



October 9, 2020

COVID-Fine & the Value of LDS in a Pandemic

"How are you?" Once a simple question, it now routinely provokes a wince, a pause, or laughter and tears in about equal measure. Hence the memes [#COVIDFine](#), [#2020Fine](#), and so on. This week, a colleague from one of the state data teams added [#WorkforceFine](#) to the list, explaining that "If you are in the workforce business, this year has been..." (she did not complete the sentence, but we're guessing you can).

At the same time, because of the unprecedented demand for information the crisis has unleashed, quality and timely workforce data is already highly prized and will increase in value during the recovery period.

You have a key role to play. By creating cross-agency LDS data products that guide program investments, inform research and analysis, and improve programs and services, you are well-positioned to help state and local leaders from across sectors forge a better future.

Toward that end, we welcome your input as we continue to host web convenings on areas of urgent need and look for opportunities to partner with the wider workforce data community. (We envision taking stock again near the end of the year.)

We're sticking with brevity in our approach to curating. This month, we aim again at our North Star—Making Better Work (of course).

News on Workforce Data

Here are a few goings-on that caught our eye and a summary of what's on the WDQI community horizon:

- The **Results for America** Fellows participating in the Evidence in Workforce Lab are sharing the results of their first year's work. We've featured key [policy resources](#) in this newsletter. The [accumulating collection of state-level stories and briefs](#) is also worth a look—**California**, **Texas**, and **Colorado** all have teams of fellows in the first cohort.
- As you may know, [National Skills Coalition](#) has been working on operationalizing "credentials of value" since 2018. We partnered with WDQC to deliver a session on the topic as part the WDQI/SLDS Annual Convening. Louisiana has just become the fourth state

(together with WDQI states **Colorado** and **Alabama** and my home state **Oregon**) to adopt [NSC's quality standards](#) which require wage data to employ. (You see where I'm going with this 😊.)

- The [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) (J-PAL) just released its [Handbook on Using Administrative Data for Research and Evidence-Based Policy](#) accompanied by a series of webinars (one per chapter) including one led by our own WDQI subject matter expert, [Dr. Josh Hawley](#) (the October 5 recording is available). The next two will cover Data Sharing Structures (October 19) and Data Use Agreements (October 26). More [here](#).
- The next WDQI Web Convening: **Apples, Oranges & Employment Data: Toward Standardization and Better Quality is Thursday, October 15, 12:30 pm EST**. We're teaming up with BrightHive, and the [US Chamber of Commerce Foundation](#) to talk about UI wage records and standardization. Part of our ongoing effort to connect WDQI teams to kindred spirits in the workforce data ecosystem, we'll learn about the [T3](#) pilots (aligned with the explicit data quality improvement goals of several WDQI states) and opportunities to participate in and leverage each other's work.

Reminders

- [The 2020 SLDS Best Practices Conference](#) will convene virtually **November 17-18**. It will include recorded and live sessions. A number of you submitted terrific proposals. We can hardly wait to see them come to life!
- **The Reimagining Pathways to Employment in the US Challenge**—powered by MIT Solve, the [Morgridge Family Foundation](#), and [New Profit](#)—seeks the most promising solutions for accelerating pathways to current and future employment across the US. (Surely they will need data). [Solutions due November 9](#).
- If you missed the joint **WDQI-Office of Disability Employment Policy Series**, we've got you covered. Recordings and materials are already up on the LEAD Center website, [here](#) (September 24, #PIRLDeepDive) and [here](#) (September 17, #DataViz)
- Did we mention the [WDQI Community of Practice on WorkforceGPS](#) has launched?
- The Employment and Training Administration's own [#COVID19 response resources and FAQs](#) is available and continually updated just for you.

It's October. It's okay to be [spooked](#).

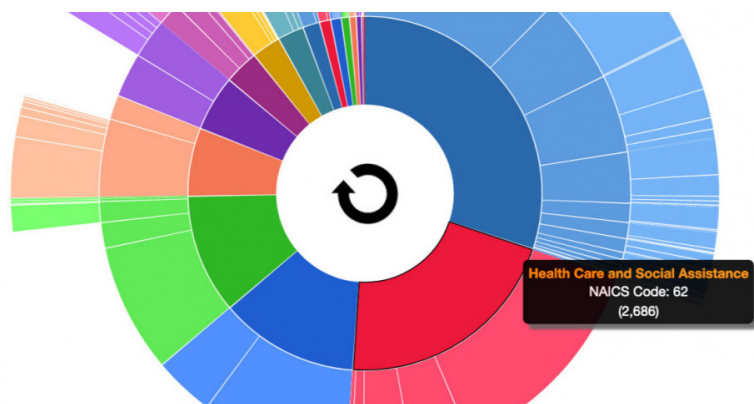
Take care of each other out there.



