

6-1-2016

## Labor Market Analysis of the Kenosha, Wisconsin Region

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### Upjohn Institute Technical Report

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#### Citation

Bommersbach, Bryan, Don Edgerly, George Erickcek, Brian Pittelko, Claudette Robey, Jim Robey, and Bridget F. Timmeney. 2016. "Labor Market Analysis of the Kenosha, Wisconsin Region." Report prepared for Kenosha Area Business Alliance. <https://doi.org/10.17848/rpt220>

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Upjohn Institute Technical Report

2016

# Labor Market Analysis of the Kenosha, Wisconsin Region

W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment  
Research

5/16/2016

W.E. UPJOHN INSTITUTE  
*for Employment Research*

May 16, 2016

# Labor Market Analysis of the Kenosha, Wisconsin Region

Prepared for the Kenosha Area Business Alliance (KABA)  
by the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, Kalamazoo, Michigan







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# Executive Summary

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Kenosha County is located in one of the largest labor markets in the country—the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area—which affords its citizens access to metro-city amenities and its industries access to suppliers and national and global markets. The county has a history of production and a workforce that has transitioned and re-skilled as industries changed. The workforce that was trained a half century ago or more for the manufacture of carriages and wagons, brass, hosiery, automobiles, and engine parts is now trained at Kenosha’s educational institutions for jobs in food, lighting, plastics, and paper products manufacturing (to name a few), as well as for jobs in warehousing, distribution, and health care. The county offers acreage for business expansion as well as industrial space to accommodate location/relocation decisions. Kenosha’s quandary, like so many other areas, is whether it will have the labor supply to sustain and grow its industry base. The purpose of this study is to provide an assessment of the current labor market environment in Kenosha County and, based on this analysis, recommend actions that the county’s economic development and workforce development community can take to attract and grow tomorrow’s workforce.

Kenosha County’s strong recovery from the Great Recession is now being threatened by a tightening labor market. From September 2009 to September 2015 its employment has grown by 18.3 percent. In 2015 its unemployment rate stood at 5.1 percent. Using the Federal Reserve Bank’s yardstick of full employment at 5.0 to 5.5 percent, Kenosha County has a tight labor market. This means that for the county’s employers and for businesses looking to set up operations in the county, it is and will become increasingly difficult to find qualified workers to fill jobs. Kenosha competes with the nearby counties of Lake and Racine for labor with the same skill sets, as there is a need for workers across the same industries. This is particularly true for professional services (including health care) and production, transportation, and construction jobs.

Industries in Kenosha, unfortunately, experience high turnover rates—higher than that of the state of Wisconsin—in nearly all of the county’s highly concentrated industry sectors. One possible reason is that annual wages paid by Kenosha employers tend to be lower in nearly all of the county’s highly concentrated industry sectors compared to Lake and Racine counties and the nation. Again, this is particularly true in the manufacturing and professional, scientific, and technical sectors.

Despite low wages, it is talent that will drive Kenosha’s economy. The competition for talent is strong not only in Kenosha but both nationally and globally. Jamie P. Merisotis, president and chief executive officer of the Lumina Foundation, recently stated that, “Talent is not merely an innate ability; rather, it’s a collection of knowledge and skills that are continually honed by education and experience to meet the needs of an ever-changing economy and society.”<sup>1</sup> There are excellent efforts under way in Kenosha County to enhance, retain, and attract the human capital necessary to help the county—and its businesses—grow and prosper in an ever-changing world. This analysis offers policy suggestions that we feel will aid in these efforts.

## The Focus of This Analysis

The Kenosha Area Business Alliance (KABA) and its partners seek a better understanding of the economic and demographic aspects of its workforce. To aid in this understanding, this analysis examines the factors associated with the county’s employment growth, including its competitive wages, its industries’ demand for occupations, the educational attainment of its workers, commuting patterns of its workers, workplace conditions, and quality of place, such as housing costs and schools. Further, KABA wants to learn about the expectations, opportunities, and challenges facing both employers and employees in an effort to get a more complete picture of the region’s labor market. Workshops conducted with employers provided a deeper appreciation of their efforts in seeking and developing talent needed to thrive and remain competitive. A survey of Kenosha County employees provided insight into their workplace expectations, opinions regarding their employers, and commuting patterns. The synthesis of these three analyses form the basis of our findings and recommendations.

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1. Lumina Foundation. (2016, May). *A Stronger Nation* (7th edition, p. 1). Indianapolis, IN. [https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger\\_nation2016](https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger_nation2016)

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## Economic Analysis

The following major findings of the economic analysis of Kenosha's labor market reveal policy options for consideration by KABA and its partners.

Not only has the county witnessed substantial employment growth, recent business park developments and the growing availability of new industrial, distribution, and professional services facilities suggest that the county is successfully attracting new capital and is not facing severe physical constraints. For a manufacturer or distributor seeking either a central location in the national market or a competitive location to serve the greater Chicago and Milwaukee region, Kenosha County is attractive.

The county's competitive strength could also be its regional weakness, however. Overall, wages in the county are lower than in the neighboring counties of Lake and Racine, as well as the national average. This is true across a wide selection of industries and occupations. The county's mix of industries tends to generate low- to middle-wage jobs, on average, and many county firms appear to pay lower-than-average wages for their industry. Still, the fact that many of Kenosha County industries paid lower wages, on average, than the same industries in surrounding counties makes it more competitive and could be a major reason for its recent job growth. However, the industries that could be attracted to the county because of its competitive wage structure are not the same industries that will likely generate higher-paying, professional positions.

The county's existing mix of industries generates occupational demand that is more centered on production and material-handling occupations than on professional occupations. With fewer professional and technical occupations being demanded by the county's employers, it is not surprising that many residents with these skill sets commute outside of the county for employment.

Unfortunately, the county's low wages appear to be associated with it having a higher-than-average employee turnover rate across many industries. For most firms, high turnover rates are costly and can negatively impact productivity, increase training and hiring costs, and lower customer service.

In addition, the county's strong manufacturing legacy, competitive wage structure, and existing mix of industries may be contributing to a negative perception of the county to professional and skilled workers. In short, professional workers seeking employment opportunities may be overlooking the job opportunities in Kenosha County. However, they may consider the county as a good residential location.

The performance of Kenosha County's school districts, as measured by their high school graduation rates and school ACT test scores, is similar, if not a little below, that of the school districts in Racine and Lake counties. The county's schools should not be thought of as a liability or strength, but more of an opportunity; however, it is an opportunity that will require a full community-wide effort to explore.

The county's housing market is competitive and attractive; however, the advantage is not as great as a countywide examination suggests because housing costs in northern Lake County are very similar to those in Kenosha County. Low housing costs may encourage families to move to, but not necessarily to work in the county due to its current mix of industries and employment opportunities. Still, available commuting data suggest that Kenosha has become a bedroom community for professional workers due to both its transportation access to professional employment centers outside of the county and its relatively low cost of housing.

According to the results of a survey of more than 1,700 employees in Kenosha County, employers in the county are providing a positive work environment for most of its workers. Most employees enjoy a very reasonable commute time to work, regardless of whether they live in or out of the county. For high-wage workers, the survey indicates that employers are providing an excellent workplace environment. The same is true for employees who can be labeled as being in the professional creative class. These workers are more satisfied than others in the availability of career advancement, managers, work/life balance, and wages. Finally, millennials—persons between the ages of 18 and 34—are more satisfied than older workers with career advancement opportunities available within their companies.

Still, there is room for improvement in the county's workplaces. Highly educated workers—individuals holding graduate and professional degrees—while having better-than-average attitudes regarding the competency of their



# Executive Summary

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coworkers and training opportunities, were also more dissatisfied with equipment and technology provided by their employers. Production workers, in general, were found to be more dissatisfied with their workplace environment, including management relations, coworker competency, equipment, life/work balance, and training opportunities. At the same time, despite the evidence of the county's relative low wages, production workers were no more dissatisfied with their wages than other workers.

## Overall Recommendations

The success of Kenosha County's efforts to rebound from industry restructuring due to the loss of automobile production is demonstrated through low poverty and unemployment rates, elevated employment and business growth, and continuing investment in industrial development. As with every community, Kenosha County can make further improvements. We propose the following recommendations to complement efforts currently under way in the region. Each recommendation is discussed in more detail in the Overall Recommendations section of this report.

**Work with county employers to be more aggressive and effective in their employment outreach efforts, especially with their online presence.** Some Kenosha County residents may be unaware of the employment opportunities available in the county. Seminars for employers on the "dos and don'ts" of online job postings should be encouraged. However, we also strongly encourage employers to state their education and training requirements when posting online job openings. When seeking to attract talent, Kenosha area employers should first evaluate their company branding strategy and assess how well that strategy is communicated to prospective employees. When creating employee search strategies or job postings, employers should also include information that speaks to Kenosha and promotes what makes Kenosha an attractive place to live.

**Kenosha area human resources professionals need to stay up to date with online talent platforms.** Due to continuous advances in technology, tools and resources available to recruit talent online are constantly changing. Any recruitment strategy seeking to attract top talent should include the most relevant and widely used online platforms as part of its strategy.

**Prepare seminars that both present the findings of the Kenosha County employee survey and recommend best practices from human resources experts on creating a productive and rewarding workplace.** Kenosha County provides a highly competitive business location due in large part to its relatively low wages and cost of living, and especially its housing prices. At the same time, its employers are facing a higher turnover rate than the rest of the state. We recommend that seminars/workshops be conducted for county employers, which would do the following:

- Show the hidden costs of high turnover rates.
- Suggest how to create an attractive workplace environment that enhances the retention of good workers.
- Offer ways in which employers could promote the assets of living and working in the Kenosha community and region to their employees in an effort to reinforce the quality-of-life aspects that would encourage them to remain in the county.

**Develop targeted industry career fairs.** Targeted industry career fairs are unique, invitation-only, two-day events that seek to connect job seekers interested in specific fields with employers from a single target industry. The first day's activities are intended to prepare attendees for meeting with employers on day two. Day one includes training and an overview of skills for which employers in the targeted industry are looking. These "fairs" cannot be compared to the standard job fairs because only screened and qualified applicants sit down with employers who have current job openings. The event is much more efficient and productive.

**Increase the employability skills of the county's existing workforce.** It is likely that the employment situation in the county will remain tight; therefore, the need to find and retain workers who face serious employment barriers will be increasingly challenging to county employers. Lack of quality child care and reliable transportation, health issues, and other family responsibilities can cause good workers to be unable to complete their tasks. For employers facing these issues, we recommend assessing soft skills development as part of the hiring process and adopting soft skills development as part of the company culture. Soft skills are commonly thought of as interpersonal skills and

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can include, but are not limited to, positive attitude, work ethic, communication, listening, following directions, time management, problem solving, conflict resolution, and understanding workplace expectations.

**Work to improve public school performance related to community engagement, community alignment, and school resource enhancement to promote a college and career going culture for K-12.** We are aware of KABA's ongoing, strong focus on facilitating and encouraging the business and education communities to work together to better coordinate training programs to meet the needs of businesses. The strategies set forth in *Kenosha First: An Economic Strategy for Kenosha County, the Next Phase* are still sound and timely. In addition, we strongly endorse and support Gateway Technical College's Gateway Promise program, which will provide crucial "gap funding" for students, as available financial aid simply does not cover the cost of going to college. A strong urban core school system serves not only as an economic development attraction and retention tool, but also as a mechanism to strategically create a talent pipeline from K-12 and with the transitions to higher education. To help promote a college and career-going culture for K-12, we suggest the following:

- *Explore the feasibility of expanding the Gateway Promise program to a four-year scholarship program.* The development of a universal Promise Scholarship Program is truly a community-wide initiative. Across the nation, there are many different approaches that are designed to address different concerns.
- *Explore career-ladder opportunities within companies to retain employees.* As described in the report's Talent Development section, opportunity for advancement is one of the most critical factors in supporting employee retention. It is recommended that Kenosha area employers investigate and develop both formal and informal career ladder opportunities within their companies.
- *Collect microdata to establish an effective community-based program that addresses the barrier that can hinder students from succeeding in all grades.* This is a difficult step that is often ignored or simply avoided because of potential administrative barriers and the lack of expertise. However, without microdata that allow the ability to track the performance of individual students over the course of their K-14 experience, it is impossible to know where the crucial breakpoints occur:
  - At what grade do students who are not academically successful begin to fall behind? Are there demographic differences?
  - How big of a factor is the student's mobility between schools and school districts on their academic performance?
  - What is the impact of quality preschool programs for student success?
- *Explore the opportunity to provide access to quality preschool for all households.* Preschool is both a consumer good and a strong investment. For all beginning, two-income households—both professional and non-professional—the availability of quality day-care and after-school care is not only a must but an attraction tool as well. A community that is able to offer quality preschool options is much more attractive.

In summary, Kenosha County already has a strong economy because of its competitiveness, growing economic base, and its location in the Chicago-Milwaukee region. Recent reports clearly show that businesses across a wide range of industries are aware of the county's strengths. The next step for the county is to focus on talent development, which will require a comprehensive approach that involves the county's business, government, and educational leaders. All aspects of talent development should be explored—from improving the workplace environment offered by its employers to enhancing the county's K-12 education system, to developing even better linkages between the business and education communities. People want to be successful, but equally important, they want their children to be successful, and many are willing to move to or stay in a county that increases the possibility of both.

# Labor Analysis of Kenosha County

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Kenosha County's business community is clearly expanding. The list of new and growing manufacturing firms and distribution centers in the county includes Amazon, with two major facilities; InSinkErator; Kenall Manufacturing; ULINE; Gourmet Foods International; and a Meijer Distribution Center. In addition, Good Foods Group, Allied Plastics, and ASYST Technologies reportedly are expanding as well. According to the September 2015 Kenosha County Economic Development Overview, more than 1,000 additional acres and up to 1 million square feet of industrial space are being constructed in the county to house future growth.

Indeed, Kenosha County has a strong manufacturing legacy that makes it unique. For more than 80 years, ending in 1988, the county was a major producer of automobile vehicles and engine components. Today, it maintains a more diversified manufacturing sector, including Snap-on Tools and Jockey International, as well as an expanding warehousing/distribution sector.

In addition to its impressive history as a production location, Kenosha County is part of the Chicago Metropolitan Area, which stretches from Racine, Wisconsin, to Michigan City, Indiana. And, it is only 50 miles away from downtown Milwaukee. Such a location provides Kenosha County with a strong supplier base, a robust regional market, and excellent access to national and global markets. At the same time, the county offers a rural/suburban lifestyle; plus, it is on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Now is an opportune time for the county's business stakeholders to assess its current and future role in the larger Wisconsin-Illinois region. Recent business reports clearly show that businesses and developers understand and are acting on Kenosha's physical assets and market location; however, the question remains if the county will attract and retain the talent necessary to meet this growing demand.

Regional economists have constantly struggled to determine whether jobs attract people or people attract jobs. Of course, the answer is both, but there remains a strong debate regarding which force is stronger. The key questions that need to be addressed are:

1. What can Kenosha County do to retain and attract a highly skilled workforce?
2. Are Kenosha County businesses taking full advantage of the skilled and professional workforce that resides in the county?
3. Are too many residents commuting out of the county to jobs that are available in the county?

The answers to these questions will have an impact on the economic health of the county and the quality of its environment. Businesses locating and expanding in Kenosha County know that their site is in the middle of one of the largest labor markets in the nation. It is a strong plus for the county and puts Kenosha in a much better position than if it were located in a non-metropolitan area. More and more professionals marry/couple with other professionals, which puts strong demands on the labor market: the market has to be big enough for both of them. In addition, in many fields a career is made through advancing between firms and not staying with one; therefore, the "thickness" of the labor market is equally important. Finally, not only is the county in one of the nation's largest labor market areas, its business community has access to excellent public and private technical and academic institutions and programs.

Clearly, much of Kenosha's success is due to the larger metro area. However, if the lion's share of its skilled workers drive into the county every day on I-94 or State Route 50, then Kenosha County's economy will not reach its full potential. Each day, thousands of dollars of potential consumer purchases drive out of the county, as well. If the county's professional and skilled

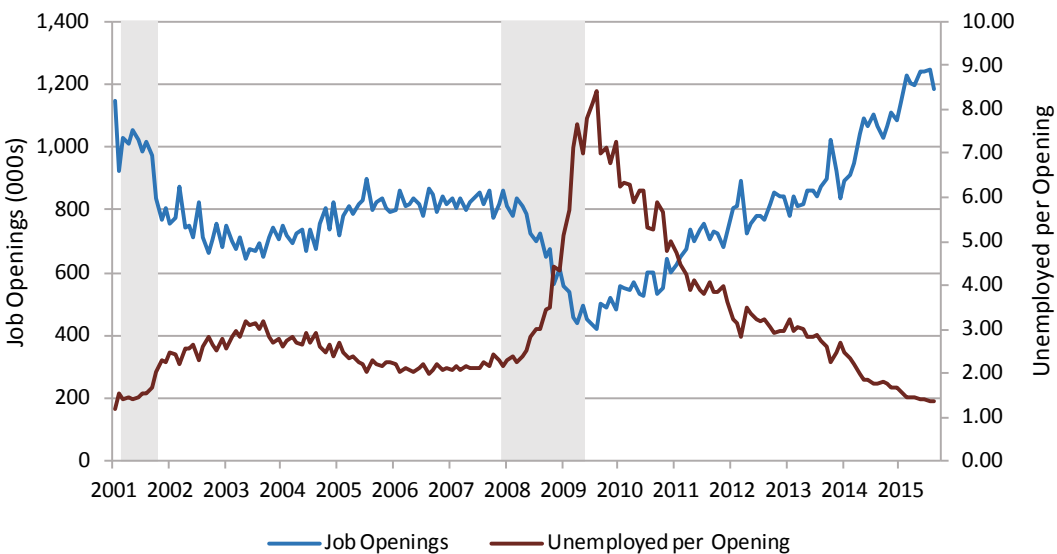
workers also reside in the county, more income will remain in the county to support more consumer-based activities and grow a more diverse and therefore more attractive retail environment. By becoming a more integrated community where people live, work, and play, the county will also become stronger economically, culturally, and financially.

The following quantitative analysis provides one of the foundation pillars for this study, as it presents both the current profile of the county’s talent base and a statistical understanding of the general characteristics of the region’s workforce, such as occupational supply, education attainment, and commuting patterns.

**General Conditions—Tight Labor Markets in a Moderately Growing National Economy**

As of the first quarter of 2016, the national economy continues to grow at a modest and sustainable rate. Still, overall employment conditions continue to improve. The nation’s participation rate—the percent of the working-age workers in the workforce—is slowly rising as more of the nation’s discouraged workers are looking for work. As shown in Figure 1, at the close of 2015 the overall ratio of job seekers per the number of job openings in the midwest has dropped to 1.3, which is very close to full employment by anyone’s measure. Nevertheless, the employment-to-population rate is still at historical lows because of the aging population and discouraged workers who are not finding employment due to the lack of skills or economic isolation (Figure 2).

**Figure 1 Job Openings and Ratio of Unemployed, Midwest**

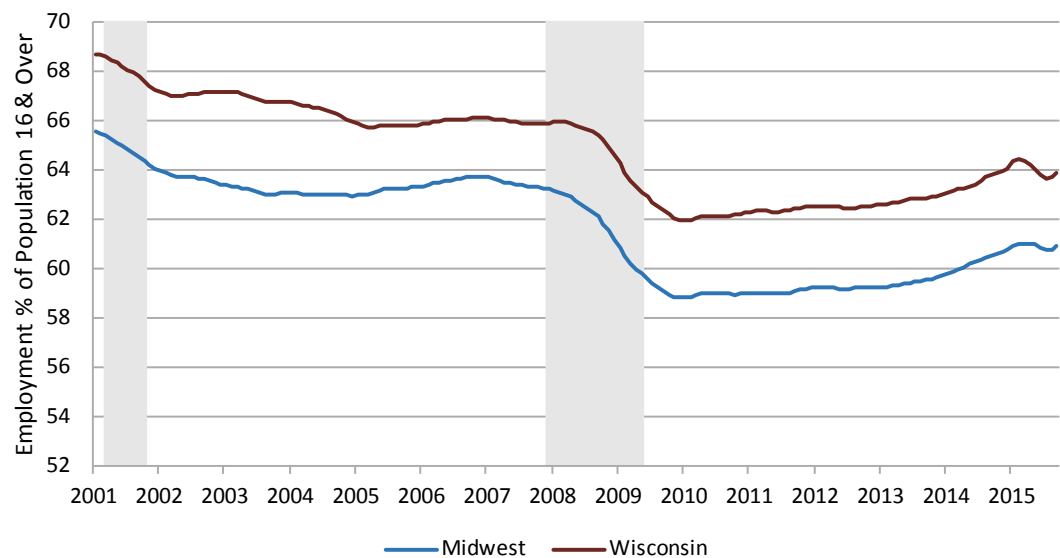


SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey.

The tightness of the labor market is finally pushing up wages nationwide, as the average hourly earnings rose by nearly 2.3 percent in March 2016 from the same month last year. In fact, domestically, most indicators are positive. However, global economic and political

uncertainties are clouding most economic forecasts. Still, most forecasts for the United States and Wisconsin are predicting positive economic growth for the next 2 years. In other words, the current economic landscape facing Kenosha County is not expected to change during the next 2 years.

**Figure 2 Employment-to-Population Ratio**



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, and U.S. Census Bureau.

The county experienced outstanding employment growth during 2015. Employment jumped 7.1 percent during the first 9 months of 2015 compared to the same period last year. It is up 15 percent from the same period in 2009. The county's job gains have cut its unemployment rate in half from 2009 to 2015, from 10.4 percent to 5.1 percent, and the number of unemployed residents fell from 9,000 to 4,400. These data only confirm that the county's employers are facing a tightening labor market, which is making it more difficult to find qualified workers.

Throughout this section of the report, we will be comparing Kenosha County with neighboring Racine and Lake counties because they share the same labor force and similar demographic characteristics, as shown in Table 1. The counties' age, racial composition, and education achievement levels are similar, although Lake County is more than four times larger than Kenosha County and has a larger Hispanic population.

## Who Are Kenosha County Employers Looking For?

An area's industrial base largely determines its occupational demand. As recent business reports confirm, Kenosha County is a great location for distribution and production. However, as shown in Table 2, the county's economic base is much more diversified than many may believe. It is still clearly a good place to build and ship products; however, only 12.9 percent of its workers are in Manufacturing compared to 25.8 percent and 15.7 percent in Racine and Lake counties, respectively. Professional and Management, Education, Health,



**Table 1 Labor Force and Demographic Characteristics, Kenosha, Racine, and Lake Counties**

	Kenosha County	Racine County	Lake County
Population	168,068	195,163	705,186
Median Age	37.5	39.7	38.0
White	76.7	73.1	63.2
Black	7.4	10.9	6.6
Hispanic	12.6	12.5	21.0
Other	3.3	3.5	9.2
Percent Associate's Degree or Higher, Age 25–64	42.2	36.2	51.0

SOURCE: American Community Survey.

and Recreation sectors each account for more than 10 percent of the county's jobs. In fact, these four service sectors account for nearly 50 percent of the jobs in Kenosha County, and combined they employ a greater percentage of the county's workplace employment than their counterparts do in Racine and Lake counties.

While the three counties share similarities in demographic characteristics as shown in Table 1, the industrial composition of the three counties is different. More than 1 out of 4 jobs in Racine County is in Manufacturing, while nearly 20 percent of all jobs in Lake County are in Professional and Management Services (Table 2). Kenosha County has a slightly higher percentage of its workers in Retail Trade.

In terms of their economic impact, however, not all jobs are the same. Employees who work to produce goods or who provide services that are sold outside of the county have a greater impact on the county's economy because they bring new money and additional jobs into the county. Therefore, the expansion of these industries is less likely to come at the expense of another county's employers, which is not true, for example, for a new grocery store.

Table 3 highlights the more highly concentrated sectors of each county and, not surprisingly, many are in Manufacturing. The table ranks the major industries of each county by location quotient: An industry's location quotient is the ratio of the industry's percent of the county's total workforce, relative to its percentage of the national workforce. If an industry's location quotient is 1.0, then that means that the industry's share of the county workforce is the same as its share of the national workforce.

Industries that have large location quotients are clearly among the area's "export base," since it is unlikely that the local economy alone could support such a high concentration.<sup>2</sup> Much of their output is consumed or purchased by customers located outside the county. In this analysis, we only examined industries that are at least 50 percent more concentrated in Kenosha County—a location quotient of 1.5—than nationwide.

2. It is important to note that an industry can be part of the county's export base and have a low location quotient. For example, a retailer that sells specialized goods or a microbrewery with a national following are clearly part of the area's export base, but they are part of much larger retail and beverage sectors that have location quotients nearly to 1, the national average.

**Table 2 Employment Distribution by Industry, %**

Industry	Kenosha County	Racine County	Lake County
Manufacturing	12.9	25.8	15.7
Construction & Utilities	3.0	3.4	3.8
Wholesale Trade	4.6	4.0	5.8
Retail Trade	14.7	11.9	13.6
Transportation & Warehousing	4.2	3.0	1.8
Information	0.4	0.5	1.3
Finance, Insurance, Rental, Real Estate	2.4	3.4	5.1
Professional & Management Services	11.3	8.5	18.7
Education	10.5	6.5	8.5
Health & Social Services	14.9	15.7	10.3
Recreation & Leisure	12.6	9.9	10.0
Business Services	2.9	2.6	2.6
Government	5.8	4.7	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: American Community Survey.

Plastics, which employed nearly 1,000 workers in the county in 2014, is the county's most concentrated industry, followed by Warehousing (please note that this is before the addition of the Amazon Fulfillment and Sortation centers). The county's other concentrated industries included Food, Chemicals, Metal, and Paper.

Racine and Lake counties share a strong concentration in many of the same industries. Plastics, Chemical, Paper, and Fabricated Metals manufacturers have a strong presence in each of the three counties. The uniqueness of Kenosha County's concentration in warehousing activity is clearly seen—again, this does not include Amazon's recent addition.

One of the major findings of this location quotient analysis is that many of the employers in the three counties are looking for individuals with the same skill set. However, as shown in Table 4, employers' occupational demand is somewhat different. Whereas 30 percent of the occupational demand in Kenosha and Racine counties is for professional workers, it reaches nearly 40 percent in Lake County. At the same time, over 25 percent of the demand for workers in Kenosha and Racine counties is for Production, Transportation, and Construction workers; it is less than 17 percent in Lake County.

Of course, it should be noted that because of its much larger size, the number of production workers working in Lake County, 18,100, is still more than four times greater than the 4,300 working in Kenosha County. In other words, even though a small percentage of Lake County's production workers are in production occupations, its businesses are still demanding a much greater number of them. ***This is important because, while manufacturing may not be competing in the same national and international markets, the counties are competing for the same labor force, and here Kenosha County may be at a disadvantage.***

The education attainment levels of adults 25 years and older who work in Kenosha County are similar to Racine County but lower than in Lake County. Only 23 percent of the county's workforce has a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 35 percent in Lake County (Figure 3). In many respects, these statistics reflect Kenosha County's manufacturing legacy more

**Table 3 Highly Concentrated Industry Sectors for Kenosha, Racine, and Lake Counties**

	Location Quotient			Relative Annual Wages to the Nation (%)		
	Kenosha County	Racine County	Lake County	Kenosha County	Racine County	Lake County
Plastics & Rubber Products Manufacturing	3.7	2.3	3.1	87	101	141
Warehousing & Storage	3.1	0.7	0.7	85	76	160
Executive, Legislative, & General Government	2.5	1.6	1.0	84	97	125
Food Manufacturing	2.4	1.6	0.7	95	112	133
Chemical Manufacturing	2.4	6.6	7.9	74	165	192
Primary Metal Manufacturing	2.4	1.1	0.3	81	71	82
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	2.2	0.7	1.3	74	72	79
Paper Manufacturing	2.2	2.6	1.7	102	103	114
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2.1	3.2	2.0	101	84	106
Electrical Equipment & Appliance Manufacturing	2.0	15.9	1.3	87	79	102
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	1.7	1.3	1.7	148	78	234
Management of Companies & Enterprises	1.6	0.3	1.6	92	97	147

than its current environment. If the analysis is focused on young adults aged 25–34, Kenosha County’s education profile of the individuals working in the county improves substantially (Figure 4). Only a very low percentage of this population dropped out of high school, 5 percent, and 32 percent have a bachelor’s degree or higher. Although the percentage of persons working in the county holding at least a bachelor’s degree is still lower than the 45 percent in Lake County, the statistics do reflect the fact that the county is successfully attracting and retaining talented young adults.

In the older 34–55 population, the education attainment levels for individuals working in Kenosha County are lower (Figure 5). It is very important to note that 16 percent of individuals working in Kenosha County in this age group have completed an associate’s degree, compared to only 7 percent in Lake County and 11 percent in Racine County, suggesting that more workers have likely advanced their skills while employed.

The occupational composition of the county is also reflected in the types of job openings that are posted, as shown in Figure 6. Only 20 percent of the job openings posted on the web in Kenosha County during 2015 required at least a bachelor’s degree. In Lake County, 35 percent required a four-year degree or more.

Finally, in an issue that is not directly related to the county’s labor market characteristics, it is unfortunate that 55.7 percent of the jobs posted in Kenosha County do not provide a description of the education requirements expected. This is regrettable for two reasons. First, employers can become frustrated that too many job candidates do not have the training or education they expect. Second, degreed or highly skilled workers may ignore these postings because they do not call for the education and training that they have worked hard to achieve. The percentage of firms that do not list their education or training expectations is too large in all three counties—nationwide as well—and clearly points to an information flow problem that could be corrected fairly inexpensively to everyone’s benefit.

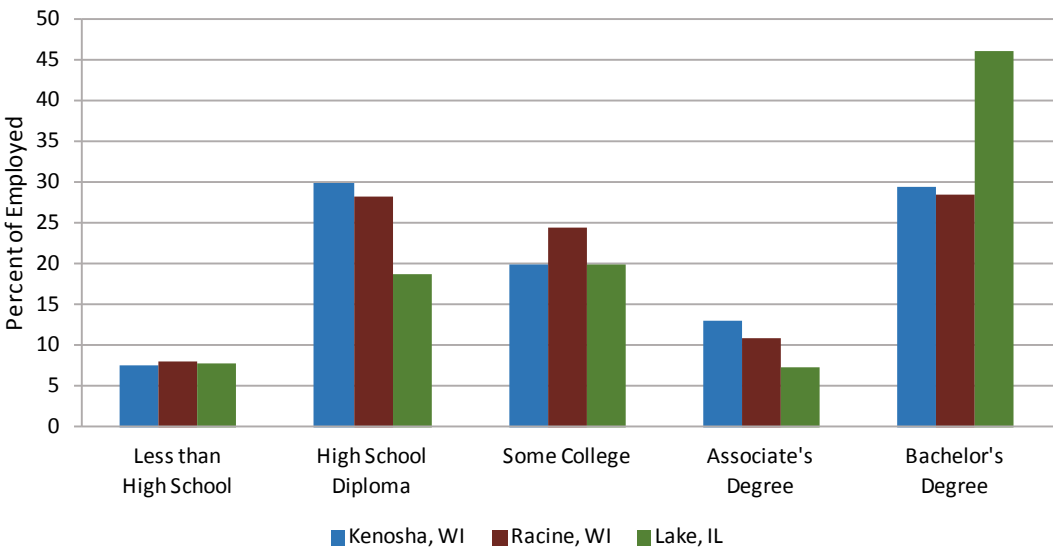
**Table 4 Occupational Demand for Kenosha, Racine, and Lake Counties**

	Kenosha County	Racine County	Lake County
Professional	29.8	30.0	39.2
Management	9.4	10.3	13.7
Business & Financial Operations	3.6	5.0	7.1
Computer & Mathematical	1.5	2.1	5.1
Architecture & Engineering	1.7	2.4	2.2
Life, Physical, & Social Science	0.0	0.7	1.2
Community & Social Service	1.2	1.6	1.3
Legal	0.7	0.4	1.0
Education, Training, & Library	8.8	5.8	5.9
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	2.8	1.8	1.9
Services Including Health Care	44.8	43.1	43.5
Health Care Practitioners & Technical	6.5	5.9	5.2
Health Care Support	2.5	3.3	1.7
Protective Service	1.8	2.2	1.6
Food Preparation & Serving Related	6.2	4.0	3.3
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	3.2	3.4	4.1
Personal Care & Service	3.2	3.4	3.5
Sales & Related	8.4	7.5	11.0
Office & Administrative Support	13.0	13.4	13.2
Production/Transportation/Construction	25.4	26.9	16.6
Construction & Extraction	5.5	3.6	3.3
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	2.7	3.5	2.8
Production	9.4	11.7	5.9
Transportation & Material Moving	7.6	7.0	4.4
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	0.2	1.0	0.1

The job posting data reveal another clear challenge that may be impacting Kenosha County's ability to retain its existing residential workforce or to attract more residents: there are simply many more jobs being posted in Lake County (Figure 7). Of course, this is not surprising because of its much larger size; however, it still shows that as Kenosha County residents seek to advance their careers, there are more employment opportunities in Lake County.

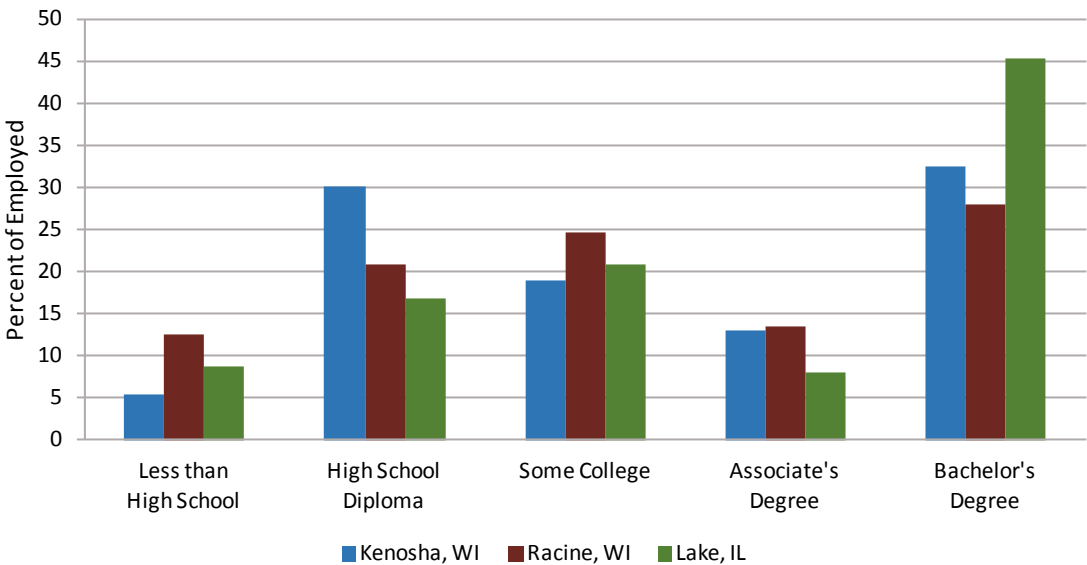
Another way of looking at these data is by comparing the percentage of job postings in the three-county region to the percentage of share of employment by sector. In doing so, the data suggest that most employers in Kenosha County are as active in posting new job opening as in the other counties. For example, in Professional Science and Technology Services (Figure 8) and Health Care (Figure 9), Kenosha County's share of job postings is very similar to its share of regional employment.

