

IN THE LOOP

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FOR BOARD MEMBERS & COMMISSIONERS

IN THE LOOP | Issue 12, January 2025

Hello {{ contact.FIRSTNAME }},

Here we are in a brand new year! I hope you are as hopeful and enthusiastic as I am about the opportunities in front of us. We're entering into our second year of this newsletter, which is designed to keep you informed (and inspired!) in between our board meetings. Please read on for important reminders about our retreat and the NAWB forum in March, as well as relevant news and stories. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Happy New Year,



Lisa Romine, CEO

Board Member Spotlight



“I see the value in a close partnership among programs when serving job seekers with barriers to employment, including disability. SkillSource is the partner when planning for workforce needs. And students, youth and adult job seekers should know that SkillSource is the local conduit to be connected to in-demand occupations.”

Pablo Villarreal

WA DSHS Division of Rehabilitation

Board Member Spotlight

Pablo Villarreal has served on the SkillSource Regional Workforce Board since 2017. He entered into Workforce Development right out of college in 1999, when he worked for Job Corps as a Job Placement Specialist. He then supported Dislocated Workers in the early 2000s following NAFTA.

Fun fact: Pablo's first job was on the alfalfa farm, driving a tractor, harvesting, irrigating and bucking hay bales. His first job in the community was in food service as a pizza maker/delivery driver for Pizza Hut!

Thank you Pablo. With the oversight and guidance of this board, SkillSource is able to strengthen our services today, and impact systemic change tomorrow.

Upcoming Events & Reminders

BOARD RETREAT - The dates for the board retreat are **March 13-14, 2025**. The retreat will be held at Campbell's Resort in Chelan, WA. Details to come.

SURVEY - If you have not yet completed the Board Retreat Survey, please do so here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QQ3L8KR>

NAWB FORUM - Anyone interested in attending the [National Association of Workforce Boards Forum](#) in WA DC (March 29-April 1) please let us if you would like to attend no later than January 10, 2025.

Community Reinvestment



Mima's Famous Salsa

Mima's Famous Salsa can now increase distribution and hire employees in Chelan County! Thanks to a community reinvestment grant through the Washington State Department of Commerce, Mima bought new automated equipment that has improved production efficiency by 75%!

[Read Story](#)

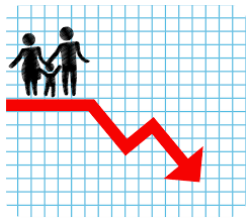
Worth Sharing



Continuing Resolution passes without WIOA reauthorization

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) remains unauthorized. Congress concluded 2024 without passing reauthorization legislation under the proposed A Stronger Workforce for America Act (ASWA). We remain optimistic that workforce development will continue to receive bipartisan support, and solutions will be forthcoming.

[Read Article](#)



When a Raise Feels Like a Setback: The Benefits Cliff in Washington State

The article discusses how small wage increases can paradoxically harm low-income families by triggering sudden losses of public benefits, while highlighting various state-level policy solutions being implemented to address this issue.

[Read Article](#)



Apprenticeships are a trending alternative to college — but there's a hitch

Apprenticeships are gaining popularity as an alternative to college in the United States, but despite growing interest from potential apprentices and bipartisan political support, there's a significant shortage of employers willing to offer these programs due to costs, bureaucratic hurdles, and other challenges.

[Read Article](#)

Chamber Recognition



SkillSource is honored to have been selected as the Business of the Month by the Greater Othello Chamber of Commerce, as well as being a finalist for Non-Profit of the Year by the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce. This recognition speaks volumes for how our organization impacts lives throughout our region, and serves to help us increase awareness in our communities. In 2024, SkillSource also became one of the inaugural members of the [Washington Native American Chamber of Commerce](#).

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