work program and our Behavioral Health Advocate (BHA) initiative, highlighting how mental health support is integrated directly into workforce services. She discussed the practical tools and strategies our teams use every day to help job seekers navigate barriers that go beyond employment — from stress and trauma to confidence and overall well-being.

Shay's conversation shines a light on the innovative work happening across EDSI programs to ensure participants receive holistic support that strengthens both personal well-being and career readiness.

Take a few minutes to listen to the episode and learn more about how our team is advancing wellness in workforce development.

Program Highlights & Innovations

Better Together: Strengthening Teams to Deliver Exceptional Service



Dearborn, Michigan Team

EDSI's Better Together annual training initiative is currently being delivered across the country, offering employees a revitalized opportunity to deepen their skills, strengthen teamwork, and reinforce the organization's Core Values of Show Up, Smile, Support. Led by EDSI's Talent Team, the training reflects our organization's longstanding commitment to continuous learning and professional excellence.

As Talent Team members visit program offices nationwide, staff participate in thoughtfully designed sessions that combine values-based learning with compliance, safety, and service delivery elements. These interactive, in-person workshops encourage meaningful connection and reflection while equipping team members with new tools, fresh perspectives, and practical strategies to enhance their work.

At its heart, Better Together underscores an essential belief: delivering high quality, people-centered service begins with strong, well-supported teams. By investing in employee development and fostering a culture of collaboration, EDSI aims to ensure that every staff member is empowered to serve customers to the best of their abilities.

Ultimately, this initiative reinforces EDSI's mission to strengthen the workforce and improve lives. Through renewed motivation, shared learning, and a unified focus on service excellence, Better Together ensures that our teams—and the communities we serve—continue to thrive.









Putting People to Work: How Chester County's Business Services Team Has Turned Job Fairs Into a Science

Chester County, Pennsylvania

For the Business Services Team at EDSI's Chester County One-Stop, job fairs aren't just events — they're carefully engineered connections. Team members Josephine Girdner, Dominic DiLuigi, and Paul Kaniewski among others have refined a process that consistently draws job seekers, engages quality employers, and — more importantly — changes lives.

Consistency Is the Foundation

One of the most significant shifts the team has made is simple but powerful: they hold job fairs on the third Thursday of every month, without fail. That consistency has built community recognition and expectation.

> Consistency has been to our advantage. People look out for it." ***— Paul Kaniewski, Business Services Representative***



The regularity also means the team's outreach infrastructure — a dedicated employer distribution list, job seeker contact lists through Constant Contact, and a community outreach coordinator with deep local connections — is always primed and ready. In recent months, they've added a save-the-date flyer two weeks out, giving the community an early heads-up before the official event flyer drops the following week. They've also begun posting job fairs as Facebook Events (rather than standard posts), which has increased visibility and engagement.

Building the Employer Roster

Securing the right mix of employers takes work — and it starts at least a month in advance. Dominic, who has been organizing these events the longest, explains the math behind it:

> If you want 10 employers at the table, you're probably emailing 30 to get there." ***— Dominic DiLuigi, Business Services Representative***

The team doesn't just rely on existing employer relationships. They actively search Indeed and LinkedIn for companies currently hiring, using those opportunities to introduce center services — and the job fair as an accessible entry point. For employers who have never worked with the One-Stop before, a free table at a professional venue is a compelling offer.

The team also intentionally diversifies the employer mix. Beyond childcare and healthcare standbys, they work to bring in manufacturing, warehouse, and tech employers. Sectors with high-volume hiring naturally drive higher conversion rates, while employers with fewer but high-paying positions attract a strong pool of interested candidates. Both, the team notes, represent success.

A Warm Welcome That Starts at the Door

Job seekers don't just show up and wander — they're guided. About two weeks before each event, the team reviews the confirmed employer list and proactively reaches out to job seekers in their system whose backgrounds align with specific openings. On the day of the event, the real coaching begins at check-in.

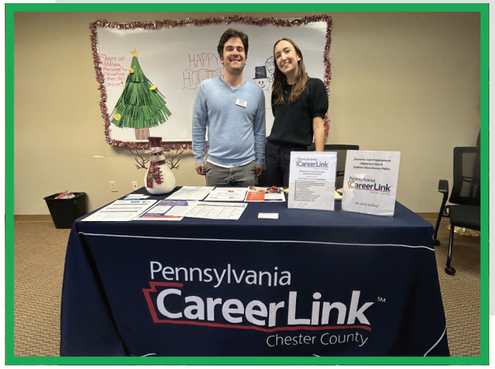
The One-Stop's digital intake captures basic information, but the team treats the check-in table as a coaching moment. Staff ask each person what brought them in and what kind of role they're looking for. For those who hesitate, it's an opportunity to help them find their voice before they step into the room.



