

OKC Workforce Development Afternoon Panel Discussion

Kim Wilmes ([00:00](#)):

So if this is your first time attending one of these again, just to give you a little bit of context, this is the small group meeting for those investing at the board of advisor level. And the goal is really is to be able to have some in-depth conversations, interactive conversations about topics that are important to us, important to you all and just to really get to know all of each other at the advisor level. So this is intended to be pretty informal. So at any time if you've got any questions, please just raise your hand. We're happy our folks are here to help, have this conversation with you, share some information. So we will go ahead and get started.

([00:47](#)):

Alright, everybody good? We're good. Alright. So I'm going to ask, have you heard within your company good help is hard to find. You have problems of your own supervisors or staff members are having a hard time trying to find people. Yes, I see people nodding. How about keeping those people as well? That's a problem also, right? So we all know here in Oklahoma City, hopefully you know that the unemployment rate right now is about 3%. So it's important for you to figure out how to find those people but also keep them. Our goal today is to really look behind the curtain. We've got our panel of experts here to talk about a lot of different resources and information that might be helpful to you as you uncover and look for other ways to find talent and keep talent. So I'm going to ask each of our panelists, introduce themselves and talk a little bit about what keeps you up at night and what's something that your organization continues to focus on daily. And I'll start with you Shane.

Shane Phillips ([01:42](#)):

My name's Shane Phillips and I work with an organization called Public Strategies. I serve as the, I help with strategic partnerships and workforce and economic development for their work radio Oklahoma program. And what that really means is I build relationships or make friends in the community with organizations that would hopefully provide an opportunity for some of the families I serve to find an avenue for self-sufficiency. So I primarily work with training providers or employers or partners that are going to help my families move to the next level.

David Emerick ([02:16](#)):

I'm Dave Emerick. I'm with JP Morgan Chase and I'm part of the state local government relations team. I cover Oklahoma as part of my territory and four state region. I primarily work on public policy issues with the folks over here at the Capitol. What keeps me up at night are sometimes the not so great ideas that they come up with, but generally we work well together with 'em. And so just working on public policy issues both at the state and local level.

Bryce Murray ([02:42](#)):

Everyone. I'm Bryce Murray, I'm principal at Hogan Taylor, specifically co-leading the Hogan Taylor talent practice, which is the part of us that's not accountants or spreadsheet people, I think is what I heard Aaron say. What keeps me up at night is solving the complex talent challenges our clients have. Those are across the board.

Kelly Kay ([03:04](#)):

Hi everybody. Kelly is president and CEO for the YMCA of greater Oklahoma City. And we serve about 250,000 people statewide across central Oklahoma through 16 locations for our Texans. We started three weeks after the land run. You may not be familiar with what that was, so that was 135 years ago. But welcome, love to having you here. Probably what I bring to the conversation today is twofold. Some of the work we've done with the chamber and other nonprofit partners, government partners, corporate partners around the childcare issue, childcare shortage, strengthening the childcare offerings across our state as well as being one of the largest, A big piece of our youth development model is being one of the largest employers of young people. So high school students and college students that come and get their first time jobs working in the your future employees that we want to teach some of those first time job skills and interacting in a workplace environment, but then hopefully attract them to want to stay in our community as well. Great,

Kim Wilmes (04:10):

Great. Thank you all for joining us today. And I'll share a little bit more to set the backdrop for this conversation. I mentioned earlier that as part of the economic development team, we have a business retention and expansion team and their goal is to talk with our local companies and make sure they understand what are some challenges and what are some benefits and challenges that they're seeing right now. And as we all know, kind of going through past four or five years, the pandemic kind of hit us. We had some pretty unstable environments related to workforce. There were times when we were all kind of fighting for figuring out work from home, figuring out VPN, how do we deal with remote work, how do we keep those folks connected to your other employees who are in the office that can't, don't have the ability to work from home.

(04:54):

So really this new normal that we're in as employers, you probably need to start thinking about if you haven't already, about offering flexible schedules and having professional development offerings to help your employees feel cared about and that you're looking out and helping them grow. But also things that are beyond compensation, like mental health support and childcare, housing and transportation. So just some things that we'd love for you to think about. But I'm going to go ahead and start with a question, and I'm going to start with you Bryce. What factors have been the cause of turnover in your organization and what adjustments have you made?

Bryce Murray (05:31):

So I think for us it's really going to be around what our clients are experiencing. And I think first off, it's important to look at the overall workforce and think about it as there are those of us who get the benefit and the luxury of being what I like to call keyboard warriors or knowledge workers. And then there are those of us who are working in highly skilled positions typically require you to be in person to do your work. And I think over the last few years what's been driving turnover on the knowledge worker side is the fact that people have a lot more options than they've ever had before. And engagement survey after engagement survey will tell you people don't quit jobs, they quit bosses. So at the end of the day, I think what a lot of folks on that side of the labor force are looking for are opportunities to fully self-actualize in their professional environment.

