



DUNCAN AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

# WORKFORCE 2022-2023





# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Throughout economic development circles, there are principles that guide organizations like Duncan Area Economic Development Foundation (DAEDF). Fortunately, my early years at the Oklahoma Department of Commerce taught me the Building Blocks of Economic Development. These principles focus on six items: Leadership, Workforce, Community Capacity, Existing Business and Industry, Entrepreneurship, and Attraction of New Business.

Today, we are focusing on the topic of workforce solutions. With so many “Help Wanted” signs across the community, nationwide some are left wondering why? It wasn’t the pandemic! While some left the workforce early truth about the workforce shortage was looming within the demographics. We have known for years that the Baby Boomers generation was about to retire, leaving a huge gap in the workforce structure of this country. However, very few companies were willing to take action or implement additional technology to lessen the workload until the issue was directly in front of them.

DAEDF has been focused on this dilemma for several years by providing local solutions to help our business community with this workforce issue. About 10 years ago, DAEDF founded a partnership with Duncan Public Schools (DPS) Career Pathways. In this long-standing partnership, a workforce pipeline has been created. This effort is focused on retention of future workforce with DPS teacher tours and student internships in the business community. Students gain insight on the local careers that they want to pursue and ones that might not be a good fit.

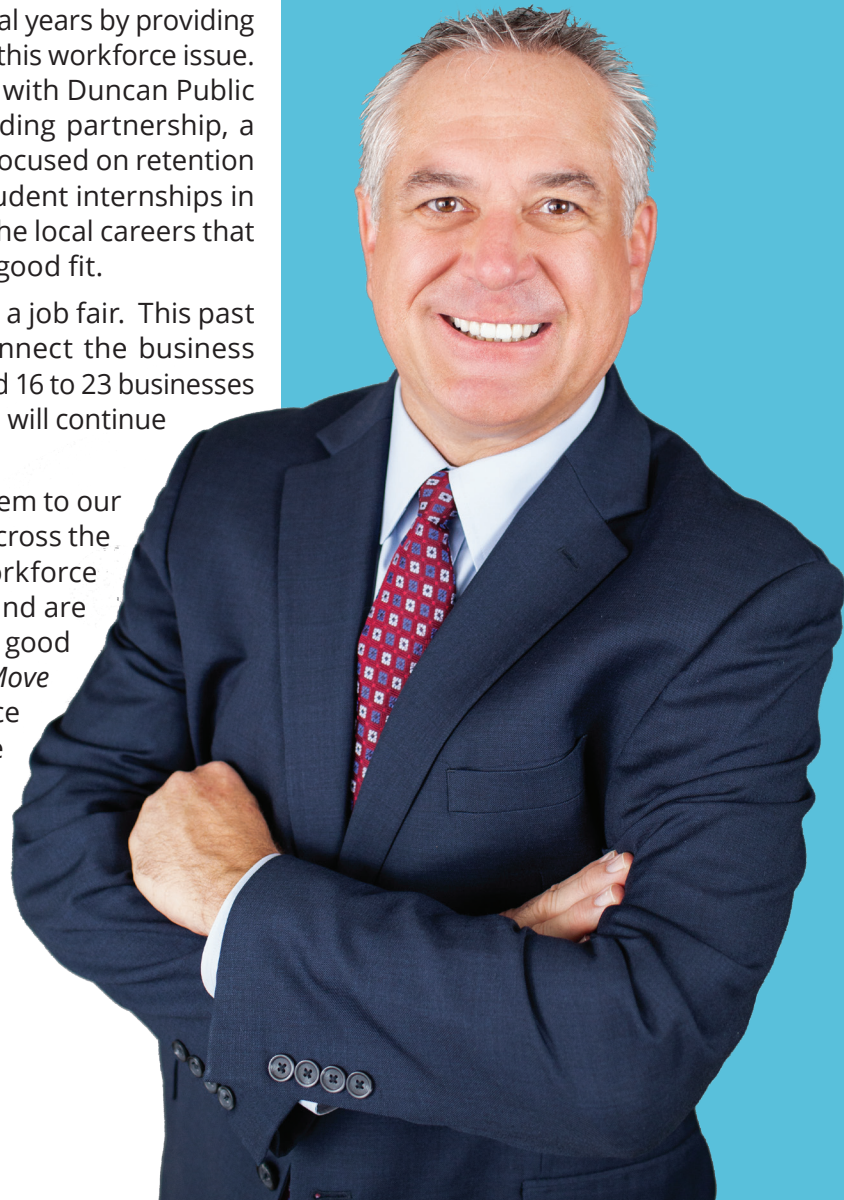
Another traditional way of finding workers is with a job fair. This past year, DAEDF hosted four different job fairs to connect the business community with job seekers. Each of these events had 16 to 23 businesses and over 150 participants at each venue. In 2023, we will continue hosting additional job fairs.