Figure 3 Education by County, Age 25 and Over



SOURCE: Ruggles et al., IPUMS USA.

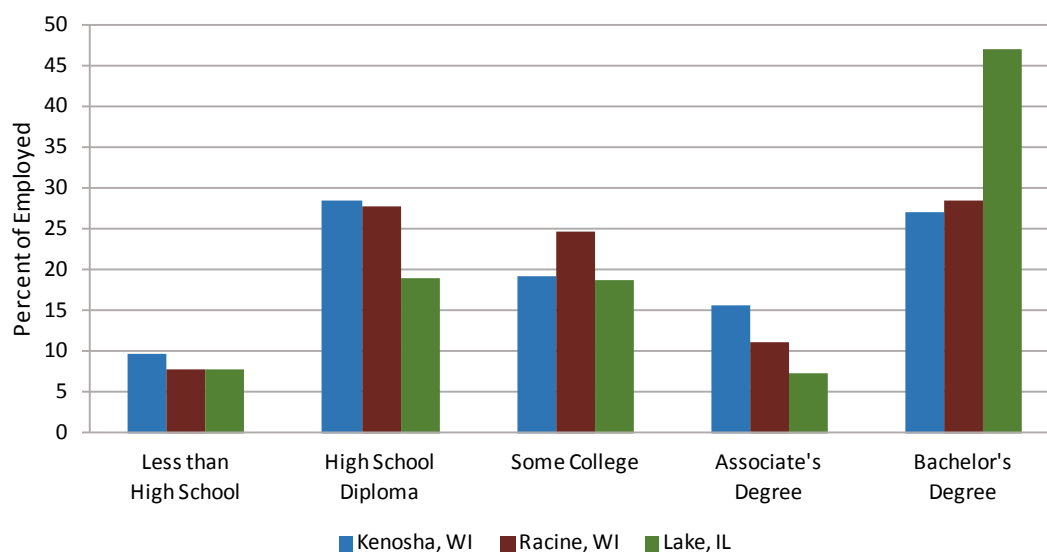
Figure 4 Education by County, Age 25-34



SOURCE: Ruggles et al., IPUMS USA.

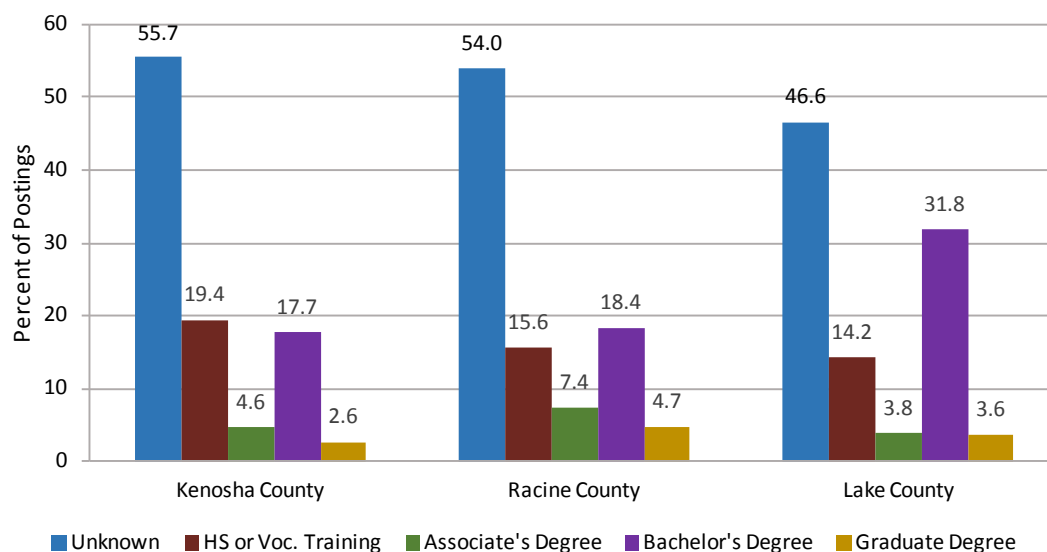


**Figure 5 Education by County, Age 35–55**



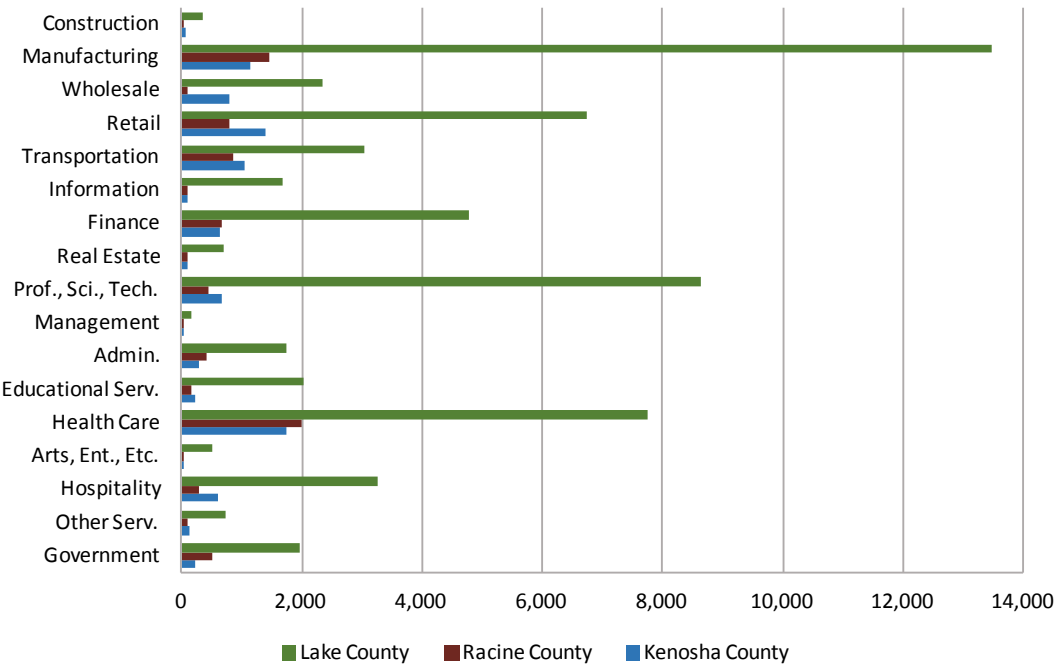
SOURCE: Ruggles et al., IPUMS USA.

**Figure 6 Educational Demand**



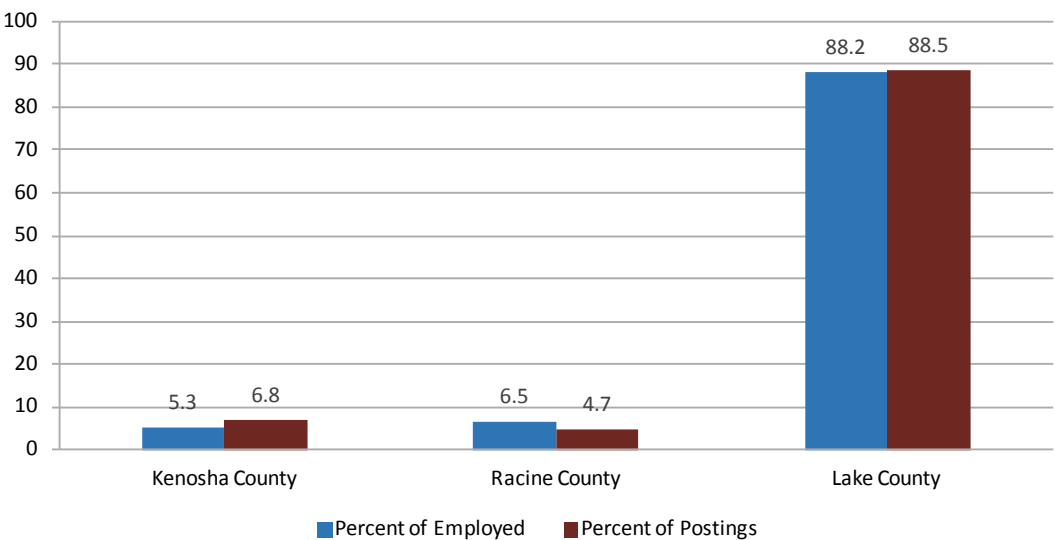
SOURCE: Burning Glass Labor Insight.

Figure 7 Job Postings in the Last 12 Months



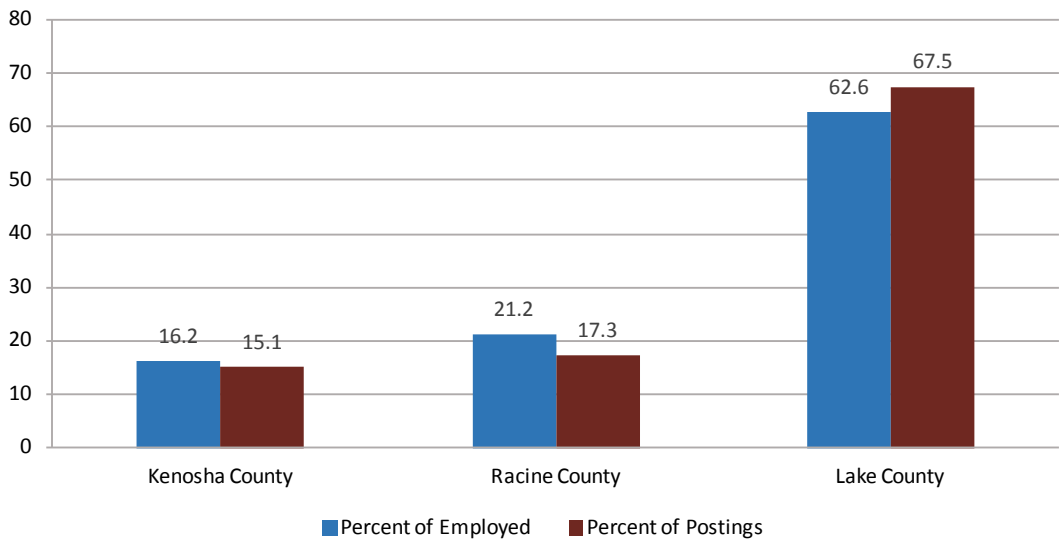
SOURCE: Burning Glass Labor Insight.

Figure 8 Professional Services Demand, Share of Employed



SOURCE: Burning Glass Labor Insight, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Figure 9 Health Care Demand, Share of Employed



SOURCE: Burning Glass Labor Insight, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

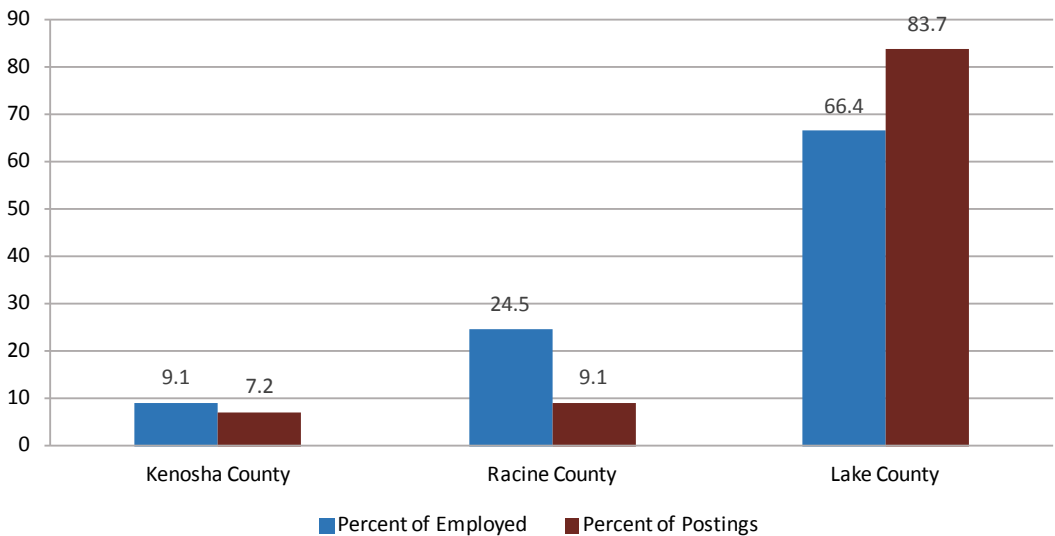
The only discrepancy in the three-county region, between a county’s share in industry job postings and its employment share, occurs in its Manufacturing sector (Figure 10). However, again, the level of job postings in Kenosha County’s Manufacturing sector is very similar to its share of regional manufacturing employment. It is Racine County’s manufacturers who are not actively posting job openings relative to its share of manufacturing employment, while Lake County manufacturers are very active in posting jobs. In short, on average, employers in Kenosha County are actively posting their job openings online.

## Competitive Wages Cut Both Ways

Returning to Table 3, the average wages paid by the employers in Kenosha County’s most concentrated industries tend to be below both the national average as well as what the industries pay in Lake and Racine counties. For example, the average worker for one of Kenosha County’s Plastics Parts producers earns only 87 percent of the industry’s national average and, equally important, earns less than his/her counterpart in Racine and Lake counties. Only in the county’s Paper and Fabricated Metals industries do Kenosha County workers earn average wages similar to their national counterparts.

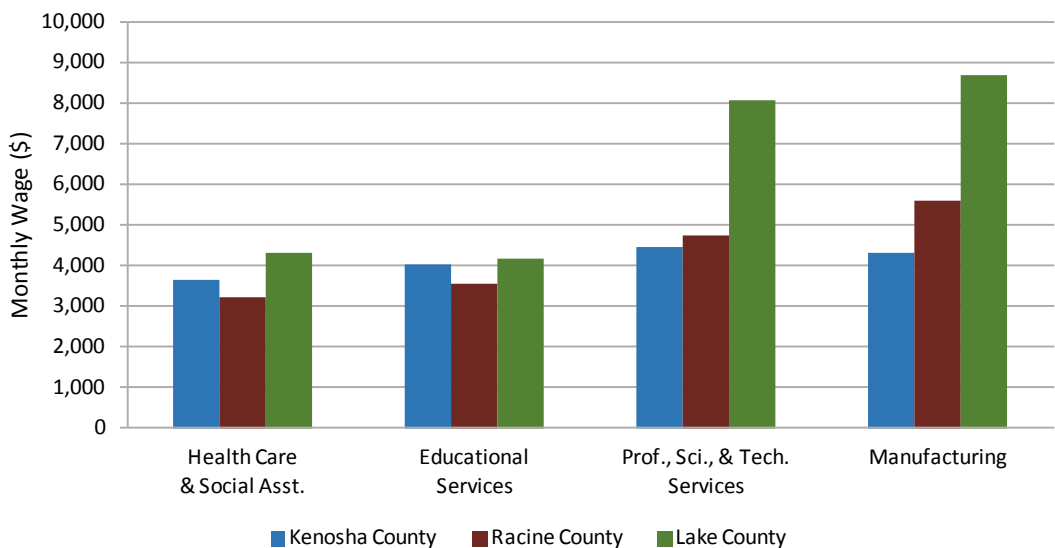
The relatively low wage structure is clear when we examine the major industry sectors of the economy, as shown in Figures 11 and 12. While wages are similar across the three counties in Health Care and Educational Services, Lake County has substantially lower wages in Professional, Science, and Technical Services and in Manufacturing. Moreover, in manufacturing, the wages can be significant, as can be seen in the chemical sector in Figure 12: In Kenosha County, monthly wages are less than half than what is paid in Lake County. It must be said that a wide range of activities are included in the chemical sector, and so a direct comparison between the wage structures in the two counties is not possible. Still, the data suggest that individuals with skills that are transferable across chemical processes and product development will find more favorable wages in Lake County.

Figure 10 Manufacturing Demand, Share of Employed



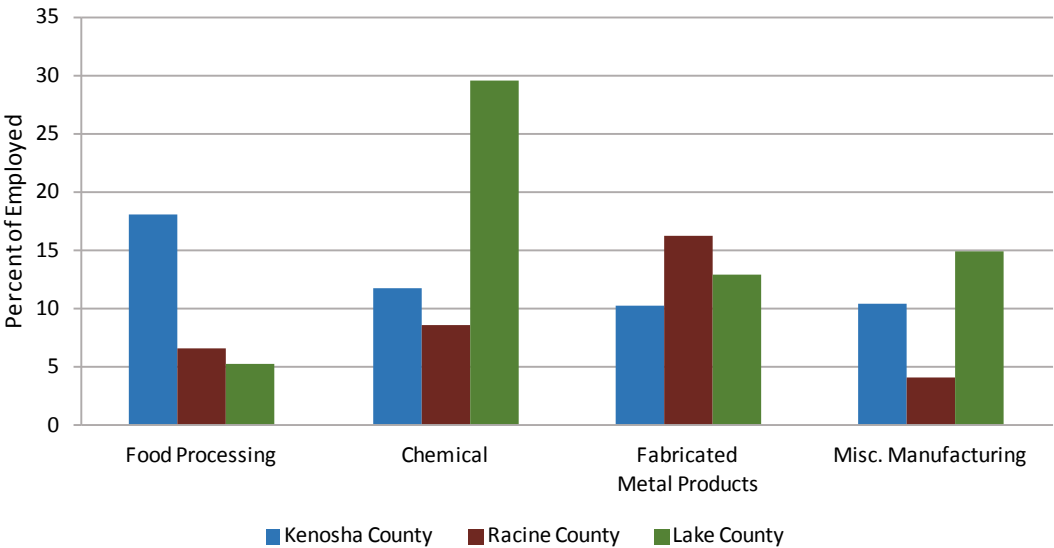
SOURCE: Burning Glass Labor Insight, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Figure 11 Average Monthly Wage by Area and Industry



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

Figure 12 Major Industry Sectors



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

Of course, having competitive wages is an important asset to an area’s overall economic competitiveness. This is especially true in the highly competitive Manufacturing sector. In addition, wages also reflect the area’s cost of living, which is relatively low in Kenosha County. Finally, wages alone do not determine the attractiveness of a workplace environment, as discussed below. A productive and appreciative workplace can be more attractive for most workers than a high-wage but brutal environment.

Nevertheless, Kenosha County employers face a greater employee turnover rate than the state average, as shown in Figure 13.<sup>3</sup> The county’s above-average turnover rate cannot be fully explained by the county’s industry mix—housing more industries that by their very nature have higher turnover rates, such as retailers. As shown in Figures 14 and 15, the county’s turnover rate is higher than the state’s across most sectors.

Unfortunately, many firms have not calculated the full cost of turnover. It includes training costs, which often involve taking a skilled worker away from his/her work to mentor and train the new hire, as well as advertising and interviewing costs. Moreover, the productivity of the new worker can remain below that of a trained worker for many months if not years. The cost of a turnover for a firm can easily climb to \$3,000, and for managerial positions can reach above \$10,000. Programs to reduce turnover rates in Kenosha County could not only lower the cost of doing business in the county, but in the long run could potentially change the workplace environment for many of its businesses.

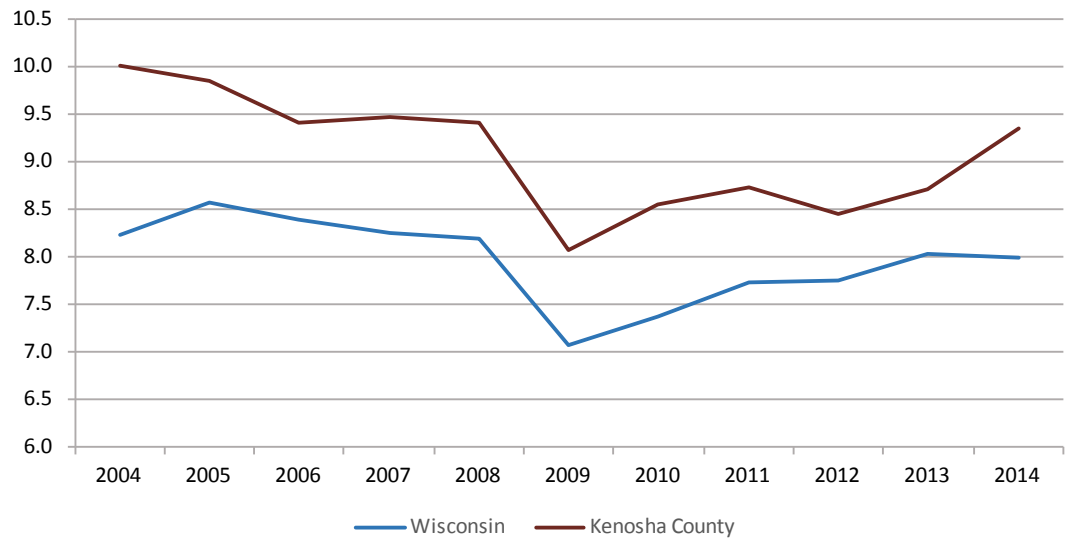
## Where Are the Workers Coming From?

According to various sources, approximately 50 percent of Kenosha County residents commute outside of the county to work. According to the American Community Survey

3. The county’s turnover rate is estimated by adding all of the hires in one quarter to the separations recorded in the following quarter and dividing that total by the county’s overall level of employment.

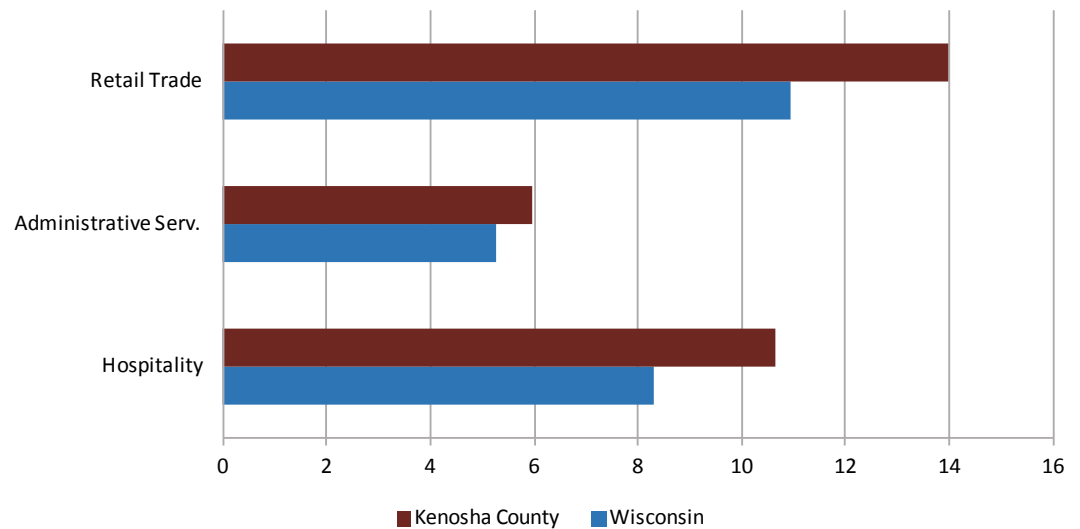


**Figure 13 Turnover Rate**



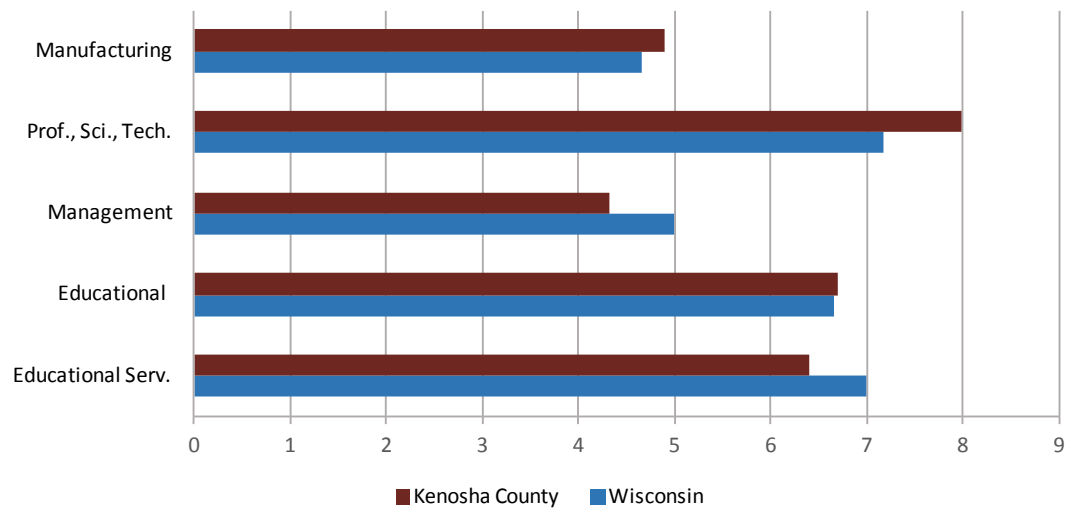
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

**Figure 14 Turnover by Industry**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

**Figure 15 Other Major Industries Have Mixed Performance in Turnover Rates**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

(ACS) from 2012–2014, 33,000 residents lived and worked in the county, while 34,000 residents commuted outside of the county for employment. Of the Kenosha County residents commuting out of the county for work, 44.4 percent work in Lake County, 22.2 percent work in Racine County, and 19.8 percent commute to either Cook or Milwaukee counties. The remaining 13.6 percent work elsewhere.

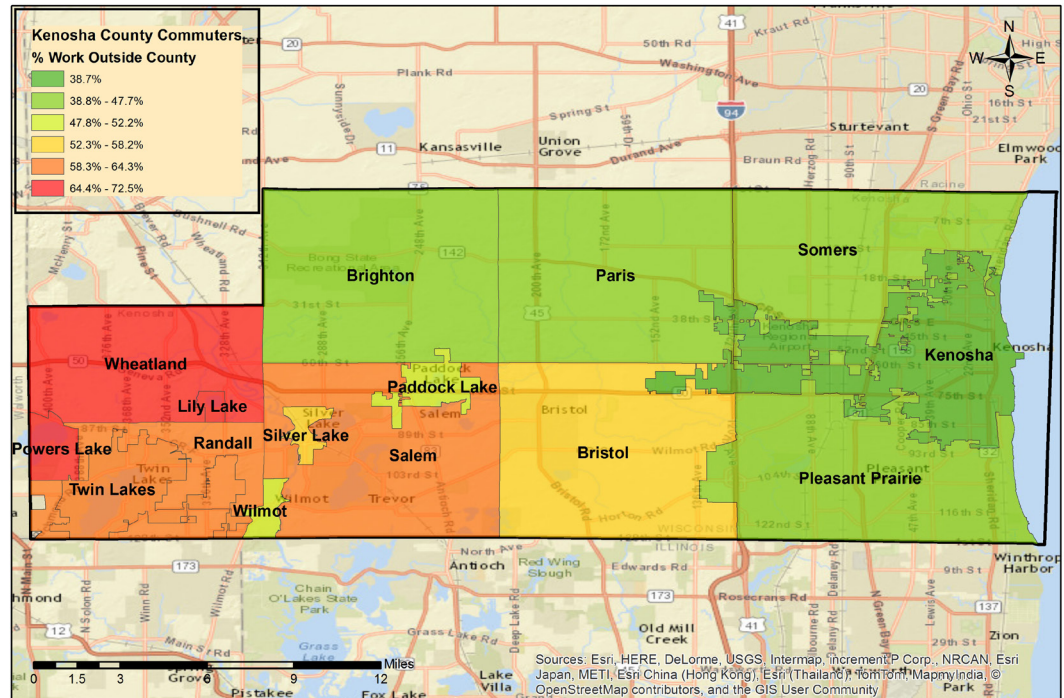
To present a more detailed picture of the commuting patterns in the county, we draw upon the ACS 2010–2014 aggregate database, which estimates that just over 45 percent of the county’s residents commute out of the county for work, and that Wheatland Town and Lily Lake and the other smaller counties on the west side of the Kenosha County are home for many out-of-county commuters (Map 1 and Table 5).

The commuting patterns of both Kenosha County residents commuting out of the county to work, as well as those out-of-county workers coming into the county to work, are shown in Maps 2 and 3. As is confirmed in the result of the employee survey (see Map 2), workers in the greater Kenosha area enjoy very reasonable commuting times. This increases the attractiveness of the area, but it also heightens the competition for attracting residents. There is little commuting cost savings by moving from Lake or Racine County to Kenosha County.

Given the employment opportunities available in the greater Chicago-Milwaukee region, it is not surprising that many county residents commute to work. Again, it is a pattern that does have a negative impact on the consumer-based sectors of the county, but it is not unexpected, and the county’s commuting flow is not abnormal.

Finally, evidence suggests that workers who have completed an associate’s degree or higher are more likely to live outside of Kenosha County than are workers who have, at best, only “some college” or only a high school diploma (see Figure 16). In short, residents are finding it necessary to commute, albeit not a long distance, outside of the county to work. Plus, a case can be made that they have chosen to live in Kenosha County because of its amenities.

**Map 1 Percentage of Kenosha County Commuters Who Work Outside the County**



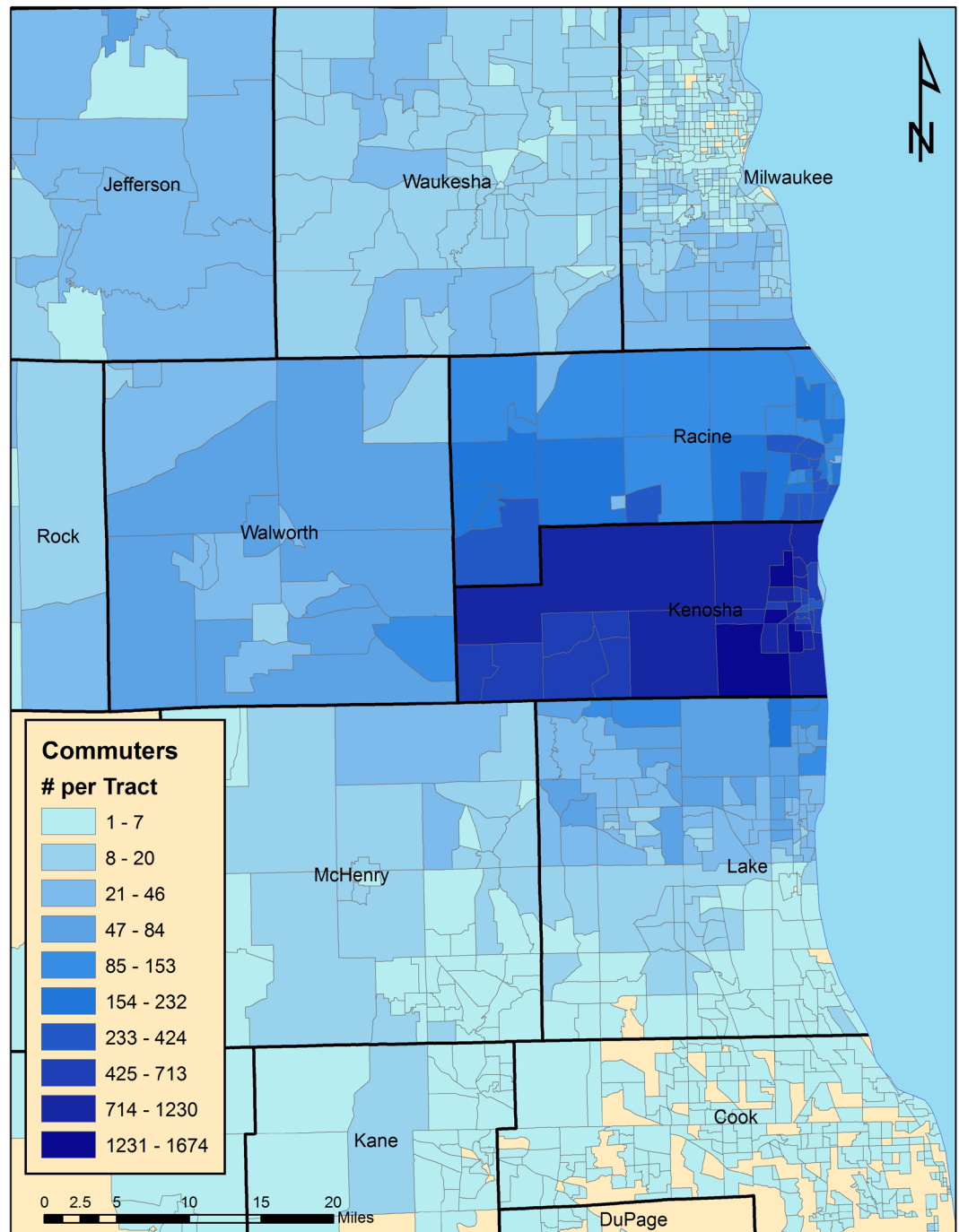
SOURCE: American Community Survey, 2010–2014, 5-year Estimates.

**Table 5 Commuting Patterns for Residents within Kenosha County**

Area	Work in County	Work Outside of the County
Brighton Town	55.5	44.5
Bristol Village	44.7	55.3
Kenosha City	61.3	38.7
Lily Lake CDP	33.0	67.0
Paddock Lake Village	47.8	52.2
Paris Town	53.2	46.8
Pleasant Prairie Village	52.3	47.7
Powers Lake CDP	27.5	72.5
Randall Town	35.7	64.3
Salem Town	37.4	62.6
Silver Lake Village	41.8	58.2
Somers Town	55.2	44.8
Twin Lakes village	37.8	62.2
Wheatland Town	30.5	69.5
Wilmot CDP	50.0	50.0
Kenosha County	54.7	45.4

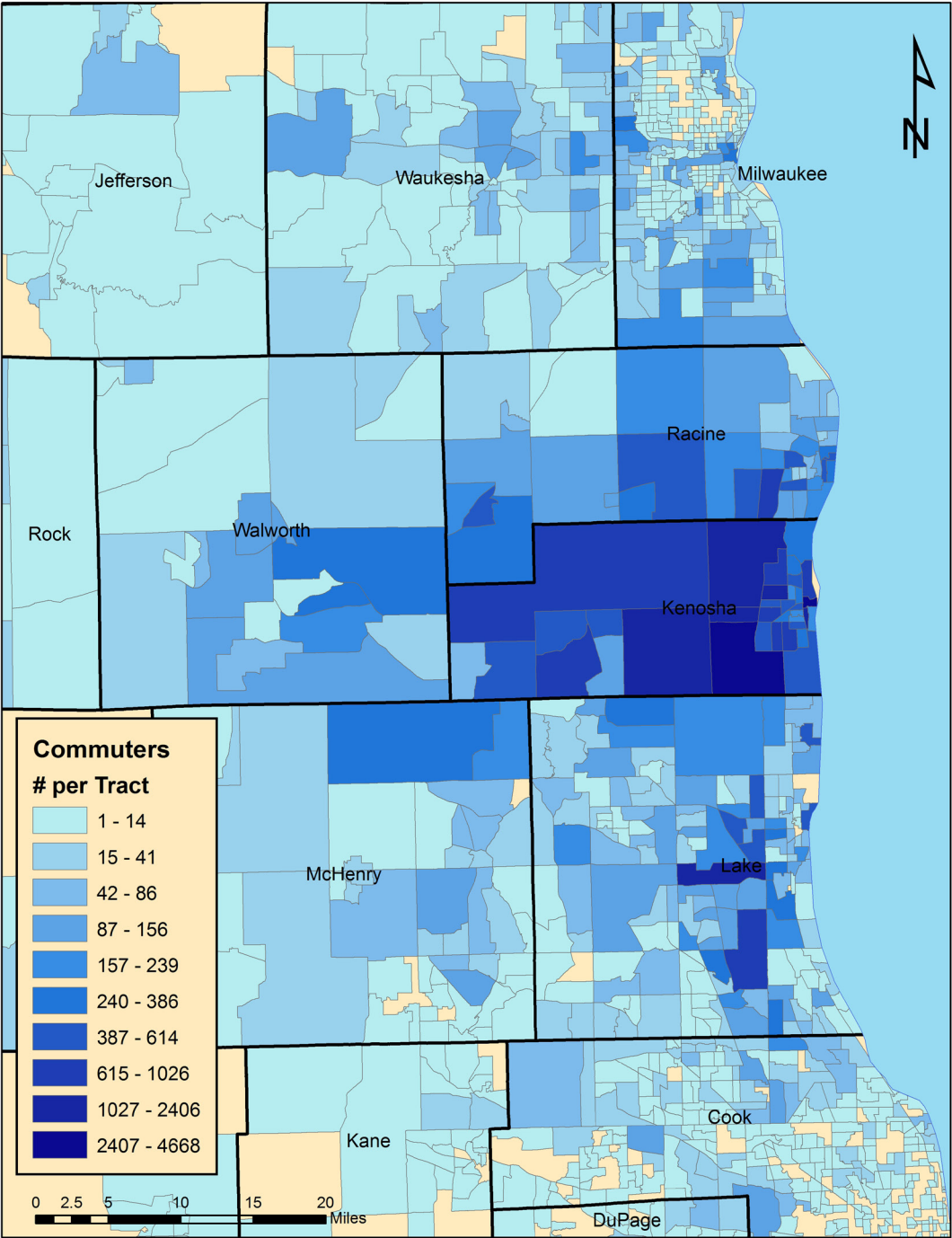
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2010–2014, Table 50801.

