



March 6, 2020

#Gratitude

It's [Employee Appreciation Day](#) 🎉! And [National Oreo Day](#) 🍪 – coincidence? (If Oreos do not inspire your particular colleagues 🤖, here are [1,501 other ways](#) to thank them, brought to you by the holiday founder himself, [Bob Nelson](#).)

Speaking of gratitude, the interwebs brought many excellent resources this month. [The Verge's](#) feature on robots stopped us in our tracks. Lifelong learning was seemingly revived [1,000 times](#) over, and on-the-job-training was cited as the new graduate degree! This month's collection features business and popular media highlighting education and workforce trends likely to influence policy conversations in your communities. These conversations create a demand for exactly the kinds of data, research, and consumer tools you are working on. We've also included a highly curated collection of #DataViz and resources on Texas and Iowa.

Announcements, Updates & Coming Attractions

- **WDQI Round VII Orientation Webinar.** Calling Round VII grantees! This is your opportunity to speak with federal program staff. Mark your calendars. Monday, March 9, 2020, 2:00 pm ET.
- **Brookings** has issued a ["Call for Papers"](#) on the topic of automation, training, and the middle class, for a June 18 conference (travel and honorarium provided). Abstracts due March 15, 2020.
- **Hot off the (digital) presses!** ETA's Office of Workforce Investment, Office of Grants Management, and Maher & Maher created a [Competitive Grant Program Basics Reference Guide](#). It walks you through almost everything you need to know to manage a US Department of Labor grant successfully (an excellent complement to our March webinar, many thanks to **Toquir Ahmed** and **David Lipnick** for the forward!).
- **STATS DC Conference dates announced!** [July 8-10, 2020](#) (Washington, DC).
- **#MakingBetterWork Podcasts:** New ones! [Hunter Morancy](#) on making Maine's LDS evidence-based decision-making real for Mainers, and [Dr. Josh Hawley's](#) take on how LDS knit together the "crazy quilt of workforce data." And more. Right [here](#).

Radar

Let us know whether you will be attending any of the convenings that follow (or any others not yet

on our radar)! Our monthly poll indicates that C2ER and STATS-DC are the top contenders for mini WDQI convenings since quite a few of you plan to attend. Stay tuned.

- **National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB)** [Annual Forum](#), March 21-24, 2020 (Washington, DC)
- **Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER)** and the Labor Market Information ([LMI](#)) Institute Annual Conference and Forum, [June 3-5, 2020](#) (Columbus, OH)
- **National Center for Educational Statistics STATS-DC Data Conference**, July 8-10, 2020 (Washington, DC). NCES is accepting proposals from those who would like to present or exhibit. The [deadline to submit a proposal is Friday, April 3, 2020](#).
- **Association of Public Data Users (APDU)** [Annual Conference](#), July 9-10, 2020 (Arlington, VA)
- **Community Indicators Consortium** Conference, August 6-7, 2020 (Washington, DC)
- **National Center for Workforce Education (NCWE)** Annual Conference (October 7-8, 2020 (Baltimore, MD)
- **State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)** [Higher Education Policy Conference](#), August 5-9, 2020, Boston, MA
- **Data for Good** [Exchange](#) (New York, NY, dates TBD)

COVID19

[The Corona Virus](#). It could interfere with any of the planned convenings noted. Please wash your hands. With Soap. For at least 20 seconds. And here are some [handshake alternatives](#), so you don't have to feel awkward.

Yours in data and all things 📊📈,

Kristin Wolff (@kristinwolff) &
Maureen Sarver (@maureensarver)

Navigating Learning and Work



The World of Work is Changing. Career Aspirations of Teenagers are Not.

Here is the answer to the question "Why do we need better tools to help (especially young) people navigate school and work?" But you knew that. Once you share these findings, many

more people will understand why you do what you do.

QZ qz.com



Texas Consumer Resource for Education and Workforce Statistics (CREWS)

The Texas Consumer Resource for Education and Workforce Statistics (Texas CREWS) is an interactive dashboard that provides information about Texas post-secondary education and training programs and outcomes. It's great data and it's house is about to undergo a large-scale remodel. Just ask [Adam](#).

 board.thecb.state.tx.us



Iowa Community College Program Outcomes Interactive Charts

Six tabs and infinite options for exploring where Iowa college leavers go (more than four out of five stay!) and how they do in the labor market. See for yourself, or listen to [Paula and Vlad](#).

 educateiowa.gov



20 Best Jobs You've Never Heard Of

"These occupations may sound like weird jobs, but one of them could be the perfect position for you." US News suggests occupations you might include in your next labor market navigation tool. #weirdjobs (Unicheck made an amazing [infographic](#) on the topic.)

 money.usnews.com

Learning For Life?

How On-the-Job Training Became the New Graduate Degree

Companies such as Shopify, Chase, Amazon, Walmart, and AT&T have robust education programs that ensure curricula evolve as fast as changing job demands.

FC fastcompany.com

The Really Good And Really Bad News On Lifelong Learning

"Searching for evidence of lifelong learning is a little like the search for evidence of life on Mars; many scientists believe we'll eventually find it, but so far we haven't." We need to.