(06:21):

And I think looking for opportunities to really feel recognized for the talent they bring and because they have so many more options than they've had before, they're willing to walk away. And in some cases, I joked this morning, sign up two or three jobs at the same time and figure out which one works best on

the skilled labor front. It feels like a very different dynamic on the skilled labor front. There's a huge demand for skilled labor right now and a number of industries. Construction certainly comes to mind, manufacturing comes to mind, and the challenge there becomes they're overworked and they would certainly tell you underpaid. And so right now there's a huge crunch on that side for different reasons, but there's nonetheless a great demand for that talent.

Kim Wilmes ([07:07](#)):

David, you have share some

David Emerick ([07:08](#)):

Thoughts? Well, I mean slightly different aspect for us working in the bank and having our employees. We hear a lot from our clients too. There's other bankers in the room that know this, but for us it's really, I think frankly again, the boss issues kind of a, I'm sorry, I'll be a louder. So from the bank perspective, some of it is like leaving because of a box primarily for us in the bank perspective, it's really benefits and pay is one of the things that we're looking at too. So it's incredibly, incredibly competitive environment in Oklahoma City right now and in Oklahoma in general from a cost perspective. But we hear generally from our clients and our customers across the board, a couple of different things related to that. A lot of it's going to be really what the benefits are and how they can get from one company to another because they're shopping not just benefits but pay. So that's something that we really strive through is that we're making sure that we've got a very strong plate of benefits for them to have to go from. So one of the things, because benefits in some cases the pay is not going to be there, but the benefits will really help push them there.

Kim Wilmes ([08:11](#)):

So talking about benefits, one of the things we mentioned early on is childcare benefits, right? We've got a lot of workers that are parents and sometimes it's difficult for them to be a totally concentrating and focused on work when they've got to worry about whether or not they're going to be able to have childcare, whether or not the babysitter next door or your parents that is going to be able to spend a little bit of time with them is still going to be on track for tomorrow. So I want to share a little bit about the greater Oklahoma City Chamber did a study last year. If you're interested in seeing the results of that, you can go to [OKC chamber.com/childcare](http://OKCchamber.com/childcare), we'll send that link out to you all after the event. But just a couple of facts that we got from that was one in 10 Oklahomans had to quit a job, change jobs or leave their job or change jobs due to childcare issues.

[\(09:02\)](#):

Two out of three people said that they had a family member consider leaving the workforce instead of using childcare. And it's probably because of cost, availability or quality and that it's estimated that the state of Oklahoma is losing 1.2 billion in productivity, lost earnings and revenue because of childcare issues. So childcare is a workforce issue. If that's not something you're thinking about now, you need to think about that. Think about offering some child family friendly policies and things like that. So Kelly was part of our group, our survey and work focus groups that we did. So I would love to hear your thoughts. We know that the YMCA is one of the largest childcare providers for school aged children in this city, and so we know you're intimately connected with that challenge. So I want to ask, why does childcare impact talent retention with our employers and why could it be so difficult for our employees to have access to adequate childcare options?

Kelly Kay ([10:02](#)):

Well, it's definitely a complicated problem as we've learned through the study and not a lot of secrets there, but it was great to get some of the data that's very helpful in addressing these issues as we focus with our various different entities because it really is a statewide issue, really a nationwide issue that we're dealing with. And the Y is the largest provider of childcare in the country. So there are a lot of national solutions and legislation and things that are in the work, some state things that we're still trying to get through. But it really, from an employer standpoint, what we heard a lot through the focus groups and just through the partnerships that we're developing through the Y is just a real struggle getting young parents into the workforce because of that shortage of childcare or getting parents back, getting their workforce back to work at the office where they can be together and productive, especially in those jobs that require the group work and the teamwork together.

[\(10:59\)](#):

So doing a lot of work there. We have some great models and there are some innovative things happening, but it is challenging. Do you think about from a parent standpoint, I think the study pointed out that the average cost for one infant in full day childcare was around \$11,000. So if you're a young family with maybe two or three preschool children, the parents really start to question, does it really make sense for us both to work at this time? And so that's an issue. But then on the other side of that, as a charitable nonprofit provider that also provides about \$2.8 million in financial assistance this year charging what it truly costs to deliver that program and to maintain a building and those kind of things. And I think the stat was in the study that there are two children for every licensed space available. So we are truly in a childcare desert.

[\(11:57\)](#):

And so that's a huge challenge, especially in early childhood, being able to pay a living wage to your teachers and what that costs to maintain buildings and playgrounds and the accreditations that we want in our high quality programs. So many wonderful providers all throughout our state and around the community. But it is a challenge and to prove that out, just we've got a wonderful model at the downtown Y with the Child Development Center and the Y and Aaron, we still call it the new downtown YMCA too, even though it's 25 years old. But it's a special model because we can serve the whole family, but there are two families on the waiting list and the center's license for a hundred kids. There's two families on the waiting list for every one of those spots at all times. So it's a huge challenge. There are some things happening, several, the Y and several other nonprofits received some ARPA dollars to expand our childcare footprint.