Map 2 Individuals Employed in Kenosha County, Where They Commute From



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), 2013.

Map 3 Individuals Living in Kenosha County, Where They Commute To



SOURCE:U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), 2013.

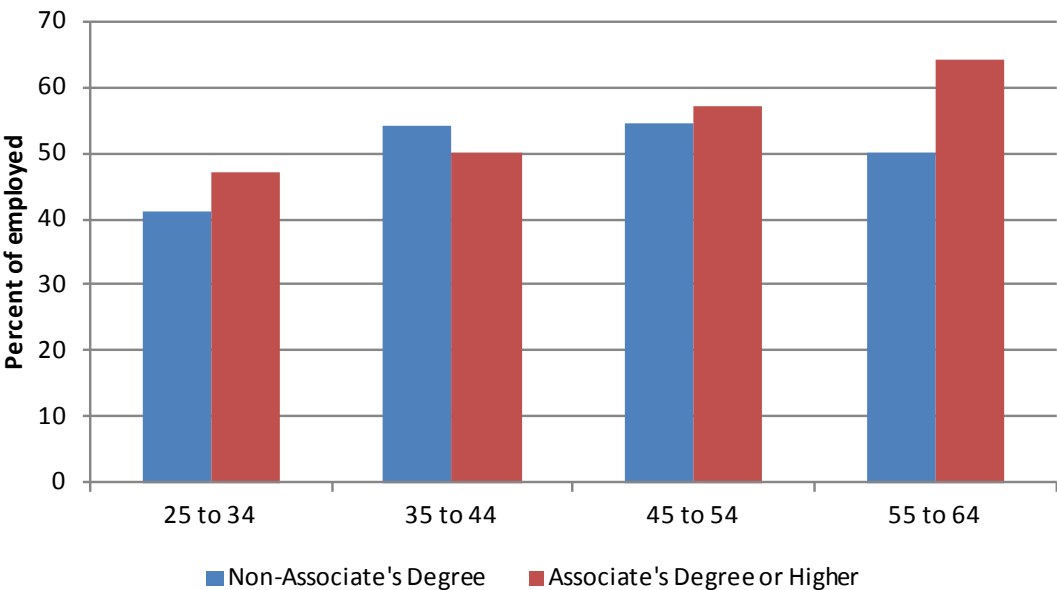
Still, the data suggest that there is at least a modest loss of talent to the detriment of county employers.

The possible loss of talent is also shown in Figure 17, which shows the annual wages for full-time workers who commute in and out of Kenosha County. In short, workers who commute either into the county or out of the county are paid more than those who live and work in the county. This is not too surprising; individuals working at lower-wage jobs are more likely to live close to work to avoid commuting costs, which can impact their incomes. Still, when looking at the top 90th percentage of in- and out-commuters and residents who live and work in the county, the wage differences are substantial. Higher-wage workers, who are also likely to be high skilled, are deciding to live outside Kenosha County or find it necessary to commute outside of the county.

Why Live in Kenosha County?

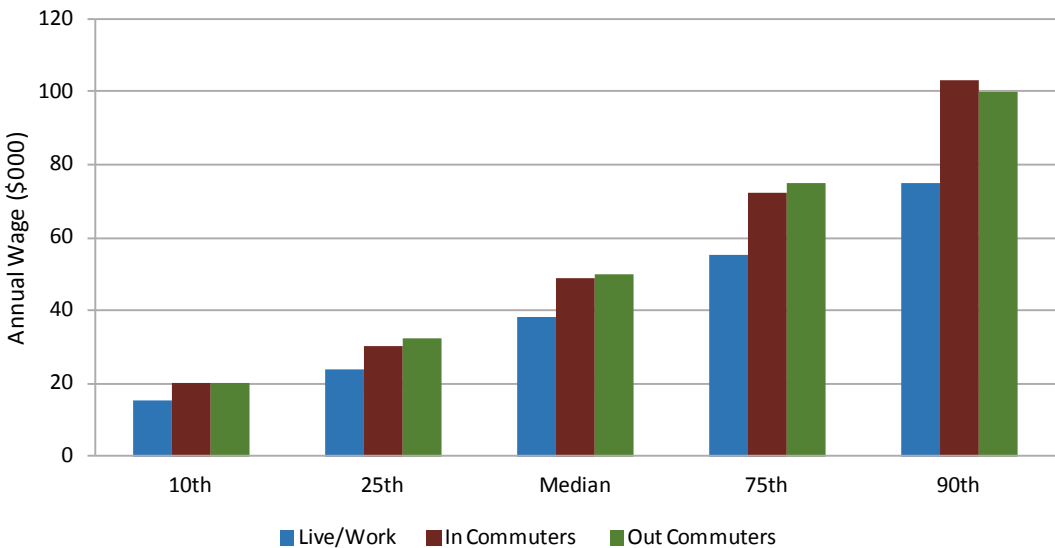
As is further discussed in the section that highlights the results of the study’s employee survey, the typical commute for workers who work in Kenosha County is very reasonable, taking, on average, about 20 minutes to complete. In fact, the easy commute that many residents experience every day is likely to be a major quality-of-life benefit of living in this area. However, the ease of the commute lessens the need to relocate, as well. Individuals are very unlikely to absorb the financial and social costs associated with moving if the only reason is to lessen an already reasonable 20–25-minute drive to work. In fact, it is likely that highly personal reasons, such as a significant change in family responsibilities or accepting a job offer in another part of the country, are the primary reasons that households move. And, of course, these factors are totally out of the influence of the county’s economic stakeholders.

Figure 16 Out Commuting by Age/Education



SOURCE: Ruggles et al., IPUMS USA.

Figure 17 Annual Wages for Full-Time Workers, by Percentile



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

In addition, many local moves are triggered by other personal factors, such as finding the “perfect” house in a great setting. Such a house can exist in Kenosha, Lake, or Racine counties; however, timing is everything. For example, just at the time a couple is thinking about moving to a new house, a perfect home could be taken off the market in Kenosha County while its twin is put on the market in Lake County, so the household moves out of the county. Again, in these instances there are few policy recommendations that can be effective.

Still, there are factors that can influence a household’s decision to move or stay that can be impacted by local policies. The quality of the public schools and housing prices/availability rank among the most important. Unfortunately, student performance in the Kenosha County public schools on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) is below par. As shown in Figure 18, during the 2013–14 school year, Kenosha County students lagged behind the state in math proficiency in all tested grades. In reading proficiency, the county is much closer to the state average (Figure 19).<sup>4</sup>

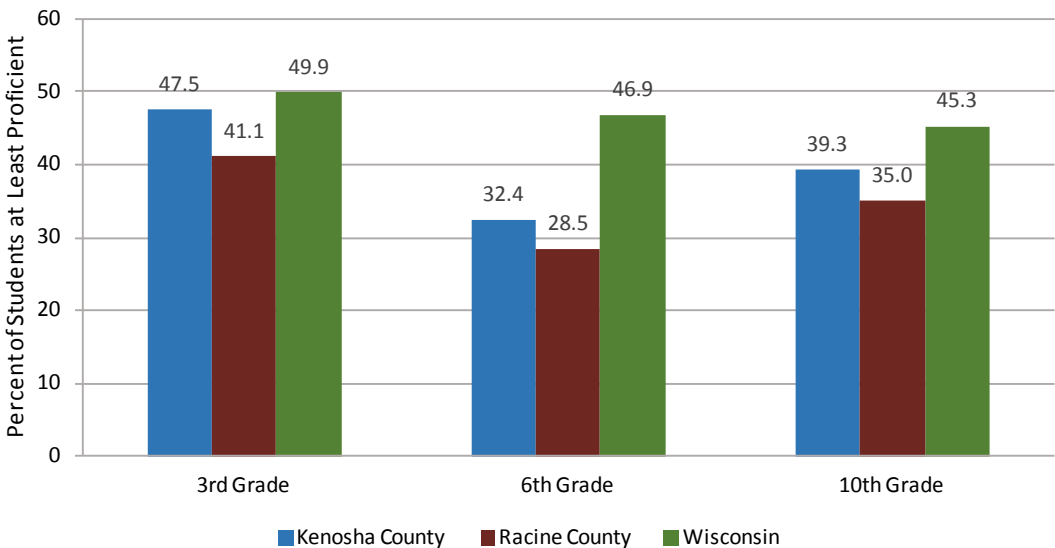
Of course, the performance of the 12 individual school districts in the county varies greatly. Still, while the county’s overall performance does not reflect the performance of its individual school districts, it is a statistic that is monitored by households making location decisions. More importantly, it is an indicator of the quality of the county’s future workforce. Indeed, it is this last point that may be the most important for the future of the county. While many of us believe that we live in a very mobile society, many individuals still live in the state that they were born; 46 percent of Kenosha County residents were born in Wisconsin.

As shown in Map 4, the high school graduation rates in Kenosha County’s school districts are non-exceptional, in both a good and a bad way. First, the inner city district of Kenosha has a higher graduation rate than that of neighboring Racine; however, the more rural/suburban districts of Westosha and Wilmot have lower graduation rates than similar districts of

4. Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare state test scores for counties in Illinois, such as Lake, because they use a different testing system.

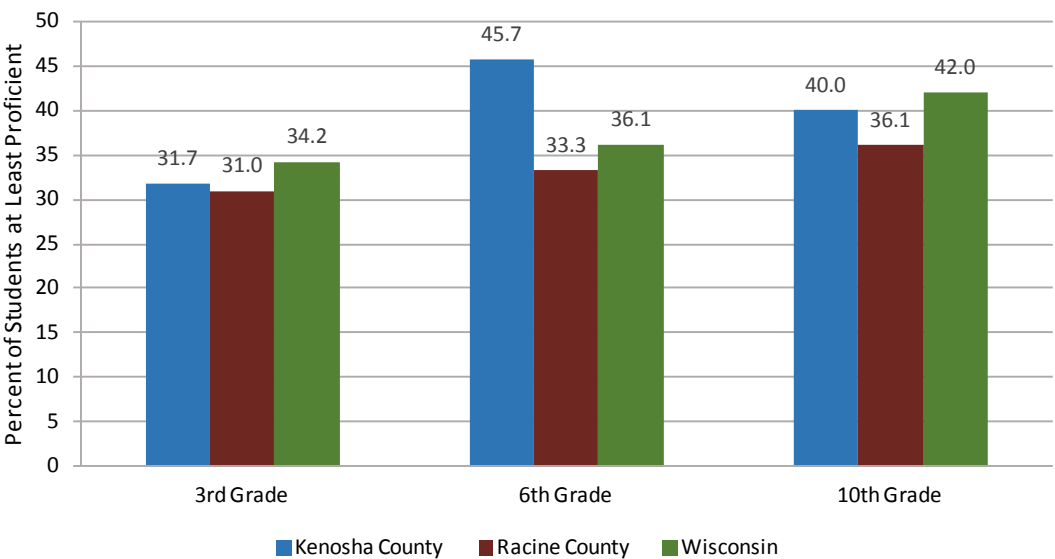


Figure 18 Mathematics Proficiency by Grade, 2013–14



SOURCE: Wisconsin Information System for Education Data Dashboard (WISEdash).

Figure 19 Reading Proficiency by Grade, 2013–14



SOURCE: Wisconsin Information System for Education Data Dashboard (WISEdash).

Burlington, Union Grove, and Waterford in Racine County. The graduation rates in Kenosha County are also similar to those in the northern counties. Statewide, the graduation rate is 88.4 percent, which is higher than 85.6 percent in Illinois. Both state rates are higher than the national rate, which is approximately 82 percent.

In terms of ACT tests that are taken by students across the nation, the scores achieved by students in Kenosha County schools can be considered to be no more than average, at best. As shown in Map 5, the test scores of students in the Kenosha school district are no worse, in general, than in the Racine district. The average test scores in Westosha and Wilmot are similar to those in neighboring Burlington and Union Grove districts in Racine County. However, students in the nearby districts of Waterford in Racine County and Antioch and Zion-Benton in Lake County, do, on average, perform better on the test. The average test scores for both Wisconsin and Illinois are slightly below that of the nation. The most recently recorded average ACT score was 20 in Wisconsin, compared to 20.4 in Illinois and 21 for the nation.

In short, the performance of the Kenosha schools, as measured by their high school graduation rates or their students’ average scores on the ACT test, are unlikely to be a major draw into the county or a serious liability. Like most districts nationwide, there is room for improvement, and as discussed below, it will take a community-wide effort to do so.

Finally, the median value of homes in Kenosha County is recovering—as of 2015 it is still below its 2008 levels. Still, in 2015, prices increased by 7.5 percent, and more importantly, houses in Kenosha County are still a bargain when compared to Lake County to the south. According to Zillow, the current value of a house on the market in Kenosha County is \$149,000, which is two thirds of the median price in Lake County, \$222,100.<sup>5</sup> As in Table 6, the average cost of homeownership is more than 80 percent lower than in Lake County and 23.4 percent lower than in Racine County. The county’s rental costs are almost 25 percent lower than Lake County as well.

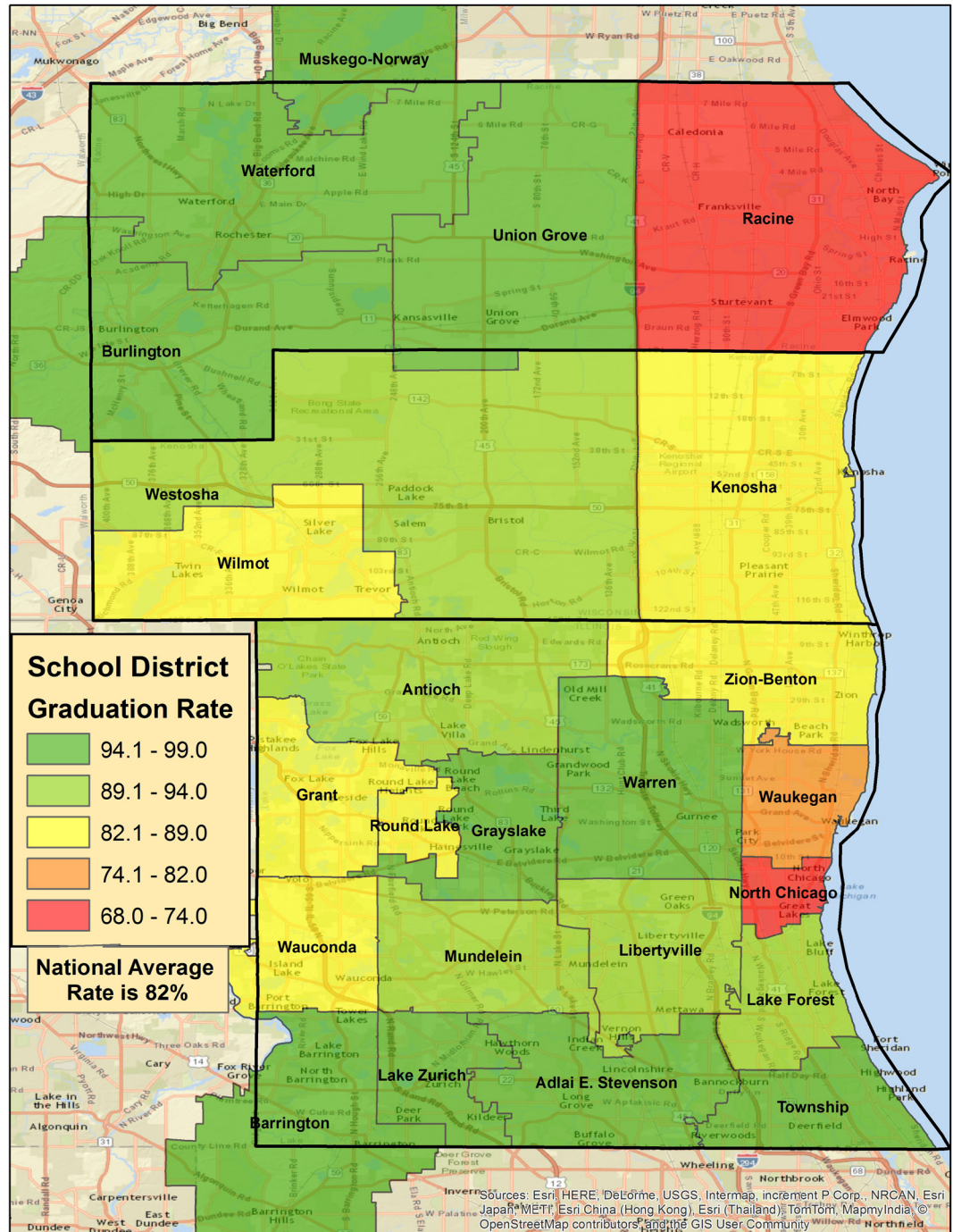
**Table 6 Homeowner and Rental Costs for Kenosha, Racine, and Lake Counties**

Measure	Kenosha County	Racine County	Lake County
Selected monthly owner costs* (\$)	1,153	1,423	2,083
Percent difference		23.4	80.7
Gross rent (\$)	870	806	1,086
Percent difference		-7.4	24.8
*Mortgage, maintenance, utilities, insurance, taxes, etc.			

However, it is important to note that Lake County’s most expensive housing is located in the southern portion of the county edging on the borders of Chicago (Map 6 and Map 7). In northern Lake County, homeowner costs and rental costs are very similar to those found in Kenosha County. Therefore, for households looking to live in the Kenosha area, housing prices or rental costs appear to be a major factor. The individual characteristics of the house and its surrounding neighborhood will be more of a factor.

5. <http://www.zillow.com/kenosha-county-wi/home-values/>.

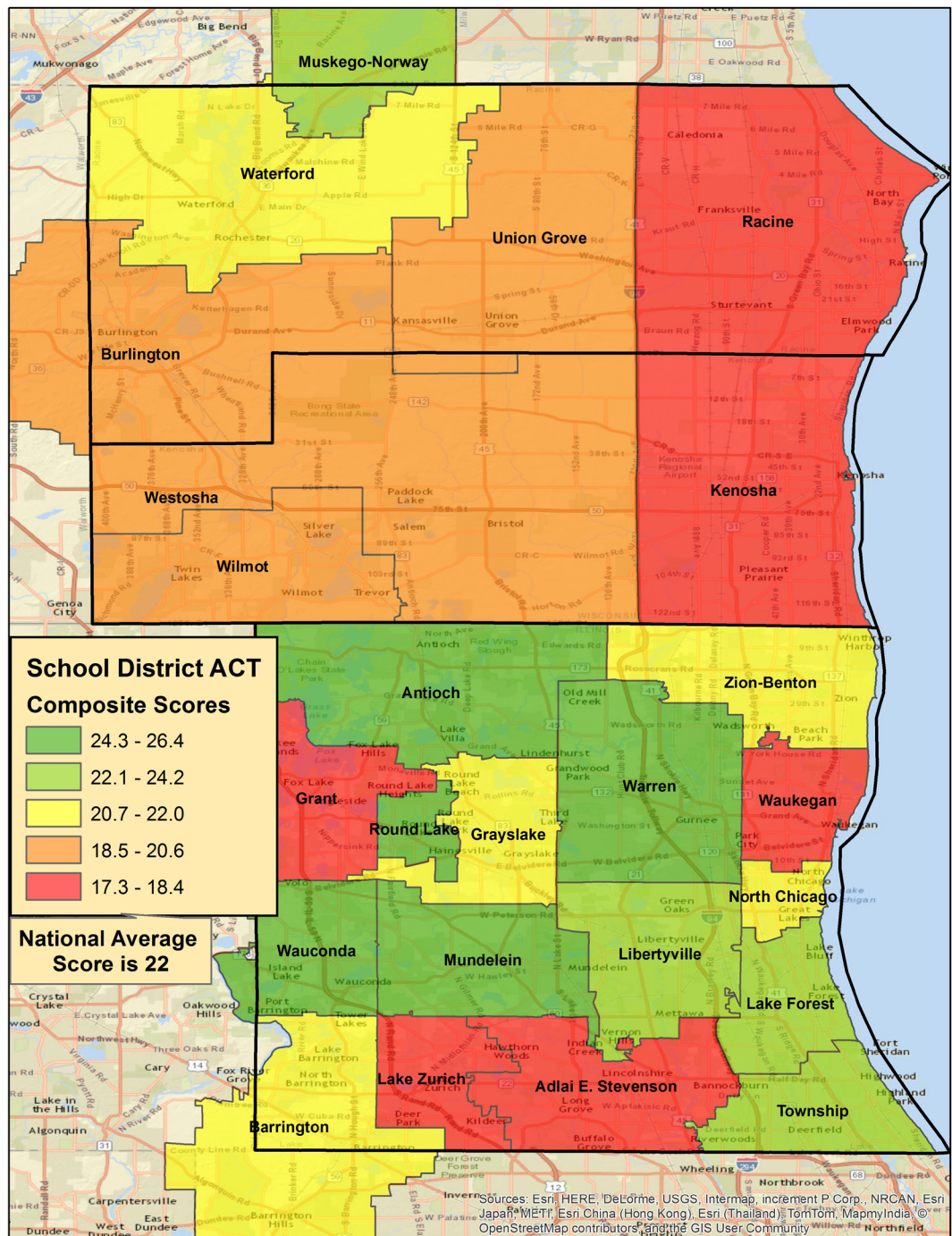
Map 4 School District Graduation Rates



SOURCE: Wisconsin Information System for Education Data Dashboard (WISEdash) and Illinois Report Card 2014-15 School Year.

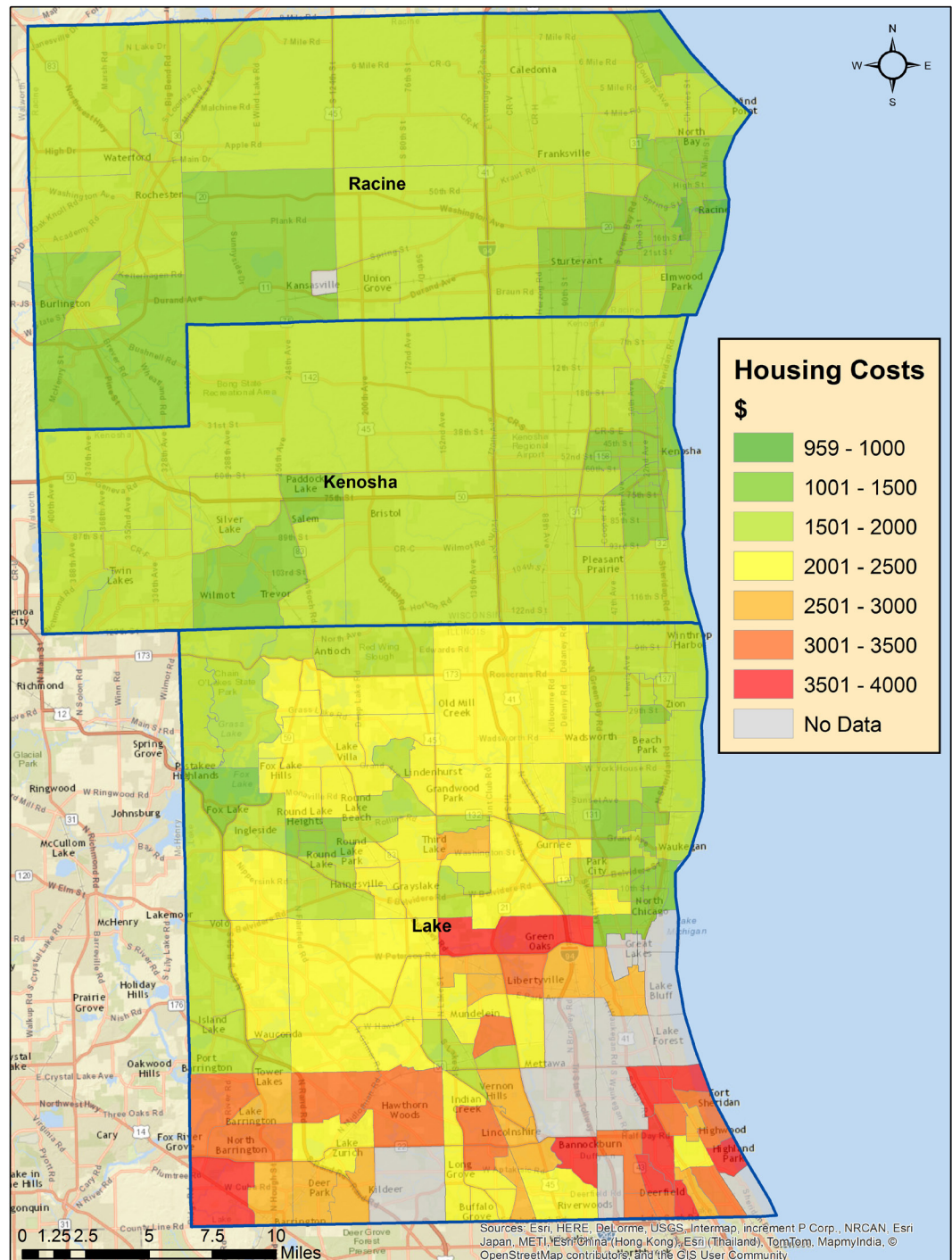


Map 5 School District ACT Scores



SOURCE: Wisconsin Information System for Education Data Dashboard (WISEdash) and Illinois Report Card 2014–15 School Year.

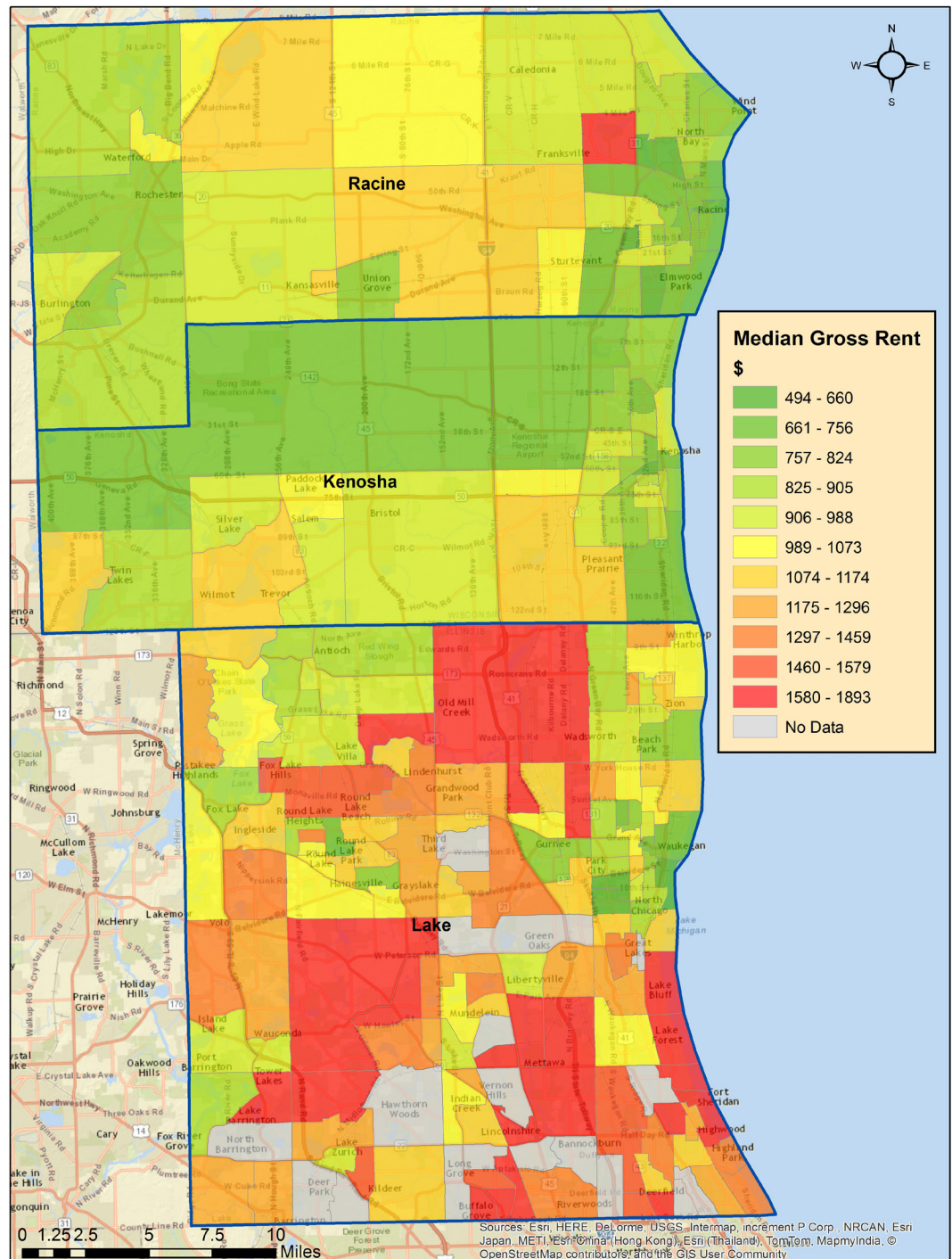
Map 6 Monthly Homeowner Costs in 2014



SOURCE: American Community Survey, 2010-14, 5-Year Estimates.



Map 7 Monthly Median Gross Rents



SOURCE: American Community Survey, 2010–14, 5-Year Estimates.

### Economic Analysis Conclusions

Current economic conditions in Kenosha County are strong. Employment growth is positive, unemployment is low, and the national outlook is promising. Many of the statistical trends uncovered by our analysis are not unusual and do not reflect a county that is in distress. This is not to say that conditions cannot be improved, and we do suggest several policy options that could be considered. At the same time, it must be remembered that many of the current economic and demographic issues facing the county have been developing over many years and will not be easily resolved. The following list highlights the major findings of the statistical analysis of the county:

1. Not only has the county witnessed substantial employment growth, recent business park developments and the increasing availability of new industrial, distribution, and professional facilities suggest that the county is successfully attracting new capital and is not facing severe physical constraints. For a manufacturer or distributor that is seeking either a central location in the national market or a competitive location to serve the greater Chicago and Milwaukee region, Kenosha County is an attractive location.
2. The county's competitive strength could also be its regional weakness, however. Overall, wages in the county are lower than in the neighboring counties of Lake and Racine, as well as the nation. This is true across a wide selection of industries and occupations. The county's mix of industries tends to generate low- to middle-wage jobs, on average, and many county firms appear to pay lower-than-average wages for their industry. Still, the fact that many of Kenosha County industries paid lower wages, on average, than the same industries in surrounding counties makes it more competitive and could be a major reason for its recent job growth. However, the industries that could be attracted to the county because of its competitive wage structure are not the same industries that will likely generate higher-paying, professional positions.
3. The county's existing mix of industries generates an occupational demand that is more centered on production and material handling occupations than on professional occupations. With fewer professional and technical occupations being demanded by the county's employers, it is not surprising that residents with these skill sets commute outside of the county for employment.
4. Unfortunately, the county's low wages appear to be associated with it having a higher-than-average employee turnover rate across many industries. For most firms, high turnover rates can have a negative impact on productivity, increase training and hiring costs, and lower customer service.
5. In addition, the county's strong manufacturing legacy, competitive wage structure, and existing mix of industries may be contributing to a negative perception of the county to professional and skilled workers seeking employment. In short, professional workers seeking employment opportunities may be overlooking the job opportunities in Kenosha County. However, they may find the county to be a good residential location.
6. The performance of Kenosha County's school districts, as measured by their high school graduation rates and school ACT test scores, is similar, if not a little below, that of the school districts in Racine and Lake counties. The county's schools should not be thought of as a liability or strength, but more of an opportunity; however, it is an opportunity that will require a full community-wide effort to explore.

7. The county's housing market is competitive and attractive; the data suggest that the county offers a good selection of housing options at costs that are lower than many surrounding areas. However, the advantage is not as great as a countywide examination suggests because housing costs in northern Lake County are very similar to those in Kenosha County. Low housing costs may encourage families to move to, but not necessarily to work in, the county due to its current mix of industries and employment opportunities. Indeed, available commuting data suggest that Kenosha has become a bedroom community for professional workers due to both its transportation access to professional employment centers outside of the county and its relatively low cost of housing.

At the same time, it is important to note that the commuting patterns of Kenosha County residents are not atypical. When compared to similar counties in metropolitan areas across the nation, the percentage of Kenosha County residents commuting outside of the county to work is not at all exceptional. Many county residents commute to Lake County because it is a larger county that offers more employment opportunities in professional occupations.

Higher-income households are able to separate their housing decisions from where they work. Family ties; housing characteristics and value; neighborhood services, such as the quality of the public schools; perceived safety issues; and efficient transportation networks can persuade individuals to choose to drive across county lines to work. This is shown to be supported by commuting statistics that show that higher-income Kenosha County residents are more likely to work outside of the county, while at the same time, workers commuting into the county earn higher incomes than county residents.



# The Role of Real Estate in Economic Development: A Note on Kenosha County

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Most economic development strategies, including this one, focus on issues of worker attraction and retention. Economists, using a “production function” equation, assume that companies that produce either goods or services rely on a mix of inputs, but primarily capital, labor, and technology. Labor is pretty straightforward: it is how companies use their workforces, including levels of human capital, based on a mix of training and experience to produce their products. Capital can be a variety of things, including actual investment capital, machines and equipment, transportation-related rolling stock, inventory, and, of course, buildings.

This aspect of available buildings in a region for either attraction or expansion activities is often overlooked as part of the economic development process. While workforce issues can be affected by actions on the part of the private, not-for-profit, and public sectors, there is the perception that real estate issues are generally left to the private sector. That said, many local and regional governments own and develop industrial parks. Cities, counties, and regions often use land banks to assemble parcels that can be combined to create “scale” sites that can meet the needs of building office, flex, and industrial space.

