

A photograph of several people at a conference. In the foreground, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark green shirt and a yellow and white patterned vest, is shaking hands with a woman in a green polo shirt. Other people are visible in the background, some wearing lanyards. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor event space.

National Institute for Work & Learning Annual Report

January–December 2025

Attendees at the Promising Justice Practices convening greet each other.
Photo Credit: Hawk Hartico

Letter from the Director

Designing Workforce Pathways

At the National Institute for Work and Learning, our work is rooted in a simple but powerful belief: everyone deserves access to a good job with a clear pathway to get there. In 2025, NIWL continued to partner with communities, employers, and public systems to design and strengthen those pathways across a wide range of fields, from care and education to engineering, advanced manufacturing, and reentry employment.

This year's work reflects our commitment to meeting people where they are and building systems that support long-term economic mobility. Whether developing registered apprenticeships, working with corporate partners to build career pathways, supporting individuals returning from incarceration, or helping families navigate career exploration and advancement, NIWL focused on connecting learning to opportunity, and opportunity to stability.

Across our projects, we equip partners with evidence-based tools, training, and frameworks they can sustain and scale. This approach allows local organizations to deepen their impact while ensuring that pathways to good jobs are accessible, responsive, and grounded in real-world labor market needs.

As we look ahead, NIWL remains committed to strengthening workforce systems that work for individuals, families, and communities.



Lisa Johnson, Director of the National Institute for Work and Learning. Photo Credit: Julia Reihs, FHI 360

Strategic Priorities

- Supporting Community Partners
- Elevating Community Voices
- Influencing the Field
- Growing with Intention

2025: Our Work by the Numbers

Active projects

 22

Funders

 15

Subawardees

 38

Workforce development, college and career readiness, and research & evaluation **resources and tools created**



153 including

NIWL delivered

 **Over 2,000**

Hours of technical assistance, including strategic planning sessions, capacity strengthening, volunteer training, and more

 13 Conferences attended

 9 Presentations at conferences



2

150+ hour Registered Apprenticeship Programs



26

Research and evaluation tools such as survey tools and interview protocols



3

40+ hour Pre-Apprenticeship Curricula

As well as a full range of other resources: facilitator guides, student activities, training guides, case management toolkits, and workshops

2025: People by the Numbers



Program participants impacted directly

3,333



Individuals impacted indirectly⁽¹⁾

102,293



Hours provided by employee volunteers from corporate partners to support participants in our programs

9,710



Participants who graduated from or completed our programs in 2025

1,337



Participants who gained employment through our programs, including 164 apprenticeships

464



Participants who completed either educational or professional credentials

554



Awarded in scholarships to 169 students

\$1,590,000



Reentry program participants who did NOT recidivate⁽²⁾

Over 97%

¹ This number includes over 94,000 students participating in Women in STEM²D sessions using FHI 360-created activities, as well as parents and other family members of program participants engaged beyond direct program enrollment.

² Our partners self-report to FHI 360 on their awareness of participants' re-involvement with the justice system. DOL defines recidivism as being convicted of a new crime committed within 12 months of release from incarceration or being placed on probation. For comparison, the [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#) has reported 44% of released prisoners were re-arrested in the first year after their release.



Where We Work

Countries

- Argentina
- Belgium
- China
- Czech Republic
- India
- Ireland
- Mexico
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Switzerland
- Thailand
- United Kingdom
- United States

Apprenticeships



FHI 360 staff member Daria Earley speaks at a YDPA graduation.
Photo Credit: Dante Brown



YDP Apprentices participate in the program kickoff in Detroit.
Photo Credit: Janice Gates

Apprenticeship Building America

Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor

Building a Stronger Care Workforce

2025 saw the launch of multiple apprenticeship cohorts and the continued elevation of NIWL as a thought leader in apprenticeship through our partnerships, conference presence, and programs.

As part of NIWL's commitment to building a talent pipeline in the care workforce, we kicked off two nationally Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in 2025: the Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Counselor (SUDMHC) apprenticeship in partnership with New Ways to Work, East Los Angeles College, and Cuesta College, and the Community Health Worker (CHW) apprenticeship, developed in partnership with the Public Works Alliance and Westcoast Children's Clinic.