[\(12:53\)](#):

We're trying to leverage those dollars with corporate partnerships. We have some great models from around the country where companies are helping to work with organizations, not only get childcare centers built, but then to also have a certain number of guaranteed spaces for their employees, but also recognizing those centers have to serve the broader community too. So some really innovative things that are starting to happen. And then from a workforce standpoint, we have right now the Y every year serves about 4,000 kids through structured childcare programs. Most of those in school age programs. But as I mentioned in my introduction, a big challenge. We had 29 summer day camps this summer with about 2,700 kids, but that could have been 40% more had we been able to hire all of the 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 year olds. And we have a thousand employees under the age of 22, but we need about 1500.

[\(13:46\)](#):

So many families had to get put on waiting lists and then wait to see if they could get into one of our camps. And we were referring to other organizations otherwise, all of that. So those are some of the other challenges from a workforce standpoint because that 4,000 kids in structure childcare, but we

have another 23,000 kids that come to our wives every day during out-of-school time hours. So families still, even if their kids are a little older, don't need full-time childcare, they still need 'em to have a safe place to be after school. So

David Emerick (14:17):

Other family friendly policies or, well, a couple of things that we do. We have a pre-tax deduction for childcare purposes, which is really important. I think that helps. And then we started in our larger centers. So we've got larger centers across the country, several of which are in Texas. We have what we call backup childcare centers for employees on base at backup. Those have become so popular and so filled. We've grown those and actually have now full-time. And so locations, childcare and it's based on a needs basis. Again, the demand is extremely high, but we also make sure that we have that backup childcare for those when the regular childcare that you have, whether it's a relative or friend or neighbor, something happens, we want to make sure that employee can still come to work. And so they do have priority spots in the backup childcare, but the pre-tax deduction for childcare expenses has been, it comes right out of their paycheck. And we

Shane Phillips (15:08):

Talked about this morning, is that, sorry, I really see childcare part of this idea of family security. So employees need to feel that they have this security and a good place to take their kids. And so some of the best models and strategies I've seen are exactly what's being focused on up here is this idea of childcare as a benefit, a standard benefit that parents are going to be able to access and the employers can really drive that. And I know that is a commitment and it is a lot of resources and it's expensive. There's a million different things that go into it. But I think through a collaborative approach, I think through looking at different resources and partners, like Kelly was mentioning, that we could have industry really lean into that and that's going to benefit all of the people that we have working on the teams that we're focusing on. So just the benefit of childcare as a standard would kind of change the way that workforce and future talent are going to look at the jobs that we have available for hiring.

Kim Wilmes (16:09):

Any thoughts or family friendly policies that any of your organizations have that you feel are beneficial or helpful that you may have heard from your employees? Nobody wants to share.

Audience Member (16:20):

I'll say that when I moved here from Washington State 16 years ago, the biggest benefit that I missed from my financial institution was a place called Barely Ill where all the bank, all of the companies paid into this childcare center. And then when your children were sick and not too sick, not like hospital sick, but they have a cold or the flu or something like that, you could go and there's not a single one that I'm aware of around here. And so that could really cut down on absenteeism for employees.

Kim Wilmes (17:05):

Yeah. So we've heard a lot of internal and external challenges that companies may have something to look within your organization. Again, taking a look at your policies might be helpful, but as we see that this people-centric approach is really important, trying to think about looking at your employees and what's going to help make them be successful. People being able to have them concentrate and work on work that you're providing them. They don't have to worry about things back at home. Yes,

Audience Member (17:32):

Something that we moved from Dallas and traffic has just gotten so bad there that I think some companies aren't thinking about where the bulk of their employees, but do they have more younger workforce but more in the city or more suburban? And so I think just with cities as they grow, thinking about where your employees are located, a little bit of a hybrid approach. You can have a flexible schedule. They come in early and leave earlier, coming in later. So those have been some things that some companies in Dallas I'm trying to work with because just company, if you have a lot of families, if you live, a lot of people live out in suburbs that be an hour commute sometimes. And so juggling that both husband and wife work.

Kim Wilmes (18:08):

Yeah, so flexible schedules. Thank you for that. Thank you for that. So some of these challenges, again that we mentioned you may have in retaining staff, but also recruiting staff. So I do want to talk about challenges and barriers that we might find in trying to recruit, recruit folks. And we've become so good at scanning folks and being able to find individuals with transferable skills that you're quick to say like, okay, this person will be successful, this person is someone I can see. You might unconsciously be excluding some other folks because you aren't as, you aren't thinking about some of the other policies or things that you might be able to adjust to help bring others on board. So I'm going to start with asking about challenges to find mid and executive level talent. And we continue to hear it's hard to recruit mid to executive level talent here at Oklahoma City. I'm going to ask Bryce from Hogan Taylor to get us started. Are you seeing a growing reticence for relocation for more seasoned talent? And if so, what factors are behind it and how might employers think differently about that issue?

Bryce Murray (19:11):

I think especially that knowledge worker talent, if they're more senior, either as a very seasoned individual contributor with a lot of technical skills in their field or as an executive, I think that they still were in a place where the market's in their favor, especially with remote work. And so the idea of moving a family to take a new job is kind of feeling old fashioned for a lot of those folks these days. Many of them are open to hopping on a plane. But I would say more and more folks are saying, look, I don't need to make that move to earn that living that I can make where I am today. I think one of the interesting side effects of that is that we have senior executives that are being tapped who are in very high price labor markets and companies are trying to compete.