> Some people will pause and say, ‘I’m not sure.’ Those are coaching opportunities. We encourage job seekers to think about their strengths. I’ll say, “tell me about your background- what do you think can you offer to an employer?” ***— Josephine Girdner, Program Manager***

Paul recalls one particularly memorable moment: a woman who came with her daughter and wasn’t planning to apply. After a brief conversation, Paul offered to walk her through the room and make a few introductions. The first employer they stopped at happened to be someone she knew. She was hired on the spot that day.

“She wasn’t going to apply. She gave me a hug afterward,” Paul said. “Those are the moments that make our jobs so rewarding.”



Tracking What Works

Dominic has found a systematic 2-prong approach for gathering data. Surveys are placed on employer tables before the event even begins — and a follow-up survey is sent two weeks later to gain feedback on the event, accounting for industries like behavioral health and education where background checks and onboarding extend the hiring timeline.

The surveys capture onsite interest levels, interview intentions, and open-ended feedback. The data, tracked across each event this program year, gives the team a clear picture of what’s working and where adjustments are needed. Employers consistently indicate they would return for future events — and when they’ve had issues (such as not finding the specific candidate profile they needed), the team uses that feedback to refine their pre-event job seeker outreach.

By The Numbers

- **74 average job seekers per event**
- **68 cohorts completed**
- **70% of employers plan to interview candidates**
- **50% of employers plan on hiring candidates**
- **93% of employers would attend a future job fair**



Bringing the Fair to the Community

Chester County is a large and geographically spread county, and the team recognizes that not everyone can travel to a central office. Several times a year, they take the job fair on the road — holding events in communities like Kennett Square and at locations such as the Coatesville VA Medical Center, ensuring broader access for veterans and residents across the county.

Best Practices

- Begin employer outreach at least one month in advance; expect to contact 3x your target number of employers
- Search Indeed and LinkedIn for actively hiring companies — not just existing One-Stop partners
- Add a save-the-date flyer two weeks out, followed by the event flyer the week prior
- Post job fairs as Facebook Events for greater reach and engagement; use other social media platforms as well
- Two weeks before the event, match job seekers in your system to confirmed employer openings and reach out directly
- Use check-in as a coaching moment — ask what they're looking for and direct them intentionally
- Place employer surveys on tables before the event begins; follow up two weeks later for industries with longer hiring timelines
- Hold events on a consistent, predictable schedule so the community can plan ahead
- Rotate locations across the service area to improve geographic access
- Include a photo consent notice in all event materials to streamline documentation

KEVIN'S KERNEL OF KNOWLEDGE



KEVIN SCHNIEDERS
Chief Servant Leader

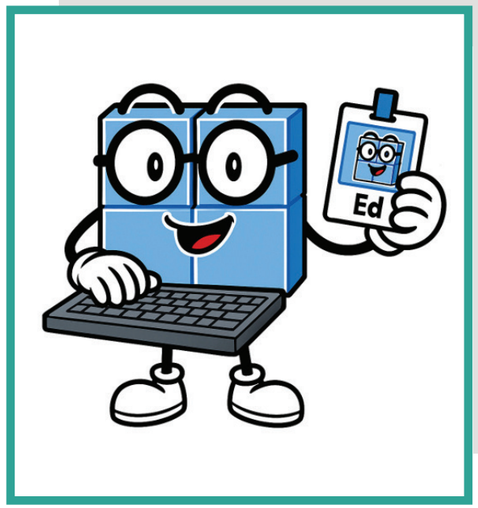
Put people at the center of everything you do.

"We want every customer to feel like they're our only customer — heard, valued, and fully supported."

EDSI | EDSI.com

Introducing “Ed”: Advancing Workforce Services Through AI Innovation

As workforce development continues to evolve, organizations are increasingly exploring ways to leverage technology to enhance service delivery, improve efficiency, and better support both staff and participants. At EDSI, that commitment to innovation has led to the development of “**Ed**,” **our new internal AI-powered chatbot**.



Created through a collaborative partnership with Northwestern University, Ed was designed in direct response to staff feedback gathered through surveys and internal discussions. The goal was clear: identify a practical, secure way to streamline access to information, reduce administrative burden, and empower staff to focus more time on delivering high-quality services to the individuals and communities we serve.