One market-based solution that has received mixed blessings from local, regional, and state entities is the willingness to build speculative, or “spec,” buildings. These are buildings that are designed to be flexible in the Kenosha County service area so that they can accommodate a not-yet-identified client. Spec buildings are often difficult to finance in traditional capital markets, primarily because a buyer or renter has not been identified and secured, and a guaranteed revenue stream is not in place to backstop the financing. Most private capital markets are leery of this type of development, many developers don’t have deep enough pockets to take this risk, and most public entities are unwilling to use their credit ratings and borrowing power to hedge on these buildings. But some areas have had success with a “build it, they will come” philosophy, notably northern Indiana, Virginia, and Missouri, where significant square footage in flexible spec space has been built.

## Industrial Space

Through a partnership with Juniper CRE, a Cleveland-based site selection and real estate advisory firm, we are able to take a limited look into the Kenosha County market for both industrial and office space. Data from Costar Group<sup>6</sup> indicate that the average cost per square foot for industrial space is about \$4.26. The vacancy rate for space is at 8.2 percent, which is a bit higher than the current national rate of 6.25 percent for the same type of space. From the end of 2013 through mid-2015, the vacancy rate in the county was just about 4 percent. At the end of 2015 and into 2016, the rate spiked, likely because of the additional capacity that came onto the market in the previous 12 months—nearly 3.6 million square feet of industrial space. In the same time period, just less than 2.1 million square feet were “absorbed” or occupied. This difference between delivered product and net absorbed product likely has pushed the vacancy rate up, although the long-run average vacancy rate over the last 5 years is 6.2 percent.

Just less than 2.3 million square feet of industrial space are currently on the market—based on 2015 absorption, this would reflect a one-year supply, which, based on current demand, is not healthy for the “user” market. The total market in the county, according to Costar, is about 27.6 million square feet, with about 352 existing buildings. While new product was delivered in 2015, there is no reported new significant construction of industrial space. Rates

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6. Costar is the preeminent database for commercial and industrial real estate used by site selectors and corporate real estate professionals when seeking commercial, flexible, industrial, and office space.

have been increasing since 2011, when rates were below \$4.00 per square foot to the current rate of about \$4.26. This suggests that demand is increasing for a limited amount of space.

As mentioned above, current vacant space is just over 2.2 million square feet, which is above the reported 5-year moving average of just under 1.5 million square feet of available space. While the 5-year average of time on the market is down from 19.1 months to just under 18 months, the long-run vacancy would beg the question of the quality and usability of the current available space in the county. As seen across many markets in the United States, older space, particularly that which was built before the 1980s, is often considered functionally obsolete.

Regarding spec buildings, if the available space is obsolete, is there an opportunity to construct buildings in Kenosha County that may have targeted uses but no owners? Two issues combine to challenge economic developers in the north: 1) companies need to have access to buildings to meet current needs, and 2) seasonality limits opportunities for construction. Thus, the ability for a company to achieve “speed to markets” is impaired.

As this report was being written, Todd Battle, president of KABA, announced that developers are planning to invest in more than 100,000 square feet of industrial space, which shows promise for the county from a real estate perspective. Nationwide, there is a lack of quality space in 50,000–100,000 square foot buildings that are ready for occupancy. The ability to double that space will make it even more attractive to potential users.

### Office Space

The office space data reported by Costar paints a picture that is somewhat different from industrial space. In 2011 vacancy rates for office space were at or near 14 percent. In 2012 the rate began to decline and in 2016 is now at about 6 percent. The 5-year moving average is significantly higher at just over 10 percent. Correspondingly, as demand increased, as indicated by declining vacancies, rents went up from a low of about \$13 per square foot to current levels of around \$16.75 per square foot.

The market currently contains about 260 sites with about 2 million square feet of office space. In the last 12 months, an additional 31,000 square feet was delivered to the market, but nearly 50,000 square feet was absorbed in 2015. While Kenosha typically brings about 15,000 square feet to the market annually, Costar is not reporting any office space under construction in the county. There are currently just over 252,000 square feet of office space available, with just over 53,000 available for sublet. The market for office space appears to be relatively healthy, at least based on data from Costar.

# Employer Involvement and Commitment:

## What Employers Say about Kenosha's Workforce

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To gain the perspective of area employers regarding the region's workforce, the Upjohn team conducted three separate workshops with human resources and management leaders representing diverse industry sectors throughout Kenosha County. The workshops sought to gain a particular understanding of the Kenosha region's workforce strengths, weaknesses, high demand occupations, future workforce needs, and issues surrounding retention, turnover, and workplace environment. The workshops also sought to secure employer commitment in supporting and facilitating the distribution of an employee survey.

### Workshop Structure and Methodology

Three full-day workshops were offered on separate dates in three locations in the Kenosha region for the purpose of engaging employer feedback on workforce challenges and opportunities and workplace issues. The workshops were conducted on

- October 28, 2015, at the Kenosha Civil War Museum, 5400 1st Avenue, Kenosha,
- October 29, 2015, at Riley Construction, 5301 99th Avenue, Kenosha, and
- November 16, 2015, at Uline, 12575 Uline Drive, Pleasant Prairie.

KABA and its partners distributed an email invitation to business leaders at companies across the Kenosha region to participate in one of the three workshops. Leaders who have knowledge about their company's workforce, needs, and issues surrounding employee retention and turnover, such as human resources management personnel and operations managers, were invited to participate. The participants were requested to register in advance of the workshops. There were 14 participants in attendance at the October 28th workshop, 12 in attendance at the October 29th workshop, and 31 in attendance at the November 16th session, for a total of 57 participants.

The attendees participated in a series of presentations and small- and large-group discussions designed to stimulate conversation regarding the workshop objectives. The Upjohn Team began each workshop by presenting a labor market profile of the Kenosha region, which helped to begin the dialogue with employers. Participants were then divided into small groups to discuss and respond to the following questions:

- What are the strengths of the Kenosha region's workforce?
- What are the weaknesses of the Kenosha region's workforce?
- Do local training institutions meet employer needs? If not, what is missing?

A representative from each small group provided a summary and outcomes of each discussion to the larger group of attendees, and then Upjohn presented data on the supply and demand of the Kenosha region's workforce. The small-group process was repeated to respond to the following questions:

- For what positions do you have challenges recruiting?
- What are the current in-demand occupations?
- What will be the in-demand occupations needed 2 to 5 years from now by your company and in the Kenosha region?
- What are your future recruitment concerns?

Following the small-group reports to the larger group, Upjohn presented data on employee turnover and retention in the Kenosha region. The process was repeated to have employer representatives respond to these questions:

- What are unique or significant challenges for the Kenosha region regarding workforce recruitment?
- What are unique or significant challenges regarding workforce retention?
- What is particularly attractive about the Kenosha region to potential employees?
- What about the Kenosha region aids in employee retention?

Each workshop concluded with a summary of the day's discussions, Upjohn's next steps in the process, and a commitment from employers in attendance to distribute a survey of the region's workers to their employees.

### Summary of Results

The workshop participants engaged in a series of small- and large-group discussions to understand and address the barriers to sustaining and growing employment in the Kenosha region. A series of questions were discussed in three small group sessions, with a representative from each of the small groups relaying the outcomes of those discussions to the larger group as a whole. The questions focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the Kenosha workforce, current and future workforce demand for the Kenosha region, and employee turnover and retention issues among Kenosha employers. Responses to each of the questions are summarized below. A list of responses from each session from the three workshops can be found in Appendix 1.

### Strengths/Weaknesses of the Kenosha Region Workforce

The strengths and weaknesses of the Kenosha area workforce presented interesting themes. Employer participants identified a hard-working, skilled, and loyal workforce for the region when discussing older, more seasoned workers. When participants identified concerns regarding work ethic and employability skills, they were usually referring to younger workers. These concerns led to additional worries about the aging and retiring workforce, as it related to future leadership challenges and the transfer of knowledge from older to younger workers.

When discussing local training institutions, employer participants generally had a positive perception of post-high school training programs. Although a shortage of skilled trade professionals was a common theme of the workshop, participants stated that training programs were available at local institutions. Employer participants did describe concerns about the relationship between local employer needs and how those needs are addressed by area high schools and other secondary education programs. The employer participants perceived that the area high schools did not promote skilled trade professions as a career path option and expressed a desire for stronger relationships between employers and secondary education.

### **Current and Future Workforce Demand in the Kenosha Region**

A strong need for most of the skilled trade professions was identified as a current and future recruitment concern by employers participating in the workshops. The need for skilled trade professionals, coupled with the lack of interest in younger people entering skilled trade professions, is a significant concern for Kenosha area employers. The need for mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering positions was also a theme for current and future occupational demand.

### **Employee Turnover and Retention in the Kenosha Region**

When discussing recruitment and retention challenges for the region, competition with Chicago and Milwaukee was a dominant theme. Employer participants were particularly concerned with the area being “less trendy” than the surrounding urban communities and that an urban environment was particularly attractive to younger workers. The perception of the quality of the local school system compared to surrounding counties was also a concern.

Employer participants had a strong perception that the Kenosha area was very attractive to workers with families. They discussed the low cost of living and relatively low property taxes compared to surrounding counties. Kenosha was described as having a “strong sense of community with a family atmosphere.”

# Talent Development and Attraction for the Kenosha Region

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As Kenosha's stakeholders consider how to address the talent development needs in the region, they must answer two initial questions: What is the critical need stakeholders are seeking to address with a Kenosha talent development effort, and how can stakeholders promote community alignment around the scholarship program? The answers to these key decision points will determine the direction of investments and collective actions to address the area's talent needs. Consideration and actions related to strategies, research into other community approaches, and efforts around community alignment that are made in isolation of keenly understanding these community dynamics will result in a less effective and less efficient resolution of the area's talent needs. Intentional and systematic assessment of these questions is vital.

## ***1. What is the critical need stakeholders are seeking to address with a Kenosha talent development effort?***

If considering an educational lens, talent development, attraction, and retention span, the developmental continuum from birth to adult training and retraining. Strategies and solutions must be designed with the community's critical need clearly identified through a structured consensus process so that stakeholders have a common understanding and commitment to the work. Any single strategy will not solve the area's talent development needs; therefore, the most important step in developing a place-based talent development system is for stakeholders to be clear about the critical need(s) they are seeking to address. For example, other communities have goals that fit into one or more of the following categories:

- Transforming K-12 school districts by building a college/post-secondary-going culture and broader awareness of the need for and benefits of a post-secondary degree.
- Reducing educational achievement gaps by race and income by building a universal kindergarten readiness and K-4 social/emotional and literacy component to ensure all children are ready to learn.
- Reducing educational achievement gaps by implementing a data-driven instructional system that identifies students' deficiencies early with subsequent implementation of strategies to increase learning outcomes.
- Increasing access to post-secondary credentials and degrees by reducing the financial barrier to higher education through the provision of scholarship funding. This goal is also supported with college awareness and readiness programs to help students overcome the nonfinancial barriers to post-secondary education.
- Reducing the area's skills gaps and work readiness of area graduates through the implementation of an early middle college program, development and promotion of apprenticeship opportunities, and/or a place-based scholarship program.
- Reducing employee turnover, improving employee skill development opportunities, and increasing career ladder opportunities through a formal convening of committed employers that can leverage resources to help remove employer and employee barriers to talent development.
- Promoting community and economic development by ensuring that actors throughout the community are aligned in support of the goals of the talent development effort and are able to use it as leverage to create a more desirable and vital community.

While most communities seek to address all of these issues to one degree or another, there is usually a compelling challenge or concern that has brought stakeholders to the table

to consider the creation of a talent development system. Clarity around the nature of this challenge can help stakeholders make design decisions that will best meet their critical need.

Three examples provide an illustration of how design decisions ideally will flow from a community's critical need:

- a. In Kalamazoo, declining enrollment in the school district that serves the region's urban core was likely one of the chief concerns of the anonymous donors who created the Kalamazoo Promise. Their emphasis on creating a powerful financial incentive to attract and retain families within the school district has served to reverse a long-term enrollment decline, while their insistence on residency within school district boundaries provides direction for an accompanying economic development agenda. Meanwhile, K-12 academic achievement and college going and completion appear to be on the rise.
- b. The chief concern of the City of Hammond (Indiana), which created the College Bound program, was quite different, centering on low home-ownership rates within the city. Thus, one of the criteria for receipt of a College Bound scholarship is home ownership within city boundaries.
- c. In Grand Rapids (Michigan), employers were concerned with high turnover, upgrading skills of their existing workforce, and attracting new employees due to aging baby boomers, which resulted in the creation of an employer resource network. These business owners realized that recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce were central to improving retention and skill levels. Out of these concerns arose a consortium of businesses that leveraged public and private resources for the benefit of member businesses, their employees, and for the communities where the businesses operate.

In Kenosha, there appears to be a variety of critical needs that a talent development effort might seek to address, but no solid consensus exists yet around the specific need. A facilitated process to reach this consensus should be a priority before adopting any strategy or solution.

These issues, based on an external review of publicly available information, suggest a variety of critical needs that a talent development initiative might address. A further facilitated assessment of stakeholder perceptions, which typically can provide greater insight into the assets and challenges facing the community, and a structured needs assessment would be valuable in defining the critical need.

### ***2. How can stakeholders promote community alignment around the scholarship program?***

Our experience in community development facilitation, evaluating economic development efforts, evaluating the Kalamazoo Promise, and studying other Promise programs has revealed an obvious point: talent development must be a multifaceted design. To achieve the types of goals mentioned above—the transformation of educational institutions, business engagement, and higher levels of college access and attainment—far more than money is needed. This brings us to the critical issue of community alignment, defined as the degree to which diverse community members “buy in” to the effort and do their part to make it successful.

In promoting community alignment around a Kenosha talent development effort, stakeholders have some important community assets on which to build. Other communities with talent development programs have often aligned through some form of collective impact



framework. In this light, it is fortunate that: 1) the 2016 Kenosha County budget includes initial funding for a collective impact effort focused on education, 2) the Kenosha County Health Department Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families operates within a collective impact framework, and 3) Gateway Technical College has planned to launch a place-based promise type program. Government, philanthropy, nonprofits, faith-based, business, and education entities can more effectively connect the dots needed to support students, families, and educators within such a framework, while keeping the broader business and community needs in mind.

If not already completed, an asset or landscape analysis should be undertaken to ensure that needed support components exist in the community, that quality and opportunities for continuous improvement are built into these systems, and that access and the importance of transitions between stages are considered as carefully as the components themselves.

### Employee Retention Principles and Practices

An exhaustive body of research has been conducted as to why employees choose to stay with or leave their employers. This section of the report seeks to briefly summarize best practice strategies regarding retention initiatives discussed in the available body of research.

The Gallup organization defines an “engaged” employee as someone who is personally invested in their work and their company—it is beyond employee satisfaction. An engaged employee is someone who is deeply connected to the organization. Engaged employees are enthusiastic, loyal, and productive. In the book *First Break All the Rules*, Buckingham and Coffman (1999) describe the development of the Gallup Q<sup>12</sup> Employee Engagement Survey. Gallup interviewed more than one million employees across diverse workplace settings around the world, asking them hundreds of questions regarding the workplace environment. The researchers were able to identify 12 questions that measure the core elements of an organization’s ability to attract, focus, and retain talent:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last seven days have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor or someone at work seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my coworkers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

A quick review of the Q<sup>12</sup> questions indicate that job fit, personal relationships, and development opportunities are key factors in an employee’s level of connectedness to her job and employer. It is interesting to note that pay and benefits are not identified as part of the Q<sup>12</sup> survey, but that’s not to say that they are not important. Research indicates



that if employees do not feel they are fairly compensated by their employers, this will lead to significant dissatisfaction and place them at risk for seeking other employment opportunities. However, research suggests that as long as employees believe they are fairly compensated, then job fit, personal relationships, and development opportunities are most important in fostering employee loyalty. The initiatives described in the remainder of this section are identified as best practices in this endeavor.

When designing the selection process for a job opening, employers should think beyond skills and experience when profiling the ideal candidate: What personality, value system, and other character traits would be the best fit with the company culture, workplace environment, and existing employee base? Employees are most connected to their company when there is a strong link between the company's mission and their own personal value system.

It is also important that employment candidates receive a realistic job preview as part of the recruitment process. Candidates should know the challenges of any position, as well as what may make the position attractive. The less likely the new employee is surprised by any challenges once hired, the more likely they are to remain on the job.

The initial days, weeks, months, and year of a new employee's work experience are critical to the employee's acclimation to the organization. Initiatives that invest time and resources in incorporating newly hired employees into the organization are found to be highly effective at strengthening retention. Key to this process is the development of coworker relationships. Employees with a well-developed network of relationships are most likely to stay because leaving would include severing those relationships. Onboarding initiatives may include formal and informal socialization activities, shared learning experiences, and formal mentoring relationships between junior and senior employees.

As stated earlier, training and development opportunities are also important to encouraging retention. Employees want to believe they have a future with their company. Research indicates that this is particularly important to those individuals generationally defined as millennials. As a group, younger generations place particular importance on having the ability to learn and grow throughout their careers.

Finally, the relationship between an employee and his or her supervisor has been identified through research as the single most important factor in an employee's decision to stay or leave the company. It has been said numerous times—employees don't leave their jobs, they leave their managers. If an employee views her supervisor as supportive, responsive, and interested in them personally, she is more likely to stay with the organization. The opposite is also true; if the relationship between an employee and his supervisor is strained, the employee is at significant risk for leaving. Companies that invest time and resources in developing management staff benefit from the results.

The concepts described above are not new to any employer or professional who has spent time reviewing the literature on this topic. These ideas are particularly well known among human resources professionals and organizations. It is likely that Kenosha area employers are familiar with these concepts.

A potential path to moving forward would be for KABA and its partners to assist employers with a landscape assessment—take a look at their current workforce initiatives and practices to assess how these could be improved to expand employment opportunities. Important questions to consider are: What initiatives have area employers implemented relative to the concepts from the literature? What has been the impact? What has worked? What have been the challenges? Are there opportunities in which area employers have the ability and

are willing to work together regarding retention concerns? This can be a delicate endeavor because of competition for talent between employers within the county.

Finally, how do the principles described align with existing talent development and retention initiatives? KABA and its partners already have related initiatives in place, such as Y-Link and Schools 2 Skills. What other current initiatives should be considered and aligned with future opportunities?

# Employee Perceptions of the Kenosha Workforce

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A survey was administered to workers across the Kenosha region to get a sense of employees' levels of satisfaction with aspects of their employment and working in Kenosha County. Another intent of the survey was to gather perceptions and opinions from Kenosha employees regarding their daily commute and workplace conditions. KABA enlisted a small and select group of Kenosha employers to help distribute a link to an online survey to their employees throughout the Kenosha region. The survey yielded 1,776 usable responses from 270 Kenosha County employers.

The 270 participating employers do not statistically reflect the business/industrial profile of Kenosha County. In particular, retail trade and accommodations and food services are mostly absent from the analysis. Nevertheless, the survey provides a glimpse into workers' attitudes at many of the county's key industries. While all surveys are subject to sampling errors, the more than 1,700 responses tallied provide important insights into employees' workplace expectations and current levels of satisfaction with their jobs.

## Major Findings

The research methodology and responses to all questions are included in a separate addendum to this main report. The following are the major findings from the analysis of the survey responses:

- Approximately 80 percent of the respondents travel less than 20 miles from home to work each day. In fact, 60 percent commute 10 miles or less to work each day. Correspondingly, the daily commute for 83 percent of the survey respondents takes 30 minutes or less each day, with nearly one third commuting just 10 minutes or less. This means that travel time to work is not a major factor in determining an employee's residential decision.
- Surveyed employees listed "being paid a fair wage" (97.5 percent) and "having good benefits" (96.5 percent) as the most important aspects of a job. While this is not unexpected, it is somewhat alarming that only 54 percent of those who indicated that a "fair wage" was important or very important can "agree" or "strongly agree" that their current wages are fair for the work they do. This suggests that the county's competitive wage environment could have a negative influence on the quality of the workplace. This finding is further evidence that the county's relatively low wages can be contributing to its higher-than-average turnover rate.
- When employees were asked to offer reasons, if any, as to why they dislike working in Kenosha County, those who responded cited lower-paying wages.
- More than one quarter of employees surveyed stated that they live outside of Kenosha County (28 percent). Two thirds of the employees who commute into the county reside outside of the county because of reasons that are totally unrelated to the county's amenities, including owning a home outside of Kenosha County, being married or attached to a person who is employed outside of the county, or wanting to live close to family.
- Nearly 60 percent of the surveyed employees who live in Kenosha County have been residing in the county for 10 or more years.

In a more in-depth examination of the survey results, the responses for five separate target groups were isolated and statistically tested. These target groups were millennials, creative professionals, persons with graduate or professional degrees, persons earning more than

\$75,000 annually, and production workers. Clearly, there is a strong overlap between the five groups; however, some unique findings were uncovered:

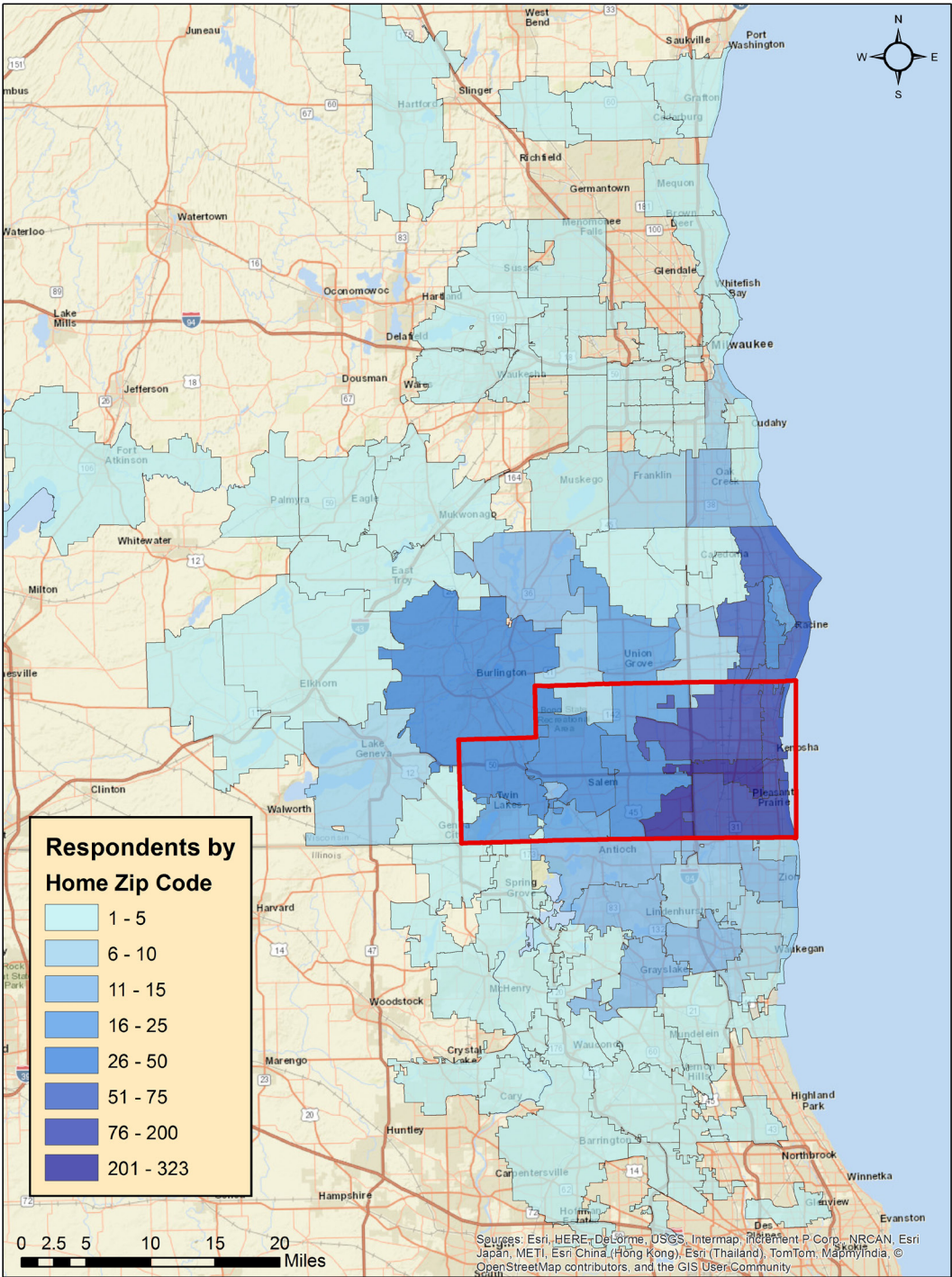
- We found that millennials' attitudes regarding the general attributes of a job and their current job were statistically similar to that of older workers. The only major statistical differences between the two groups are that millennials have **higher** expectations for strong career opportunities and, more importantly, they are more satisfied with the career advancement opportunities at their current position than older workers.
- For persons defined as being creative professionals, the major statistical differences between them and other workers were that they are more satisfied about their current wages. Surprisingly, they have fewer expectations regarding the attributes of a job, but are, in general, more positive than other workers about the working conditions at their current jobs.
- As with "creative class" workers, highly educated workers appear to have low expectations regarding the general attributes of employment. Statistically, they expect less job security than others but have a greater sense of job insecurity with their employers. They are less satisfied with the resources provided at their workplaces. Statistically, they feel worse about their current life/work balance than other workers; however, they are more satisfied with available training opportunities and enjoy their jobs more than other workers.
- Individuals who make \$75,000 or more annually are satisfied statistically with most aspects of their work experience compared to lower-earning workers. Statistically, they have low expectations regarding work and they are statistically more satisfied with their overall current working conditions.
- Production workers' perceptions of adequacy of their current wage and benefit packages were no different than non-production workers, despite the fact that evidence suggests that they are being paid lower than workers in neighboring counties and the state. However, they did express relatively greater dissatisfaction with most other aspects of their current positions, including the quality of the equipment being used, the competency of coworkers, and company management.

## Commuting Patterns

One of the key reasons for conducting the survey was to find out more about the residential location decisions being made by county employees. Why do some of them, 28 percent, choose to live outside of the county? And, for those who do live in the county, what do they like most about the county?

The survey respondents were asked to provide the zip codes for their homes and places of work. Map 8 depicts the concentration of the survey respondents by zip code of residence. The majority of the survey respondents reside in the 53142 zip code area of Kenosha. The darker blue areas indicate higher densities for respondents for their home zip codes. With the exception of the zip code along the lakeshore north of Kenosha County, the densities by zip code tend to be significantly lower, with 1–15 survey respondents per zip code. Given that the survey targeted firms operating within Kenosha County and the lower density of respondents per zip code outside of Kenosha County, it appears that, for the most part, survey respondents are living and working within the county.

Map 8 Survey Respondents by Home Zip Code



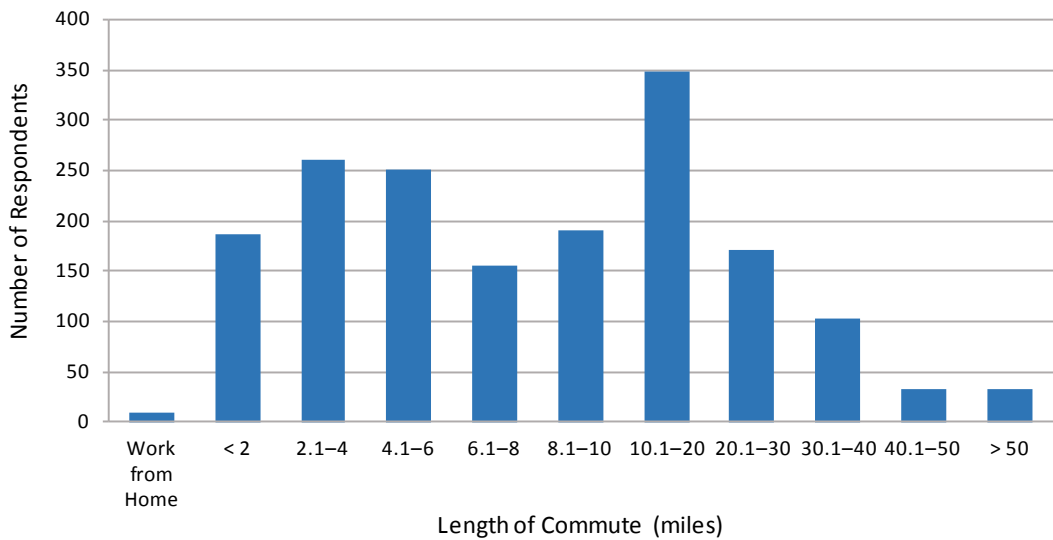


Map 9 shows the concentration of where the survey respondents work by zip code. The majority of those responding to the survey are employed outside of the zip code area in which they live; however, they still work within Kenosha County. On this map, the darker blues indicate high densities of where respondents are working in Kenosha County. These tend to be on the eastern side of the county, while the western side of the county, as well as most zip codes outside of the county, tend to represent low levels of employment by zip code. The one exception is what is likely a zip code in Racine County. Although this may stand out as being ranked in the middle range of zip code densities, it only represents the workplace of somewhere between 11 and 25 survey respondents.

Distance and Time Traveled to Work Each Day

Employees responding to the survey were asked to list the number of miles they travel to work each day (*N* = 1,737). Most of the respondents (348) indicated that they commute 10–20 miles from home to work each day (see Figure 20). The total percentage of respondents

Figure 20 Distance Traveled to Work Daily

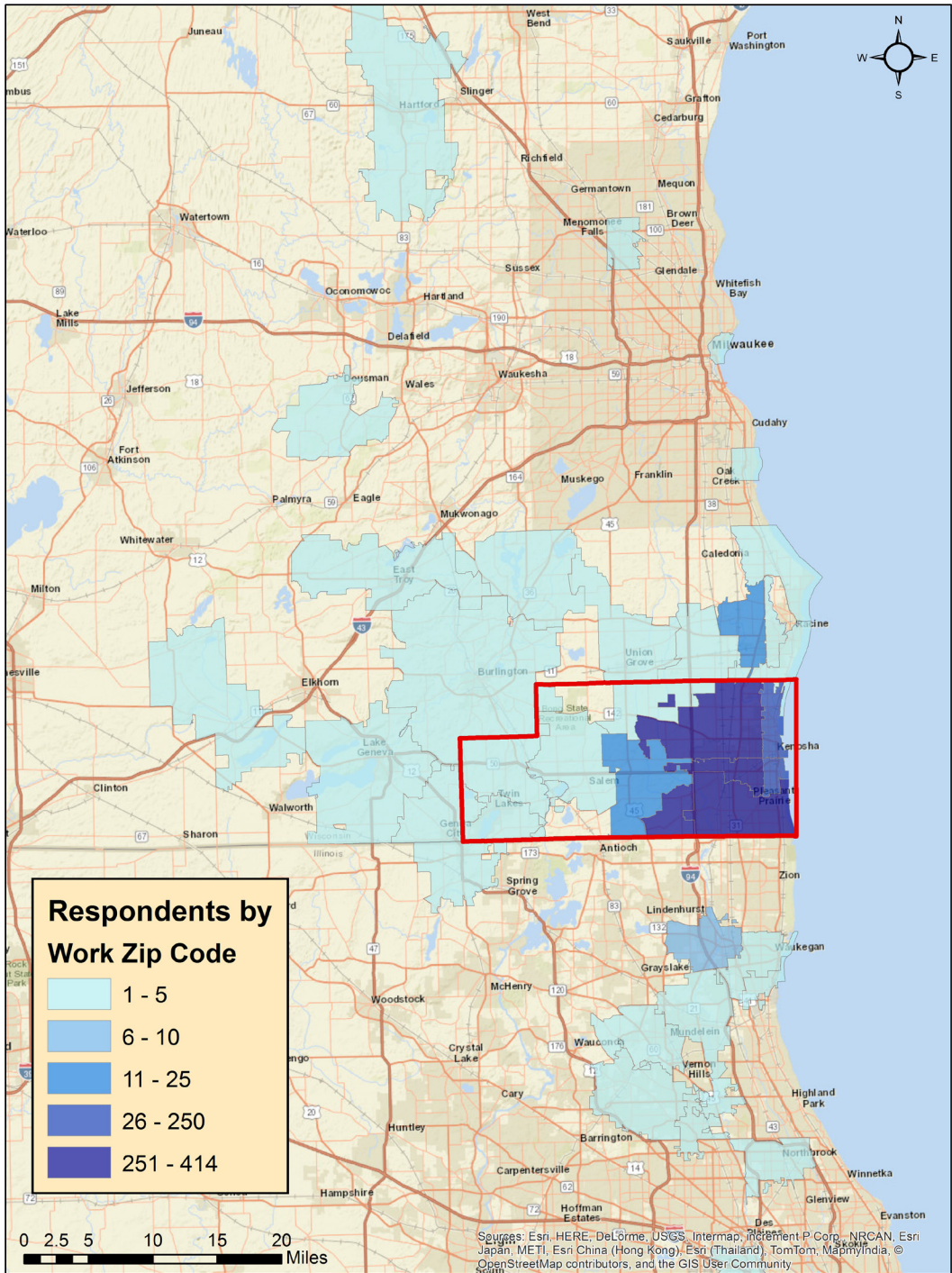


traveling 20 miles or less from home to work each day is 80 percent (1,400), with 60 percent commuting 10 miles or less to work each day (1,052). Nine of the respondents indicated that they work from home.

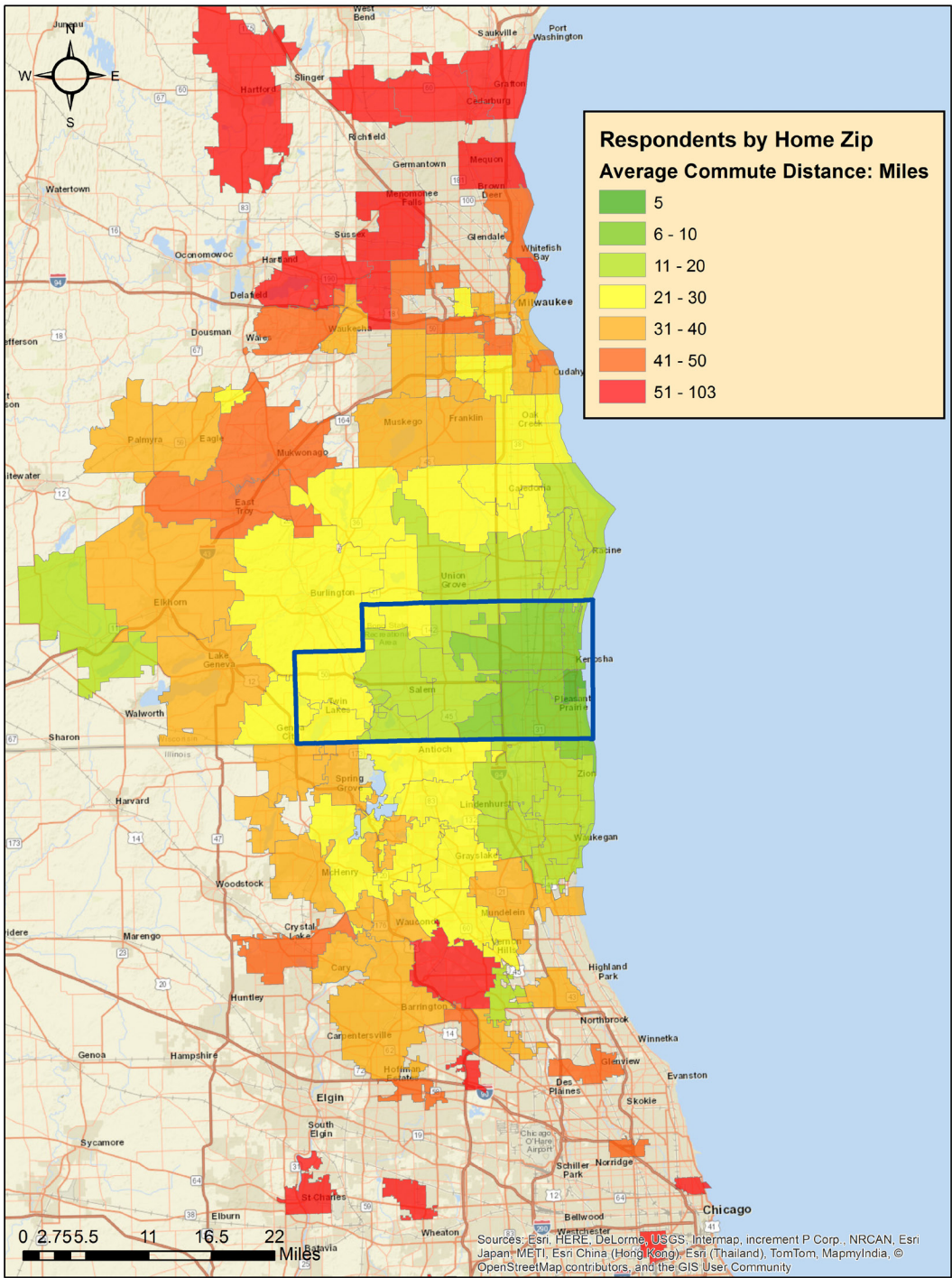
Map 10 displays the average distance survey respondents commute to work from their home zip codes. The range of commuting distances is between 3 and 103 miles; however, the map does not reflect the number of respondents for each of these zip codes, only the average commute distance in miles. By area, most of the respondents who noted home zip codes in Kenosha County are commuting, on average, between 3 and 18 miles to work.

