

MAKING BETTER WORK



December 15, 2021

Best & Brightest

As 2021 comes to a close, we wish you peace, wonder, and good health above all. And hot chocolate—with marshmallows—because ☺. Mugs in hand, we invite you to review the WDQI community's Best of 2021—the five resources you and your colleagues studied ☺ most during the year. You surprised us! When we last ran a Best-of list, artificial intelligence (AI) and credentials were the stars. This year? Not so much. Keep reading and see.

Our new content includes innovations we'll be featuring in WDQI webinars today and in the new year, as well as #dataviz, a new measurement framework, and a model for communicating about data.

Goings-On in Workforce, Data & Data Viz!

Our curated collection includes in-person, remote, and hybrid events. Be sure to also check your state and local listings.

- **WDQI December (Holiday) Gathering**, featuring JFF Labs' Josh Copus & Eshwar Eswaran, who will demo the new [O4O data platform](#), December 15, 2021 (TODAY!)
- **US Department of Commerce's Good Jobs Challenge**—\$500M to support collaborative skills training systems and programs that advance equity. [Applications due January 26, 2022](#)
- **National Skills Coalition Skills Summit** (in person), Washington, DC, February 15-17, 2022. Register [here](#).
- **Open Data Week 2022**, New York, NY (& Online), March 5-13, 2022. Call for proposals open through December 22, 2021. Register [here](#).
- **Data for Public Good Symposium** Ann Arbor, MI (& Online), March 24-25, 2022. Call for abstracts open through January 14, 2022. Register [here](#).
- **NAWB Forum**, Washington, DC, April 11-14, 2021. Call for presentations open through January 4, 2022. Register [here](#).

Now Hiring!

(You too? Send us your best openings and we'll share them!)

- **Data & Society** still seeks a Senior Researcher in technology and precarious work. And a Director of Research! Other mind-blowingly great positions also on offer. [Refer great people](#).
- **Evident Change** (WI & CA) has quite a few research positions open for people who know data and understand social and community services. [Refer great people](#).
- **GovLab** still needs Research Fellows! [Refer great people](#).
- **JFF** is looking for talent for ten positions! All over the country! [Refer great people](#).

- **Luminary Labs** needs a Director for its Future of Work and Education portfolio. And seven other fabulous positions. [Refer great people.](#)
- **Mathematica** is looking for researchers in multiple domains to work in locations ranging from Princeton to Ann Arbor to Oakland to Seattle—253 positions altogether! [Refer great people.](#)
- **National Fund for Workforce Solutions** is looking for a champion to manage evaluation and learning. [Refer great people.](#)
- **National Skills Coalition** is looking to fill nine terrific positions! [Refer great people.](#)
- **Upjohn Institute** seeks a Senior Director of Regional Economic and Community Development—and two other terrific positions! [Refer great people.](#)
- **Urban Institute** is looking to fill 41 positions—many in research, equity, and turning data into action. [Refer great people.](#)

#ICYMI

- "Better Data Are Needed to Ensure HUD Block Grant Funds Reach Vulnerable Populations," says a [new GAO report](#). We have a sneaking suspicion there's an opportunity to leverage data equity work in affected communities.
- Harvard's **Project on Workforce** released a collection of [six papers](#) authored by its 2021 Summer Fellows on topics including Career & Technical Education (CTE), Future of Work, and Online Skills Platforms.
- National Science Foundation's **Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier** Core Research Program (FW-HTF) is accepting proposals through March 2, 2022 (\$30M, 40 awards). [More](#). NSF is also looking for nominations for Convergence Accelerator (Future of Work is a current one). [More](#).

Again, we say congrats to all of you for surviving (and even thriving) in 2021. We are honored to support you in helping each other succeed and wish you a wonderful holiday.

Keep taking care of [each other](#) out there.