Ed functions similarly to widely used large language model (LLM) tools, but with one critical distinction—**it is purpose-built using EDSI-specific knowledge**. Unlike public AI platforms, Ed has been trained exclusively on internal resources, allowing it to provide accurate, organization-specific guidance in real time.

This includes access to a wide range of internal materials, such as:

- Policies and employee handbooks
- Benefits documentation
- Program codes and operational guidance
- Organizational charts
- Proposal content and historical materials
- Standardized forms and ISO documentation.

By centralizing this information into a single, conversational interface, Ed enables staff to quickly locate what they need—whether that’s clarifying a policy, identifying the correct form, or navigating internal processes. What previously may have required multiple emails or time spent searching across systems can now be accomplished in seconds.
The result is a more efficient and responsive workforce. Staff are better equipped with the information they need, when they need it—allowing them to dedicate more time to participant engagement, employer partnerships, and program outcomes.

Importantly, Ed has been developed with a strong emphasis on data security and responsible AI use. All information remains protected within EDSI’s internal environment, ensuring that sensitive organizational content is both secure and accessible only to authorized users.

As Ed continues to evolve, it will also play a role in staff onboarding and training, helping new team members quickly acclimate to EDSI systems and processes while reinforcing consistency across programs and regions.

This investment reflects EDSI’s broader commitment to innovation—leveraging emerging technologies not for their own sake, but to strengthen service delivery, improve operational effectiveness, and ultimately drive better outcomes for the communities we serve.

Strengthening the Workforce from Within: Incumbent Worker Training Delivers Results

Bucks County, Pennsylvania



Since 2017, the Bucks County One-Stop has successfully implemented the Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Employer Reimbursement Program—an impactful workforce development strategy designed to support both employee advancement and business growth. The program continues to demonstrate strong results, reinforcing the value of investing in talent from within.

To date, the IWT program has partially funded more than 225 training initiatives across 85 Bucks County companies. These investments have empowered employers to upskill their workforce, enhance productivity, and remain competitive in an evolving economy. In the most recent program year alone, 140 incumbent workers benefited from advanced training opportunities, with participants earning wage increases or one-time bonuses upon completion—further strengthening employee engagement and retention.

A representative sample of trainings funded over the past year includes:

- Leadership Academy
- Project Manager Academy
- SolidWorks Essentials
- CMO Support & Brand Refresh
- Emerging Manager Institute
- ISO Internal Auditor

Beyond traditional upskilling and leadership development, Bucks County employers are also leveraging IWT funds to support the Related Technical Instruction (RTI) component of Pennsylvania Registered Apprenticeships. **Many of these apprenticeships are rooted in the skilled trades, including:**

- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Sheet Metal
- Carpentry

The sustained success of the IWT program in Bucks County is driven by strong employer engagement. Each year, participating businesses fully utilize available funding, enabling the Bucks County Business Services Team to maximize its investment in workforce development initiatives. This ongoing demand underscores the program's effectiveness in strengthening the regional workforce while meeting the evolving needs of employers.

Building on this success, EDSI is actively working to expand and replicate the IWT model in additional Pennsylvania regions, including Northwest Pennsylvania, Lehigh County, and Philadelphia. By bringing this proven approach to new communities, EDSI aims to further support employers, enhance workforce skills, and drive economic growth across the Commonwealth.

As workforce needs continue to evolve, programs like IWT remain a critical tool—ensuring that businesses can grow, employees can advance, and local economies can thrive.

Building Futures Through Pre-Apprenticeship

Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Across the country, employers in the skilled trades are facing a familiar challenge: finding workers with the skills and experience needed to fill critical roles. At the same time, many young adults—particularly those who are out of school—are searching for clear pathways into stable, family-sustaining careers. Bridging that gap requires more than training alone. It requires strong partnerships, hands-on experience, and a clear connection to real opportunities.

EDSI is helping meet that need through innovative pre-apprenticeship programs that connect participants directly to career pathways in high-demand industries. One example is the Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship Program serving WIOA Out-of-School Youth in Delaware County, Pennsylvania. Delivered through the Delaware County One-Stop, the program is designed to introduce young adults to the skilled trades while preparing them for long-term success.

Developed in partnership with Garage82 and affiliated with Eastern Atlantic States Technical College, the program also maintains a direct connection to the Philadelphia Carpenters Union. These relationships ensure that participants are not only learning foundational skills, but also gaining exposure to real-world expectations and apprenticeship opportunities within the industry.