(20:01):

Maybe they're in a lower cost labor market. And the opposite is also true, where you have senior and experienced leaders in lower cost of labor markets that are being arbitrage into more expensive markets, getting for them what feels like a major pay raise, but still is a bargain relative to the talent in that market. So lots of arbitrage going on from that point of view. And I think in the end, if you're in a knowledge worker role at a senior level, things are very much in your favor right now, which makes it challenging as an employer. It means you really need to think creatively about the necessity of the person being in the office. Depending on the nature of the role, the leadership role, they need to play. The example I shared this morning for that more senior individual contributor, very deep technical specialist. We have a client that as in the defense industry, looking for really, really senior firmware engineering talent, people sitting at the intersection of hardware and software.

(20:57):

And for a job like that, you would expect that this person would be going into an office sitting alongside an electrical engineer testing equipment. And more often than not, these firmware engineers are saying,

even at the senior level, I'm good. I can work from home with my boxers and I can get paid really, really well. So why would I come into an office? I don't need to do that anymore. So that's really hitting companies hard as they're trying to break talent back into the office. I think the other piece to that, going back to the piece on turnover is remote work has put a lot of pressure on frontline managers. So if you were a bad manager before in the world of remote work and distributed work, you're a horrible, so that's a big challenge that companies are dealing with right now and that has a further implication from a recruitability point of view.

Kim Wilmes (21:48):

Any other comments?

David Emerick (21:51):

Just quick example from the portability issue and quality of life and things that are really important to that. One of our major clients that we were banking had five job openings that either could be based in Connecticut or Austin. And Austin used to be a highly recruited place. Everybody wanted to go there. 64 people applied for the job, all of 'em for the Connecticut, not for Austin. A lot of it was the affordability, it's quality of life, it's just that kind of the travel, the traffic, the cost of living, everything along that. And it was remote. And so again, it's kind of that quality of life. So how can you track those from senior executives and say, I can do this not necessarily in my underwear, but I can do this job in a place where I'll be happier and I can afford, it's just more affordable and that salary goes way more here than it does in another market.

Shane Phillips (22:38):

And I also just think that for Oklahoma City specifically, we have a lot of positives in our favor. And I think if we can really lean into just making this a place people want to move to, we have great organizations, our infrastructure's just improving every day. There's so much going on that if we just want to keep people from Dallas moving up a couple miles just because we have what they need and we have all the things in place. So just making that we need to echo that it's a great place to live, work, and play. And I think that more people will reciprocate that.

Kim Wilmes (23:09):

Yeah, thank you. So we shift over to, as your HR teams are probably sharing, it's hard. Our candidate pool isn't big enough. We don't have enough people. We find that even though we do have an unemployment rate of 3%, but a lot of numbers that we don't talk about is a labor force participation rate. So the labor force participation rate right now is at 65%. That means there are 35% of people who are within working age who are fully capable to be workers at your organizations that are not working and they want to work. So there are some that perhaps we all may be doing that's preventing them from being able to find gainful employment. And that's something else that we want to talk about today. So Shane, I want to start with you of how the nonprofit workforce community can advocate for sustainable employment and how does it help overcome? How does individuals overcome systemic barriers to finding economic mobility?

Shane Phillips (24:07):

I think from our standpoint work for Oklahoma, we really look to help understand the needs of employers and industry so we can take that back and focus on what we can bring from the families that we serve. So we really look to help develop a good product. I mean, I work specifically with

organizations to try and find new talent and people that would be a good fit for the organization. So we work really hard to build relationships and get to know the organizations we deal with and understand their expectations. But then also we really work hard to work with the talent that we serve to help them upskill. We work a lot with the career techs or local training providers to help them find skills or find resources that would make them more competitive in an ever changing market. And then really we focus on quality jobs and that's an initiative. There's a whole brand behind that, but we look for a job that's going to provide a livable wage and opportunities for advancement. A lot of jobs that organizations in this room have, but we will look to match those and really help people kind of connect with that. Is that

Kim Wilmes (25:11):

Yeah, yeah. Well, let me follow up with a second question. Please do. What mindset might our talent acquisition teams and hiring managers adopt that could open the aperture and partner with organizations that can expand their access to this hidden talent?