One final way to gain workforce is by recruiting them to our community. There is a lot of movement of people across the country. Individuals are no longer bound to the workforce opportunities within a specific geographic region and are more than willing to relocate to areas that provide a good quality of life and competitive wages like Duncan. *Move Duncan* is the newest program to attract workforce to our community. DAEDF is partnering with the business community to offer this new relocation incentive. These are just a few ways that DAEDF helps grow our community, region, and state.



Lyle Roggow,  
President and CEO of the Duncan  
Area Economic Development Foundation.

Creating  
innovative  
programs to  
assist our  
future





## EDUCATION IS AN INVESTMENT

*written by Channa Byerly, Superintendent Duncan Public Schools (DPS)*

Education serves as an investment that improves the economic quality of a community. The school district and local businesses and industry must work in partnership to ensure our students are prepared for the workforce, and our business and industry partners have a local workforce pipeline. DPS works collaboratively with many individuals to give our students multiple opportunities to be exposed to career pathways starting in Pre-K. Education is not just about curriculum, but utilizing opportunities to prepare our students for an ever-changing workforce.

Our teachers are tasked with connecting the relevance of what they teach to how students will use those skills in the workforce. Through our Teacher Tours partnership with DAEDF, we are able to do just that. DPS teachers tour local business and industry to see first hand the jobs available in our community and the skills needed for those careers. The connection of the classroom to the workforce allows teachers to see the relevance of their curriculum and helps connect the importance of those skills to our students. In addition, during those tours, teachers are able to hear about the job and scholarship opportunities that are available.

DPS continually evaluates new opportunities to expose our students to college and career readiness. An additional goal of DPS is to continue increasing the number of students participating in our Internship program. We would love to see all our students provided an opportunity to learn employability skills and receive career training in their chosen occupations.

We want our students to graduate college and career ready, but most importantly, to be provided that career opportunity in Duncan. Our DPS graduates are assets to our community, and we want to help them find the right career. It is our responsibility to work

together to overcome the shortage in our workforce. This is possible through partnerships like the one we have with DAEDF. We want to work to continuously improve the opportunities in our community for our students and ensure they are prepared through their education for those opportunities. Duncan is a community that values our students and we value our partnerships with our community.





# LEARN HERE EARN HERE

## INTERNSHIPS LEAD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE

*written by Emily Prichard, Duncan High School Internship Instructor/Coordinator*

Imagine your high school senior coming home from a day at school and telling you that she has found, without a doubt, what she wants to do for the rest of her life. That is exactly what happened when Anna Grace Roberson, a senior at Duncan High School, got home after her first day as a speech language pathology intern.

Anna Grace, along with 45 other Duncan High School juniors and seniors are currently participating in the Pathways to Future Careers Program for 2022-2023 school year. This program provides training and internship opportunities for students at local businesses and organizations in and around Duncan. Students spend the first few weeks of school in the classroom learning career readiness basics such as team building, resume creation, writing cover letters, researching careers, learning how to successfully interview, and other basic soft skills.

Once the students determine in what career path their interest lies, students are matched with corresponding local businesses and organizations. Students then go through the interview process, are presented job offers, and begin internships. They spend an hour and half, four days a week with these industry partners. Students learn hands-on, as they ask questions and help where needed. This process gives students an opportunity to make an informed decision about a college major or post-graduation career long before most students their age. The program is different from many across the state, as internship sites are based on students' interests.