The survey respondents provided the amount of time (in minutes) that it typically takes them each day to commute from their home to their place of work (*N* = 1,739). The majority of survey respondents (497, or 28.6 percent) travel between 16 and 30 minutes from home to work each day (see Figure 21). Travel time for 82.7 percent (1,439) of the survey

Map 9 Survey Respondents by Work Zip Code

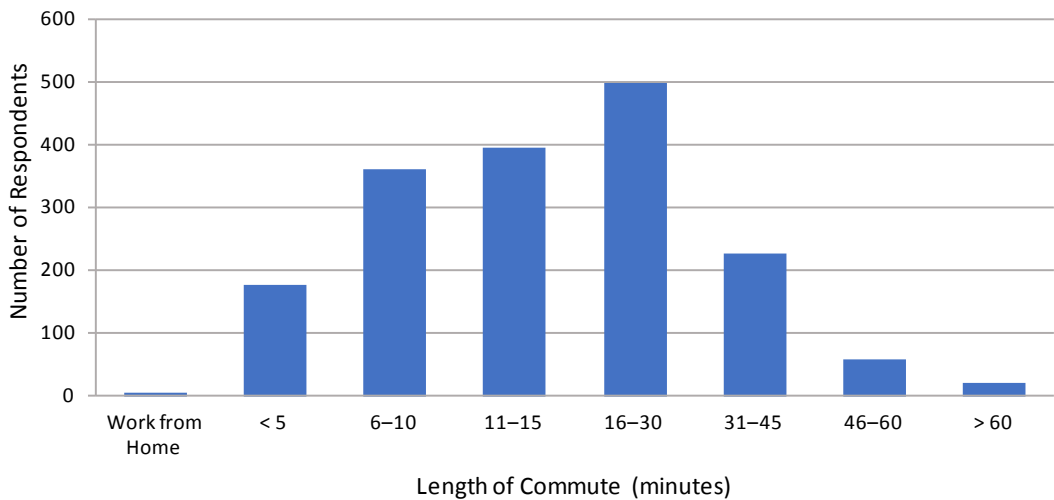


Map 10 Average Distance in Miles Survey Respondents Commute to Work from Home Zip Code





**Figure 21 Time Spent Traveling to Work Daily**



respondents from home to work is 30 minutes or less each day. Nearly one third (31.4 percent) of the survey respondents commute 10 minutes or less daily to work.

Map 11 depicts the average commuting time from the respondents’ home zip code; however, the map does not reflect the number of respondents for each of these zip codes. The average commute time for those on the eastern third of the county is 11–15 minutes. For those in the central part of the county, the average commute time is 16–30 minutes. On the western side of the county, the average commute time increases to a reported 31–45 minutes.

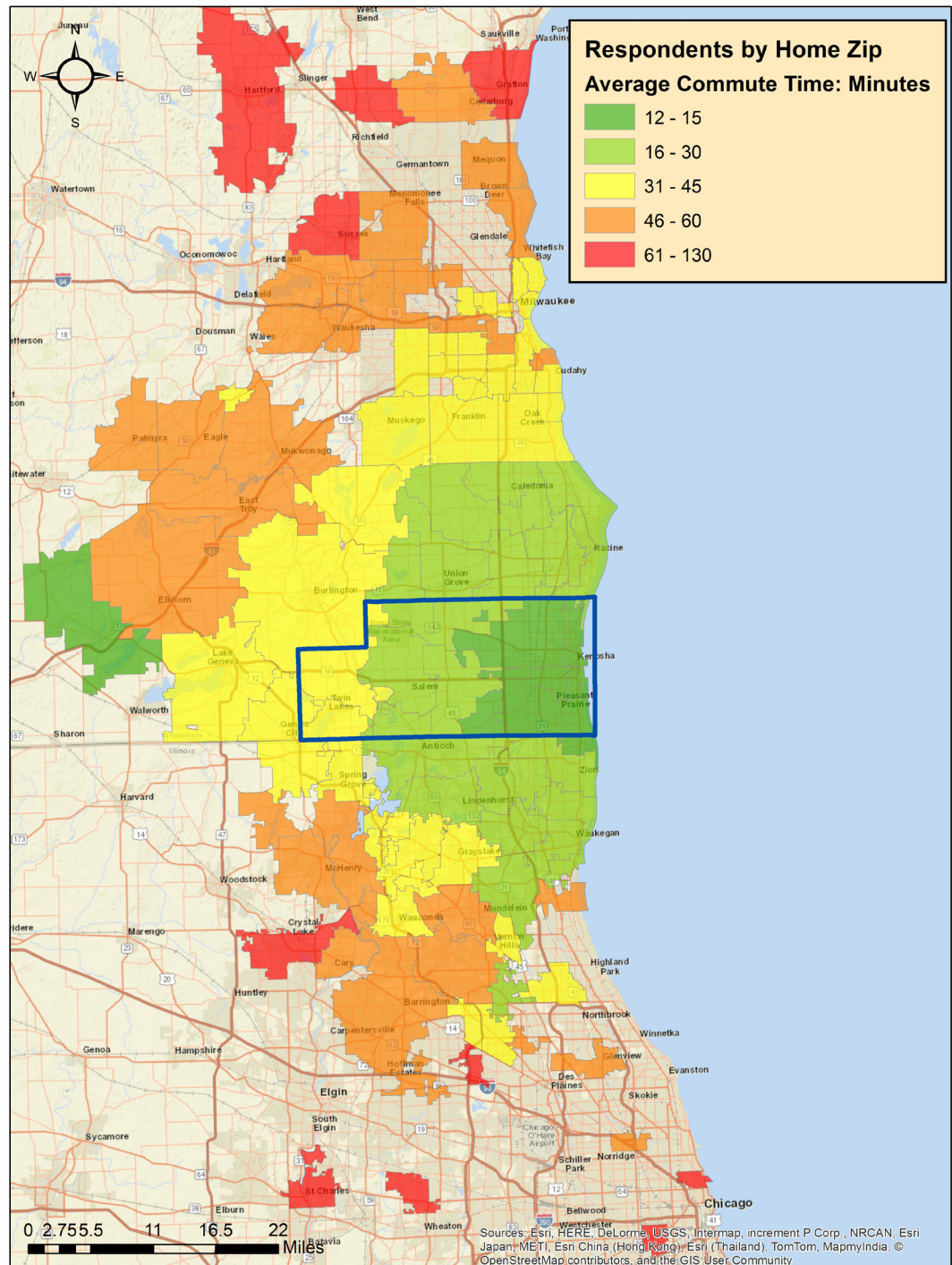
Overall, 28 percent of the respondents who work in Kenosha County do not reside in the county. Most of the respondents (40 percent) indicated that they commute to work in Kenosha County because they either own a home outside of the county or live in another community that they like outside of the county (see Table 7). Many of the survey respondents (15.8 percent) have a spouse or significant other employed outside of the county, while several of the respondents (10.7 percent) reside outside of Kenosha County to be near family. In other words, two thirds of the employees who live outside of Kenosha do so for reasons that have nothing to do with the quality of life or the availability of housing in the county.

## What Respondents Like about Kenosha County

Workers were asked to write in the reasons why they like working in Kenosha County ( $N = 1,420$ ). Most of the survey respondents stated that they like working in Kenosha County because they are close to where they live and are near family. Several expressed that they feel “invested” in their communities, and the convenience of working in close proximity to home, school, church, and family in their neighborhoods anchors them there.

Several survey respondents noted that they were “born and raised” in Kenosha and wouldn’t consider working or living anywhere else. As natives of Kenosha, they stated that they appreciate their close-knit communities, have a great deal of “hometown pride,” and want to see the county “grow and succeed.” They additionally expressed an appreciation for Kenosha’s growth and the friendliness of its people.

Map 11 Average Commute Time in Minutes from Survey Respondents' Home Zip Code



**Table 7 Reasons for Commuting Into Kenosha County**

	Number of Respondents
Already own home or live in a community outside of Kenosha County that I/we like	501 (40%)
Spouse/significant other employed outside of Kenosha County	197 (15.8%)
Wanted to be near family/my family lives outside of Kenosha County	134 (10.7%)
Did not find the right house in Kenosha County	75 (6%)
Did not find the right neighborhood in Kenosha County	41 (3.2%)
Thought that the public schools in Kenosha County were below average	40 (3.2%)
Concerned about crime in Kenosha County	36 (2.8%)
Lack of cultural amenities	29 (2.3%)
Taxes	25 (2%)
Heard negative things about Kenosha County from friends, family, or real estate agents	19 (1.5%)
Low home/property valuation	15 (1.2%)
Lack of shopping/retail	14 (1.1%)
Other	123 (9.8%)
	<b>1,249</b>

What the survey respondents also like about working in Kenosha County are the companies they work for and the benefits and opportunities provided by their employers. Simply stated, they love their jobs. Many expressed that they are happy in their work environments and enjoy working with their fellow employees, many of whom have become close friends.

The survey respondents also commented on the convenience of a short commute to work each day as another reason why they enjoy working in Kenosha County. They find the county easy to navigate and like that the short commute leaves more time for family and recreational activities. Those living outside of the county reported that, although not Kenosha residents, the commute is quicker and easier than driving to Illinois or elsewhere in Wisconsin.

The amenities offered in Kenosha County are another reason the respondents state they like working in the county. The survey respondents cited several examples of the variety and ease of access to shopping and retail throughout Kenosha and Pleasant Prairie, as well as the convenience of being able to run errands during lunch because of the proximity of their work to retail. Others noted the availability and quality of medical care in Kenosha, and the excellent school system. Downtown Kenosha is viewed as an asset among the survey respondents, with the hope for further development noted by several respondents. One of the most frequently mentioned amenities is the enjoyment of the lake, considered by many as an asset that draws people to the Kenosha area.

## What Respondents Dislike about Kenosha County

Those responding to the survey were also asked to offer reasons, if any, they dislike working in Kenosha County. Most of the respondents cited lower-paying wages as one of their top dislikes. Some respondents stated that jobs are available, but they are lower-paying jobs, whereas others report not being able to find “jobs in their field” that offer decent wages. Others cited specific industry sectors, such as manufacturing, education, and health care, as areas where wages are stagnant and they have not received pay raises “in years.”

Another top dislike to working in Kenosha County is the winter climate. Many expressed discontent with commuting to work through snow and ice, while others simply stated “it’s Wisconsin.” Several survey respondents cited compounding winter weather issues and poor road conditions, specifically numerous potholes and snowy roads that do not get quickly plowed. Respondents noted instances where they weren’t able to get to work because their neighborhood streets remained unplowed for long periods of time.

Although many respondents in the earlier question stated that Kenosha is a safe community, several expressed concern over the growing crime rate and illegal drug use in the county. Some respondents noted that they fear riding their bikes home from work because they would have to travel through reportedly high-crime areas. Others stated that some of the neighborhoods have become “run down” and are in need of revitalization.

### What’s Important to Employees about a Job

The survey respondents were asked to use a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate their level of importance about certain characteristics of a job. The scale offered this range of choices: 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Not important, 3 = Somewhat important, 4 = Important, and 5 = Very important. Employees were asked to rate the following aspects of a job:

- Having career advancement opportunities/ability to be promoted (*N* = 1,755)
- Being paid fairly for the work that I do (*N* = 1,760)
- Having good benefits (for example, insurance, time off, retirement) (*N* = 1,754)
- Having opportunities for long-term employment (job security) (*N* = 1,743)
- Being satisfied with my work schedule (for example, flexible shifts, work from home) (*N* = 1,750)
- Having good managers/supervisors (for example, fair, willing to listen) (*N* = 1,755)
- Being comfortable where I work (for example, safety, physical setting) (*N* = 1,751)
- Having what I need to do my job (for example, tools, equipment) (*N* = 1,752)
- Working with people who are qualified and competent to do their jobs (*N* = 1,744)
- Having training/education opportunities available to me (*N* = 1,752)
- Enjoying my job/the work that I do (*N* = 1,725)
- Having a reasonable commute to/from work each day (in time and/or distance) (*N* = 1,751)
- Having a balance between life/work and not having to choose between the two (*N* = 1,754)
- Being in a workplace that is welcoming to everyone (*N* = 1,742)
- Receiving feedback from supervisor(s) that not only helps me in my job, but also helps me grow as a person (*N* = 1,734)

Overall, the respondents ranked being paid a fair wage for the job they do and having good benefits available from their employers as the most important aspects of a job (see Table 8). They also ranked as significantly important opportunities for remaining with their employers for the long term, having good managers and supervisors, enjoying the work they do, and being able to work alongside qualified and competent coworkers. Having

**Table 8 Overall Rankings of Levels of Importance on Job Characteristics by Survey Respondents**

Job Attributes/Characteristics	Overall Percent, as Ranked by Survey Respondents
Fair wages for the job	98
Good benefits	96
Long-term employment (job security)	95
Good manager or supervisor	95
Enjoying the work	94
Good coworkers	93
Life/work balance	91
Comfortable work environment	90
Have proper resources and technology	90
Welcoming work environment	88
Flexible work schedule	85
Helpful feedback from supervisor	80
Training and education opportunities	76
Career advancement opportunities	69
Reasonable commute	68

opportunities for career advancement and promotion and having a reasonable commute to/from work each day were ranked as the least important.

### Responses: What's Important about a Job

Having the ability to advance in their careers is not considered as important to the survey respondents as some of the other aspects of a job. Of those responding to the survey, 69.4 percent (1,218) ranked career/promotional opportunities as important. Few (9.3 percent or 163) did not consider career advancement opportunities as important in a job (see Figure 22), while 21.3 percent (374) were neutral.

Being paid a fair wage (97.5 percent) was ranked as the most important aspect of a job by those employees responding to the survey (see Figure 23). Only 1.9 percent (35) of the survey respondents were neutral on the importance of being paid a fair wage, and less than 1 percent (9) considered being paid a fair wage as unimportant.

The survey respondents also ranked having good benefits as one of the most important aspects of a job (see Figure 24). Employees responding to the survey viewed having good benefits (such as medical and dental insurance, paid leave, and retirement options) available from their employers as significantly important, with 96.5 percent (1,692) ranking this aspect of a job as “important” and “very important.” Few, 2.4 percent (42), were neutral, with only 1.1 percent (20) ranking this as an unimportant aspect of a job.

Also of significant importance to employees are having opportunities for long-term employment (95 percent), and having good managers and supervisors (95 percent) (Figures 25 and 26). With regard to long-term employment opportunities, very few (3.9 percent or 69) viewed this as “somewhat important,” while 0.9 percent (17) indicated this is an

Figure 22 Having Career Advancement Opportunities

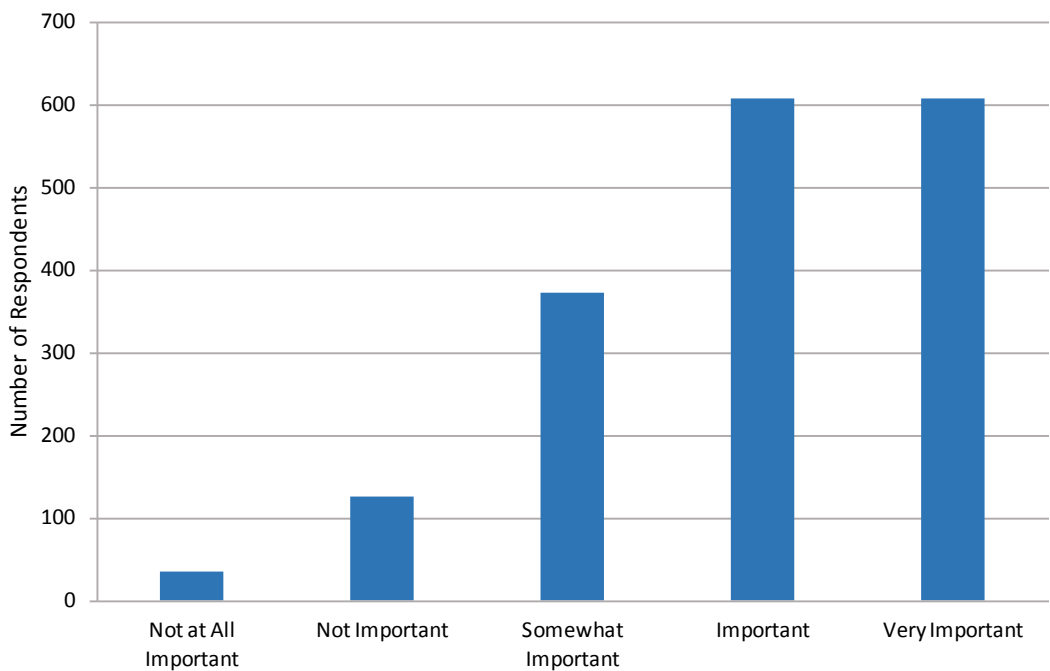


Figure 23 Being Paid Fairly for the Work That I Do

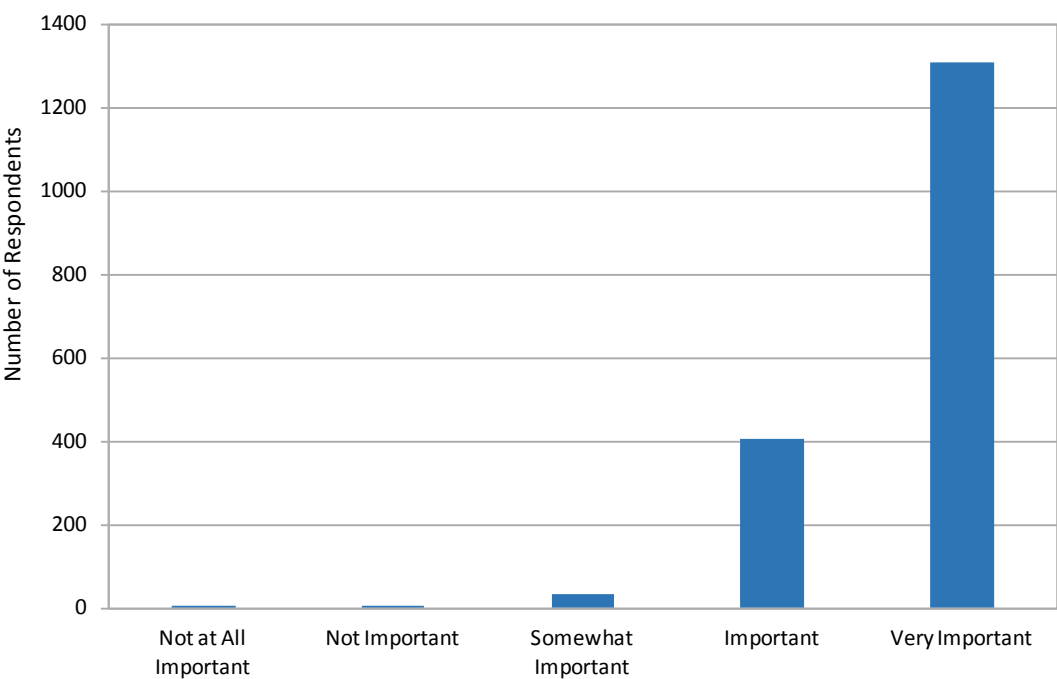


Figure 24 Having Good Benefits (i.e., insurance, time off, retirement)

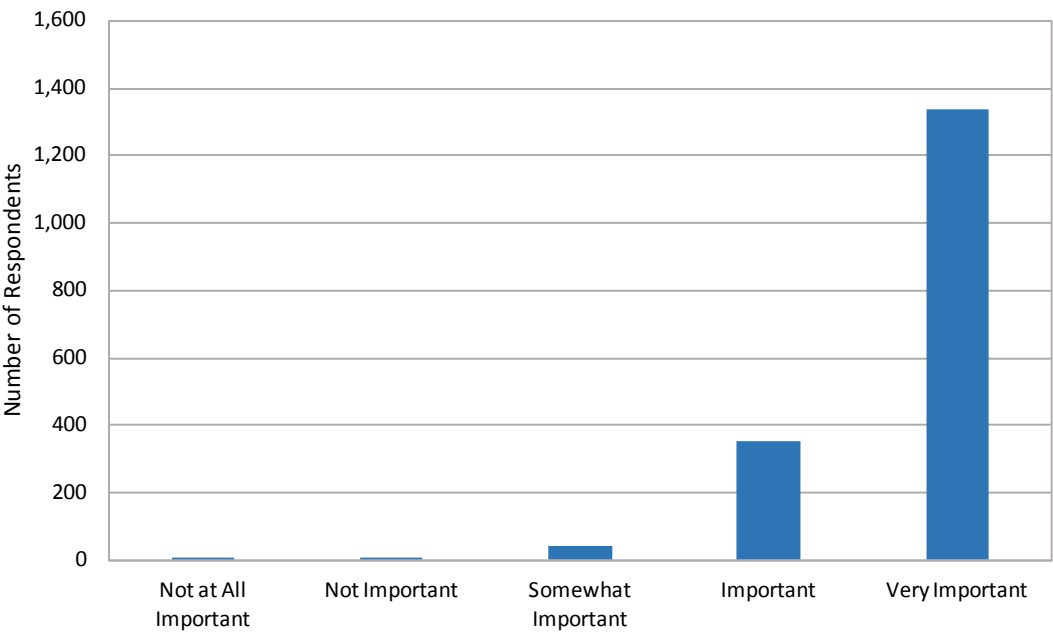
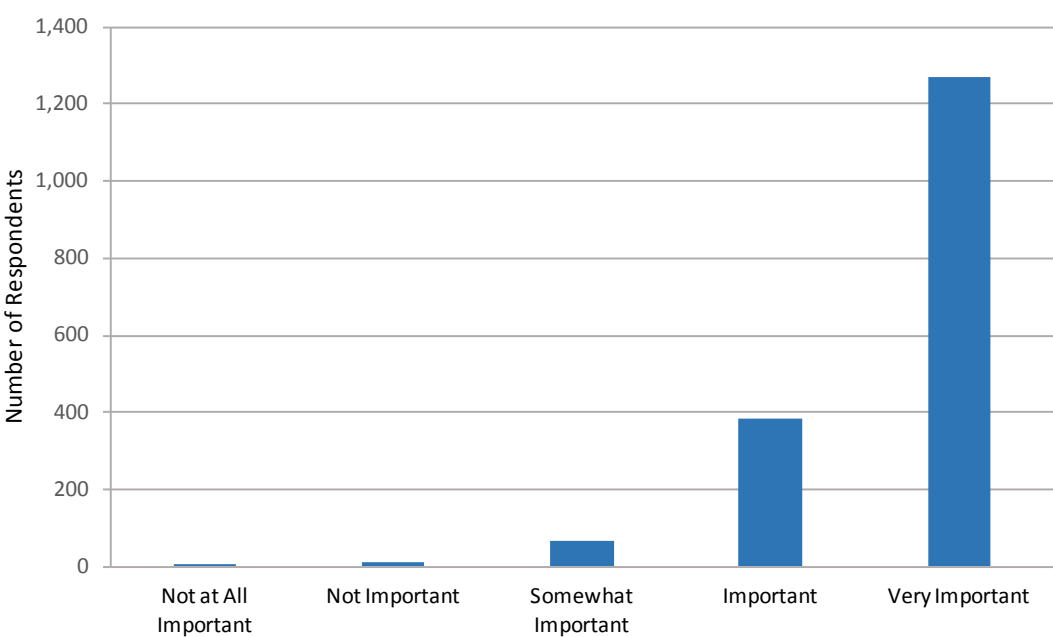
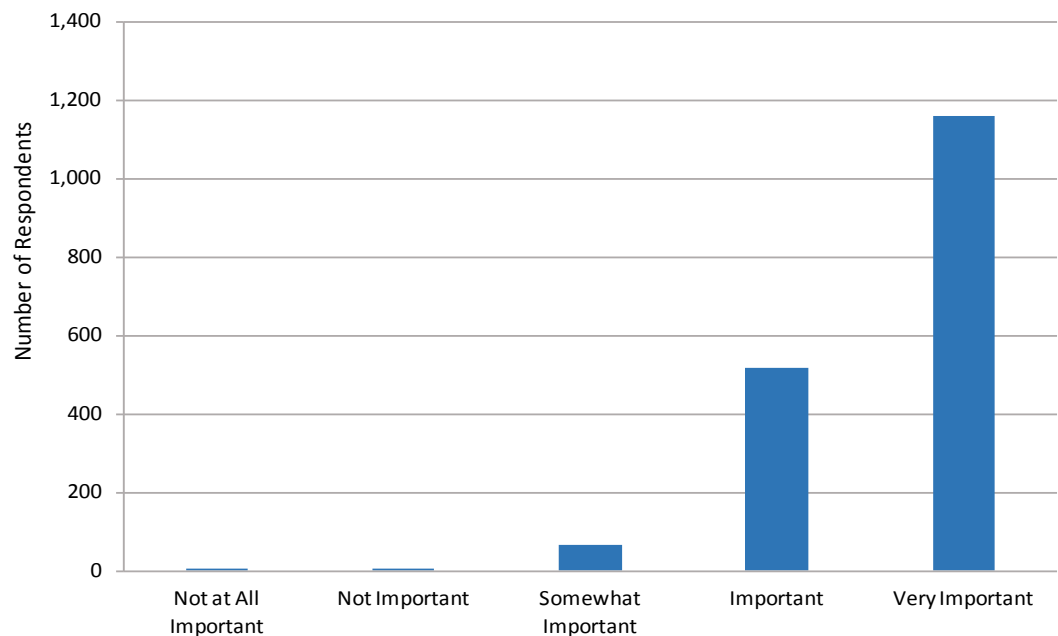


Figure 25 Having Opportunities for Long-Term Employment (job security)





**Figure 26 Having Good Managers/Supervisors**



unimportant aspect of a job. Only 3.9 percent (68) of the survey respondents remained neutral on the level of importance of having good managers and supervisors, with less than 1 percent (13) ranking it as unimportant.

Employees responding to the survey indicated that being satisfied with their work schedules is an important aspect of a job (85 percent or 1,486). This aspect was ranked as “somewhat important” by 12.6 percent (220) of the survey respondents, with only 2.5 percent (42) viewing this as unimportant (see Figure 27).

Workplace safety and comfort was cited by 90 percent (1,575) as being important to a job (Figure 28). Just over 1 percent (1.3 percent, or 22) ranked this as unimportant to a job, while 8.8 percent (154) viewed the comfort of the workplace as “somewhat important.” Ranked just as important as workplace comfort and safety was having the tools and resources at the workplace to do a job (see Figure 29). Just over 90 percent (90.2 percent, or 1,580) stated that having the tools and equipment to do a job is important, with 8.7 percent (152) remaining neutral. Very few of the survey respondents (1.1 percent, or 20) ranked having the resources to do a job as unimportant.

Having education and training opportunities available at a job was ranked by 76 percent (1,332) as important, while 20.2 percent (354) noted this as being “somewhat important” to them (see Figure 30). Also, 3.7 percent (66) ranked having education and training opportunities as unimportant. Only two aspects—having a reasonable commute to/from work and having career advancement opportunities—were ranked lower than education and training opportunities.

Survey respondents consider enjoying their jobs and the work they do (94 percent) and working with people who are competent and qualified to do their job (93 percent) as important (Figures 31 and 32). Although relevant, the survey respondents viewed having a reasonable commute to/from work each day (Figure 33) as the least important aspect of a job overall (68 percent).



Figure 27 Being Satisfied with My Work Schedule

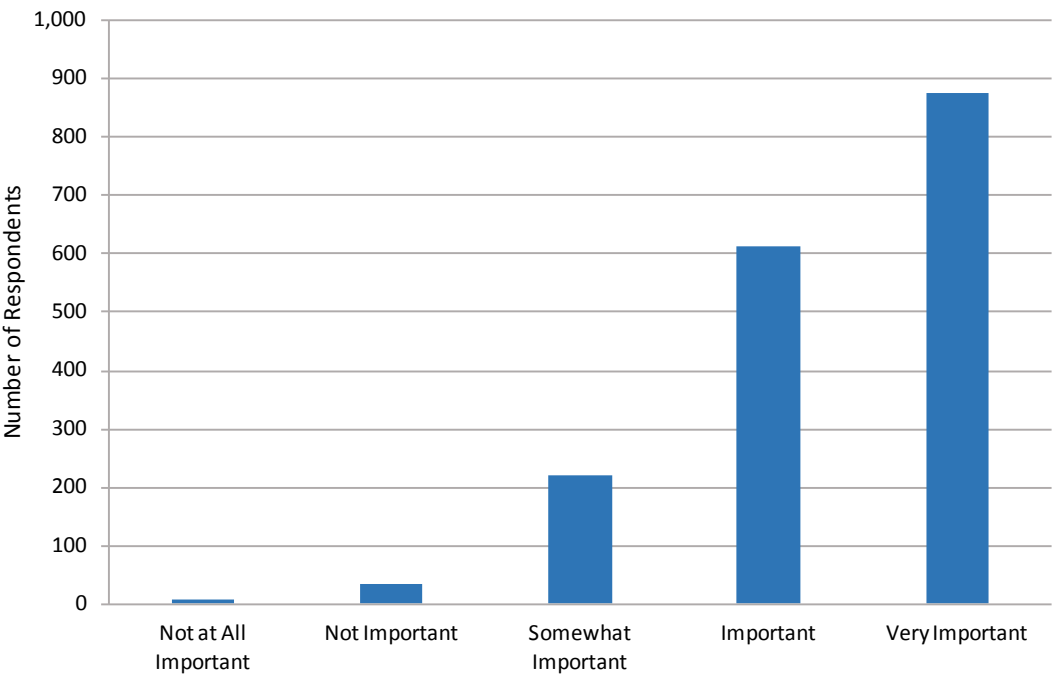


Figure 28 Being Comfortable Where I Work (i.e., safety, physical setting)

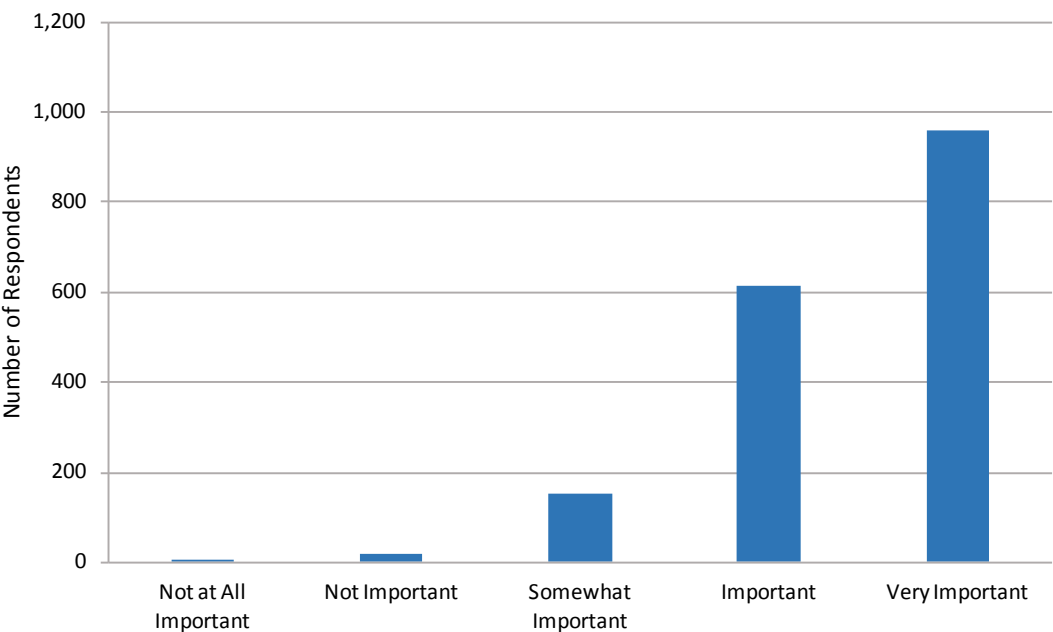


Figure 29 Having What I Need to Do My Job (i.e., tools, equipment)