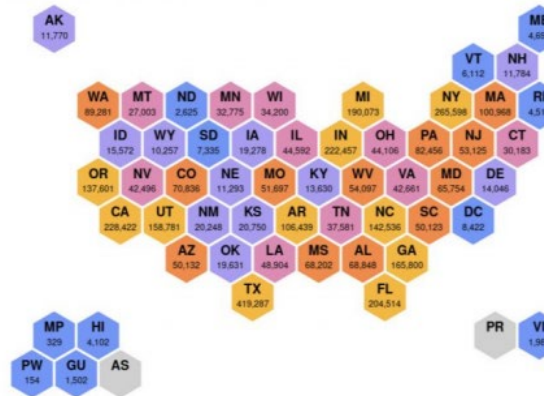
♡ + Data

Kristin Wolff (@kristinwolff), Editor

Maureen Sarver (@maureensarver) **Dallas Oberlee** & the **SPR Support Team**

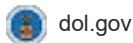
Evolving Workforce Data Ecosystems

Total Participants Served is 3,641,571 for the 2019 program



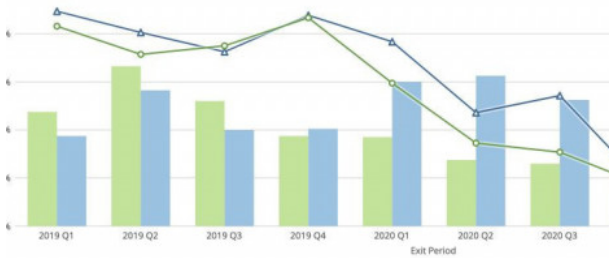
WIOA By the Numbers

We've been busy collaborating with our performance data-loving friends at the US Department of Labor to open up the data books and let them sing. Go ahead and see what's in there over the holidays! New interactive tools are planned for early 2022.



dol.gov

of supportive services on job placement



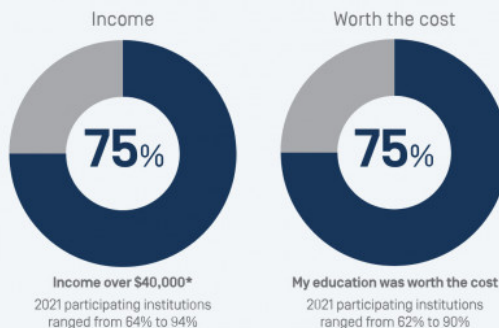
Outcomes for Opportunity

We introduced JFFLab's Outcomes for Opportunity (O4O) pilot last month in preparation for our December webinar. Since then, the project has released new interactive tools and shared more information about the project. For a deeper dive, have a listen to Making Better Work (Episode #26) featuring Project Directors Josh Copus and Eshwar Eswaran.



jff.org

A framework for measuring postsecondary success



* among those who chose to respond

Source: 2021 Strada Alumni Survey, bachelor's degree graduates 2019

Post-Secondary Education Measuring of Success

The idea of getting beyond completion as a measure of education and training success is gaining traction. But there's little consensus on which measures should count. Strada has piloted a post-secondary alumni survey and measurement framework that features



Communicating with Stakeholders About Your Data

Workforce Data Quality Campaign has mastered the art of communicating about data. We've shared their resources before, but this time we point you to their narrative about themselves, their data, and the value

financial and non-financial measures of success. Such approaches may also hold value for workforce programs, funders, and performance managers.



cci.stradaeducation.org

they hope to realize (on the DQC website). [Education Data 101](#) and [Our Big Idea](#) are excellent places to start for data whats and whys that will make you weep with joy.



dataqualitycampaign.org

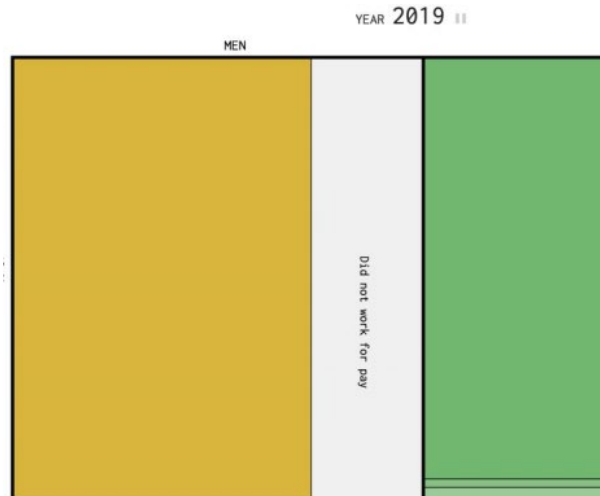


[Do We Know What Jobs Are 'In Demand'?](#)

Modern technology has dramatically changed hiring and the way the country tracks labor market demand. But measuring which fields call for policy change or investment is harder than it sounds. Here's why.



[workshift.opencampusm...](#)



[How Much Women and Men Work](#)

This chart shows the shifts since 1960, and provides historical data context for many of our current social and economic ills. As data viz, it is powerful. As art, it is mesmerizing (ala Hans Rosling). Scroll all the way down for more.

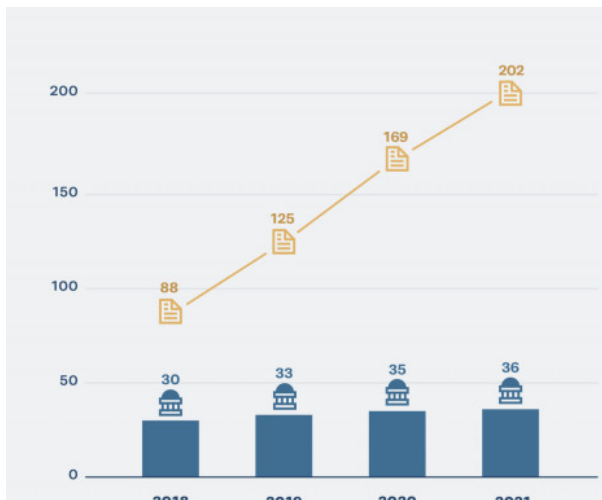


flowingdata.com



A Visual Economy: A Tool to Showcase Visuals on Economic Inequality & Growth

A Visual Economy provides thousands of visuals on economic inequality and growth produced by Equitable Growth since 2019. Beyond the data itself—and the 📊 dataviz—Equitable Growth employs labels and titles to great effect, revealing compelling data stories with speed and clarity.