Over the past six years, more than 350 students have interned with more than 150 businesses/organizations in or around the Duncan area. The opportunity Duncan High School students have to use local industry partners as non-traditional teachers is invaluable. As the program continues, the hope is to increase the number of students participating, further bridging the skills gap between secondary education and the workforce. Duncan High School students are this community's future and experiences like this program help ensure it will be a bright one.



**Anna Grace Roberson, Celebrating her acceptance to Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, OK. (Photo from Facebook)**

**SINCE 2016 MORE THAN  
350 STUDENTS  
HAVE INTERNED WITH  
150+ BUSINESSES  
& ORGANIZATIONS  
THANKS TO THE PATHWAYS TO  
FUTURE CAREERS PROGRAM**



# NOT JUST HERE FOR HEALTHCARE

## IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM, OR IS IT?

written by *Lesa Hefner, DRH Health Careers Advisor*



Workforce development is a multifaceted term and looks a little different from each perspective in which it is viewed. It has driving connections to education and social service sectors, to community and regional sectors, and to specific industries and businesses. The bottom line is, workforce development does affect all of us. But what can I do?

For a young person, a major part workforce development means gaining “soft” skills or employability skills. Research from the National Soft Skills Association reports that 85% of job success comes from having well-developed soft skills. Skills usually mentioned: teamwork/ collaboration, communication-both written and oral, time management, interpersonal skills, flexibility, problem solving, innovation and strong work ethic, to name a few.

As an educator, I have spoken with business people in Duncan since my arrival in 2013 regarding expectations for young people in entry level jobs. Employers and department managers are all in agreement. If a person demonstrates solid employability skills, the technical skills, at least to some degree, can be taught.

I have always been keenly aware of my responsibility to prepare students for success in the workplace by focusing on employability skills. The truth is, there are many direct correlations from the skills that should be demonstrated and emphasized in a classroom to those skills expected to be used in a job environment. Our job as educators is no longer that of the “sage on the stage” but we must teach students to how to learn. It is essential that we encourage students to be engaged, life-long learners who are not afraid of challenges and mistakes as they grow both personally and professionally.

My newest endeavor has challenged me. It has taken me from the familiar into once again, figuring it out mode, as I move forward. DRH Health CEO, Mr. Jay Johnson and his team have a proactive approach to accomplish their vision for workforce development. In my interview, Mr. Johnson stated, “DRH Health wants to serve the communities in which we have a presence.” My new title as Healthcare Careers Advisor is a new position to seek to accomplish this vision. I am still very much a teacher; it just looks different. I am working to build relationships with schools in Stephens and Jefferson counties to increase awareness of career opportunities for both clinical and non-clinical roles in healthcare and to provide career readiness activities and presentations, including those needed employability skills. Which in turn, serves our whole community.

What a great job to have, right? Building relationships, supporting school staff and serving students, I can do that!

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

written by *Jay Johnson, CEO of DRH Health*

Workforce development. What is it? From our perspective, it is strategy, it is service, and really, it's our core mission. One of the great things about healthcare is serving others and living out service to others in our jobs and work. We just need more great people to join us.

We have a difficult challenge in front of us at DRH Health. Currently, out of our 1,200 employees, we have 48 employees that are temporary and working under contract instead of full-time and local employment. These employees come at a significant cost, and as good as many of them are, they come without a commitment to our community. Being local and living local is so key to “buy-in” and making where we live a better place. We often say we want “owners” and not “renters” working here.

We desire to not only be great at providing healthcare, but we want to be a significant force for good in our community. We want to grow our community and be a catalyst for our community's future. That's more than just providing healthcare. It is our dream to lift our community and to provide well-paying jobs with the opportunity to grow locally. That's one of the reasons we hired Lesa Hefner.

Lesa's job is to meet local high school students and adults looking for a career change and educate them about the opportunities at DRH. We currently have 152 job vacancies, with almost half of those being nurses. We believe investing in the people in our communities is the way to eliminate these vacancies.