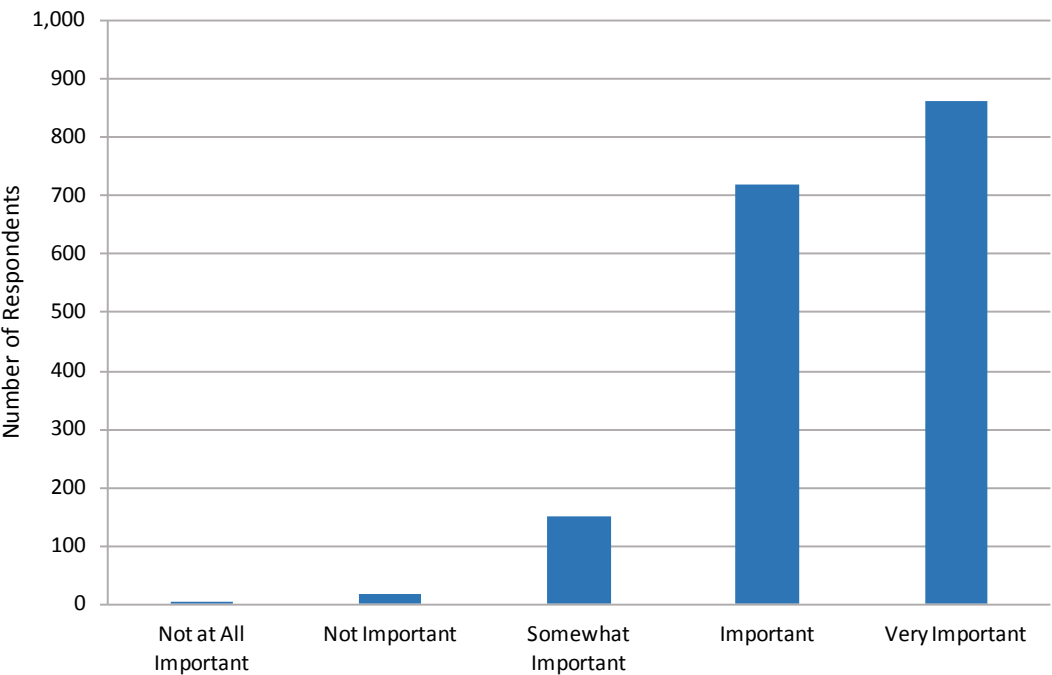


Figure 30 Having Training/Education Opportunities

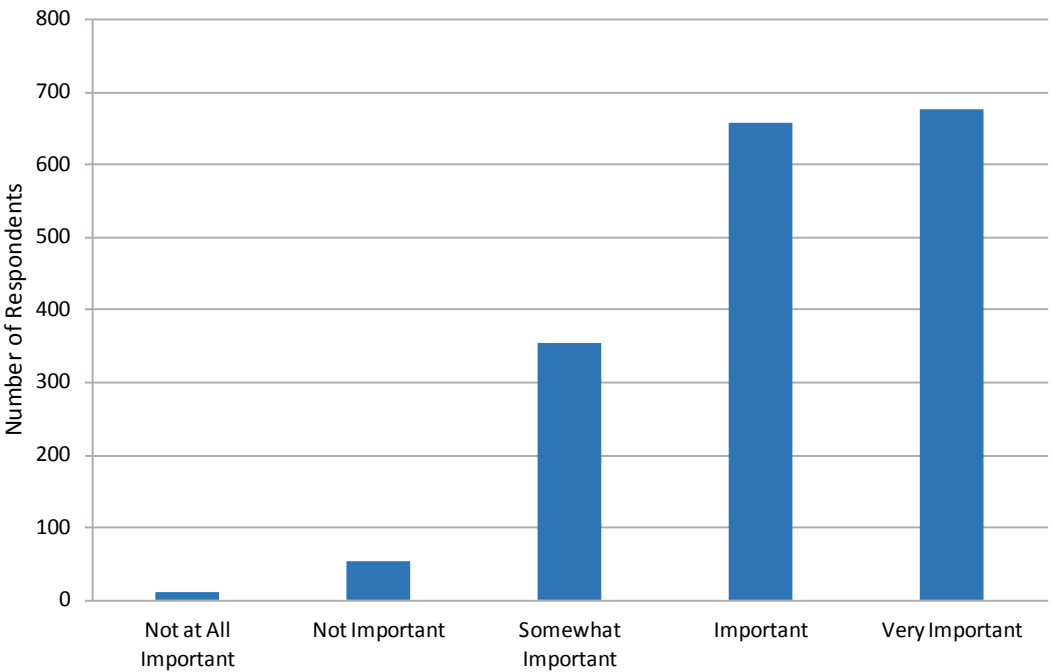


Figure 31 Enjoying the Work That I Do

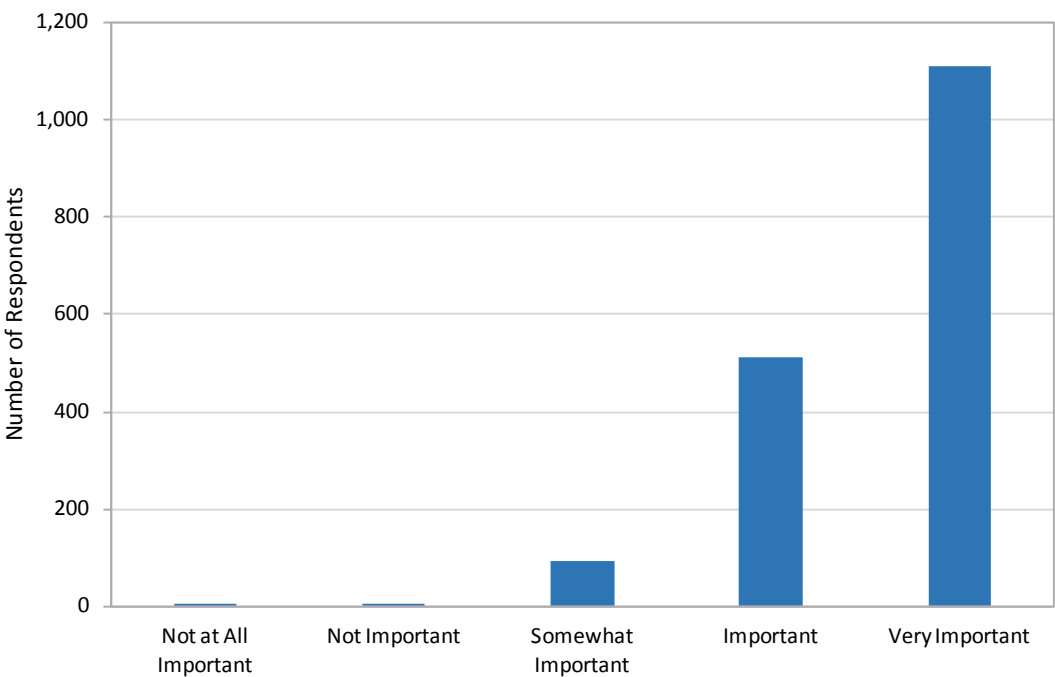
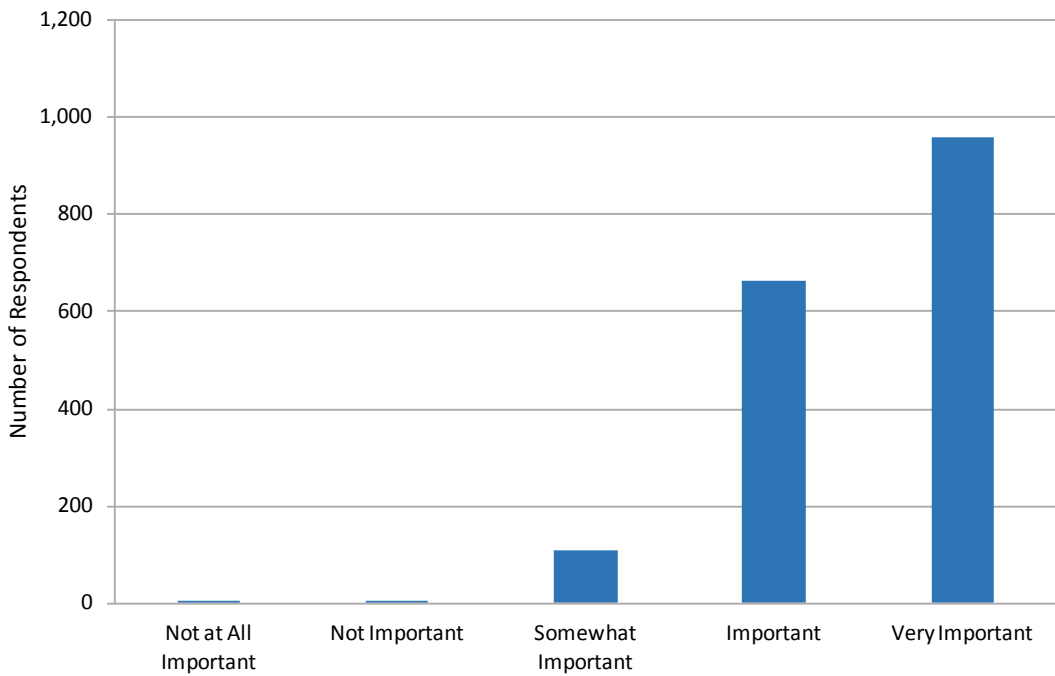


Figure 32 Working with People Who Are Qualified/Competent



Kenosha employees responding to the survey indicated that having a decent work/life balance is important to them (91.2 percent, or 1,600). Few (1.1 percent or 20) viewed this as having little importance, with 7.6 percent (134) indicating that having a good balance between life and work was somewhat important (see Figure 34).

Nearly 88 percent of the survey respondents (87.9 percent, or 1,531) viewed being in a workplace that is welcoming to everyone as important (see Figure 35). Remaining neutral are 9.9 percent (173) of the survey respondents, with 2.2 percent (38) of respondents indicating this is an unimportant aspect of a job.

Receiving feedback from supervisors was cited as another relatively important aspect of a job. Of those responding to the survey, 80.3 percent (1,393) ranked this as important, while 4.5 percent (78) view this as an unimportant aspect of a job. Remaining neutral are 15.2 percent (263) of the survey respondents (see Figure 36).

### How Well Employers Provide for Their Employees

In the next question, survey respondents were asked how much they agreed on how well their employer provides the following for them and their coworkers:

- My employer provides career advancement opportunities/ways to be promoted ( $N = 1,753$ )
- I am paid a fair wage for the work that I do ( $N = 1,752$ )
- My employer offers good benefits (for example, insurance, time off, retirement) ( $N = 1,747$ )
- My employer offers opportunities for long-term employment (job security) ( $N = 1,754$ )
- My employer does a good job of setting up work schedules (for example, flexible shifts, work from home) ( $N = 1,750$ )
- My employer, in general, has good managers/supervisors (for example, fair, willing to listen) ( $N = 1,747$ )
- The company provides a good workplace (for example, safety, physical setting) ( $N = 1,753$ )
- My employer provides the things that I need to do my job (for example, tools, equipment, technology) ( $N = 1,748$ )
- My company hires people who are qualified and competent to do the job ( $N = 1,751$ )
- Training/education opportunities are available to me ( $N = 1,748$ )
- My employer gives me opportunities to do the work that I do best ( $N = 1,745$ )
- My employer is located within a reasonable time and distance to/from home each day ( $N = 1,746$ )
- My company encourages me to balance my work and life, rather than having to choose between the two ( $N = 1,747$ )
- My company does a good job at offering a workplace that is welcoming to everyone ( $N = 1,747$ )
- The feedback that I get from my supervisor(s) not only helps me in my job, but also helps me grow as a person ( $N = 1,743$ )

Figure 33 Having a Reasonable Commute to/from Work

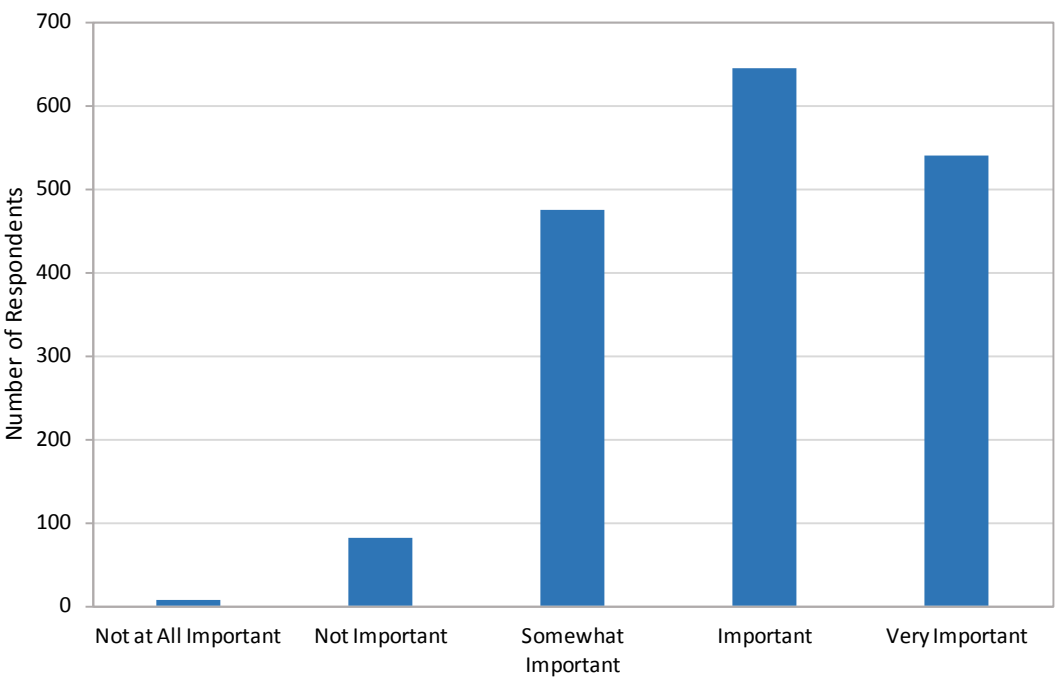


Figure 34 Having a Balance between Life/Work and Not Having to Choose

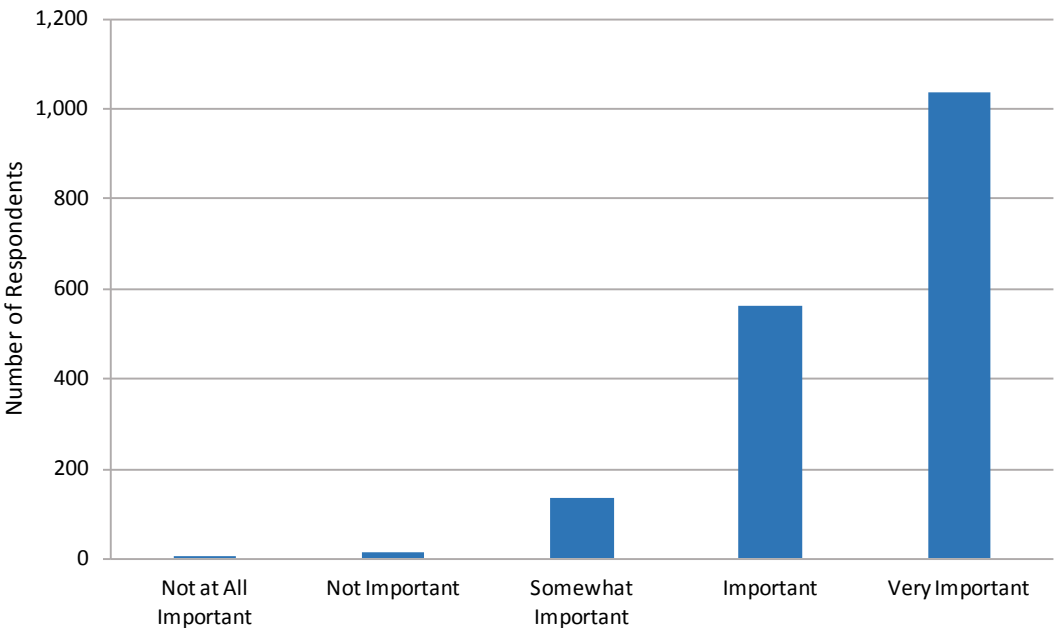


Figure 35 Being in a Workplace That Is Welcoming to Everyone

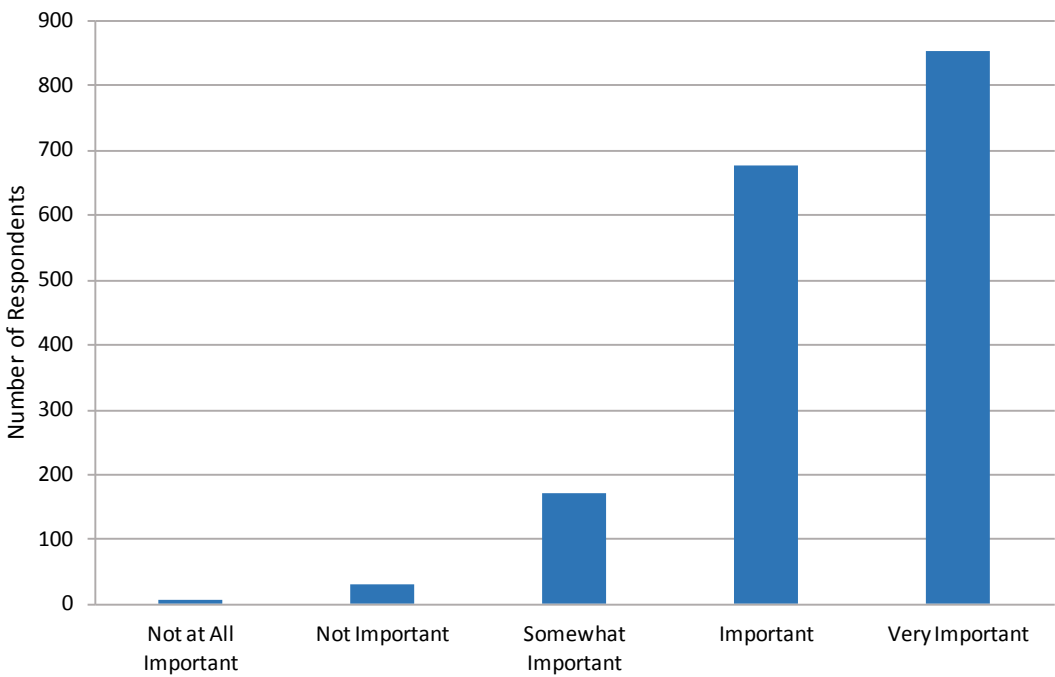
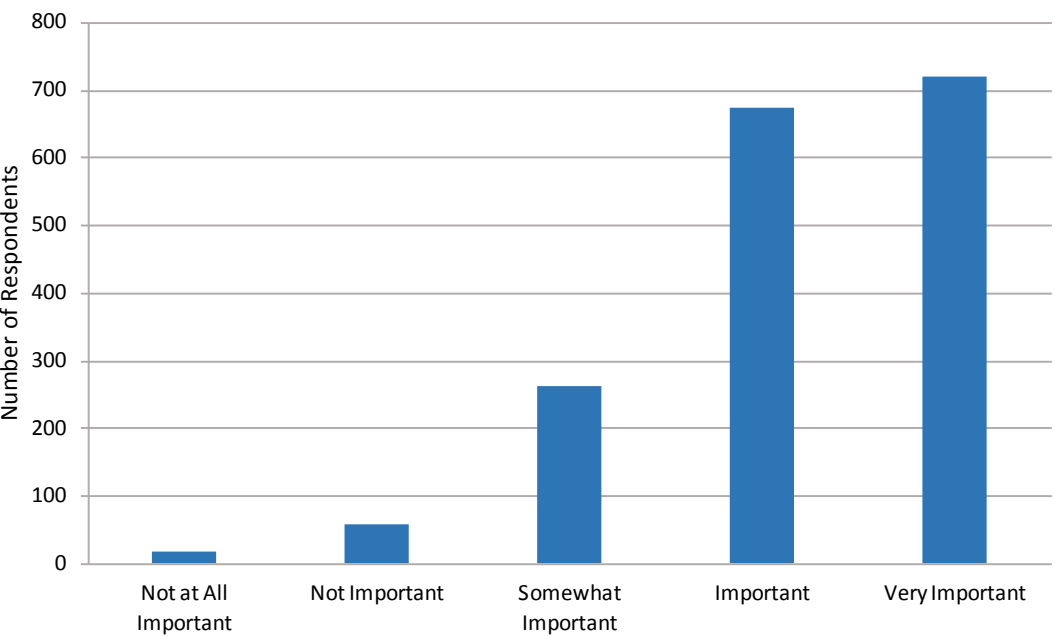


Figure 36 Feedback from Supervisors





On each of these questions, the employees were asked to rate them using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly agree.

The difference between this question and the previous one is subtle but important: the previous question asked about favorable attributes of “a job,” whereas this one asked about how their current employers do in providing these attributes. Unfortunately, the survey respondents were not as favorable with their rankings on this question as they were with the preceding question.

Overall, they favorably agreed that their commute to/from work each day was reasonable and that their employers provide a comfortable and safe work environment (see Table 9). The respondents indicated that they are reasonably satisfied that their employers offer good benefits, maintain the needed resources and technology for them to perform their jobs, and offer opportunities for long-term employment. The strongest element of dissatisfaction among Kenosha employees responding to the survey is with opportunities for career advancement.

**Table 9 Overall Rankings of Levels of Agreement on Job Characteristics by Survey Respondents**

Job Attributes/Characteristics	Overall Percent, as Ranked by Survey Respondents
Reasonable commute	87
Comfortable work environment	83
Good benefits	77
Have proper resources and technology	77
Long-term employment (job security)	75
Enjoying the work	73
Welcoming work environment	70
Training and education opportunities	68
Good manager or supervisor	65
Good coworkers	59
Flexible work schedule	56
Helpful feedback from supervisor	56
Fair wages for the job	54
Life/work balance	54
Career advancement opportunities	46

### Responses: How Well Employers Provide for Their Employees

Most of the employees responding to the survey (87 percent, or 1,514) indicated that their employers are located within a reasonable time and distance to/from their home (see Figure 37). Responding that they neither agreed nor disagreed were 8.1 percent (142), while 5.1 percent (90) indicated that they disagreed.

Figure 37 Employer Is Located a Reasonable Distance to/from Home Each Day

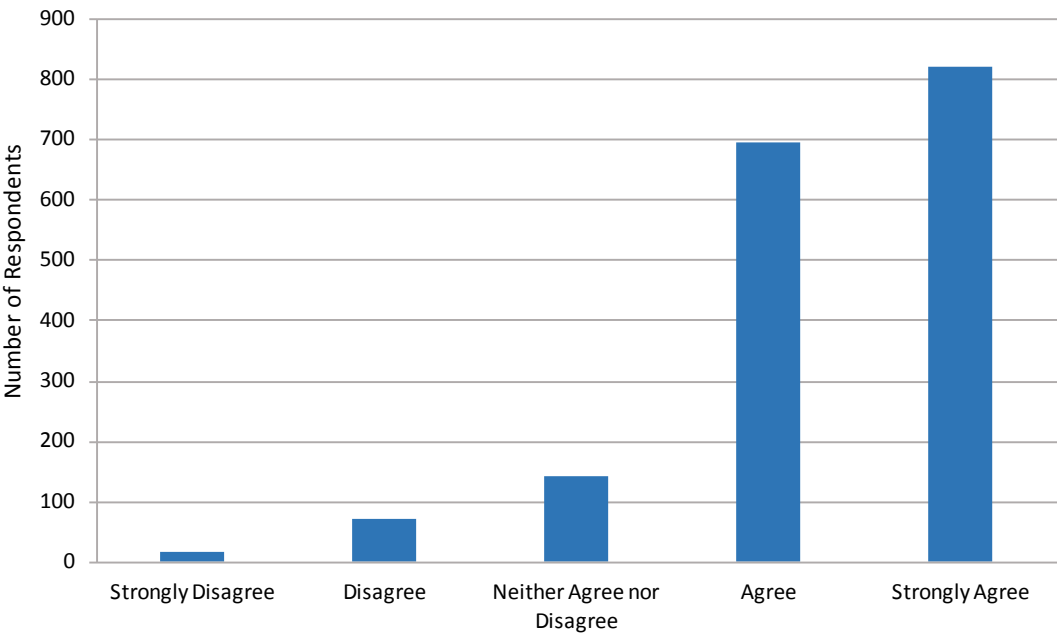
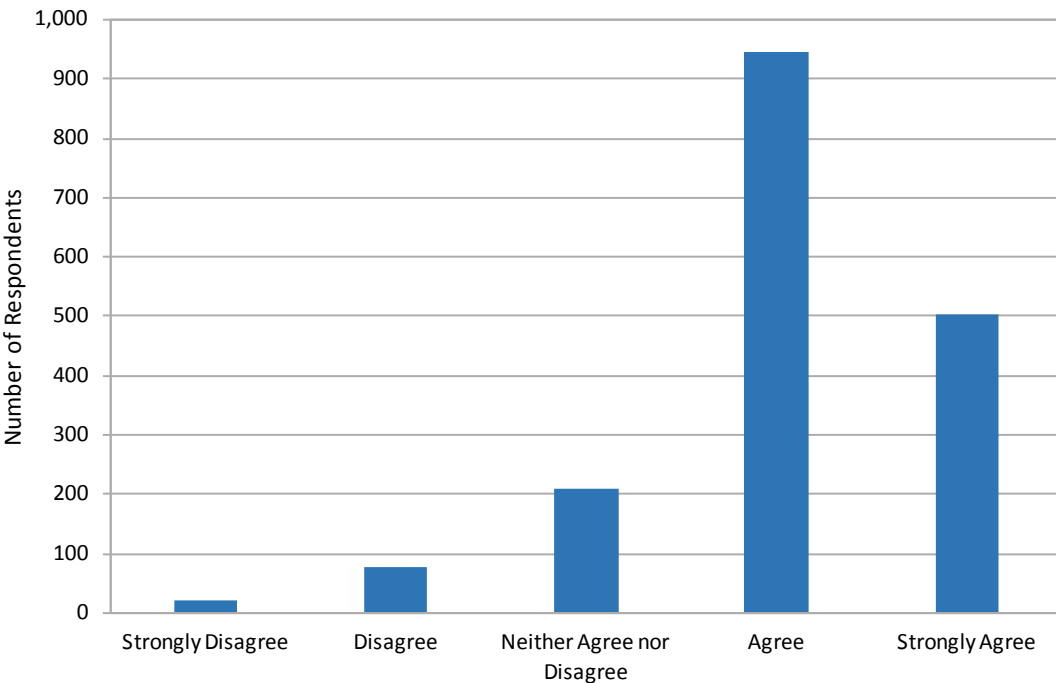


Figure 38 Company Provides a Good Physical Workplace Setting



The survey respondents also favorably agreed (82.5 percent, or 1,447) that their companies provide a good and safe workplace (see Figure 38). A total of 11.9 percent (208) of those responding to the survey remained neutral, with 5.6 percent (98) stating that they disagreed.

Those responding to the survey agreed overall that their employers provide the things needed to do their jobs, such as tools, equipment, and technology (77.4 percent, or 1,352). There were 8.4 percent (147) who indicated that they disagreed, whereas 14.2 percent (249) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Employees also favorably agreed that their employer offers good benefits (77 percent or 1,338), as well as opportunities for long-term employment (75 percent, or 1,311) (see Figures 39, 40, and 41). Of those responding to the survey, 14.7 percent (258) remained neutral, while 8.6 percent (151) disagreed that their employer offered good benefits. With regard to long-term employment opportunities, 17 percent indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed, while 8.2 percent (144) disagreed.

Employees were not in strong agreement (see Figure 42) that their companies provide career advancement opportunities for promotion (46 percent, or 801). One quarter of the respondents (25.4, percent, or 445) disagreed that advancement opportunities are provided by their employers, while 29 percent (507) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents had a less positive view about being paid a fair wage for their work (54 percent, or 947) and about whether their companies encourage them to balance their work and personal life (54 percent, or 943) (see Figures 43 and 44). With regard to being paid a fair wage, 19.4 percent (340) of respondents remained neutral, while 26.5 percent (465) did not feel that they are paid a fair wage. A total of 19.8 percent (346) disagreed that their employers encourage a stable work/life balance, and 26.2 percent (458) remained neutral.