Results for America State Standard of Excellence

In the 2021 State Standard of Excellence, Results for America identified 202 examples of data-driven and evidence-based practices, policies, programs, and systems in effect (as of August 2021) in 36 states across the country. Nearly all WDQI Round 7 cohort states were represented. Colorado and New Jersey were named as leaders. Have a look!



Best of 2021 #ICYMI

Here are the five items that received your undivided attention—or at least the highest number of clicks—in 2021. Competition was fierce! Share your own favorites! #MakingBetterWork



[Making Better Work & Bitwise on “How does tech ... innovate alongside government?”](#)

Bitwise Industries' Michelle Skoor claims the **#1 spot** in her podcast interview with Kristin Wolff! More of you clicked into the introduction to this episode (#24, from October) than any other single video, audio, dataviz, report, or news item all year. If you missed it, now's your chance.



podcasts.apple.com



[Digital Transformation in Labor and Education Systems](#)

July's report from Brookings on technology and change in the workforce system was a **close second**. Authored by Dr. Annelies Goger and Janie McDermott, the insightful piece was also informed by field research that included experts and practitioners from within the workforce data community. (You know who you are. We thank you!)

brookings.edu



[America's First Labor Day](#)

It warms our hearts to think our Labor Day history post came in at **#3** (in September, but you knew that). So you'll understand when we employ Editor's prerogative to remind you that



[GovLab's Data Stewards' Executive Education Program](#)

In the **#4** position was the introduction to GovLab's Data Steward's Network, together with an invitation to apply to the professional development program (May). Many of you looked into the program. Bryan Huebsch (WI WDQI Team) applied, was accepted, and completed it, indicating it was among his most consequential outcomes in 2021. [Learn more](#)

Oregon (Kristin's home state) was the first to recognize Labor Day—in 1887. But hey, we all played a role then, and if you are reading this, you certainly do now.

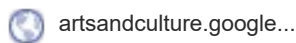


about the program and GovLab's fantastic work.



[Blob Opera](#)

As evidence of just how awesome the WDQI community can be, we submit Blob Opera at **#5** (February). We had a feeling it might make another appearance given just how many of you reached out with emoji-filled messages of joy and laughter. If this was not your initial response we invite you to give it another go right now. (No really, right now. We'll wait.) Then thank @daviddotli for his creative genius.



Just for You



[Space Tacos: The Hatch Chile Meets the US Space Station](#)

Freeze-dried fare is no longer the main course at 1,309,440 feet. More [here](#) and [here](#).

 npr.org

The #MBW Podcast

***Our Very Own #WDQI
#MakingBetterWork
Podcast Now Has 26
Episodes!***

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Search for **Making Better Work** on Google Play (a quirk of the platform).

Again, we hope these communication channels will bring your work further into the public domain so that kindred spirits in different parts of the public data ecosystem can find each other. It's a big job but somebody's got to do it. Why not us?

MAKING BETTER WORK



Information Wants to Be Shared

This is the 29th edition of #MakingBetterWork, the perpetual beta newsletter of the longitudinal workforce data community.

We'd love your continued help in making it great (and your generosity of spirit when we don't quite get there). Here's our focus (always subject to change) going forward:

- **COVID-19 Recovery!** (Alas!)

- **Impact** (Products, legislation, key policy decisions, and more – what difference is WDQI making in your state, community?)
- **Governance** (In the words of one of our subject matter experts, "It's everything.")
- **Ecosystem** (How do we better align public data efforts and work with nonprofit, foundation, university, and other partners more effectively to address critical workforce and education issues? How do we do this consistently, ethically, and responsibly?)
- **Themes that run through WDQI events and activities:**
 - Federal legislative mandates (WIOA – and evaluation, HEA, Perkins, etc.)
 - Trends in training: non-degree credentials, work-based learning, apprenticeship, technology and distance learning, dual-systems, stackable credentials, etc.)
 - Future of Work – using data to help policymakers, institutional leaders, and the rest of us navigate it
 - Data Equity
 - #DataViz – so more people can understand, interact with, and use the data and tools we're all creating.
 - #DataStories – sharing data in ways that make it easy for stakeholders to understand, learn, and put it to use!

In case you've received this from a friend or colleague and don't know how to find us, we've provided our contact information below.

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Know someone who needs this newsletter? Forward it or send them here.

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