We believe healthcare jobs are often overlooked, especially when considering the diversity of opportunities. We all know about the doctors and nurses that work here. But we also need lab technicians, respiratory therapists, physical therapists, food service workers, sterile processing technicians, accountants, front desk clerks, billers, plant and facility technicians, security officers, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, radiology technicians, and many others. I think you can see there is a lot of opportunity within your local healthcare system.

Have you considered a job in healthcare? If you'd like to learn more, please call Lesa at 580.251.8238.



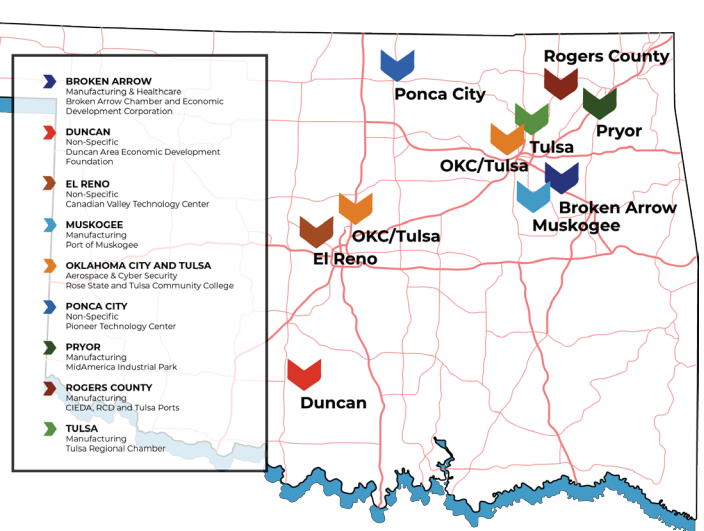


# CENTERS FOR WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE

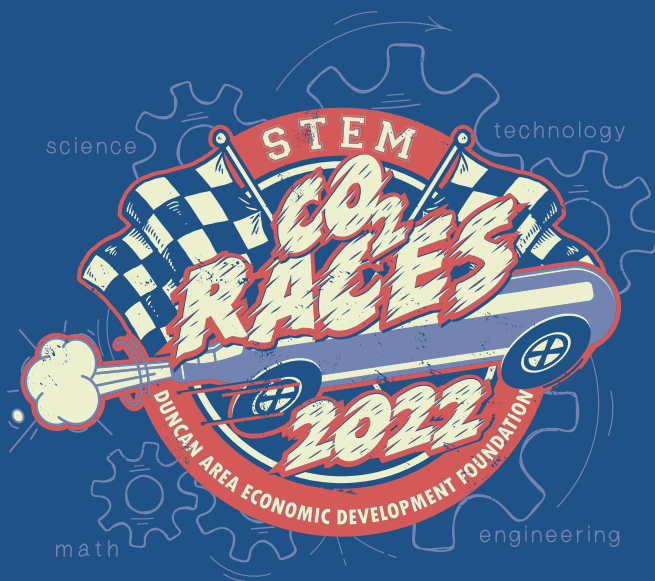
»DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES FOR OKLAHOMA COMPANIES

Oklahoma Works Together is a statewide, collaborative initiative that works locally to deliver the skilled team Oklahoma businesses need to operate. Each Center for Workforce Excellence has a targeted focus to best support the key industry sectors in the region.

Duncan is one of twelve certified centers. Workforce development is a part of our culture. The Duncan CWE is a collaborative effort between local educational partners, our business community and the regional economic development organization. Together, we are building a sustainable talent pipeline that benefits employers, existing employees and the future workforce.



*Duncan is one of the nine originally certified centers pictured here. Additional centers include Ada, Tishomingo, and Midwest City.*



## YOUTH ENGINEERING CONTEST

The 16th year of the Duncan Area Youth Engineering contest for 6th-12th graders in the area resulted in 340 students participating and \$5,000 in prizes awarded.

## MOVE DUNCAN TALENT RELOCATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM

To help meet area workforce needs, Move Duncan provides qualified individuals \$4,000 when they choose to move to Stephens County. To learn more about the qualifications and to apply visit [ok-duncan.com](http://ok-duncan.com) or scan QR Code.