**Figure 39 Employer Provides the Tools/Technology I Need to Do My Job**

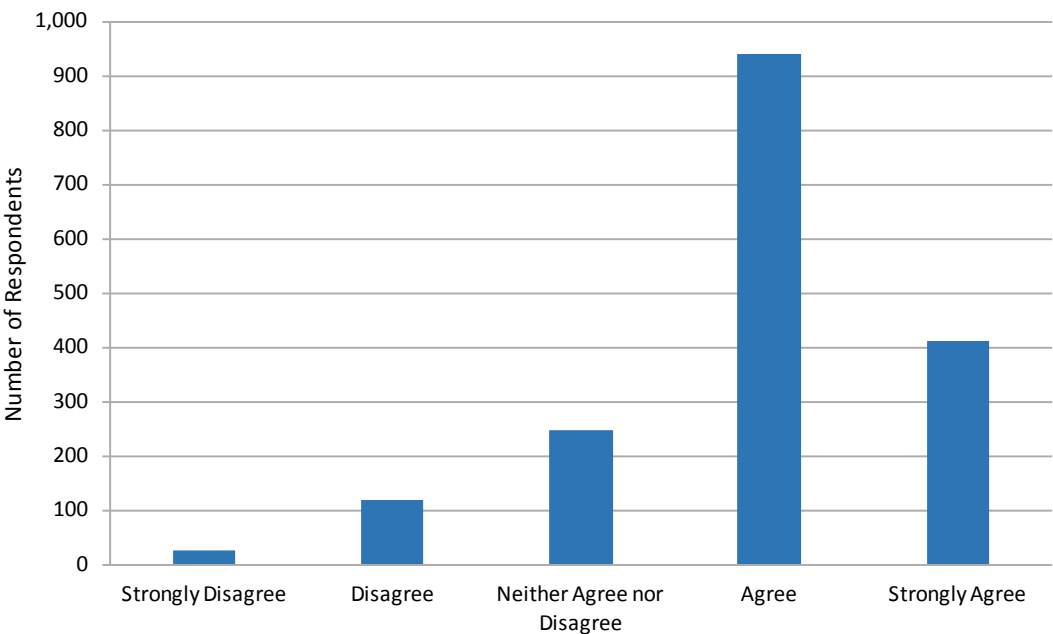


Figure 40 Employer Offers Good Benefits

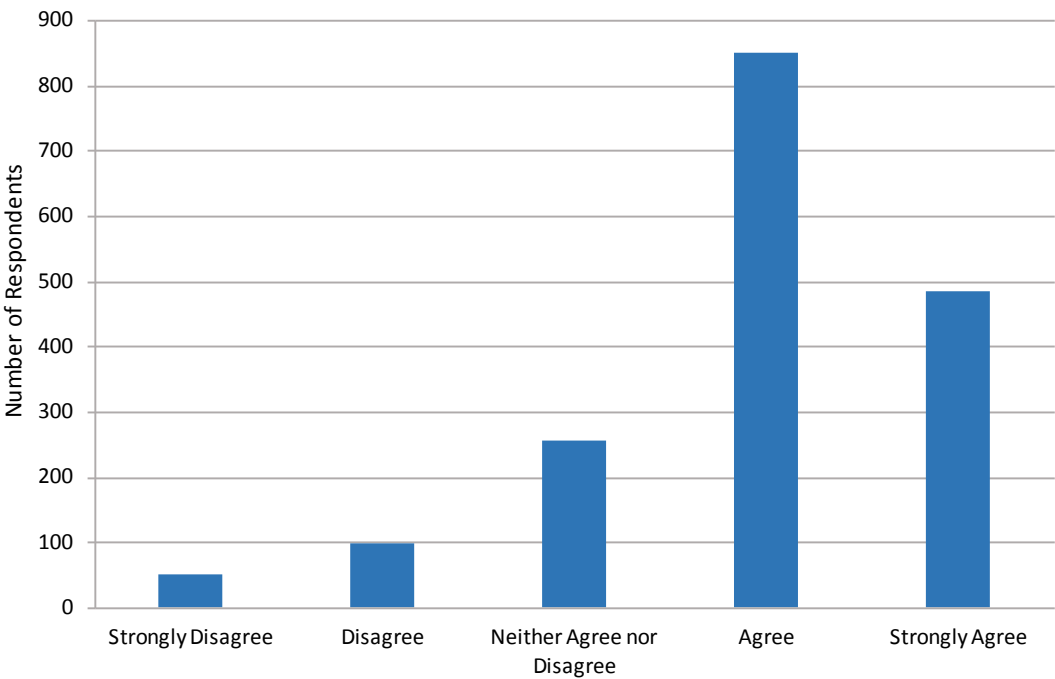


Figure 41 Employer Offers Opportunities for Long-Term Employment

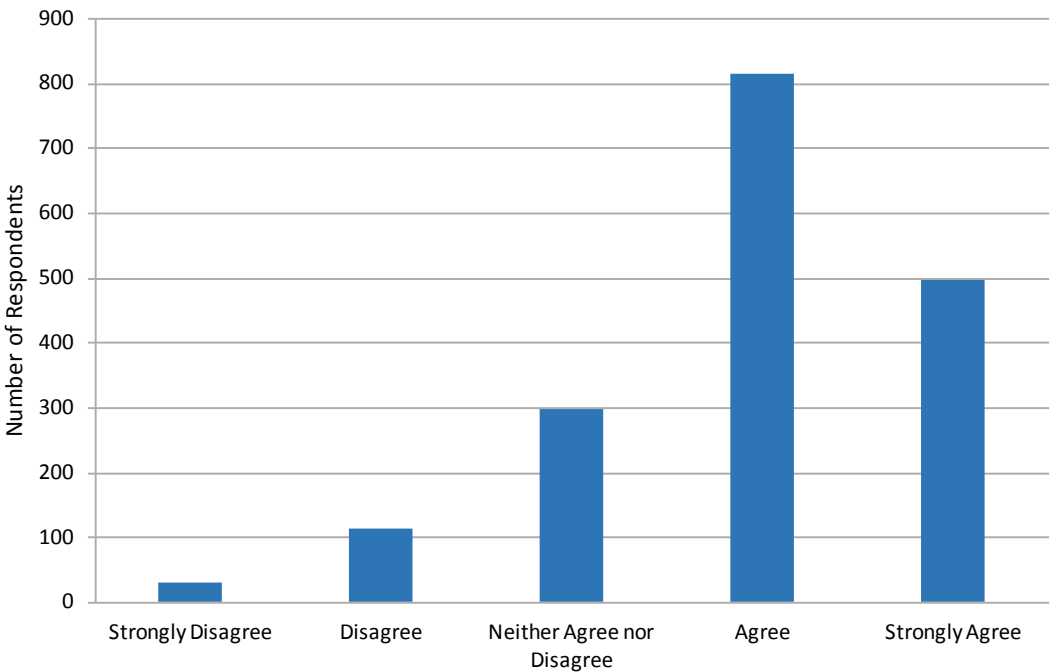


Figure 42 Employer Provides Advancement Opportunities

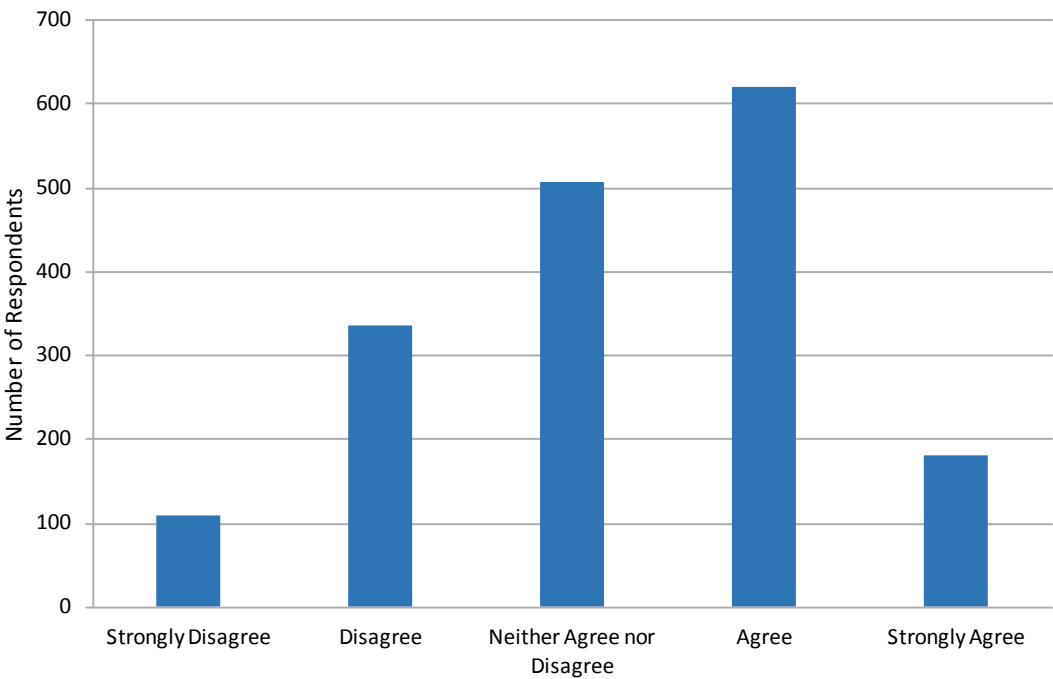


Figure 43 I Am Paid a Fair Wage for the Work That I Do

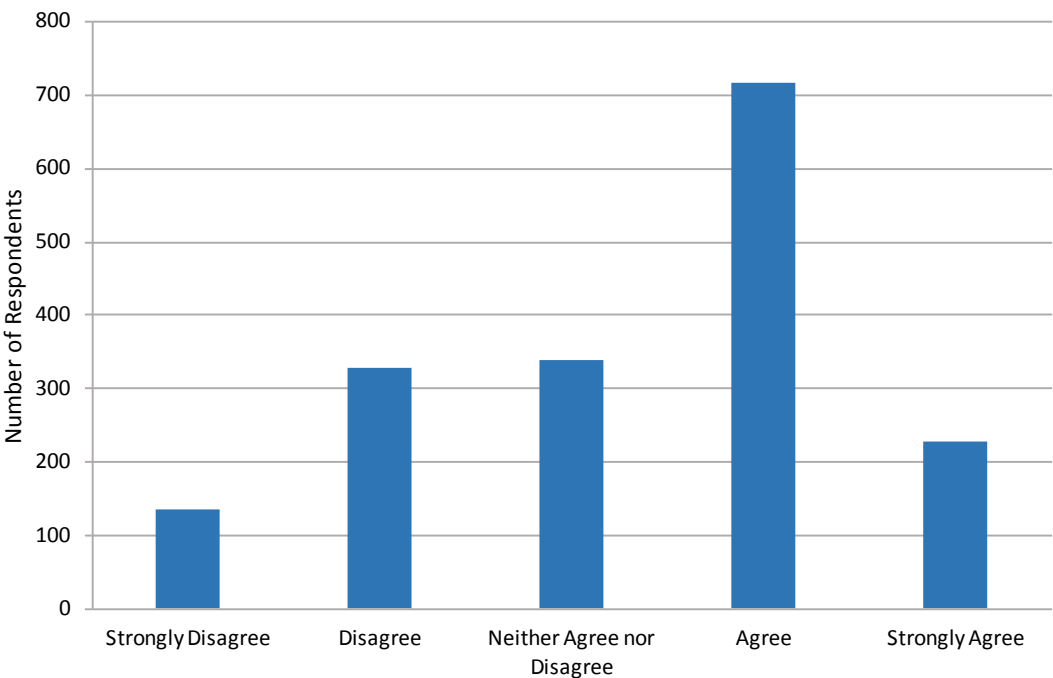


Figure 44 Employer Encourages Me to Balance My Work and Home Life

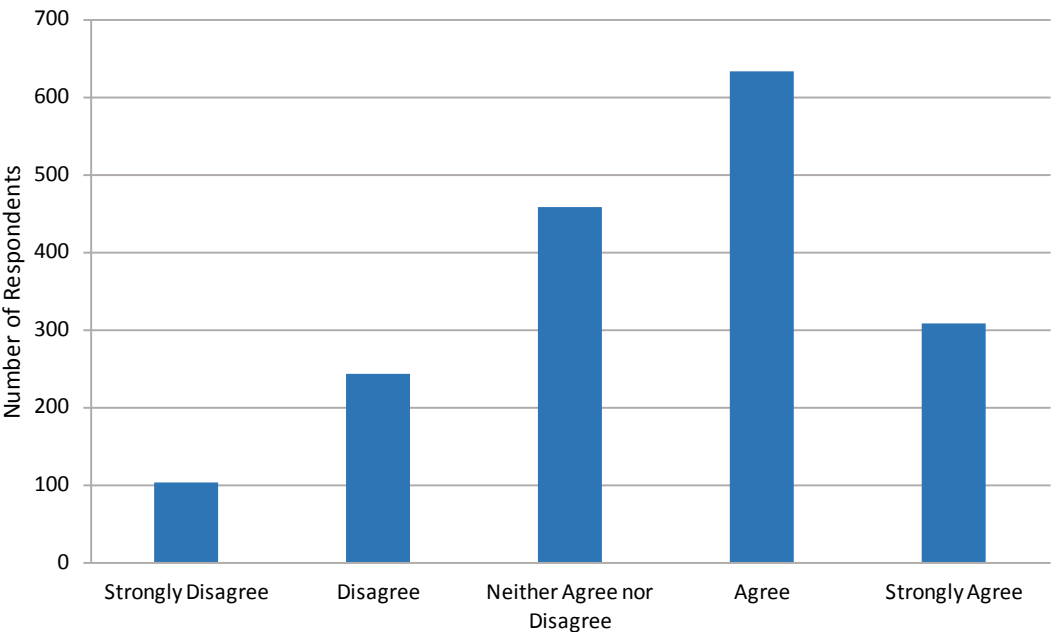
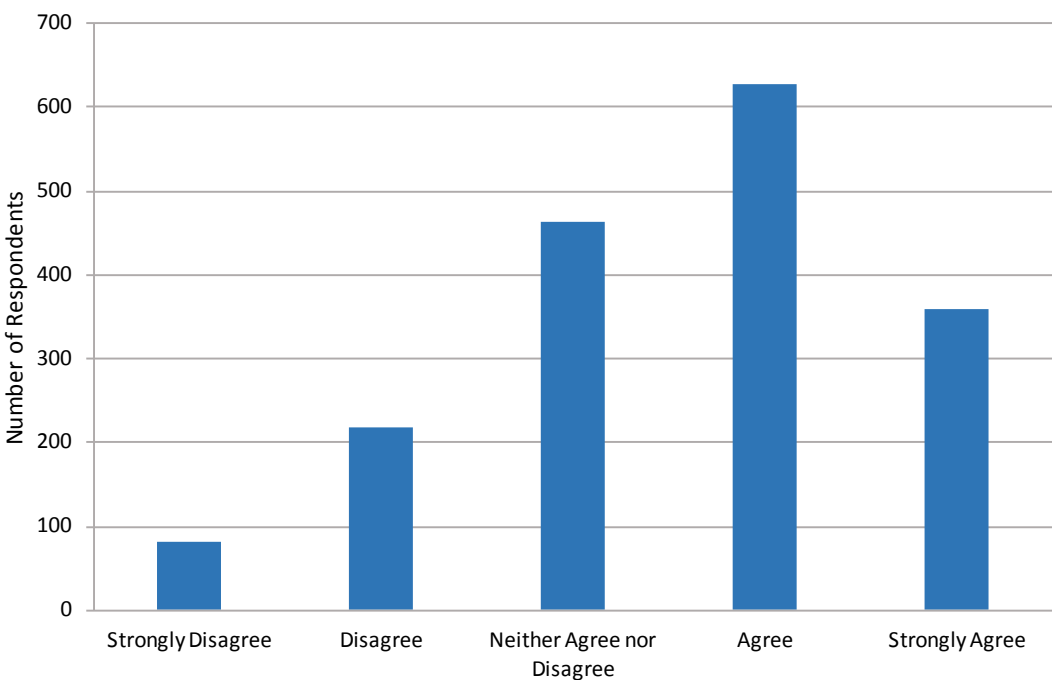
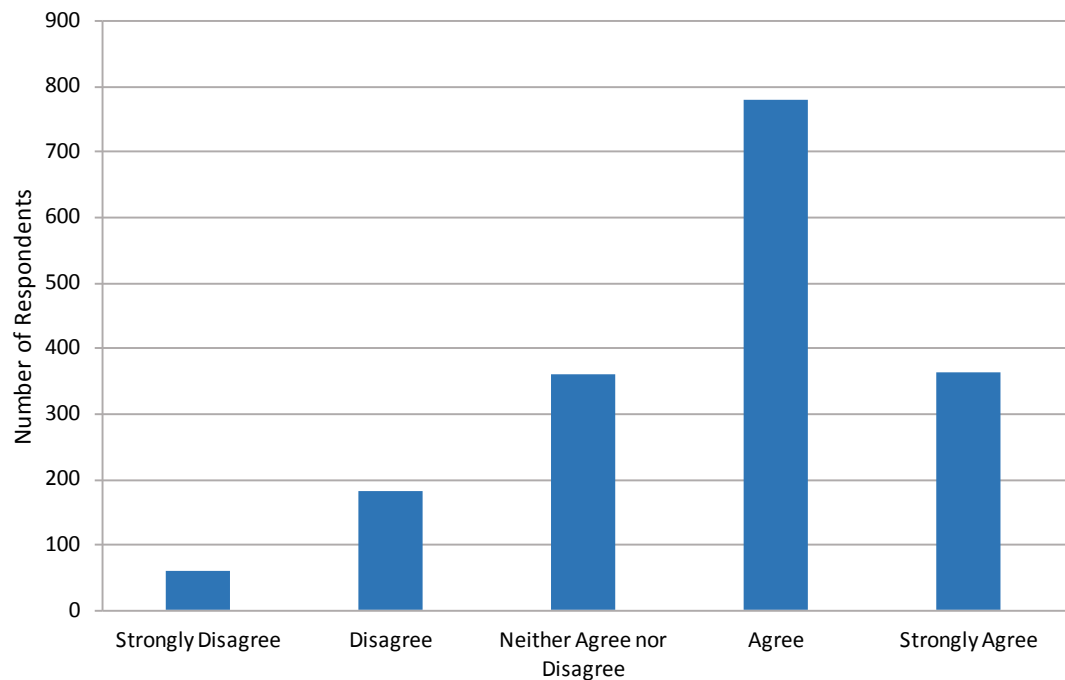


Figure 45 Employer Does a Good Job of Setting up Work Schedules





**Figure 46 Employer, in General, Has Good Managers/Supervisors**



The survey respondents were nearly evenly mixed on how their employers set up work schedules. More than half (56.4 percent, or 987) agreed on the flexibility of their work schedules, with 26.4 percent (463) remaining neutral and 17.1 percent (300) disagreeing (see Figure 45). A total of 65.4 percent (1,143) of respondents favorably agreed that their employers hire good managers and supervisors (see Figure 46). Remaining neutral were 20.7 percent (361), while 14 percent (243) disagreed altogether.

More than half of the survey respondents (58.5 percent, or 1,024) agreed that their companies hired workers who are qualified and competent to perform a job (see Figure 47). There were 28.6 percent (500) who neither agreed nor disagreed and 13 percent (227) who completely disagreed.

For the most part, the survey respondents agreed that their employers offer training and education opportunities for professional and skills development (see Figure 48). A total of 68 percent (1,189) of the employees responding to the survey were in agreement on the availability of training and education opportunities, while 11.5 percent (201) altogether disagreed. There were 20.5 percent (358) who remained neutral.

Receiving more favorable agreement from 73 percent (1,275) of respondents is that employers provide their employees with opportunities to do the work they do best (see Figure 49). There were 7.8 percent (137) of the respondents who did not agree and 19.1 percent (333) who neither agreed nor disagreed. Several of the survey respondents (70.5 percent, or 1,231) also highly agreed that their employers provide a workplace that is welcoming to all employees (see Figure 50). Remaining neutral were 20.6 percent (360), with 8.9 percent (156) disagreeing altogether.

Employees responding to the survey were somewhat mixed as to whether they receive helpful feedback from their supervisors. A total of 56.5 percent (985) of respondents (see

Figure 47 Company Hires People Who Are Qualified/Competent

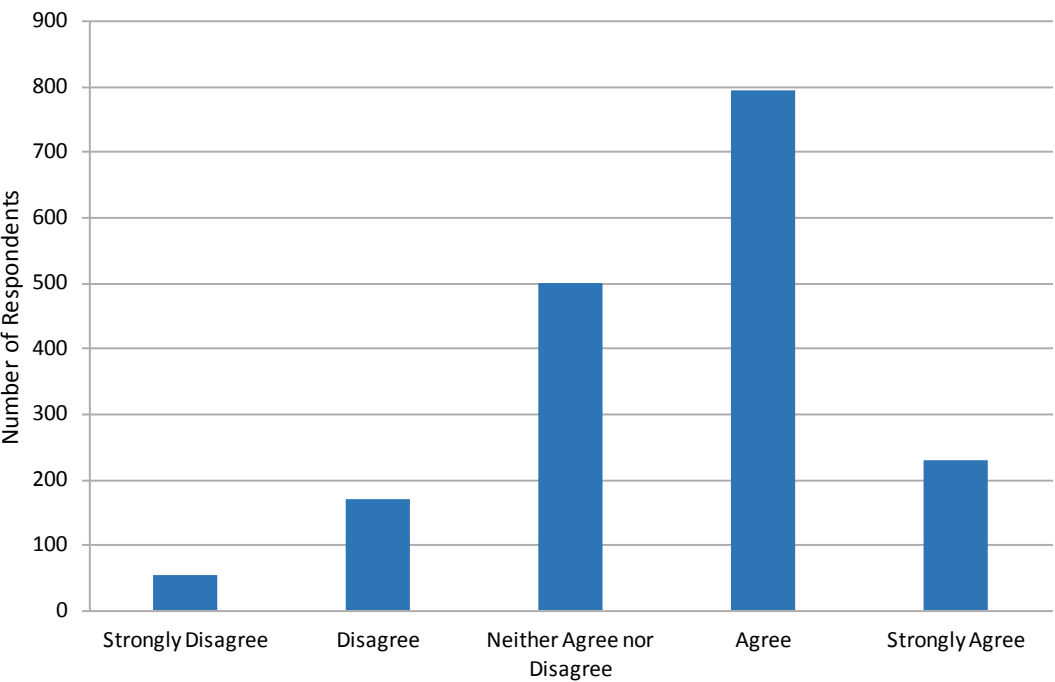


Figure 48 Training/Educational Opportunities Are Available to Me

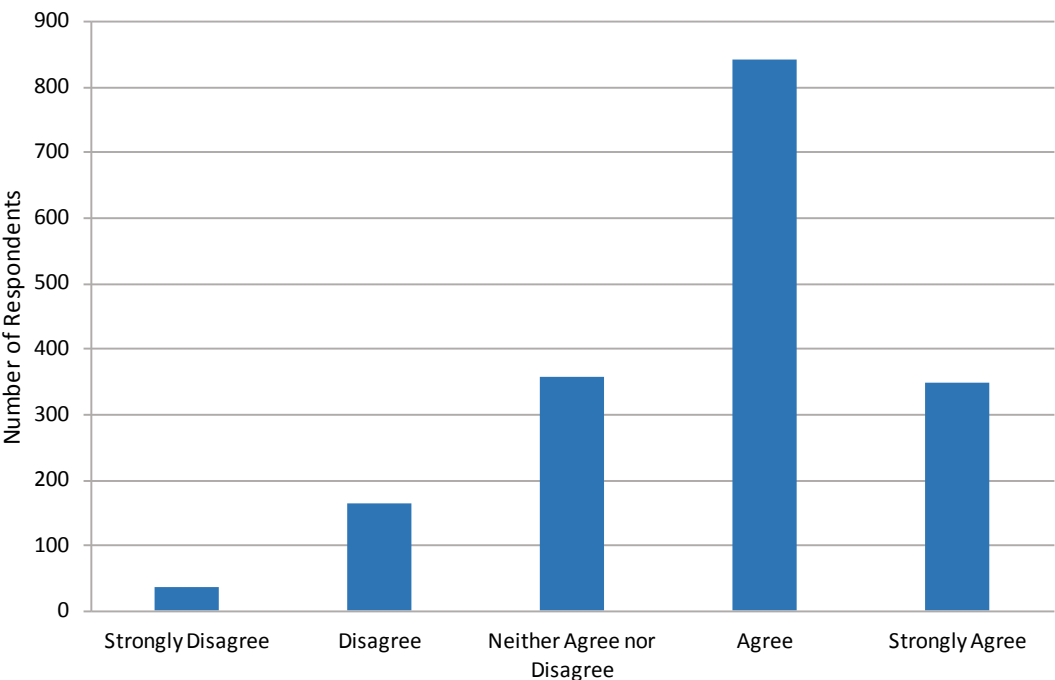


Figure 49 Employer Gives Me Opportunities to Do the Work I Do Best

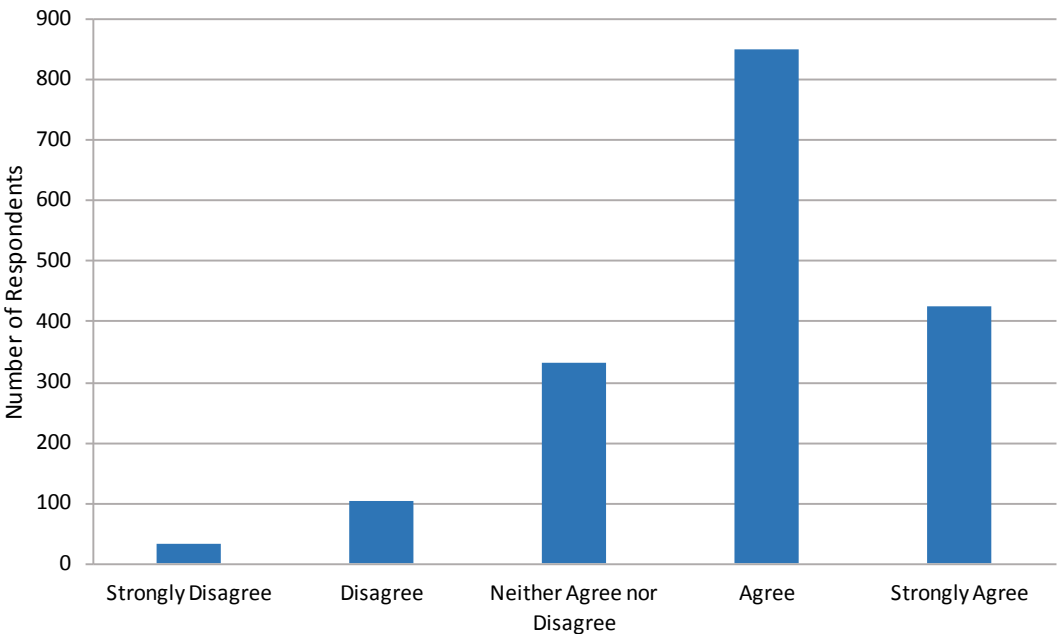


Figure 50 Company Offers a Workplace That Is Welcoming to Everyone

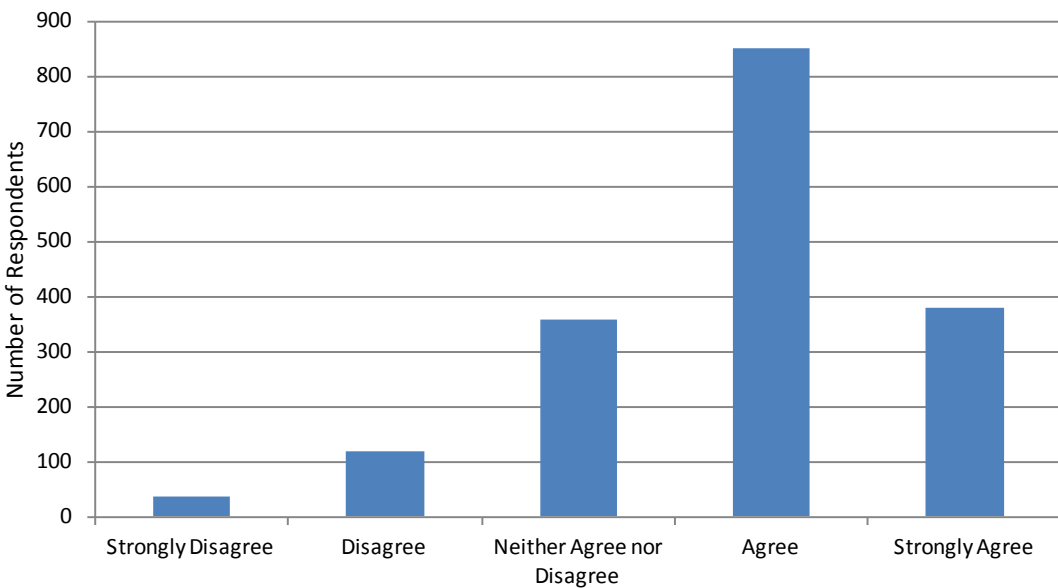


Figure 51 Feedback from Supervisors Helps Me Grow in My Job and As a Person

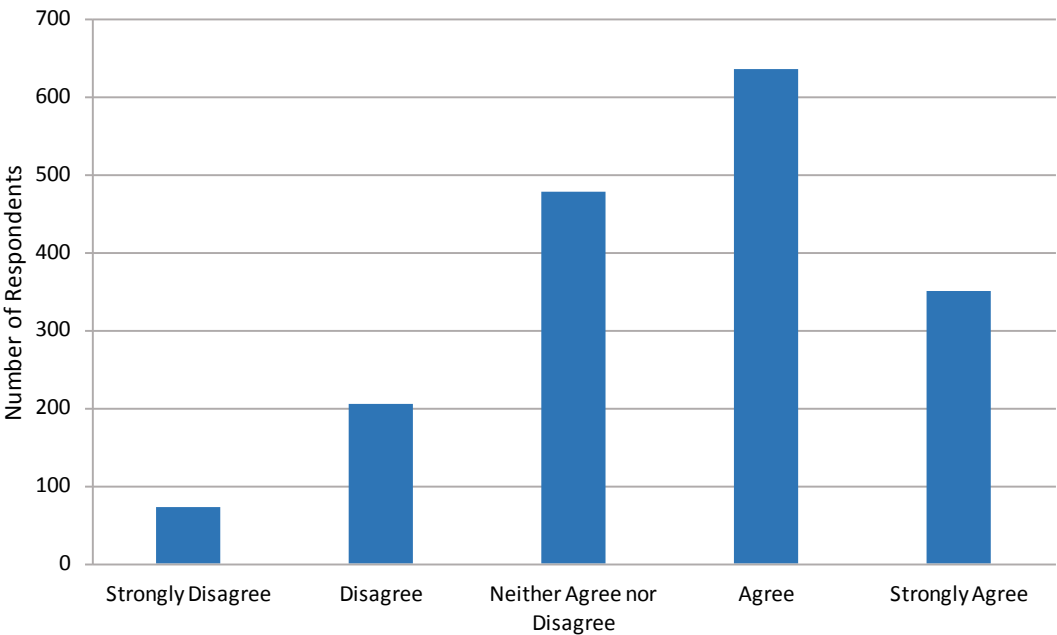


Figure 51) agreed that they received helpful feedback from their supervisors, while 16 percent (279) disagreed. Remaining neutral were 27.5 percent (479).

Are Employers Meeting Employee Expectations?

The key question to address from the analysis above is, are employers providing the attributes or conditions that employees identified as being key for a job? The answer is mixed, at best, as shown in Table 10. As stated above, 98 percent of the surveyed employees identified a fair wage as being “important” or “very important”; however, of those 98 percent, only 54 percent “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their current employers provide a fair wage. By far, this is the widest discrepancy between expectations and actual experience on the job. For example, surveyed employers did a better job of meeting the expectations of their workers for benefits: 96 percent said good benefits are “important” or “very important” for a job, and 77 percent of those employees “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the benefits provided by their employers are sufficient. The data show that surveyed employers are doing a good job of providing a comfortable work environment, providing training and education opportunities, and providing the right resources and technology for employees to do their jobs.

Given the harsh economic environment that many employers face in the marketplace, it is difficult for them to guarantee job security and raise wages; however, the survey results suggest that there are several workforce issues that can be addressed without too much expense that could have strong benefits for employees’ attitudes. First, the survey results do suggest that relationships between supervisory personnel and employees and between coworkers could be improved. Also, it is important for firms to address the importance of providing a proper life/work balance for their workers. Only 54 percent of the employees

who identified this as an “important” or “very important” issue for a job agreed or strongly agreed that their employers offered a healthy life/work balance. Such levels of dissatisfaction could result in “burn out” and higher turnover rates of some of the employers’ hardest-working employees.

**Table 10 Overall Rankings of Job Characteristics by Survey Respondents**

Job Attributes/Characteristics	Percent Listing a 4 or 5 (Important or Very Important) for a Job	Percent Who Gave Their Employers a 4 or 5 (Agreed or Strongly Agreed)
Fair wages for the job	98	54
Good benefits	96	77
Long-term employment (job security)	95	75
Good manager or supervisor	95	65
Enjoying the work	94	73
Good coworkers	93	59
Life/work balance	91	54
Comfortable work environment	90	83
Have proper resources and technology	90	77
Welcoming work environment	88	70
Flexible work schedule	85	56
Helpful feedback from supervisor	80	56
Training and education opportunities	76	68
Career advancement opportunities	69	46
Reasonable commute	68	87

## Examination of Key Target Segments of the Kenosha County Workforce

In the section below, the responses for five separate target groups were isolated and statistically tested. These target groups are millennials, creative professionals or “creative class” professionals, persons with graduate or professional degrees or highly educated workers, persons who indicated they earn more than \$75,000 annually, and production workers. There is a strong overlap among these segments; however, below we discuss what the statistical analysis revealed for these groups (see Table 11).

### Millennials

When considering “the future of work,” it is clear in both the academic and periodical literature that identifying the differences and needs of millennials compared to their older counterparts is a prominent topic. As we look at the existing national workforce, we see the baby boomers preparing to retire. Any growth in employment, as well as demand for replacement workers, will be met by the pool of millennial workers.

While the definition of “millennial” varies, a review of sources suggests that this group is defined by people born between 1980 (or in some definitions 1982) and the early 2000s (or

**Table 11 Important Characteristics of a Job and Level of Satisfaction in the Current Job: Statistically Significant Differences in the Responses of the Targeted Group and Other Workers Who Answered the Question**

	Millennial Age Group		Creative Class		High Education (Grad. Degree)		High Income (\$75K+)		Production Workers	
Job Attributes	Typical Job	Current Position	Typical Job	Current Position	Typical Job	Current Position	Typical Job	Current Position	Typical Job	Current Position
	+ = Target Group statistically more important or more satisfied at their current position; - = Significantly less important or less satisfied at their current position									
Career advancement	+	+		+	-			+	+	
Fair pay			-	+	-		-	+		
Good benefits			-				-	+		
Job security			-		-	-	-	+		
Work schedule		+			-	-	-			-
Good managers			-	+	-		-	+		-
Workplace comfort			-	+	-		-	+		-
Equipment/tools/supplies			-		-	-	-	+	+	-
Competent coworkers			-			+		+		-
Training/education possibilities	+		-		-	+	-	+	+	-
Job enjoyment	-				+	+		+		-
Reasonable commute		-	-		-	-	-		+	
Life/work balance			-	+	-	-	-	+		-
Welcoming workplace culture			-	+			-	+		-
Valuable feedback from supervisors		+			-		-	+		-

in some cases as early as 1995). For purposes of reporting these survey results, we adopt the generally accepted definition of 18- to 34-year-olds as millennials to identify this group of respondents from their older-responding counterparts.

In short, millennials are not very different from their older coworkers in terms of the attributes they look for in a job and with regard to their attitudes about their current positions and their residential location decisions. Most of their thoughts on the conditions or situations that help to make a job attractive tend to be fairly similar to older-age respondents. A more detailed analysis of millennial survey responses is included in a separate addendum to this report.

When describing the attributes millennials look for in a job, millennial expectations for fair wages and benefits were statistically similar to those of older workers. Opportunities for long-term employment were again similar to what older workers wanted to have in their jobs. Regarding the characteristics of the workplace, there was no statistical difference in the responses between the two groups in terms of the desire for a good work schedule, good supervision, enjoyment, a comfortable and culturally welcoming work environment, necessary resources to do their jobs, and good coworkers.

Not surprisingly, being younger, millennials have significantly higher expectations of having career advancement at a job. Just as important, they are more satisfied overall than older



workers about their opportunities for career advancement in their current positions. They also rate the importance of further training or education on the job statistically higher than older workers. Millennials are statistically more satisfied with their work schedules at their current jobs than are older workers. They are also more satisfied about the feedback they receive from their supervisors than older workers.

One explanation for the dearth of statistical differences in the attributes about work between millennials and their older coworkers is that millennials include all types of workers, from high skilled to low skilled, in different occupations and industries. The good news is that the evidence suggests that current employers are providing solid feedback to their younger workers and providing them with options to expand their careers.

### **Creative Class Professionals**

Since the publication of Richard Florida's book *The Rise of the Creative Class*, urban planners and economic developers have focused on attracting and retaining creative professionals. The power of this group of individuals is more than just income generation, although many are in well-paying careers. They are prized because of the culture and vitality they can generate for a regional economy.

Unfortunately, it has always been difficult to properly define the creative class; in this analysis, we include the nearly 500 respondents who are in Management, Business/Financial, Computer/Mathematical, Architecture/Engineering, Life/Physical/Social Science, Community/Social Service, Legal, and Arts/Design/Entertainment/Sports/Media occupations. These occupational categories were derived by the Upjohn Team, based on the occupational groupings of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service.

When compared to other survey respondents, the members of these "creative" occupations do have statistically different views about the attributes of a job and the work conditions at their current employers. Surprisingly, their expectations of career advancement on the job were no different from that of individuals in other occupations; however, they are more satisfied with the career advancement opportunities in their current jobs than are other workers. The "creative class" workers in the county are also more satisfied with their current wages than others, although to them, getting a fair wage is not an important characteristic of a job. Compared to those not employed in creative class occupations, they are less interested in wages and benefits, job security, good management, training, life/work balance, and other characteristics when considering a job.

Fortunately, in addition to being more satisfied about their current wages than workers in other occupations, these employees are more satisfied about their managers, working conditions, and life/work balance than other workers. In short, county employers get a good report card from these surveyed employees. This is important because it is believed that these highly prized individuals are more mobile than other workers and are the very workers that many communities are trying to attract.

### **Highly Educated Workers**

There may be a perception that there is substantial overlap between respondents who are labeled as being in the creative class and those who have a graduate or professional degree. As this research is reviewed, two questions are likely to come to mind: First, what is "highly educated," and second, how similar is the highly educated group to the creative class group? The first question is easily answered by looking the survey responses to Question

16, “highest education level.” While the responses ranged from “did not graduate from high school” to “Ph.D.,” only those with education beyond a bachelor’s degree (graduate degree or Ph.D.) are included in the highly educated study group. Of the total 1,711 respondents who provided a response to education and occupation, 473 have a graduate degree and 494 represent the creative class group. When these two groups intersect or overlap, the total number of respondents is 133, or about 28 percent of those with a graduate degree, and 27 percent of those are in the creative class. While not a statistical assessment in any way, slightly less than 75 percent of the “highly educated” are also not part of the creative class.

When compared to lower-educated workers, workers with advanced degrees have surprisingly lower expectations about work. In fact, according to their survey responses, they value less than other workers career advancement opportunities, higher wages, good work environment, having the right equipment and technology, job security, good work schedules, good supervisors, a balanced work/life environment, and training and education opportunities.

At the same time, this group’s satisfaction with their current employers is mixed relative to other workers. At their current positions, their levels of satisfaction with career opportunities and wages provided by their current employer are no different from other workers. They are more likely to agree and strongly agree that their current employers have hired competent coworkers and provide good training/education opportunities. Moreover, they enjoy their jobs more than other workers. At the same time, however, compared to other workers, they are also more dissatisfied with their employer’s lack of providing a good life/work balance on the job, job security, and work schedules.

On other issues, their ranking of their current employment is not different from that of other workers. Their ranking of their current relationship with their supervisor and workplace environment is statistically the same as other workers.

### High-Income Workers

As with highly educated workers and those with creative class occupations, there is a strong overlap between high-earning workers, highly educated workers, and being part of the creative class. The major exceptions are workers in the skilled trades, such as machinists and plumbers, and individuals who have advanced in their careers with only a bachelor’s degree. We define high income as anyone who responded that they made more than \$75,000 annually. Unfortunately, the survey question did not specifically request an annual salary, so we do not know if the respondents were stating his/her income only or his/her total household income. Regardless, \$75,000 is well above the median household income for the nation, which was \$54,000 in 2014.

In short, the county employers are creating an excellent environment for these workers. In general, the survey respondents had lower expectations than others regarding their attributes with work and are more satisfied with their current positions. Their expectations of a fair wage and good benefits at a job were significantly lower than other workers, and they statistically are more pleased with their current pay and benefits package. They are more satisfied than other workers about the career opportunities, job security, management, and work environment at their current positions.

It is impossible to know if high-income workers across the nation are in general a more satisfied group of individuals. Nevertheless, given that these individuals are likely to be serving in key and productive positions, the level of satisfaction they are getting from Kenosha employers is extremely positive.

### Production Workers

Since Kenosha County remains a strong production center, it is also important to identify the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the county’s work environment for its production workers. Of course, we do not know if the surveyed employers represent an unbiased sample of production locations in the county.

Still, the findings provide a glimpse of the work environment for the production workers in the county.

First, surveyed production workers' views on wages and benefits are no different from that of non-production workers. This is somewhat surprising since evidence indicates that overall county wages in production are lower than in surrounding counties and the state. However, on most all other aspects of their current positions, production workers are statistically less satisfied than non-production workers. They are less satisfied with scheduling, management, workplace environment, training opportunities, coworkers, and life/work balance. Because many of these negative perceptions could impact turnover, this is an important finding. It suggests that management could address key issues with which production workers are most dissatisfied, without necessarily raising wages and without losing some of their competitiveness.

# Overall Recommendations

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The first and clearest finding of our examination of Kenosha County is that it can be sold as a success story. It has rebounded from severe industrial restructuring caused by the loss of American Motors and Chrysler. Evidence suggests that ongoing economic development efforts in the county have been successful: both the unemployment rate and the poverty level are low, and employment growth and business and residential development are strong. The market for both office space and industrial/distribution space appears to be relatively healthy. This is especially the case with KABA's announcement that developers are going to invest in more than 100,000 additional square feet of space. An investment such as this will increase the attractiveness of Kenosha County, as there is a lack of quality 50,000–100,000 square foot space across the country that is ready for occupancy.

At the same time, Kenosha County, like every community, can make further improvements. The following recommendations are listed in terms of feasibility:

- 1. Work with county employers to be more aggressive and effective in their employment outreach efforts, especially with their online presence.**

This is NOT to say that Kenosha County employers are not posting their job openings online. When adjusted for its share of regional employment, Kenosha County employers are just as active in posting jobs as employers in Lake and Racine counties; Lake County simply houses more employment opportunities that would attract Kenosha County residents looking for advancement. Still, it is possible that the Kenosha County residents who do want to shorten their commutes may simply be unaware of the employment opportunities in the county. Seminars for employers on the “dos and don’ts” of online job postings should be encouraged. However, we strongly encourage employers to state their education and training requirements when posting job openings. This will not only reduce the number of unqualified applicants through which employers would have to wade but, more importantly, it will increase the information flow to both job seekers and training providers, regardless of the education/training requirements for employment.

We do not recommend the development of a web-based Kenosha Job Site, as we have found that such sites do not generate sufficient visitors to be effective and they quickly become out-of-date.

When seeking to attract talent, Kenosha area employers need to first evaluate their company branding strategy and assess how well that strategy is communicated to prospective employees. What makes the company unique or particularly attractive? Once clearly and succinctly identified, that information should be consistently and universally included in all job posting and employee search strategies. Many job postings only speak to the duties and requirements of the role. Little, if any, information is provided that attracts employees to the company itself. By sending a consistent message regarding its unique attributes as an employer, a company greatly increases its ability to attract talent.