Kristin Wolff (@kristinwolff), Editor

Maureen Sarver (@maureensarver), **Caitlin Grey** & the **SPR/BrightHive Support Team**

Ten Resources for the New Now



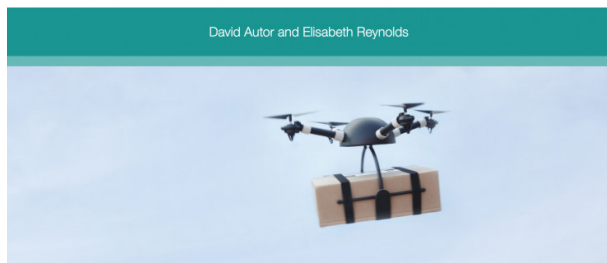
SkillsCommons Gets a Re-Make

Remember SkillsCommons? The repository for resources, materials, and evaluations linked to the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant programs? It's since become a repository for myriad open educational services and resources. (There are also evaluations hosted there). You can find them by using the wheel—a nifty little #dataviz industry filter (that uses NAICS codes). Give it a whirl.

 skillscommons.org

The Nature of Work after the COVID Crisis: Too Few Low-Wage Jobs

David Autor and Elisabeth Reynolds



Too Few Low-Wage Jobs?

Automation meets demographics meets COVID19. Low-wage workers laid-off in large numbers simply do not have many options for re-employment. A more-nuanced-than-usual looks at trends, choices, and options for the new #FutureofWork.

 hamiltonproject.org

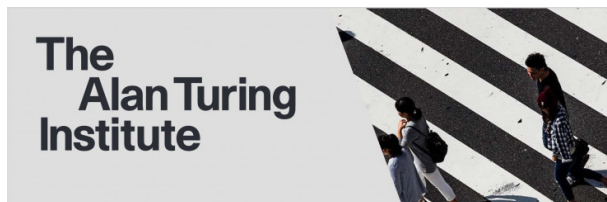


Four Times More Women Than Men Dropped Out of the Labor Force in September

That's why its been dubbed the first she-session. The implications for strategy that yields a robust recovery are profound. You know what to do.

 nwlc.org

The Alan Turing Institute



Understanding AI Ethics & Safety: A Guide for the Responsible Design and

Implementation of AI Systems in the Public Sector

Although it may not have immediate application for all of you (yet), we had to include a guide designed for the public sector developed by the Turning Institute, right? (It came out last year and somehow escaped our gaze until now). Even if you are not yet employing the technologies discussed, the fairness principles, governance framework, and human-centered practices are relevant to LDS work.

 turning.ac.uk



Why Culture Is the Greatest Barrier to Data Success

Aimed at companies, you'll see much that is familiar. You'll also find six lessons to share with your own teams when the going gets tough. There's nothing magic here, just cross-sector evidence of what you already know, but sometimes need someone else to say.

 sloanreview.mit.edu

Time-Out Treasures

The Future We Were Promised

Darren Garrett's visual history of the future, this post reads like a narrated museum tour (of the best possible kind). Its drawings, maps, comics, and graphic imagery reflect past ideas about what the future would hold. It's a remarkable look at the familiar but not-quite-identifiable imagery that shaped our ideas about the once (and past) new now. Get yourself some tea and pull up a chair.

 howwegettonext.com

Working Nation Launches New Digital Magazine

[Inquire Within](#) aims to highlight innovative programs and initiatives that provide all Americans with the skills needed for good jobs now and in the future.

The Admin Data Handbook You've Been Waiting For

Chapters cover all the basics—collaboration, data sharing, data privacy, data use, and so on. Loads of examples help the practices

Julia Lane's New Book is Out!

Manifesto indeed. (We love the title too.) The [publisher's site](#) includes a trove of additional resources, and here's a Center for Data Innovation book talk ([video](#)) in case you just can't wait

It's a #FutureofWork media candy store. One we needed.

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

come alive (so will the [webinars!](#)).

 [admindatahandbook.mit...](#)

another minute. Happy Democratizing.

 mitpress.mit.edu

The Civic Tech Field Guide

You've seen this before, but not since 50(!) new resources were added. A global compendium of projects and resources, the Guide includes many workforce-relevant entries contributed during the COVID crisis, and a few unrelated to workforce that provide nice analogs from which we can learn.

 civictech.guide

The #MBW Podcast

Our Very Own #WDQI #MakingBetterWork Podcast Now Has 19 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 20th 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:

- **COVID-19** (until future notice)
- **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.