“ Individuals are no longer bound to the workforce opportunities within a specific geographic region and are more willing to relocate to areas that provide a good quality of life and competitive wages like Duncan. DAEDF is partnering with the business community to offer this new relocation incentive. ”

**Lyle Roggow,**  
DAEDF President and CEO  
*The Oklahoman news article*





# DUNCAN AREA TEACHERS ON TOUR

## PATHWAYS TO OPPORTUNITIES

*written by Eric Hancock, Red River Technology Center Industrial Coordinator*

I am new to the Industrial Coordinator role at Red River Technology Center (RRTC), but I am not new to tech-ed having spent the last couple of years in a similar position at another school. Since coming to RRTC, I have been able to get out into the community to connect and re-connect with business and industry decision makers. I continue to receive the same feedback, regardless of industry that is being represented. Most organizations continue to look for skilled, competent employees to fill roles in their company. From healthcare to the service industry and everything in between, the need for quality employees is the common thread. RRTC is working to fill that gap with qualified program completers, customized industry training, and even licensed healthcare professionals. How can we be of assistance to you and your organization?

**Red River Technology Center Business and Industry staff serve local industry and provide job skills to workers.**

## A GREAT IDEA!

*written by Steve Bratcher, OK Dept. of Commerce*

In the past few years, I've had many conversations with economic development organizations where the discussion centered around how to keep young people from graduating and immediately leaving rural Oklahoma never to return.

The economic development team in Duncan organizes an event with local manufacturers and the public school system where they have over 100 teachers during a professional day tour different manufacturing companies, the local hospital, and a bank. During each tour, the different companies discussed the exact educational disciplines they were looking for, what jobs required what skills and teachers were able to interact with local businesses to collaborate. Most teachers were surprised at some point about jobs that were available in their own community.

This is a great idea because the Duncan economic development team is turning teachers into recruiters, letting rural kids know there are jobs in their own town. Retaining our young adults keeps the local workforce strong and helps stop our big cities and even other states from luring away young people from our rural Oklahoma communities.





**Duncan Area Economic  
Development Foundation**

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## THANK YOU MEMBERS

- Arvest Bank
- AT&T
- BancFirst
- Billingsley Ford of Duncan
- Bishop Electric, Inc.
- Blackfoot Services, LLC
- BlueArc Innovations
- Cameron University
- Chickasaw Nation
- City Mart Enterprises, LLC
- Cotton Electric Cooperative
- Davis Air Conditioning, LLC
- DeHart Air Conditioning
- Dolese Bros. Co.
- Dream Team Prosthetics, LLC
- DRH Health
- Duncan Banner
- Duncan Builders Supply
- Duncan Power/DPUA
- Elk Crossing / Gregston Nursing & Rehab
- Ellis & Buckholts
- Ellsworth Electric
- Endurance Federal Credit Union
- Family Dollar
- First Bank & Trust Co.
- First National Bank in Marlow
- Flotek Industries
- Fortney Construction, LLC
- Four D
- Halliburton Energy Services
- Hope Equipment & Construction
- Insurance One
- Jayna Johnson, P.C.
- Jimmy Cooper
- Jones Oil Company
- Kelly Kirkland
- L.E. Jones Production
- Leach & Sullivan
- Legacy Bank
- Legal Shield
- M.J. Lewis & Associates
- Mack Energy Company
- Marlow Economic Development Authority
- National Rural Water Association
- NOV / Wilco
- Perkins Energy Company
- PGM Processing LLC
- Pinnacle Site Development
- Public Service Company of Oklahoma
- Punneo Plumbing Company
- Red River Technology Center
- Rightway Manufacturing Solutions, LLC
- Sellers Air Conditioning, Inc.
- Sensia
- Shepherd & Shepherd
- Shores Dental Company, PLLC
- Simmons Center
- Smith Dressler Electrical Services
- Southern Machine Works, Inc.
- Stephens County Abstract Co.
- Stephens County Dental Society
- Stone Law Firm
- The Territory
- Universal Fidelity Life Insurance Co.
- Valco, Inc.
- Wal-Mart Store #1116
- Whitten Insurance
- William A. Gossett, Attorney At Law

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To continually increase job opportunities and the development of a favorable business climate and workforce-development programs.