

# Business Services

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## The Big Picture



## Millennial and Middle Skills Hiring Challenges

One of the most oft-cited reasons that young people overlook middle skill occupations is that we, as parents, educators and community members, have spent the last few decades convincing them to go to college. Apparently, we're very convincing.

According to the Institute of Educational Sciences, undergraduate enrollment grew 48%

## Service Spotlight

### ReHire Candidate Turns Career Exploration into Business Ownership

Athena Kline thought she was looking for a job. Wrong!

When she connected with **Theresa Zabala**, her **ReHire Program** coach at the

Workforce Center, Athena discovered a career pathway, a pathway that has led to a new life as an entrepreneur.



The one-time job seeker now owns and operates Advanced CPR and Life-Saving. Athena has a business office at the Fort Collins/Loveland airport and a growing client base that already includes five client businesses.

Upon arrival at the Workforce Center, Athena completed a survey that positioned her to receive an internship. While considering internship opportunities, Athena suffered a foot injury that led to her discovery of a business opportunity. As she explored options with Zabala and with a training coach, Athena saw how to combine her interests and create an Emergency Responder Instructor Training Program.

While training, she networked with businesses to offer her lifesaving skills classes once she was certified. She quickly secured several businesses who want her to teach emergency response to their employees.

ReHire funds and coaching assistance provided a foundation of success. All Athena had to do was add her positive attitude, a training focus and determination to make her an asset to the community, her family, and herself.

## Business Insights

### Free Assessments Save Larimer Employers Time and Money

between 1990 and 2012 in the United States. Additionally, Colorado State University boasted record enrollments for the Fall 2014 semester, up 15% since 2005 (source: Coloradoan).

Over the next ten years 24% of the machinists and 29% of water treatment workers currently working in Northern Colorado will reach retirement age (source: Economic Modeling Specialists International). These statistics represent the challenge facing most middle-skill occupations throughout the United States.

Workers who have gained their skills over decades of work will continue to retire in large numbers while at the same time a low number of young people are showing interest in middle skill occupations.

Regardless of the reasons, young people simply aren't gravitating to middle skill occupations. Our economy needs more of them to start considering these jobs. Estimates show that between 2012 and 2022, 47% of Colorado's job openings will be for middle skill occupations (source: National Skill Coalition).

To fill these jobs and keep our local economy strong, it is imperative that we give all young people an opportunity to learn the value of middle skill careers. We encourage employers

Many northern Colorado employers have discovered the value of free candidate assessment services provided by the Larimer County Workforce Center.



Offered at no charge, these assessments help employers more efficiently screen candidate pools when they post positions. For example, if a posting requires Microsoft Excel skill level at intermediate or higher, the free assessment validates the candidate's skill level, alleviating uncomfortable conversations at a later date.

The Workforce Center also can assist by **proctoring the assessment for just a \$10 fee per assessment.**

"Our assessments work especially well for employers who want to expedite the recruitment process by qualifying the best candidates," said Meier. "They save both the candidate and the company a lot of valuable time."

More than 1,200 tools are available and cover a broad range of topics, including internet, sales, office, computer and behavioral skills. Meier noted that these evaluations are recognized as the standard test throughout the United States.

To find out more about these assessment services, please contact **Marie Meier at (970) 498-6650 (970) 498-6650** or via email at [mmeier@larimer.org](mailto:mmeier@larimer.org).

## Strengthening the Workforce

### Elevate Program Offers Custom Solutions in Leader Training



Companies across the country and even worldwide turn to northern Colorado-based business consultants their management and leadership challenges.

Fortunately, many of those world-class coaches share their expertise as instructors in elevate, the Workforce Center's leadership and workforce development training program.

**elevate** offers professional development opportunities to area managers and supervisors whose businesses need budget-friendly solutions to their challenges. What's more, the workshops are ideal for individual contributors who are seeking to boost their professional profiles.

who hire middle skill workers to reach out to local school districts for opportunities like field trips and internships to expose students to the workplace.



#### Strategic Partners



#### Coursework is offered in three educational tracks:

- Communication and Employee Engagement
- Workforce Management
- Leadership Development

We will work with employers to assess specific needs and then customize programs to address them. To provide continuity, we will follow up with participants and employers to verify their progress in achieving workshop learning objectives. In addition, a web-based forum will allow participants to exchange ideas and best practices, thereby continuing their growth and development.

For more information about [elevate](#), contact Mike Kohler at (970) 498-6658 (970) 498-6658 or [mkohler@larimer.org](mailto:mkohler@larimer.org).

#### Upcoming Training Events

April 19 **Thinking Like a Leader** [Fort Collins](#)

April 21 **Crisis Communication** [Fort Collins](#)

April 26 **Strengths-Based Leadership** [Fort Collins](#)

April 29 **Honorable Exits (Termination)** [Fort Collins](#)

May 6/13/20 **Becoming a Successful Manager** [Fort Collins](#)

#### Did You Know?

**Career Road Trips** are Workforce Center-sponsored events that take area youths to various businesses to learn what opportunities are available. The trips were originally called 'Tuesday Tours' and were geared for teachers to become better acquainted with area businesses.

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