Over the course of eight weeks, participants build practical carpentry skills through hands-on learning. They learn how to read measurements, safely use hand and power tools, and apply those skills through projects like building toolboxes and framing structures. Each participant receives their own set of tools and has the opportunity to explore union facilities, helping them better understand the next steps in their career journey.

What makes the program especially impactful is its focus on what comes next. Participants are connected to a broader pathway that can include OSHA-30 safety training, advanced skills development through Individual Training Accounts, internships, and ultimately apprenticeship placement. This structured approach ensures that participants are not just gaining experience—they are building momentum toward long-term employment.

For many, that momentum is life-changing. After completing the program in 2025, Alex a program participant discovered a passion for woodworking and secured a position with Home Depot, where he continues to build his skills while assisting customers with materials and project guidance. Chris, another program participant who completed the program in 2022, later returned with a renewed focus on the trades and is now enrolled in welding training at Delaware County Community College. His goal is to pursue an apprenticeship with Philadelphia Shipyard and establish a long-term career in the field.

Programs like this demonstrate what's possible when workforce organizations, training providers, and industry partners work together with a shared goal. By aligning training with real opportunities and supporting participants beyond the classroom, EDSI is helping to strengthen the workforce pipeline while creating meaningful career pathways for the next generation.







Job Fairs & Conferences

Industry-Specific Job Fair Series Connects Employers and Job Seekers

Berks County, Pennsylvania

In February 2026, EDSI's Berks County One-Stop hosted a series of Industry-Specific Job Fairs designed to bring together employers and job seekers in targeted fields. These events, hosted over a span of four days, focused on creating meaningful connections, streamlining the hiring process, and helping participants engage in productive, face-to-face conversations that move careers forward.

By concentrating on specific industries, we were able to foster strong matches, encourage deeper dialogue about workforce needs, and provide job seekers with clearer insights into available opportunities and career pathways in Manufacturing, Healthcare, Transportation, and Construction.



With 45 total employers over 4 days, the events demonstrated the continued value of in-person networking and collaborative workforce development efforts. Over 600 job seekers benefited from direct access to hiring representatives, on-the-spot interviews, and valuable information about open positions and company cultures.

We are proud to support initiatives that strengthen the local workforce and build lasting partnerships within our community. Events like these highlight the importance of intentional engagement between employers and job seekers, and we look forward to continuing to expand opportunities that support economic growth and career advancement.

We appreciate all the participating employers, job seekers, and partners who contributed to the success of this series, and we are excited to build on this momentum in future events, including the upcoming Spring 2026 Job Fair held at Redner's Event Center at the Reading Fightin Phils.

Where Opportunity Meets Momentum: Inside a Hiring Event That Delivered Results

Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania

When workforce development works the way it's intended to, it creates more than connections—it creates momentum. That was the case this February, when EDSI's team at Lehigh Valley One-Stop hosted a dynamic hiring fair designed to bring employers and job seekers together in meaningful, productive ways.

The event welcomed 26 employers representing a wide range of industries, including healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality, transportation and logistics, and early education. More than 180 job seekers attended, each arriving with their own goals—whether entering the workforce, advancing a career, or exploring new opportunities. The result was a high-energy environment where conversations quickly turned into possibilities.

While the hiring fair was open to the public, the EDSI team took a thoughtful and strategic approach to employer engagement. Special emphasis was placed on recruiting businesses committed to inclusive hiring practices, particularly those interested in connecting with veterans and individuals who speak languages other than English. This intentional focus helped ensure that the event reflected the diversity of the community and expanded access to opportunity for job seekers who may otherwise face barriers.

For participants already enrolled in workforce programs, the hiring fair offered a chance to put preparation into action—meeting face-to-face with employers, practicing professional communication, and pursuing real job leads. At the same time, the event introduced new individuals to available services, opening the door for future engagement and support.





The impact was immediate and measurable. To date, six attendees have received job offers as a direct result of the event, with additional outcomes still unfolding as employers continue their hiring processes. Beyond those numbers, the event strengthened relationships between local businesses and the workforce system, reinforcing a shared commitment to building a strong, inclusive regional economy.

Events like this hiring fair demonstrate the power of collaboration—where employers, workforce professionals, and job seekers come together with a common purpose. By creating spaces that are both accessible and intentional, EDSI and its partners continue to drive outcomes that matter for individuals, businesses, and communities alike.