Shane Phillips (25:25):

A theme that we talked about earlier today was that in the past a lot of systems and processes that employers put in place were based on the fact that you had dozens and dozens of great quality candidates and you're really looking to screen out the folks that weren't the best fit. And now that's kind of flipped over. We have to really open the aperture like that question asks and really be more broad based in who we would consider. So I mean, we talk a lot about second chance employment. We talk a lot about special populations, maybe the underemployed or people impacted by poverty or as I mentioned, incarceration. So how do we really make it easier to connect with more people that would be available in the workforce? So that 35% is people in prison, it's parents that can't find childcare. It's people that can only get one way on a bus trip and can't be able to make the shift home. It's folks that may not have a skill or a GED and we wouldn't consider hiring them because we have some kind of issue in our practice that would keep 'em from that. So I think that it's really, it's on the employers to broaden that up so they can actually capture the people that are remaining that are not actively or fully employed. You want to be able to broaden

Shane Phillips (26:42):

Your search. I think you need to broaden the populations you can serve into people that would need

Kim Wilmes (26:48):

More. And speaking about justice involved folks, David, I'd love for you to share your story. Again, David's with JP Morgan Chase and 10% of his workforce is justice involved individuals. If a financial institution can figure out how to employ justice involved individuals, I think you can too. So David

David Emerick (27:08):

you stole my lines.

(27:12):

I'm going to just change the transition. That was great for justice impacted. So it's actually 10% of our new hires over the last few years. So not necessarily 10% of workforce, but 10% of our new hires over the last four years, roughly 10% are just as impacted. Meaning they have a criminal record or they've got a ding or they've been arrested or something along those lines. People are arrested but they're never

convicted, but it still shows up on their record. Kind of a strange way. How we got involved with this. Jamie Diamond, our chairman, CEO was at an event years ago and met some young men that were catering and working for the company that was there, and he just starts talking to him like he normally does. He just likes to start conversations. He found that all of the young men were former justice impacted and recently out of incarceration.

[\(27:58\)](#):

And so he said, I want to learn more about that. So we did a little bit more. He comes back to the operating committee and the head of hr. He goes, we're going to become a second chance employer, figure it out. And so we did. And so what we've done is over the last few years, we've actually done a couple things. We banned the box on applications. So what that does is it automatically opens up a pool of employees that we wouldn't have necessarily gone forward with in an interview process. And our HR professionals within our team say, this is one of the best things that's ever happened because they never really want to know if a person that they're talking to has a criminal record or not. And so what happens is they go through the entire process. Once we're ready to make an offer, maybe we've made a contingent offer, then we do a background check at that point, and then if something pops, we come back to them and say, tell me your story, what happened?

[\(28:47\)](#):

And generally the story of just they were stupid, they were young, they did something once, they haven't been convicted since or they haven't had their issues. We generally and probably 90% of the cases can move forward with that higher. And we're not talking about a menial job where they're mopping floors or working in a kitchen or janitorial or something else. And we make sure that we fit the jobs with what that criminal record may be. So if it was convicted, a theft, they're not going to be able to handle money. There's something else like that, but we can maybe put 'em in a tech role. But these are jobs that are good jobs. They're skilled jobs in some cases, they have a career pathway, they have opportunity for progression and promotion with benefits. And I can tell you these second chance employees are fantastic employees.

[\(29:30\)](#):

They're great, they're glad to be there. They work hard, they have a job and they're just great to have. So that's kind of how we got into it. And then Jamie being one of the things he says, well, with the power of JP Morgan Chase, we're going to change public policy issues at the state level addressing second chance hiring. So that's where my role came in. So then I've started working on legislation in Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado. We passed it in Louisiana as well, but it's the Clean Slate legislation. So what that does is it seals your record, your conviction record or your criminal record after a certain period of time if you're eligible for having your records sealed through the process. What we're working on is legislation to have that happen automatically. Oklahoma is one of the first states, about six states have done it.

[\(30:15\)](#):

It's automatic record clearing. So that means that if you reach a certain point and you haven't been convicted of a crime since a certain period of time, seven years or 10 years, your record is automatically sealed or expunged. And that means you don't have to check the box if it's on the application. Generally a background check won't show up what it does. Now, if there's special jobs with security clearances for DOD or something else like that, then that changes and does that, what that does is it opens up an entire pool of applicants you probably didn't have or didn't know about. The other thing that it does is because that process to clear your record or expunge or seal your record is extremely complicated. It

takes time. It takes a lawyer in most cases, and it's very expensive and most people do it. We found that 85% of the people who are eligible for expungement don't do it.

[\(31:00\)](#):

85%, I can tell you one in four people have a criminal record or have some kind of justice infected one in four, and we've heard maybe it may be a higher third higher this morning you gave it 30%. You're knocking out at least 25% of your population right there by just saying not looking at somebody that may have a criminal record. And we're not talking, in our case, these are nonviolent offenders primarily. These are cases of ddu I shoplifting, maybe possession something stupid that happened one time. Why does somebody have to have their career or their inability and job? They've had an impact one time. So that's what we've done. We're working on those issues. As I said, we're a highly regulated national bank. We're maybe one of the highest regulated entities in the world, in the country. If we can do it, anybody can.