In addition, the last year also saw the development and publication of two pre-apprenticeship curricula available for use by youth-serving organizations: the Youth Development Practitioner Pre-apprenticeship and Empowering Futures: A Mental Health Pre-apprenticeship.

These new programs and curricula ensure that we provide youth, job seekers, and employees with the necessary skills in trauma-informed care, case management, and more to meet workforce needs. At the same time, our programs help support employers' needs for highly skilled workers.

“ I think the information you learn is so vast that **everyone can benefit from it** in some way no matter where you are in your professional development.”
— Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Alum

Highlights

Apprenticeship Building America Success in 2025

In 2025 we:

- Enrolled **148** apprentices
- Partnered with **15** employers
- Engaged **137,752** stakeholders
- Launched new Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship cohorts in **Michigan, California, and Illinois**
- Provided **30** hours of Technical Assistance
- Developed **26** resources
- Incorporated **youth input** into our programs through consistent use of youth surveys

2026 will see the continuation of NIWL's apprenticeship work through state-level registrations, the launch of another RAP - the Peer Support Specialist Apprenticeship - and the development of another pre-apprenticeship curriculum.

Through the development of new RAPs and the expansion of existing ones, NIWL works towards making this effective workforce development practice accessible to employers, workforce boards, and potential job seekers alike.

*"Even if our apprentices go somewhere else after, we're still **helping the ecosystem of nonprofits** in our county - we're producing **more youth development professionals** who will **serve our community as a whole.**" - Germain Castellanos, CEO of Boys and Girls Club, Lake County*

NIWL's Registered Apprenticeships are supported by the Employment Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor as part of an ABA2 grant award totaling \$8 million with 0% financed from non-governmental sources.



Germain Castellanos, JP Arangure, and Devea Williams of the Lake County Boys and Girls Club join FHI 360 at NAWDP Youth Symposium to share their experiences as apprentice employers and an apprentice! Photo Credit: Kelly Middleton Banks

2025 Impact Highlights



Pathway to Success participant, Gianni, practices behavioral based interviews during a Winter Seminar. Photo Credit PFI Photography.

Promising Justice Practices in Native Communities

Funded by the Walmart Foundation

Exploring the effectiveness of culturally-responsive practices

In 2025, NIWL concluded the Promising Justice Practices for Native Communities program. Promising Justice Practices hosted a convening in Oklahoma with 12 tribes and six Native American organizations who came together to discuss effective, culturally-responsive practices in supporting youth wellbeing and growth. Following this exchange, NIWL invited participants to apply for funding to pilot their ideas. Supporting their implementation of learnings from the convening, Promising Justice Practices funded the projects of seven tribes and tribal organizations:

- Bishop Paiute Tribe
- Cherokee Nation Language Department
- Cherokee Nation Department of Juvenile Justice
- Oglala Sioux Tribe, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
- Muscogee Nation
- St. Regis Mohawk Tribe
- Yurok Tribe

In addition, NIWL also published [six different issue briefs](#) over the year, synthesizing and organizing ideas from the convening in the form of an accessible resource that many other youth-serving organization can use to develop their own culturally-responsive practices with regards to justice-involvement.



Sterling Knox from Red Lake Nation shares best practices from his community. Photo Credit: Hawk Hartico

Pathway to Success

Funded by Johnson & Johnson

Creating Connection and Confidence

In 2025, after seven years, Pathway to Success (Pathways) closed its final chapter, but not before leaving a lasting mark on the young people it served and on the adults who had the privilege to walk alongside them. An extension of Bridge to Employment, Pathways provided support for 93 participants – over half of whom were first-generation college students – as they prepared for and transitioned into college and then into their careers.

Every single graduating participant said they felt prepared to set goals, apply for jobs, and advocate for themselves. Many described Pathways as the reason they felt hopeful about their futures.

Alumni echoed this sense of impact. A large majority said the program helped them stay motivated in college, encouraged them not to give up when things became difficult, and helped them see themselves - and their futures - more clearly.

Volunteers at Johnson & Johnson were equally moved by their experience. Hiring managers spoke with unexpected emotion about their interns; how proud they were of their growth, how inspired they felt as they watched them flourish. Volunteers described being “very impressed” by students’ growth, highlighting the “tipping point” when interns shifted from completing tasks to asking critical questions and taking ownership of their work.