F forbes.com

The Four-Year University Model Needs a Lifelong Learning Overhaul

"In 2020, universities will adapt to the needs of students, rather than the other way around. Universities are belatedly introducing new ways of learning." **Indiana** libraries and **California** Community College have lessons to share.

W wired.co.uk

Will You Still Need a College Education in 2040?

Fast Company surveys our field! A compelling and easy to digest review of major trends that begins with the first US DOL Registered Apprenticeship in coding (Tectonic Group in **Colorado**) and ends with – you guessed it – lifelong learning.

FC fastcompany.com

Completing College (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center)

Six-year and eight-year college completion rates have reached new highs, 60 percent and 62 percent, respectively. This report, the eighth in the series, presents completion outcomes by cohort along with historical trends. New analyses of major fields at graduation are added for the first time.

 nscresearchcenter.org

2020 Horizon Report

The Horizon Report profiles key trends and emerging technologies and practices shaping the future of teaching and learning. For the first time, the report offers evidence, data, and scenarios that inform what the future might look like. Be sure and take a look at the [mindmap](#) for a #dataviz inspired way to connect issues, examples and locations.

E library.educause.edu

Making Data Matter

Measure What Matters: Realigning Measures of Economic Success with Societal Well-Being

It's nice to be able to view important events you are not able to attend. Here's a shout-out to [The Aspen Institute](#) for making [Heather Boushey](#), [Daniel Alpert](#), and [Sapna Mehta's](#) panel session on better measurement accessible to all of us.

 [youtube.com](#)

Beyond Randomized Control Trials (in SSIR)

You can skip ahead to J-PAL2.0 and then share this with your colleagues. What's described here is why you are building LDS in your own states. It is work worthy of a [Nobel Prize](#). Enough said.

 [ssir.org](#)

OECD Going Digital Toolkit

Not only can you see how the US compares on the seven key policy dimensions and find solutions to improving and modernizing workforce services, you may also pick up a few ideas for your next #DataViz project.

 [goingdigital.oecd.org](#)

Statista's #FOW Infographic

This simple infographic covers flexible work, the gig economy, and robots-as-colleagues using friendly graphs and charts that draw from multiple data sources. Scroll down for more examples of data made simple (across a wide range of topics).

 [statista.com](#)

Data & Eggs' Mindblowing #DataViz

The DataFace compiles a list of the week's best data-driven stories in its Data & Eggs newsletter. One look at it and you will never lack for #dataviz inspiration again. Here's one on [shift workers](#) that took our breath away.

 [thedataface.com](#)

Boosting the Reach and Impact of Research

Once you have great data, you want to get it out there so people can use it! On this episode of Mathematica's *On the Evidence*, economists Jennifer Doleac and Kosali Simon share lessons on translating and sharing research for media interviews, Twitter, podcasts, and elsewhere.

 [mathematica.org](#)

AI Is the Next Workplace Disrupter—and It's Coming for High-Skilled Jobs

Artificial intelligence is expected to alter how Americans work on a scale similar to that of robotics and PCs—but this time, most affected employees will be managers and professionals. Since this was a rare WSJ piece outside the firewall, we're sharing it.

 [wsj.com](https://www.wsj.com)

New Conference Board Report Highlights Labor Shortages

In contrast to the robot apocalypse narrative, this new report highlights key trends that have resulted in long-term labor shortages, especially in the trades. What does this data look like in your state? What does it point to as potential solutions?

 [conference-board.org](https://www.conference-board.org)

Using Skills to Strengthen Regions

Emsi's new report compares **Minnesota** and **California**, and suggests a new way to help regions stay competitive in a fast-paced, talent-based labor market. Using the language of skills. Some call a modern skills and competency rubric the [holy grail](#) of workforce.

 [economicmodeling.com](https://www.economicmodeling.com)

Transparent Credentials: The Connected Ecosystem of Work and Learning

There are more than 700,000 credentials ranging from college degrees and certificates to industry certifications and other credentials available in the United States alone. The Learn-and-Work Ecosystem Guide aims to help you and your partners make sense of them.

 luminawp.wpengine.com

Help a Colleague!

During our recent calls, a couple of you asked how we might use the newsletter to share grantee questions or challenges and invite community feedback. Last month we asked for ingenious solutions to data matching. You shared plenty during the webinar, but not so many here. So how about a tweet or an email instead?

This month's challenge is: **Name one thing you've learned about making data actionable.**

Respond via:

Twitter: [#MakingBetterWork](#)

Email: Kristin_Wolff@spra.com

Have a Listen

Our Very Own #WDQI #MakingBetterWork Podcast Now Has a Full Dozen Episodes!

If you haven't subscribed, pull out your mobile device and do it now!

[iTunes](#) * [Stitcher](#) * [GooglePlay](#)

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

Again, we hope these new 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?

Information Wants to Be Shared

This is the 14th 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). We changed up the headers this month to make it easier to navigate. Let us know what you think!

Here's our focus (always subject to change) going forward:

- **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
- #DataViz -- so more people can understand, interact with, and use the data and tools we're all creating.

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.