[\(31:41\)](#):

Don't be scared. You can do it. Just get over that hump. There are protection. There are laws in most states that protect you from hiring folks with criminal records in case something happens again, which usually doesn't. The other thing is how do you know you don't have an employee right now that has a criminal record? Maybe you hired them before to background check. Nothing happened, but how do you know they haven't been convicted of a crime since? But they're still a great employee, they're still producing, they're still a great job. That's what it is. Open up your pool. Look at that. So I never thought five years ago when I was working, I've been working for fancy service and lobbying for 30 years. I've been in my 31st session here in Oklahoma. I never thought I'd be working on second Chance hiring or working on these issues. I thought it'd banking is just my entire career when I got into this is opened up a whole new idea. Like, wow, this is really cool and it's changing lives. It's making a difference. It's the right thing to do. Thank you for that. Yeah, that's what I just think it's

Shane Phillips [\(32:31\)](#):

Interesting that a giant bank understands the impact on the bottom line. Does that make sense? They understand that, oh yeah, this really does impact our workforce. It's going to make sure we're going to make more money. We have a better skilled workforce. And I just think that's great.

Kim Wilmes [\(32:48\)](#):

Now if you're interested in having more conversation about this topic of a hidden talent topic, we will have another event October 22nd. I encourage you to put that in your calendar and we're about to go into q and a, but I think this was a great discussion to be able to kind of maybe just open your eyes and think a little bit differently. Times have changed. I'm sure HR policies have been in place for a long time. I encourage you to just take a step back and really think about how things you might be able to change things just a little bit to allow for it to be easier for your team to hire folks. So with that, I want to actually just give our panelists each last comment, last thing you want to share with the group before we head to q and a final comment.

Kim Wilmes [\(33:37\)](#):

Questions for the panelists.

Audience Member [\(33:39\)](#):

I have a question, right? Yeah. I came from JP Morgan, I think I was there.

David Emerick (33:45):

You look familiar. I think you met before

Audience Member (33:47):

I was the Oklahoma City corporate

David Emerick (33:48):

Office. Okay, that's right. You worked with David. Yeah. Yeah.

Audience Member (33:51):

But I was there when they started the, I want to say disabilities, but the people that came in that had autism and things like

David Emerick (34:00):

That, that's another part of our program too.

Audience Member (34:01):

Going back to what you were talking about with the second chance piece, how do you get those employees bonded in roles where they have to be With the state of Oklahoma, a lot of employees have to be in bonded, bonded if they're in banking and have,

David Emerick (34:15):

It depends on the role. So if it had to be bonded and there's a way we can't bond them, we'll find another spot of thatwhere.

(34:23):

Again, it depends on what the crime's a great question too. And again, I'll talk about the other point about untapped talent. We've got a whole new program. We hired people with disabilities, we've got a whole veterans program. We're one of the top veterans hired. So we identify the talent where those gaps are and we'll find those folks with disabilities and have them work in our branches and call centers other places, spend another part of that untapped talent we'll talk about. So thanks for raising that. I knew I knew you from somewhere. I'm trying to figure it out. Good to see you again.

Kim Wilmes (34:53):

Other questions?

Audience Member (34:56):

I believe it's David. She took my first question. That was great. With the bonded, I'm curious what the retention rate of those employees are. Justice

David Emerick (35:03):

Impact. Great question. We don't track that intentionally. One we don't want, and two things. Two, we don't disclose to their hiring manager or to the hiring managers or anybody else that they necessarily have a criminal record. The only way that they know that their colleagues or their manager knows that they have criminal record is that they tell them, and we don't track it because we'll make sure that

they're integrated, that they're just in mood. Anybody else? We don't track 'em because we don't want them to feel like we're watching them. But what I can tell you, the retention rates are very good. Great employees. It's very good. I dunno what that number is, but we don't lose many. Question,

Audience Member ([35:41](#)):

Kelly. So you've been at the YA year or two. So how has the younger hiring force changed? So you're dealing with the younger individuals and sometimes they get a bad rap for not working as hard as some of the older generations and everything. So what have you experienced and what tools have you used to attract the younger generations to

Kelly Kay ([36:05](#)):

Work? Well, we've done a lot of things and I would say by and large, they're outstanding employees. And we've actually, because of that, we have so many kids that start off with this in childcare and camps and sports and swim lessons and all that. And as they start to get to driving age, you tend to start to lose 'em a little bit. And so we've actually started some job training programs for 14 to 15 year olds so that they can get their CPR certifications and first aid and safety, all these certifications that will benefit them forever once they have 'em in place, get all those kind of things in place. And then we work with a lot of partners. We've done a lot our Y achievers program that we do at Oklahoma City Public Schools. And I would encourage all of you to send your most magnetic employees to come in and mentor in those programs because they can have such a tremendous impact on those young people, giving them a hope and a vision for their future.

([37:06](#)):

But so many of our employers, we do, it's a college readiness. So we work a lot with career tech and universities and military and others to get them committed to some level of education track beyond high school, but also to work with a lot of corporate partners to learn that there are so many jobs and career paths that they can have. And a lot of those, as they mentor them as freshmen and sophomores and stick alongside them, they start to give them summer jobs and internships and things like that and already start to develop those skills that they need in them. And so I think that's a tremendous piece of it. And in that program and in the Y kind of in general, we don't really recruit many people from other states and things like that. So we really have to grow our own leaders. And it starts at those younger ages really pouring into 'em and developing those skills in them and then hopefully keep 'em here in our community if we can't keep 'em.