Click to learn more about the event and its impact

EDSI Teams Take the Stage During Spring Conference Season



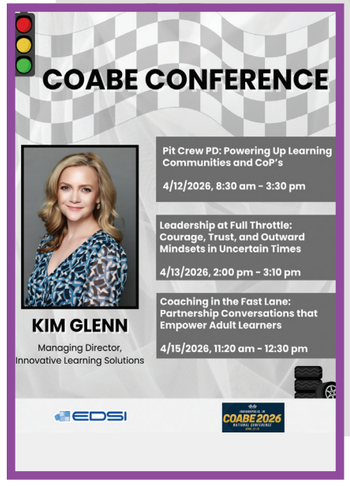
As spring conference season unfolds, EDSI's Innovative Learning Solutions (ILS) and Behavioral Health Advocate (BHA) teams are actively contributing to key industry events across the country—both in person and virtually.

Throughout the season, team members are leading sessions and workshops at prominent gatherings such as the Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA) Virtual Summit, the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association (PWDA) NextGen Youth Summit, and the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) national conference. These opportunities reflect EDSI's commitment to sharing best practices, advancing innovation, and supporting workforce development professionals nationwide.

By presenting on topics that drive impact and inspire progress, EDSI staff continue to demonstrate the depth of expertise within the organization and its leadership role in the field. Their contributions not only elevate industry conversations but also strengthen partnerships and expand the reach of effective, people-centered solutions.

We applaud our team members for representing EDSI with professionalism and passion, and for helping to shape the future of workforce development through their thought leadership and engagement.











Connecting Talent to Opportunity: Waller County Job Fair Drives Impact in the West Region

Waller, Texas

In January, the West Region hosted a highly successful Waller County Job Fair, bringing together nearly 700 pre-registered job seekers and 26 employers ready to hire. The event welcomed 339 attendees and created valuable, real-time connections between local businesses and individuals seeking meaningful employment opportunities.

Beyond job matching, the event offered added value to participants through 70 complimentary professional headshots—helping attendees enhance their resumes and strengthen their online presence in today's competitive job market.

The job fair also made a strong impact among young people in the community, engaging 46 youth participants. Of those, 11 were identified as potentially eligible for Workforce Solutions services, reinforcing our continued commitment to building accessible, long-term career pathways for the next generation.

The energy and engagement from both employers and job seekers underscored the importance of events like this in strengthening local workforce ecosystems. We invite you to watch the accompanying video from the event to experience firsthand the connections, conversations, and community impact that made the day such a success.

Click here to watch the Waller County Job Fair Video.

Special Projects

Digital Literacy Initiative Expands Workforce Skills

Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Through a Digital Literacy Grant awarded by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and administered by Bucks County Workforce & Economic Development, the Bucks County One-Stop has expanded access to technology training for job seekers across the region. Digital literacy workshops and hands-on assistance are delivered through the One-Stop's Career Resource Center, community partner locations, and the Workforce on Wheels (WOW) mobile unit.

The program helps participants build foundational digital skills needed to compete in today's labor market, including using computers, navigating online job platforms, communicating through email, and submitting employment applications. Outreach efforts focus on individuals who may face barriers to employment, including seniors, veterans, reentrants, refugees, and underserved residents, with additional classes offered through partnerships with local senior centers and community organizations.

Since tracking began in October 2025, the initiative has registered:

- More than 2,500 participants
- Served over 1,400 individuals through workshops and digital skills assistance
- 524 individuals received services through the WOW mobile unit
- Many accessed training and technology support through the Career Resource Center.

Since tracking began in October 2025, the initiative has registered more than 2,500 participants and served over 1,400 individuals through workshops and digital skills assistance. Of those served, 524 individuals received services through the WOW mobile unit while many others accessed training and technology support through the Career Resource Center.

Through these efforts, the Bucks County One-Stop team is helping residents build the digital competencies needed to search for employment, connect with employers, and succeed in today's technology-driven workplace.





Building Opportunity: Southeast Missouri STEM Initiative in the Running for MAWD Partnership Award

Southeast, Missouri



A collaborative effort in Southeast Missouri is gaining recognition for its innovative approach to expanding career opportunities for young people with disabilities. The Southeast Missouri STEM Career Pathway Apprenticeship Initiative, launched in March 2026 in Cape Girardeau, has been submitted for the Missouri Association of Workforce Development Local Excellence Award in Partnership—highlighting its strong, community-driven model.

