

# SUCCESS STORIES

## America's Promise Grants

### WORKFORCE ALLIANCE OF SOUTH CENTRAL KANSAS

#### — EMPLOYER PARTNER SUCCESS —



Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas' service delivery area, which includes Wichita, Kansas and the surrounding counties, has experienced over 60,000 layoffs since January 1, 2020.

Approximately 46,000 of those layoffs were a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the others were mostly due to the grounding of the Boeing 737 MAX. The regional economy is beginning to recover and as of March 2021, the unemployment rate for the Wichita Metropolitan Service Area dropped to 5.3%, from a high of 6.5% in November 2020.

Cox Machine, which supports the aviation industry was one of the many companies in the grant service delivery area to experience layoffs in 2020 due to the halt of the production of the Boeing 737 MAX and the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to 2020, Cox Machine had seen rapid growth in all areas, and then quickly had to pivot and account for loss of business. During the slow-down in business, Cox Machine chose to train and upskill their workforce, which ultimately helped reduce the number of layoffs.

Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas worked with Cox Machine to train these incumbent workers using training programs funded by the America's Promise grant. Cox Machine identified 28 employees that could be reskilled and utilized on other projects. Twenty-six participants successfully completed training, earned a credential, and avoided layoff. This partnership also allowed Cox Machine to recall furloughed workers sooner than anticipated. The grant and incumbent training programs have setup Cox Machine to recover faster than other businesses that have been impacted by recent economic conditions. Additional incumbent worker trainings are anticipated in 2021.

#### — PARTICIPANT SUCCESS —

Shane is a 40-year-old with a high school diploma who has worked at Cox Machine as a Brake Form Operator since November 2017. Due to the Boeing 737 MAX grounding and COVID-19 pandemic, he was identified as being at risk for layoff. Cox Machine recognized Shane's work ethic and desire to learn more, and the company decided to cross-train him in another area to avoid a layoff. In July 2020, Shane began an eight-week on-the-job training program in conjunction with Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas in the Route Brake Cell department. Shane caught on quickly and was able to complete the training plan ahead of schedule, and has helped implement new processes within the department.

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Rachael is a 30-year-old with a high school diploma and no post-secondary education. She was hired at Cox Machine in 2015 with very little experience in the aviation industry. Since starting, Rachael has shown an excellent work ethic and a drive to learn more. She was most recently employed as an Internal Auditor when her position was identified as at risk for layoff. Cox Machine identified Rachael as an employee who could be cross-trained in another department to avoid layoff. In July 2020, Rachael began an eight-week on-the-job training program with Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas as an Outside Processing Receiving Inspector. She excelled during training and completed the training plan ahead of schedule. Since then, she continued expanding her knowledge to the point that she has become a trainer herself for multiple departments. The training not only allowed Rachael to stay employed during the pandemic, but it has also allowed her to become an asset to Cox Machine, setting her up for a career in the aviation industry.