Bryce Murray ([38:06](#)):

Maybe I want to share one point on that younger generation, call it Gen Z millennial. To your point, there's probably always been this narrative of the next generation doesn't work as hard and all that. I think that's a real factor. But I'd love for you to check in on this, Dave, but I think one of the things that this generation coming into the workforce is also looking at is the math around the American dream doesn't add up anymore. And all of a sudden you're like, wait a minute, why am I signing up for this program to climb this ladder when I'm never going to get there and maybe I need to rethink how I live my life, what matters to me? That's why you see a lot of movement around certain types of companies like a Patagonia, very purpose driven, impact driven, ESG focused companies because people are saying in these younger generations, I'm not afraid of working hard, but I'm not going to work for something that's not real.

([38:59](#)):

And if I'm going to work, I'm going to work for something I believe in and want to be a part of because I'm probably not going to own a house and I may not be able to run a car for the first five or 10 years of my life. They're just looking at those realities very differently in this generation than many of us were fortunate to not see when we were in our early career. So I would just add that as a factor for this new generation coming into the workforce. And so I think they really weigh that in as they look at employers and the calculus they do just looks very different as a result.

Kim Wilmes (39:30):

Yeah, thank you Bryce. And one of the things that continued conversation from this morning was also making sure that your organization's, why do you do what you do for the greater good? How can you connect that staff person to that message of being able to show here's the impact that you're making on your community through this job that you're doing. So another retention effort of just showing how they are helping to make an impact within your company and helping them understand what their why is. Other question? Oh,

Kelly Kay (39:59):

Go ahead. I might just tag onto that real quickly because I think they are, and I think one of the things that we see with our young people today is they are very driven. And that's one reason why it's hard to get them into the workforce. They are so busy, all their focus on academics and their future goals and all of those kinds of things. And then as a charitable nonprofit, it could be challenging for us because you can go get jobs at a department store or other places where you could make 15 to \$18 an hour. And we have to rely on those kids that are looking for meaningful work, want to have an impact and give back to an organization like the Y. That's really helped to raise them as young men. And then the other end of the spectrum too, I think that we would be remiss not to mention, but so many, the Y is one of the largest employers of young people, but we're also one of the largest employees, are seniors that want to stay active and healthy, giving back, supporting, being engaged in the community. And that's a tremendous, if you have flexible schedules and those kind of things, they can supplement their income and do so many jobs that really even high level leadership work in organizations. If you're willing to bring three or four of 'em together to do that job kind of

Bryce Murray (41:10):

Thing, that's an overlooked

Kelly Kay (41:11):

Labor force,

Bryce Murray (41:12):

Labor marketability. Anybody heard of the elder

Kim Wilmes (41:18):

Millennials

Bryce Murray (41:20):

Guy every day? I'm trying to think. There's another guy, I think his name is Chip something or other, and he's probably in his mid sixties now. Elder millennial always is the first name that comes to mind. But he

shared with me a program at j and j to the point of this untapped talent pool where if you have been performing in your job area for 15 or 20 years, you can move into this advisor or mentor status of the company. And literally your job is to just sprinkle OG pixie dust on any project and just roll in with all the young Turks and give them advice because you understand the business and you've been there for so long. And I thought that that was just brilliant. Talking about hidden town pools, keeping people engaged, leveraging this collective intelligence. That's the first time I'd heard of that.

[\(42:13\)](#):

I'll have to think about it. It was a guy who advised the founder of Airbnb and they called him the elder something or other. It wasn't the millennial, but I just thought it was a brilliant program because that is a very overlooked talent pool. I see that in a lot of clients we serve that are in the tech industry. It's like, oh, we don't want anybody over 40, right? Well, they've got a huge challenge there around perspective and wisdom. And so that's something that I think companies are wise to really look at. Let's be honest, this issue of finding talent is going to get worse fill with the birth rates United States, and this is the thing we're talking about. They're going down, we are building jobs or creating jobs, birth rates are going down. We're not going to have the number of people to create jobs. I've never even heard of this. I'm going to bring this back to the folks back in the firm and say, is this where

Kim Wilmes [\(43:05\)](#):

Yeah,

David Emerick [\(43:05\)](#):

We're

Kim Wilmes [\(43:05\)](#):

On. If you talk after they did have

David Emerick [\(43:08\)](#):

That. They do.

Kim Wilmes [\(43:09\)](#):

They did. I dunno if they still

David Emerick [\(43:10\)](#):

Hear Okay before jump. This is interesting, but I mean again, this is a problem that's not going to go away.

Kim Wilmes [\(43:15\)](#):

Well think about it too. When you've got a large portion of your workforce who might be working remotely and don't have the benefit of being mentored and they're going to become managers one day, that's great. Think about how are they going to be able to mentor the even younger and folks coming in. So I think about that. It's a huge

Bryce Murray [\(43:33\)](#):

Bridge. It's huge.