This initiative brings together national expertise from the National Disability Institute (NDI) and industry leadership from General Motors, alongside state and local partners, to expand access to inclusive, high-quality STEM career pathways. At its core is a focus on developing registered apprenticeship opportunities that align with regional workforce needs while ensuring equitable access for youth with disabilities.

The effort began with a community-wide kickoff conversation that convened workforce leaders, educators, and service providers to share insights and strengthen collaboration. Together, partners are working to increase awareness of STEM careers, connect existing support systems, and reduce barriers to employment. Complementary models such as LEAP further support this work by helping participants gain early work experience and build skills that lead into longer-term apprenticeship opportunities.

The Southeast Workforce Development Board and EDSI has played an important role in advancing this initiative locally, helping to convene partners and support a coordinated, community-centered approach. The collaboration reflects the spirit of MAWD's partnership award—bringing together diverse stakeholders to drive meaningful, lasting impact.

If selected for the award, funding will be used to expand employer engagement, increase community awareness, and enhance outreach efforts throughout the Cape Girardeau area—further strengthening the region's inclusive talent pipeline.

If anyone is interested in exploring a similar opportunity with NDI in their local area, please reach out to Regional Director Samantha Terry at sterry@edsi.com

Bridging the Digital Divide Through Partnership and Opportunity

Hartford, Connecticut





Access to technology is no longer a luxury –it's a necessity for education, workforce training, and long-term career success. In Hartford, Connecticut, a powerful collaboration is helping ensure that more young people have the tools they need to move forward with confidence.

Through a partnership between Capital Workforce Partners, Hartford Public Library, the City of Hartford, Computers 4 People, and donating organization Nassau Financial Group – alongside a network of dedicated community partners – 44 students participating in Training and Advancement Program (TAP) initiatives recently received access to essential technology resources.

This effort represents more than a one-time distribution of devices. It reflects a shared commitment to advancing digital equity and expanding opportunity for young people who are building pathways toward education and employment. By removing barriers to access, these partners are helping ensure that participants can fully engage in virtual learning, develop critical digital skills, and explore career opportunities that depend on technology.

For students in TAP programs, this moment marks an important step forward. Equipped with the tools they need to succeed, they are better positioned to complete training, pursue credentials, and enter the workforce with confidence.

Initiatives like this demonstrate what is possible when public, private, and nonprofit partners come together with a common goal. By aligning resources and expertise, the collaboration is not only addressing immediate needs – it is investing in long-term outcomes for individuals and the broader Hartford community.

As workforce development continues to evolve in a digital landscape, partnerships like this one serve as a model for how communities can work together to close gaps, create access, and open doors—one opportunity at a time.

Read more about the program partnership by clicking here.

Success Stories



EDSI Multi-Generational Program Graduate – Jess Neal: Graduation Speech

Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Multi-Gen has given me way more than an opportunity to obtain a certification in Customer Service Personally, it served as a way for me to get back into the 'game'. I had been so down and out before this thing started with all that life was throwing at me. I felt that I was fading away. I was losing hope and confidence in myself. Then this program showed up for me in a huge way. It gave me something to commit to. Something to look forward to. Small goals to achieve. Something to show my children that hey, mom is back and moving the family forward in the right direction. It served as a tool for me to move past what was draining me.

Whoever designed the setup of this program did an exceptional job and really thought about EACH AND EVERY area of it. I mean even my kids were tapped into the meetings. Often reminding me about my class I had to log in to (lol). Early on, they could see it was doing something for me. Meeting the ladies in the class and Heather and Sierra, it became something I looked forward to weekly. A safe space to be vulnerable and heard and valued. As much as I valued this program, I felt that in return 10-fold. Multi-Gen became a family, and that family wanted you to win! That family clapped for you, cheered you on, swapped advice and pretty much took on an all for one and one for all approach.

Wrapping up, I would like to say thank you to everyone who played a part in this. To the board members and the funders, to every staff member, to Darnell for suggesting the program to me, to our director, Heather, to our instructor, Sierra, and to the ladies that took this journey with me. Each and every one of you now holds a place in my heart. We will forever be a Multi-Gen family.

P.S. Today I got a formal offer for a customer service position starting March 30th.

Read more about our innovative Multi-Generational program in our latest blog.

From Setback to Strength: A Journey of Resilience, Renewal, and Purpose

Delaware County, Pennsylvania



When Maureen Cislo first connected with EDSI's career services in February 2025, she was navigating a season marked by uncertainty. After a prolonged period of unemployment and a series of professional setbacks, her confidence had been shaken, and early outreach efforts to re-engage went unanswered. Like many job seekers facing complex challenges, taking the first step forward wasn't easy.