These reflections, combined with strong academic performance and the steady career progress of alumni, paint a picture of a program that did far more than prepare young people for college or work. It gave them belonging. It gave them the space to imagine and step into a future that once felt out of reach. Pathway to Success may have concluded, but the stories, confidence, and opportunities it sparked will continue to ripple forward for years to come.



Zamira Solano, Henry Cano, and Olga Guante dress to impress at the final Pathways spring forum held at Rutgers University. Photo Credit: PFI Photography

100%

full-time internship match from 2019-2023

90%

rated themselves strong in leadership and communication skills

84%

reported Pathways encouraged them to remain in college

“

My favorite thing about the program is that it doesn't teach us how to change ourselves in order to become a professional, but rather how to take who we already are and apply it to the things we want, to envision ourselves achieving our goals.”

— Miracle Moore, Pathways alum



Participants ask questions during construction-related job training.
Photo Credit: MCSO

Second Chance Act Post-Release Rapid Employment Program

Funded by the U.S. Department of Justice

Advancing Reentry Employment

In 2025, NIWL concluded its Second Chance Act Post-Release Rapid Employment Program (PREP) in North Carolina. Partnering with Erika's Closet and the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), the program used evidence-based trainings to raise employment and workforce readiness for individuals leaving incarceration.

Through pre-and-post release case management planning, community partnerships, and second chance employer networks, the Second Chance Act PREP program reduced recidivism, improved public safety, and promoted economic opportunity.

“This was an incredible partnership to assist individuals in **gaining hope and employability**, but it also helped the team... we offered participants a national credential that could **help them thrive in their lives regardless of their criminal background.**”

— Dorian Johnson, MCSO Detention Program Director

122

Individuals
directly impacted

84

Participants
credentialed

98%

of participants did
not recidivate



A GWUL Career MAP participant attends a career fair to learn more about job opportunities in the DC area. Photo Credit: Tara J Photography

Career MAP

Funded by the Greater Washington Urban League

Strengthening Career Navigation

Started in 2022, the Career Mobility Action Plan (MAP) program takes a human-centered approach to providing critical services in career advancement, financial empowerment, family support, and housing stabilization for 300 DC Department of Human Services Career MAP families.

As the lead partner for Career Advancement Services, NIWL developed customized learning materials, including an eModule series, and facilitated workshops and career coaching sessions to support participants' career exploration and readiness. Participants learned how to find and identify jobs that aligned with their skills and interests, how to improve their resumes, and how to prepare for interviews.

NIWL also strengthened capacity and knowledge among the Greater Washington Urban League staff to support Career MAP members and their families.

During the three-year project, our team shifted from direct service to focus on technical assistance, with the goal of improving member and staff engagement. We delivered a unique set of Career Journey Maps and a robust library of training materials to help guide members and their navigators through the career exploration process, and ultimately into more sustainable careers.

Looking Forward



Next Engineers: Engineering Experience student in Staffordshire, UK, celebrates a design challenge win. Photo Credit: The Inspirational Learning Group

Novartis Beacon of Hope Coordinating Center

Funded by the Novartis U.S. Foundation

Advancing Healthcare Research

Founded by Novartis and the Novartis U.S. Foundation, Beacon of Hope aims to advance effective, measurable solutions to reduce barriers to accessing healthcare innovation and to reimagine healthcare workforce pathways.

Together, FHI 360's Programs & Research Group and NIWL now serve as the Coordinating Center for the Beacon of Hope, providing centralized leadership, strategic coordination, and technical assistance to advance the program's goals.

The Coordinating Center works with three clinical trial Centers of Excellence at Morehouse School of Medicine, Meharry Medical College, and Howard University School of Medicine, as well as the Digital Health Validation Center of Excellence at Morehouse School of Medicine.

FHI 360 also manages the Capacity Building Fund and the Clinical Trial Training Academy, supporting students as they build the rigorous skills needed to design and implement medical clinical trials. In addition, FHI 360 facilitates the Industry Coalition, which serves as the strategic advisory body and provides insights, technical expertise, and resources to support the Beacon of Hope Centers of Excellence.

While this work has just begun, we're excited to help build long-term pathways into the healthcare workforce and to support a future where healthcare innovation is designed, tested, and delivered by a well-prepared workforce.