Kim Wilmes ([43:35](#)):

Other questions? Yes,

Audience Member ([43:38](#)):

I've heard that the state of Oklahoma is trying to provide some incentives to get more childcare centers. And so if the chamber could help disseminate some of that information, which I know that part of it is a per head financial support to help 'em get some of that seed money. I'm sure there's some other incentives out there. So that might be good. The chamber could disseminate that. There could be some entrepreneurs out there that wanted to do that. The other thing I found interesting was 65% of our eligible workforce is actually engaged and looking for a job. Do you know how we compare? Is that for the state of Oklahoma? Is that Oklahoma City? How we compare to other markets?

Kim Wilmes ([44:22](#)):

So for the state of Oklahoma, it's 35% are age eligible to work and they are not working off the top of my head. I do not know how that compares to other states.

Shane Phillips ([44:35](#)):

I don't know either. But I think that Brian on the panel earlier, he said that that is over average. We have a higher

Kim Wilmes ([44:42](#)):

Participation rate. No, no,

Shane Phillips ([44:44](#)):

Higher. Higher. That 35% is higher than national

Kim Wilmes ([44:46](#)):

Average. That that's what I believe. That's it. Yes. It's

David Emerick ([44:49](#)):

Roughly, from what I understand, it's with other groups of it. It's roughly 25%

Kim Wilmes ([44:54](#)):

Is on average. On average, on average.

Bryce Murray ([44:56](#)):

And to be clear, those are people who could work but are not seeking employment

David Emerick:

or they have barriers. They have barriers or they're not seeking employment. They're not seeking employment because the barriers have stopped them in the

Audience Member ([45:10](#)):

Past. Yes, yes. I just really kind want to make shame. We really support this ified population, but we also have a certified family positive workplace program, which I think the wife's a member of. And it is to recognize companies that have good benefits that go toward the family work-life balance for families. And the reason I mentioned that is first of all, because you should go to the website under the programs tab and look at it. It helps with employees to see that, but also as you go down the list to check off what you do to see what level you qualified for, there's a lot there that are good examples and good ideas that things you could be doing that you may not be doing and you may not have been aware of.

Kim Wilmes (46:04):

Share the website address again.

Audience Member (46:06):

Well, it's pottsfamilyfoundation.org. Go under the program tab and it says Certified pay forward please. Thank you.

Kim Wilmes (46:17):

Other questions?

Audience Member (46:21):

I've got a question. So are we doing anything to retool or upskill our current workforce as we move into deeper into aviation life sciences? That's low hanging fruit. We just don't have the workforce that's ready. I know the innovation districts working on that to some extent, but what else are we doing if we're going to have these huge,

David Emerick :

well, one, there's some legislation to pass last session that kind of addresses the workforce in the future. We're talking about skill training and upskilling and Josh, there's going to be more of a focus this year. Again, I know that talking to some of my colleagues in other chambers in the state chamber too, that's good workforce. Workforce. Workforce is going to continue to be that. And a lot of that has to do with how they're addressing agility training and job skills, both with universities and so traditional four year universities and also public around the career tech and junior colleges.

Shane Phillips (47:15):

So something that we're working on with career tech is to try and shrink down the timeframe of finding a credential that would lead to liftable wage. So looking at stackable credentials, micro-credentials, maybe shoving a good program into six weeks so that we can rapidly reemploy or I would say over people that haven't been employed that way. So there are things in place, and I think it is with the training provider is kind of the base, but also you mentioned kind of the biotech cluster. Those are examples of what is about to go off in Oklahoma, I believe. And you mentioned aerospace as well. There was a rep from credos here. They have a really cool system where they send people straight to this composite, kind of build rocket ships. And so it's a really cool and innovative thing that we're going to be able to look forward to in the future. So yeah,

Kim Wilmes (48:03):

To

Shane Phillips (48:03):

Do that. Yeah, definitely.

Kim Wilmes (48:05):

And at the Chamber, we just launched a program called OKC Fame and it is a manufacturing program where the students, high school graduates can work three days a week at a manufacturing facility and go to school two days a week at OSU OKC to earn a two year degree. So that is a program, it's almost like an apprenticeship style program, but we're also wrapping in professional behaviors and other trainings in addition to your basic manufacturing skills. So just really trying to get those students in early on. We've got the manufacturers who are dying for engineers, and this is an engineering technologies associates, applied associate's degree. A lot of them also offer tuition reimbursement, so they're going to encourage them to continue on. So again, those students can almost work, earn a four year degree and not have to pay, not have any student debt. So it's an option

Shane Phillips (48:58):

And a good job. And they have a job

Kim Wilmes (48:59):

And they have a job when they get out. This is great national other questions

Audience Member (49:03):

And I'm going to give you props on that program as well. It was super neat, the holistic kind of approach you did bringing a group in with the financial literacy. Some of these graduates are going to be beeping with money in the bank,

Kim Wilmes (49:16):

Which is

Audience Member (49:16):

A problem that their generation family may have never possible before. So I think that's holistic. Thank

Kim Wilmes (49:24):

You. Thank you. Other questions? Alright, well I want to thank our sponsors, Hogan, Taylor, stride Bank, and Integris Health. Please help me give them around applause.