CareerSource Okaloosa Walton  
EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY CONSORTIUM QUARTERLY REPORT

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| A. GENERAL INFORMATION |

**Report quarter:** January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025

**Date of meeting:** March 6, 2025

**Report prepared by:** Michele Burns

**Local workforce development board contact:** Michele Burns **Date:** March 6, 2025

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| B. ATTENDANCE |

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| **Name** | **Organization** | **Industry or Education Organization** | **Contact Information** |
| Donna Daniels | Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University | Education | Danield15@erau.edu |
| Nicole McDonald  (Virtual) | University of West Florida | Education | nmcdonald@uwf.edu |
| Jesse Spaid | Emerald Coast Technical College | Education | Jesse.spaid@walton.k12.fl.us |
| Glenn Boschen | Micros Systems, Inc | Industry | Glenn.boschen@kratosdefense.com |
| Bonnie Barlow | Bridgeway Center | Industry | BRushton@bridgeway.org |
| Dave Underwood  (Virtual) | Walton County Economic Development Alliance | Economic Development | underwoodcol@outlook.com |
| Cole Randall | One Okaloosa | Economic Development | cole@oeokaloosa.org |
| **Name** | **Organization** | **Industry or Education** | **Contact Information** |
| Dennis Braun  (Virtual) | Northwest Florida State College | Education | braund@nwfsc.edu |
| Jeff Felice | Applied Technology Academy | Education | Jeff.f@appliedtecha.com |
| Chasity Fry  (Virtual) | Live-Oak | Industry | Chasity.fry@liveoakfiber.com |
| Carolee Gibson | GSC Systems | Industry | g.gibson-15@gscsystems.net |
| Guests Present  Cathy Starkey | GSC Systems | Industry |  |
| Drew Willis | Okaloosa Technical College | Education |  |
| Jimmy Heckman | Florida Commerce | Presenter | James.Heckman@commerce.fl.gov |
| Staff Present  Michele Burns | CSOW | Workforce | mburns@careersourceow.com |
| Kelly Jordan | CSOW | Workforce | kjordan@carersourceow.com |
| Brad Balfanz | CSOW | Workforce | bbalfanz@careersourceow.com |
| Emmy Epperson | CSOW | Workforce | eepperson@careersourceow.com |
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| B. SUMMARY REPORT |

Chair Glenn Boschen called the meeting to order and had guests present and virtual introduce themselves. The meeting was then turned over to Jimmy Heckman – Bureau Chief of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research – who shared local industry updates. Jimmy mentioned that the unemployment rate in our area has stayed consistently lower than that in the State of Florida. He shared that the top-performing industries were retail, professional and business services, and education and health. Kelly Jordan had shared at the beginning of the meeting the Industry Sectors for CareerSource Okaloosa Walton and two of these are in the top-performing. There has been a 60% increase in online job advertisements over the last 5 years. We also discussed the future training needs for our area. A few members asked Jimmy to break down some of the top-performing industries further.

Brad Balfanz – Shared the PY2024 Training update. We currently have Statewide grants along with our WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Grants.

Brad shared the enrollment by industry sector, training providers and training programs.

Industry and Education members discussed current needs and challenges.