That changed when Maureen attended the Spring 2025 job fair hosted by the **Delaware County One-Stop**. While there, she participated in a hybrid résumé workshop led by workforce professionals. Something clicked. As she listened, Maureen began to recognize gaps in her job search strategy—and made the pivotal decision to reach out for support.

That moment marked the beginning of a powerful transformation.

After connecting with one of the workshop presenters—who would soon become her career advisor—Maureen began refining her résumé and approach to job searching. The results were immediate: for the first time in months, she began receiving responses and interview invitations. But as her journey unfolded, it became clear that her needs extended beyond technical career support.

Maureen was carrying a significant personal burden. She opened up about a series of life challenges, including difficult employment separations, a prolonged divorce, the emotional transition of becoming an empty nester, and the recent loss of her father. While grieving, she was also responsible for settling her father's estate out of state—all while trying to regain her footing professionally.

Recognizing the full scope of her situation, the team took a holistic approach. With Maureen's consent, she was connected to a Behavioral Health Advocate, ensuring she had the emotional support needed alongside her career services. She engaged fully in these services, later sharing how meaningful and timely that support was in helping her process loss and move forward with clarity and confidence.

With a strong foundation in place, Maureen began rebuilding her professional identity. Having previously served as a Director of Development, she worked closely with her advisor on structured career planning, targeted networking, and interview preparation. A turning point came through a writing assignment that tapped into her natural strengths. As a gifted writer, Maureen was able to rediscover her voice—both on paper and in interviews—strengthening her confidence and how she communicated her value.

Within just one month, she received two professional job offers.

Yet the journey didn't end there. As Maureen carefully considered her options—evaluating mission alignment, organizational fit, and long-term growth—an unexpected setback occurred. One offer was rescinded, and the remaining opportunity fell short of her compensation expectations. Faced with uncertainty, she once again leaned into the support around her.

Together, she and her advisor reviewed labor market data, practiced negotiation strategies, and reinforced her worth. With determination and courage, Maureen advocated for herself. The outcome reflected her preparation: one of the employers returned with an improved offer that aligned more closely with her experience and value.

Today, Maureen is thriving as Director of Mission Advancement for the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In this role, she leads a team of five and oversees all fundraising efforts, including grant writing, event planning, planned giving, and major donor engagement. For Maureen, the position represents more than career advancement—it's a calling. A deeply spiritual person, she has found purpose in working alongside individuals who share her values and commitment to service.

Reflecting on her journey, Maureen credits EDSI's comprehensive support system with helping her not only find employment, but rediscover herself. From career coaching to behavioral health services, she describes the experience as both inspiring and transformative.

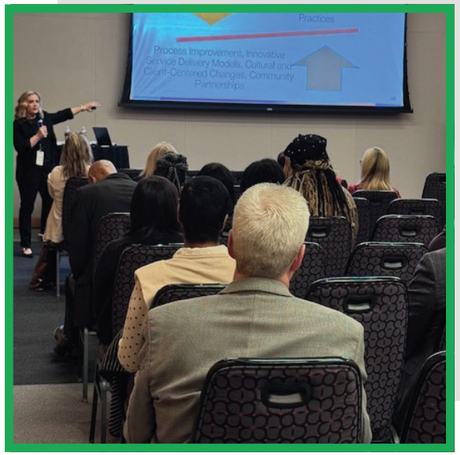
"Never ever give up," she says. "It is not what happens to you in life, but how you handle it."

Maureen's story is a powerful reminder that workforce development is about more than jobs—it's about people. Through personalized guidance, integrated support, and a commitment to meeting individuals where they are, EDSI continues to help job seekers turn adversity into opportunity and build futures filled with purpose.



Blogs Published

Blog Feature: How EDSI's Innovative Learning Solutions Team Approaches Risk Mitigation in Instructional Design and Learning Projects



Successful learning initiatives aren't defined by how smoothly they go — but by how well they're prepared to navigate the unexpected. At EDSI, our Innovative Learning Solutions team takes a proactive, structured approach to risk mitigation that strengthens outcomes from the very first planning conversation to long after a project is live.