Partners from the Centers of Excellence and Industry Coalition joined the Beacon of Hope Partners Convening in FHI 360's DC Office. Photo Credit: Chip Dizard



FHI 360 staff member Adrienne Eagan meets with a Compass Rose partner during the 2025 GO4 Convening. Photo Credit: Jessica Baker

Our Projects in 2025

- Apprenticeship Building America 2
- Bridge to Employment
- Career Mobility Action Plan Content and Navigation Services
- Career Mobility Action Plan Evaluation
- Community Blueprint for Youth in Rural America
- Community Impact Benchmarking and Fellowship
- Compass Rose - Growth Opportunities 1
- Compass Rose - Growth Opportunities 4
- GEAR UP Evaluation, in partnership with our colleagues in FHI 360's U.S. Education
- Holistic Defense Pilot Evaluation 2
- Next Engineers, in partnership with our colleagues in FHI 360's Global Education
- Novartis Beacon of Hope
- NSF ADVANCE Adaptation
- OJJDP FY 2021 Delinquency Prevention
- Pathway to Success
- Promising Justice Practices in Native Communities
- Second Chance Act - Post-Release Employment Program
- WiSTEM²D University Pillar, Undergraduate Programs
- WiSTEM²D Youth Programs
- Work Readiness Framework
- Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship - City of Los Angeles
- Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship - Lake County, IL, Workforce Development Board



Next Engineers: Engineering Experience participant in Staffordshire collaborates on a design challenge. Photo Credit: The Inspirational Learning Group

Our Funders

- American University
- City of Los Angeles
- GE Aerospace Foundation
- Greater Washington Urban League
- Johnson & Johnson
- Lake County Workforce Development Board
- National American Indian Court Judges Association
- North Dakota Central Regional Education Association
- Novartis U.S. Foundation
- Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
- Society of Human Resource Management Foundation
- U.S. Department of Justice
- U.S. Department of Labor
- Walmart Foundation
- Anonymous funder

66

FHI 360 does so much. What stood out for me was the **support** and the **follow through**. They ensured that me and my team had **everything we needed**. — Dorian Johnson, Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office Detention Program Director

Our Partners & Subawardees

- Asociación Conciencia
- Bishop Paiute Tribe
- Central Regional Education Association
- Cherokee Nation Juvenile Justice Department
- Cherokee Nation Language Department
- Clemson University
- Erika's Closet
- Georgia Tech Research Corp
- Hand2HeartDC
- Indigenous Community Empowerment Network
- Journey On
- JUMP! Foundation
- Junior Achievement Czech Republic
- KentuckianaWorks
- Kinai 'Eha
- Muscogee Creek Nation
- National American Indian Court Judges Association
- National Association of Workforce Boards
- National Association of Workforce Development Professionals
- National Collaborative for Transformative Youth Policy
- National Youth Employment Coalition
- NCIA
- New Ways to Work
- Palm Beach State College
- Pathfinders Resource Conservation and Development
- Perspektyw Education Foundation
- Phoenix Youth and Family Services
- Project BUILD
- PROTEC
- Public Works Alliance
- Spark Ministries
- St Regis Mohawk
- The Inspirational Learning Group
- United Way Bengaluru
- University at Albany
- University of Cincinnati
- Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA)
- Yurok Tribe



Next Engineers partners from Ohio and New York, USA, Johannesburg, South Africa, and Bengaluru, India work together to build the tallest card tower possible. Photo Credit: Jessica Baker



About FHI 360: FHI 360 is a global organization that mobilizes research, resources and relationships so people everywhere have access to the opportunities they need to lead full and healthy lives. With collaborations in over 50 countries, we work directly with local leaders to improve health and well-being, respond to humanitarian crises and strengthen community resilience. We share data-driven insights and scalable tools that expand access so communities can effectively address complex challenges and achieve thriving futures.

WASHINGTON DC OFFICE

2101 L Street NW
Washington, DC 20037
T 1.202.884.8000
F 1.202.884.8400

FHI 360 HEADQUARTERS

359 Blackwell Street, Suite 200
Durham, NC 27701
T 1.919.544.7040
F 1.919.544.7261

www.fhi360.org

NIWL Staff during the 2024 Staff Retreat. Photo Credit: Julia Reihs, FHI 360