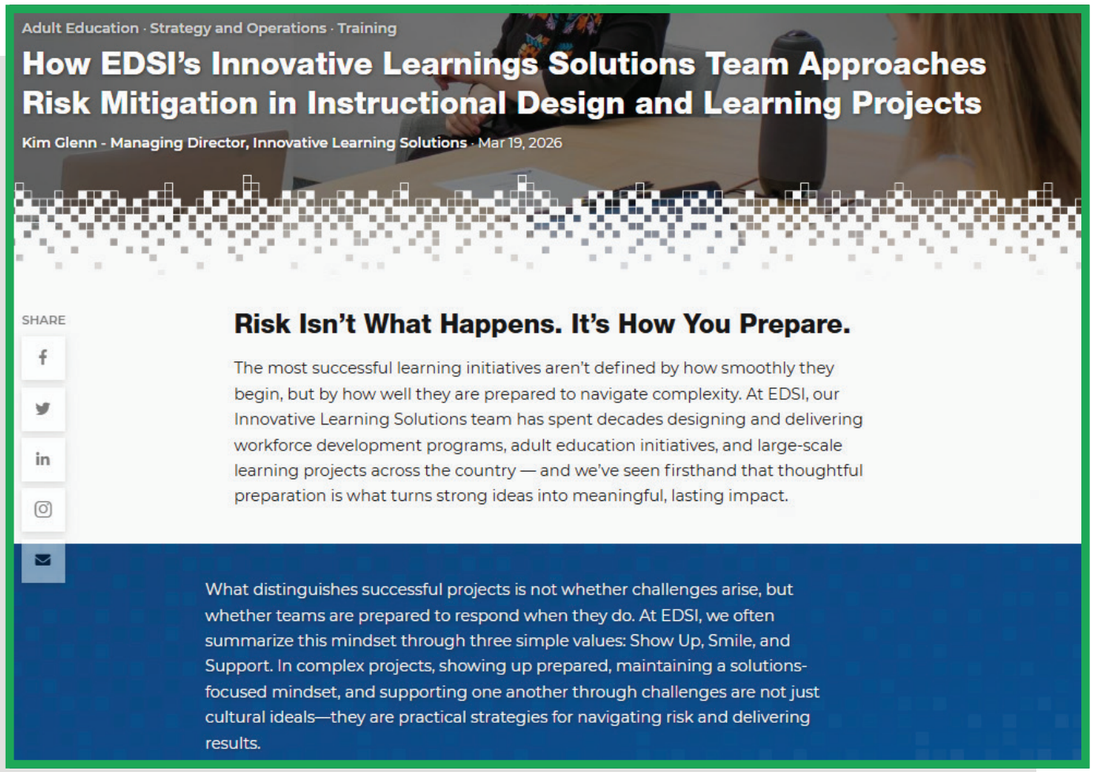
This approach is shaped by insights from Kim Glenn, Managing Director of Innovative Learning Solutions, whose decades of experience in instructional design and professional development across workforce and adult education environments have informed the tools and practices her team relies on today.

At the center of this work is our Risk Mitigation Worksheet, a practical resource used throughout every phase of a project. The worksheet helps teams identify and assess risks related to scope, timeline, stakeholder alignment, instructional quality, and technology — while also defining likelihood, impact, early warning signs, and clear response strategies. A foundational principle anchors the process: every identified risk has an assigned owner, ensuring accountability and timely action.

But tools alone aren't enough. Effective risk mitigation is woven into the entire project lifecycle — from early discovery and design to development, implementation, and evaluation. This ongoing attention helps teams anticipate challenges early, adapt as projects evolve, and capture insights that strengthen future work.

Equally critical is the culture behind the process. Research by Amy Edmondson underscores that psychological safety is a key driver of successful risk management. When teams feel empowered to raise concerns and explore new ideas, risks become opportunities for alignment, creativity, and strengthened collaboration.

In the end, EDSI's approach is about more than managing potential obstacles — it's about building trust, supporting innovation, and creating the conditions for meaningful, lasting impact.



Read the full blog on EDSI's website to explore the complete framework and see how this approach comes to life in our learning projects.

New Business

New Business Wins

Pennsylvania

- **City of Philadelphia Call for Ideas: Workforce Innovation Grant - Build Different Program** *(subcontractor role)*

Kansas

- **Kansas Statewide Study of WIOA Title I Service Delivery**







Stay Connected

EDSI.com/company-info

National Appeal Local Feel

Apr. 2026 Volume 13

EDSI is a Federal Contractor – Equal Opportunity Employer & Programs — Minorities/Women/Disabled/Veterans. Reasonable accommodations will be made upon request.

Click here for Stevens Amendment information.