When creating employee search strategies or job postings that may be viewed outside the Kenosha area, employers should also include information that speaks to Kenosha and promotes what makes Kenosha an attractive place to live. Through the employer workshops conducted by the Upjohn Team, the Kenosha area was consistently identified as having a strong sense of community, high quality of life, and low cost of living, and as having access to two major metropolitan areas. These attributes make Kenosha area employers unique to employers in other parts of the country. Job postings and employee search strategies should capitalize on this and include this information as a consistent part of its message.

Kenosha area human resources professionals need to stay up to date with on-line talent platforms. Due to continuous advances in technology, tools and resources available to recruit talent on-line are constantly changing. For example, a few years ago LinkedIn was a relatively unknown resource for professionals to connect with each other. Today, LinkedIn is the largest on-line talent platform in the world, with over 364 million members. Any recruitment strategy seeking to attract top talent should include the most relevant and widely used on-line platforms as part of its strategy.

Finally, Kenosha area employers need to insure that they are working closely with other area agencies that could provide assistance with recruiting and attracting talent to the area. For example, several real estate firms across the United States have developed relocation divisions. A relocation team can provide employers and prospective candidates with a plethora of information to promote the area. Some will custom design materials to specifically address questions or particular points of interest important to candidates. Many do this at no cost as a service to the community. Types of services offered often include phone consultations, customized relocation guides, community tours, school information, community profiling and comparison information, transitional and permanent housing information, and partner (trailing partner/spouse) employment assistance information.

**2. Kenosha area human resources professionals need to stay up to date with online talent platforms.**

Due to continuous advances in technology, tools and resources available to recruit talent online are constantly changing. Any recruitment strategy seeking to attract top talent should include the most relevant and widely used online platforms as part of its strategy.

**3. Prepare seminars that both present the findings of the Kenosha County employee survey and recommend best practices from human resources experts on creating a productive and rewarding workplace.**

Kenosha County provides a highly competitive business location due in large part to its relatively low wages and cost of living, especially regarding its housing prices. At the same time, its employers are facing a higher turnover rate than the rest of the state. We recommend that seminars/workshops be conducted for county employers, which would do the following:

- a. Show the hidden costs of high turnover rates. The true costs of training new workers, the loss of productivity and quality of service caused by turnover, and the administrative costs of managing turnover are not routinely measured and can be costly.
- b. Suggest how to create an attractive workplace environment that enhances the retention of good workers. While wages and benefits are important, they are not the only factors that keep individuals on the job.
- c. Offer ways in which employers could promote the assets of living and working in the Kenosha community and region to their employees, in an effort to reinforce the quality-of-life aspects that would encourage them to remain in the county. Ideas for promoting the Kenosha region could be adopted as part of the company's human resources processes.

Companies could utilize many of the same promotional methods used by downtown associations, chambers of commerce, and tourism associations to

inspire employees to explore the region. In fact, these types of agencies would be beneficial partners in developing quality-of-life awareness initiatives for employees. What literature could companies make available to their employees on seasonal and year-round regional activities? Working with partnering agencies, are there retail coupons and/or event promotions that could be extended to employees to encourage them to investigate the region? Are there public events (such as farmers' markets and health fairs) where the company could staff a booth with employee volunteers? Are there downtown or area promotions where companies could sponsor or offer discounts to its employees (such as dining "nights out" or shopping days or "nights out")?

Several companies demonstrate corporate citizenship or corporate social responsibility, where the company's goals and objectives include a strong commitment to the sustainability of a community. Today, companies are more actively leading and participating in community-sponsored initiatives and events, and it is their employees who are carrying out and contributing to these quality-of-life efforts. Encouraging and building a sense of corporate citizenship within the workplace is another strategy to introduce and connect employees to the community and the region.

#### **4. Develop targeted industry career fairs**

Targeted industry career fairs are unique, invitation-only, two-day events that seek to connect job seekers interested in specific fields with employers from a single target industry. The first day's activities are intended to prepare attendees for meeting with employers on day two. Day one includes training and an overview of skills for which employers in the targeted industry are looking. Training includes, but is not limited to, job previews, employability workshops, and mock interviews. Industry-specific employers from the surrounding area are invited to participate on day two. Participating employers must have current vacancies they are seeking to fill.

Industry-specific career fairs are for job seekers who are relatively job ready. Participants are required to register in advance, submit a professional resume, and complete an application. Once registered, participants are given a ticket to present for admittance to day one.

Job seekers must show up at an appointed time on day one, dress in interview-appropriate attire, and present a resume. The importance of the first day is that the registration and participation requirements communicate the level of commitment expected and provide a more committed job seeker for consideration to participating employers.

Again, participating targeted employers must have current vacancies to fill. We have found that employers are more willing to participate in these events because they attract a higher level of job applicant due to the registration and day one requirements. The goal is for employers to be able to interview job seekers and offer positions at or soon after the two-day event.

#### **5. Increase the employability skills of the county's existing workforce.**

It is likely that the employment situation in the county remains tight; therefore, county employers will be increasingly challenged in retaining workers who face serious employment barriers. Lack of quality child care and reliable transportation, health issues, and other family responsibilities can cause good workers to be unable to complete their tasks. For employers facing these issues, we recommend assessing



soft skills development as part of the hiring process and adopting soft skills development as part of the company culture.

Kenosha area employers identified lack of soft skills as a significant weakness in the employee population. Soft skills are commonly thought of as interpersonal skills and can include, but are not limited to, positive attitude, work ethic, communication, listening, following directions, time management, problem solving, conflict resolution, and understanding workplace expectations.

To improve the soft skills of their workforces, it is recommended that Kenosha employers assess soft skills development as part of their application process. Soft skills can be evaluated through a variety of means. This requires effort on the part of the employer, but the payoff is significant for those employers willing to invest in the process. Typically, limited soft skills are identified as a most significant concern regarding entry-level or lower-skilled employees. This is also the group that most employers tend to spend the least amount of resources and time assessing. To accurately assess soft skills, employers should use open-ended questions or scenario questions when interviewing whenever possible to assess an individual's ability to communicate, as well as respond to everyday situations they may encounter on the job. An example of an open ended question that assesses interpersonal skills is, "If I talked to people who have worked with you in the past, what would they say about you?" An example of a scenario question that would assess conflict resolution is, "A customer approaches you angrily, stating they are unhappy with the service you provided. What would you do?"

Group applicant interviewing and assessment activities are shown to effectively screen for soft skills and improve retention. After an initial application or resume screen, employers who use this type of process invite a number of applicants, typically 10–20, to participate in a half-day or day-long experience. Invited applicants are required to show up at an appointed time and dress appropriately. At the event, they learn about the company, job, and workplace expectations and have the opportunity to ask questions. They may participate in small group activities. Applicants participate in an interview as part of the experience, usually with more than one team member. The entire time, the applicant group is being evaluated throughout the process. Obviously, this type of assessment process requires time and effort on the part of the employer, but it has been shown to significantly increase retention of those employees who are hired through such a process.

Once hired, it is recommended that Kenosha area employers implement supports that assist their employees in soft skills development. There are many curriculums available that teach soft skills. If an employer is interested in utilizing a tool, employer human resources professionals should review the resources available and select that which best fits the needs of the company. However, training has been shown to only go so far in developing soft skills. The best way to develop soft skills is to allow opportunities for the employee to practice and receive feedback. Employers should identify which soft skills are critical for the success of their employees and regularly monitor and discuss these as part of employee evaluation processes. Managers and supervisors should be trained how to coach soft skills development.

Finally, it is likely that the Kenosha area workforce development system, as well as local community colleges, also provides soft skills training programs. It would be beneficial for the community to audit the resources available from different service providers, and to then develop a process for integrating resources to best meet the needs of area employers and employees.

**6. Work to improve public school performance related to community engagement, community alignment, and school resource enhancement to promote a college and career going culture for K-12.**

We are aware of KABA's ongoing, strong focus on facilitating and encouraging the business and education communities to work together to better coordinate training programs to meet the needs of businesses. The strategies set forth in *Kenosha First: An Economic Strategy for Kenosha County, the Next Phase* are still sound and timely.

In addition, we strongly endorse and support Gateway Technical College's Gateway Promise program, which will provide crucial "gap funding" for students, where available financial aid simply does not cover the cost of going to college. The community might also want to explore this current design and consider a more universal model to impact college-going and alignment that could be more transformative.

We want to restate that a strong urban core school system not only serves as an economic development attraction and retention tool, it also serves as a mechanism to strategically create a talent pipeline from K-12 and with the transitions to higher education. Certainly academic rigor can improve, particularly related to the differentiated achievement gaps across socioeconomic groups. Moreover, to be successful, this strategy is not entirely a school system responsibility but, rather, a joint effort concerning community alignment. A district- and community-wide approach to improve academic rigor inclusive of an integrated tutoring effort, summer school, and structured extended-day opportunities have all been found to help increase student outcomes; grade-level curriculum options integrate career and college awareness; and business speakers, adopt-a-classroom, job shadowing, mentorships, internships, and industry tours all help students make their school-based time relevant and purposeful, as well as introduce and offer opportunities to further practice soft skills. Additionally, the integration of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) options can increase academic rigor. To help promote a college and career-going culture for K-12, we suggest the following:

- a. Explore the feasibility of expanding the Gateway Promise program to a four-year scholarship program.** The development of a universal Promise Scholarship Program is truly a community-wide initiative. Across the nation, there are many different approaches that are designed to address different concerns.

If talent development is a goal, along with meeting the needs of the business community and providing career pathways for existing students, the Gateway Promise is an excellent vehicle.

If talent attraction is also a goal, then a more generous, universal four-year scholarship program should be considered. A four-year universal program is not needs-based, which means that it will not be mistakenly categorized as strictly an anti-poverty program. All students are eligible, regardless of income, and can use the scholarship to attend a four-year university. In Kalamazoo County, evidence shows that because of the Kalamazoo Promise, more families are staying in the Kalamazoo public school district, and the students are performing better academically.

Universal four-year scholarship programs are expensive and require strong community participation. To have a long-term impact, residents,

especially households with small children, must be assured that funding for the scholarship is secured for the foreseeable future. The incentive of a paid college scholarship may not be enough for a family that is dealing with numerous economic and social barriers. Community support must be provided for students in all grades. Nevertheless, recent research has shown that benefits in terms of the improved lifelong earnings of the students more than pay for the cost for the Kalamazoo Promise universal program. The present value of lifetime earnings rises by 4.7 times Promise costs paid, for a break-even rate of return of 11.3 percent. In short, the program is cost-effective, and this is true even though it does not target academically successful students or student in need.

- b. Explore career-ladder opportunities within companies to retain employees.** As described previously in the report's Talent Development section, opportunity for advancement is one of the most critical factors in supporting employee retention. This is proven by research as well as by responses received to the employee survey. The opportunity to advance within a company is most important for younger workers, generations X and Y. It is recommended that Kenosha area employers investigate and develop both formal and informal career ladder opportunities within their companies. A career ladder is a clear path that shows employees the training, experience, and performance that is needed to advance within a company, as well as what those future advancement opportunities are.

As part of a career ladder process, employers should consider implementing a merit-based pay system. Merit-based pay structures reward employees for the visible effort, contribution, personal growth, and performance they demonstrate within a company. Employees are most likely to stay if they feel the effort and performance they demonstrate on the job translates to a tangible reward, be it financial or promotional advancement.

Employers should also consider the possibility of supporting training opportunities, such as developing tuition assistance programs or supporting training that results in the employee receiving a certification recognizable by employers. However, training without opportunity does not in itself encourage retention. There needs to be a clearly identified connection between the educational or training program and what it will mean for an employee's future with the company.

It is not enough to just develop a career ladder system; that system also needs to be clearly and regularly communicated to employees so they are continuously reminded of the opportunities within the company. Kenosha employers should develop a strategy to effectively communicate opportunities both current and prospective employees. Career ladders not only assist in retention of current workers, they are excellent recruitment and attraction tools for prospective employees and should be included as part of employee search or job posting strategies.

- c. Collect microdata. To establish an effective community-based program that addresses the barrier that can hinder students from succeeding in all grades requires data collection.** This is a difficult step that is often ignored or simply avoided because of potential administrative barriers and the lack of expertise. However, without microdata that allows the ability to

track the performance of individual students over the course of their K-14 experience, it is impossible to know where the crucial breakpoints occur:

- At what grade do students, who are not academically successful, begin to fall behind? Are there demographic differences?
- How big of a factor is the student's mobility between schools and school districts on their academic performance?
- What is the impact of quality preschool programs for student success?

There are many barriers facing the collection of these data, from privacy concerns of parents to public relations issues of school administrators. These perceived barriers should not hamper progress of this important community development resource. By partnership with a neutral third party who is able to gather the data following approved guidelines, these data could lead to more focused and effective programs that can make a difference in school performance. Equally important, these data will provide strong evidence of the impact of external factors, such as poverty in school success.

- d. **Explore the opportunity to provide access to quality preschool for all households.** Preschool is both a consumer good and a strong investment. For all beginning, two-income households—both professional and non-professional—the availability of quality day-care and after-school care is not only a must but an attraction tool as well. A community that is able to offer quality preschool options is much more attractive.

Equally important, research has shown time and time again that the returns to quality preschool programs in terms of lifelong earnings are very strong: the benefit-to-cost ratio is estimated to be 5 to 1.<sup>7</sup>

In summary, Kenosha County already has a strong economy because of its competitiveness, growing economic base, and its location in the Chicago-Milwaukee region. Recent reports clearly show that businesses across a wide range of industries are aware of the county's strengths. The next step for the county is to focus on talent development, which will require a comprehensive approach that involves the county's business, government, and educational leaders. All aspects of talent development should be explored—from improving the workplace environment offered by its employers to enhancing the county's K-12 education system, to developing even better linkages between the business and education communities. People want to be successful, but equally important, they want their children to be successful, and many are willing to move to or stay in a county that increases the possibility of both.

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7. Timothy J. Bartik (2014). *From Preschool to Prosperity: The Economic Payoff to Early Childhood Education*, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, Kalamazoo MI.

# Appendix 1:

## Reports from Employer Workshops

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### October 28, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #1

- What are the strengths of the Kenosha Region's workforce?
  - Lots of opportunities for applicants; so many different types of industries
  - Easy commute
  - Have a lot of types of jobs
  - Increased technology
  - Kenosha is paying attention to some of the issues; 10-year plan
  - Opportunity for growth within organizations
  - Cost of living less for employees and employers
  - Number of people in the Kenosha workforce; pool to choose from (number of people)
  - iMET center for training
  - Diverse workforce
  - Diverse opportunities
- What are the weaknesses of the Kenosha Region's workforce?
  - Soft skills problem (being respectful, polite, listening to other people's ideas, showing up for work)
  - Local public transportation (Ice Plex and outlying areas)
  - Public uneducated about modern manufacturing technology; have lots of technology that none (high school students) don't know about
  - Need to go to schools and talk about these programs
  - Lack of technical skills/degrees
  - Investment in training; employees leave
  - Pay scale
  - A lot of partnering with tech—not so much with colleges
  - Lack of technical skills (knowledge base on a lower level)
  - Shift work
  - Attitudes—people not willing to do shift work; drivers and split shifts
  - Not able to pass drug tests for random screenings
  - How much should employers modify drug policies?
  - Lack of a professional base
  - Traffic patterns (people on north side of Racine take longer to get here to work than traveling to Waukegan); have a good infrastructure for commuting to IL but not within Kenosha and to/from Racine
  - Have generations that don't have good role models as far as getting up in the morning, going to work
- Do local training institutions meet employer needs? If not, what is missing?
  - Meet needs of specific industries, need to get into high schools
  - High school counselors don't know about technical degrees
  - Need more practical degrees; more practical/communication skills education training
  - Tests—time taking tests; fewer tests—200 hours average high school
  - Kenosha colleges—Parkside and Carthage—grads tend to commute out
  - Truck driving at Gateway; how does gateway bring a program here to fill the void; CDL needed here
  - Most skills can be taught on job, but coming in with no soft skills; don't know how to address issues that come up in workplace (conflict resolutions, etc.). All hiring for attitude now.
  - For most part, have training institutions here to train what employers need to do. Can't get enough students into these programs.
  - Gateway willing to work with employers to develop programs needed.

- Workers' commitment to education; employers have training needs but that pool of individuals going to school accept jobs at Amazon and Costco rather than go to school; they look at the near-term picture rather than the future to see where they can go. Gateway trying to change perception—going to 4-year university good for some but not right for all.
- Any programs addressing soft skills—Herzig incorporates soft skills in all classes; this was based on feedback from employers. We need to do better job of partnering with employers we don't regularly work with.
- Workers don't always follow through on things they are taught; institutions have to tweak their pitch to them to emphasize why it is important.
- Training/mentoring
- Voids in training

### October 28, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #2

- What positions do you have challenges recruiting?
  - Unskilled temp labor
  - IT positions—in demand
  - Hiring technical instructors to teach the skills needed; technical educators
  - Bus drivers
  - Operators, machine operators, packers
  - Mechanics, machinists, truck drivers, engineers
  - Truck drivers seem to be a constant theme; challenges are things mentioned in first activity
  - Positions are part time, split shifts, and no benefits
  - Mid-level, few positions; professional/but non-management
  - Civil engineers (salary not good but benefits good)
  - Advanced degree positions
  - Shift work/part time/no benefits
  - Positions that pay student loans
  - Lack of experience with quality
  - Any entry level
- What are the current in-demand occupations?
  - IT positions
  - CNC machinists, inspectors, truck drivers, police officers
- What will be the in-demand occupations needed 2–5 years from now by your company and in the Kenosha region?
  - Leadership positions—operations managers
  - More automation
  - Truck drivers
  - Police officers, programmers, maintenance, electricians, teachers, plumbers, tool and die, welders, technical (some professions due to aging out); if plumbers and electricians are not in apprenticeship programs right now, then they won't be ready in 4 years to meet demand. Very few are going into apprenticeship; not seeing a lot of young people going into the “dirty” jobs (plumbers and such). Many young people are not aware of what it means to work in trades; this is part of reason young people not going into these professions.
  - Machinists; civil engineers
  - CNC, truck drivers, police officers, teachers, technical/manufacturing, programmers, maintenance, tool and die, welders, plumbers, electricians

- What will be your recruitment concerns in the future?
  - Knowledge transfer; are we using people in positions now to transfer this knowledge to those coming in?
  - More recruitment competition; more companies coming in to the area so more competition
  - Motivation
  - Knowledge of where to recruit (too many)
  - Salary
  - Student loan increase
  - Soft skills issues
  - Train/invest/leave
  - Drug testing
- Theme that keeps coming up is helping kids focus on jobs that they aren't aware of

### October 28, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #3

- What are unique or significant challenges for the Kenosha Region regarding workforce recruitment?
  - School system ratings; Lake County better in ratings
  - Unified school system to support growth
  - Educated people leaving
  - Wisconsin weather/less trendy urban area
  - East of Highway 94 leave; West stay (slower pace, farm, less diverse)
  - Young professionals want to experience large urban areas
  - Stigma for Wisconsin
  - Public transportation; timing and when people can get to work
  - Lower-skilled positions; will move for \$1 per hour
  - Limited choices of things—don't have book stores; amenities, such as restaurants that aren't chains
  - Brain drain—college-educated people leave; attribute it to weather and going to trendier areas
  - East/West of the interstate—two different mentalities; slower paced west of the interstate
- What are unique or significant challenges regarding workforce retention?
  - Students don't stay here after college
  - Could teach supervisors more soft skills; they need this as they move up the ranks
  - Lower wages paid in Kenosha; pay more if fewer benefits
  - Lower-skilled positions
  - School system ratings
  - Public transportation
  - Limited choices
  - Weather
- What is particularly attractive about the Kenosha Region to potential employees?
  - Kingfish minor league baseball
  - Low cost of living; low housing prices
  - Low cost or free parking downtown
  - Access to two large metro areas
  - More attractive for families than younger people
  - Lakefront – close to chic and milieu
  - Younger coming back to family or raise family
  - Young want time off; golf outings; Christmas party; gym; hair salon, kids camp, day care; close to work; flexible schedules; benefits—all of these types of amenities
  - Lake Michigan



- Cost of living
  - Location proximity to Chicago and Milwaukee
- What about the Kenosha region aids in employee retention?
  - Making sure they have ample time off
  - Having gyms, day cares, and amenities in work facilities
- Theme—public transportation issues

### October 29, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #1

- What are the strengths of the Kenosha Region's workforce?
  - Hard-working; diligent
  - Loyal
  - Cultures in company; people want to work for companies here
  - Older workforce
  - Skilled workers
  - In-commuting skilled labor—very qualified
  - Dedicated long-term employees
  - Take pride in their work
  - Strong bond with each other; strong bond among workforce
  - Willing to move up within the company and do what's necessary to get promoted
- What are the weaknesses of the Kenosha Region's workforce?
  - Millennials (struggling with) work ethic; what do they want to do? They all expect something different than the norm; how do employers adjust to this mindset?
  - Low wages; need to increase to get the better workers in
  - Lack of unskilled workers; it's a struggle to fill manual labor positions
  - Smaller employers losing employees to the Amazons of the world; smaller employers competing with larger companies. What can be done to address that? Trying to find that fit or what they have to offer the employee that the larger company can't; having ownership of the smaller company; selling itself as a smaller company; having a process for growing itself and demonstrating how employee can grow with the company. Also makes a conscious effort to develop a personal relationship with the employee. Create an environment where people want to work; create a career path for various levels of employees (demonstrate what their career path would look like if they stayed with the company, no matter the level). Some companies have created apprenticeship programs so that they can move up in the company. Build a culture within the company so they want to come and work for you.
  - Seeing an increase in people who don't have proper values; injured workers want to take advantage of the system, thus increasing company costs
  - Some don't have way to get to jobs; lack of transportation for people to get to jobs
  - Lack of mentoring programs within companies for employees to get to next level
  - Some leadership challenges in companies
  - New employee commitment (don't show up for work; doing what it takes to keep a job)
  - Aging/retiring workforce
  - Lack of technology knowledge with aging staff; haven't been able to keep up with technology
  - Background checks (aren't able to pass), criminal backgrounds (what crimes are acceptable that they may have been rehabilitated from and how long ago did the crime occur); failed drug testing
  - Poor or no work history
  - Promotion to leadership positions (lack of degrees, lack of leadership skills)
  - Transportation issues—difficult to get to some areas
  - Higher-level positions are people commuting in; they live elsewhere and commute in
  - Younger workforce lacks ability to take direction

- Do local training institutions meet employer needs? If not, what is missing?
  - Gateway has good programs and boot camps, but concentrated into niches
  - KUSD not meeting expectations; not seeing anything pushing careers or students into construction
  - Institutions not promoting construction skill sets
  - Need soft skills training
  - Boys and girls clubs—could there be some sort of program that talks about options other than college?
  - Department of workforce development not meeting needs
  - “shop” type courses have gone away; these have lost focus
  - Gateway—lack of on the job training
  - Technical colleges; employers need have more interaction with tech colleges and let them know their needs

### October 29, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #2

- What positions do you have challenges recruiting?
  - Technical areas—welders, maintenance, electrical engineers, managers, project management
  - Entry-level positions
  - Unskilled positions
  - Unskilled labor
  - Leadership positions
  - Skilled labor (trades, drivers, industry-specific)
  - Entry to mid-level engineers
- What are the current in-demand occupations?
  - Unskilled labor (production, health care)
  - Skilled labor (maintenance, engineer)
  - Professional (those that require degrees and high-level training)
  - Engineers, human resources individuals, sales, skilled trades, unskilled trades, project management; HR has changed over the years so will need new personnel; also existing HR people will age out.
- What will be the in-demand occupations needed 2–5 years from now by your company and in the Kenosha region?
  - Distribution/maintenance positions
  - Service industries (e.g., forklift repair)
  - Leadership (one company uses the 9-grid system for leadership development), maintenance, health care, teachers, quality & safety professionals
- What will be your recruitment concerns in the future?
  - Millennials’ lack of interest in manufacturing/physical labor
  - Finding replacements for retirees
  - Retaining employees
  - Building bench strengths within this area (had to bring in managers and professionals from outside of the area; need to build strengths here for these positions so don’t have to outsource or bring in from other areas)
  - New competition to the area
  - Very few companies have succession plan for replacing its workforce
  - Social media knowledge
  - Retention—how to retain employees you bring on board and convince them to stay with the company
  - Pool of candidates
  - Competition

### October 29, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #3

- What are unique or significant challenges for the Kenosha Region regarding workforce recruitment?
  - Weather (4 seasons)
  - Not well known
  - Competing with Chicago and Milwaukee; often higher wages in these areas
  - Competition within the county
  - Climate
  - Location—between Milwaukee and Chicago
  - Higher education ties; have 2 universities in the area, Carthage and UW Parkside
  - Transportation—not a lot of public transportation
  - Generational poverty (people born into poverty and stay into mode of being poor)
  - Historical stigma of not being from this area
- What are unique or significant challenges regarding workforce retention?
  - Commute for those living in Milwaukee or Chicago
  - Same as first 4 bullets above
  - Transportation—public transportation only runs so far
  - Wages—compete with Milwaukee and Chicago
  - Growth opportunities
  - Location being between Milwaukee and Chicago
- What is particularly attractive about the Kenosha Region to potential employees?
  - Between 2 major cities, Milwaukee and Chicago
  - Quality of life (there's something for everyone in Kenosha area)
  - Property taxes are relatively low
  - People feel safe
  - Small town feel
  - Education institutions
  - Employment opportunities are diverse; spouses have opportunities for employment
  - School system seems pretty good
  - Location
  - Diverse cultural activities
  - Climate
  - Cost of living relatively low
  - Schools
  - Lake Michigan
- What about the Kenosha region aids in employee retention?
  - Small businesses; family-owned businesses; feel a part of something
  - Family atmosphere
  - Lack of congestion—traffic relatively light
  - Easy access—right on interstate so can get anywhere
  - Cost of living

### November 16, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #1

What are the strengths of the Kenosha region's workforce?

- Loyalty (non-temporary employees)
- People who have been with a company for long time tend to stay with the company
- Willingness of employees to learn or have the education behind them
- Educated workforce; majority have high school diploma or GED

## Appendix 1: Reports from Employer Workshops

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- Workforce generally wants to grow and learn
- Technologically savvy; more connected
- People willing to potentially move for the company; are mobile
- See company loyalty with some
- Strong sense of community for long-time and committed employees; also see a gap between long-time and committed and fly-by-night employees
- Dedicated workforce
- Diversity of knowledge
- Strong school system that draws people here to live and work
- Have highly skilled people here, but doesn't mean that they are happy here—they see the wages in other county (across the border)
- Work ethic (once identify right fit for position, people are usually committed)
- Committed; loyal to community; pride
- Educated
- A percentage of the workforce is willing to accept the jobs in the community available at the wage levels they are available
- Young workforce that's not retiring any time soon

What are the weaknesses of the workforce?

- Aren't sure how driven or motivated the workforce is; are they just looking at the dollar? Not looking at the total compensation package. All in room educate them on the total package. Educating them on this is important.
- Attendance—people don't show up for work every day
- Life and employability skills lacking (if have flat tire on way to work, just take day off)
- Disengaged; people choose not to participate in company events
- Can't pass drug tests
- Student debt/financial situations
- People more willing to job hop for small amount more
- Wages issue—low wages/minimum wages in WI
- Attendance
- Short-term career builders (just out of college, get first job then move on)
- Small business compete with big businesses
- Entitled problems
- Health care utilization and cost to insure employees; costs more to insure employees in this region
- Aging workforce
- Resistant to change—some employees get fed up with all changes happening, which leads to sense of entitlement
- Commuting out due to wage and opportunity elsewhere
- Unwilling to commute locally
- Work ethic
- Computer literacy
- Not taking advantages of resources available, whether provided by the employer or community
- Not considering advantages of total compensation package versus wages/salary
- Quality of candidates
- State employee assistance programs, people don't want to work overtime or extra hours because they are on state assistance; afraid they will lose their benefits
- Child care
- If don't have a program that's heavily monitored, will have people taking advantage of worker's compensation. Then when go to get another job, they tell employer that they've been on worker's comp, so you become reluctant to hire them.

Do local training institutions meet employer needs? If not, what is missing?

- Yes, typically does meet needs. High school meets entry level (STEM program)
- Areas not quite meeting are soft skills, higher technical levels such as engineering—have to go outside area for this; boiler operators, steam fitters
- Support of technical side
- Need support on retraining
- Need life skills training
- Need leadership training to attract, engage, and retain employees (KABA's living as a leader program)
- Have to make connections—employers/education
- Technical skills coming through, but little soft skills—don't know how to work in team, respect for coworkers, communication skills, working with coworkers. Need to get them early—at home and in earlier grades. Expectations for all to have a college education.
- Vocational skills in high school—some are strong
- Get rid of these “everyone is a winner” strategies where employee feels should have a paycheck for showing up
- Assessment of education from state/federal
- Lack of accountability for own action
- Application of theory
- Lack of critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Lack of basic math
- Bigger picture, yes, do provide what we need; provide literacy, ESL, and computer training, but would like to see more programs around financial stability and giving them a broad overview of employer benefit programs and why investing in your future is important. People don't know about the financial stability and employee benefit programs. Don't necessarily get these from school.
- How do we get the word out—do people know about the programs? How do you get them engaged and want to participate? Work experience vs. education when hiring an individual. How do we get people to take advantage of free resources?

### November 16, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #2

What positions do you have challenges recruiting?

- Highly technical jobs
- Positions with multiple skill sets
- Positions that require bilingual skills
- Positions not competitive relative to total compensation; low wage
- Those that require workers to work in environmentally challenging situations
- Inside and outside sales, engineering, maintenance requiring 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shift positions, diesel mechanics, production supervisors, truck drivers, technology service (outside), right fit for culture of the company
- Machine repair, maintenance mechanic, welding, fabrication, CNC, engineering (midlevel/advanced degrees), some industry specific positions, quality assurance, health care—all levels, electrical assemblers, IT with multiple skills/industry specific careers, energy management with some of alternate energy sources, customer service
- Health care—CNAs, nursing, maintenance, accounting, electricians, PLC, mechanics, quality analysis, IT, highly technical educators

What are the current in-demand occupations?

- Engineers, mechanical/electrical technicians, welders-all categories, robotics/industrial automation workers, die cast workers, multi-skilled customer service professionals
- Warehouse/production, assembly line, truck drivers, sales/customer service, engineers

## Appendix 1: Reports from Employer Workshops

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What will be the in-demand occupations needed two to five years from now by your company and in the Kenosha Region?

- Middle management—all departments; concern over retirements when middle managers retire
- Project managers
- People growing from team leaders to become managers; leadership
- Mechanical and maintenance positions
- Leadership roles
- Older generation workforce
- Technical needs
- Automation
- HR being able to support all of this—training/development, succession plan
- Smart manufacturing
- Logistics and supply chain managers
- Robotics—manufacturing and programming
- Engineering—electrical and mechanical
- Mechanics
- Health care
- Educators—all levels;
- Biomedical/nanotechnology
- Police/civil service supports (some applicants can't pass criminal background checks)
- Soft skills/people skills
- Increased technology
- Specialized consulting (knowing Spanish)
- Global (second language, experience in dealing with other countries)

What will be your recruitment concerns in the future?

- Challenges caused by retirement; replacement for retirees
- Stagnant wages
- Concerns over what makes Kenosha attractive place to live
- Lifestyle/climate
- Do we have a competitive technology infrastructure?
- Recruiting right quality of people
- Have temp agencies really listen to the needs and give us quality people; making sure they're the right fit for the company
- Maintaining culture in companies; as grow, getting lot of people right out of college with different attitudes on how to do processes that have been with company for decades; want to keep older generation comfortable as well as younger
- Maintaining non-union status
- Meeting employee needs
- Diversity
- Wages; having competitive benefit packages to compete
- Location not attractive to younger workforce
- Rebrand to attract top talent in area
- Not enough in workforce to fill pipeline of needs
- Being an employer of choice—demonstrating advancement and growth opportunities; value proposition
- Experienced workers
- Pipeline for manufacturing jobs; convincing parents and educators of this
- Immigration reform effects
- Lack of apprenticeship programs
- Loyalty—market volatility

- Competition in markets (employers)
- Generational gaps
- Professional maturity; need for a constant change with young workforce
- How to get employees to stay longer
- Recruiting strategies—how will recruiting change with social media and other technological advances?
- College/technical college relationships
- Job titles

### November 16, 2015, Workshop: Reports from Group Activity #3

What are unique or significant challenges for the Kenosha Region regarding workforce recruitment?

- Public transportation to anything outside of city of Kenosha
- Competing with Milwaukee and Chicago for wages
- Lack of knowledge of what others are paying within market
- Local competition (this accounts for large share of local talent)
- Lack of understanding or appreciation for what Kenosha offers younger candidates
- Perception of crime; based on news is a place of high crime and poverty
- Wages
- Companies over state line and local
- Quality of labor pool
- Unwillingness to drive
- Lack of life skills
- Competition—another company offers a better wage
- Resistance to change—something did years ago not relevant today but still doing it
- Social work/life balance—young people think not much to do here as in larger cities
- School system—math and reading skills
- Lack of public transportation
- Employment fit
- Excessive employers in specific industries—employee has many options
- Recruiters relationship—recruiter understanding what company looking for to fill position
- Employee pool—need the labor supply
- Wages—have be competitive
- Competitive wages
- Benefits that might be limiting/competing
- Finding right fit with talent pool
- Location not what young looking for
- Regional identity—how do we promote Kenosha and what's to offer (you can stay to grow a career)
- Crime—crime rate not rising, but recent news stories over past week
- Changing from small town to emerging market—being between Chicago and Milwaukee, showing that can have career here

What are unique or significant challenges regarding workforce retention?

- One job viewed as a stepping stone to move on to other jobs
- Lack of employee engagement
- Wages and benefits—as soon as find something better will move on if wages/benefits not strong
- Culture—has be right fit or will move on to another job
- Limited advancement or career path; may be lack of training
- Commute from Milwaukee or Chicago
- Great place to start/stepping stone



## Appendix 1: Reports from Employer Workshops

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- Wages and benefits (not modernized/telecommute)
- Paid continuing education

What is particularly attractive about the Kenosha Region to potential employees?

- Church on every corner
- Bar on every corner
- Cost of living—housing
- Milwaukee–Chicago corridor
- Lakefront (farmers’ market, museums, etc.)
- Close proximity to Summerfest
- 3 airports
- No tolls
- Parking—not congested
- Less competition for positions
- Friendly people
- Diversity
- Community resources
- Educational opportunities
- Art galleries
- Kingfish
- Brand recognition
- Opportunities within regional companies
- Area is growing
- Commute—don’t have to go far to get to Kenosha
- Cost of living (more house for the money)
- Workforce and economic support
- Lakefront/recreation
- Bars and churches
- Sense of community; good place to raise a family
- Location—close to lake, Chicago, and Milwaukee
- Community – arts/social events
- Advancement opportunities—different industries
- Variety of job choices (manufacturing, retail, logistics, etc.)
- Low cost of living (taxes)
- Traffic not bad
- Social activities
- Small town but big town amenities
- Proximity to Milwaukee and Chicago
- Transportation to recreation purposes; not as congested, open space
- Low cost of living
- Lake
- Culture/arts
- Diverse workforce and employers
- Local colleges and partnerships
- Hometown ties—might go to local college and stay in the community

What about the Kenosha Region aids in employee retention?

- Stability of the area
- Education—good schools
- Safety
- Family oriented



# Appendix 2:

## Survey Instrument

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### Kenosha Region Employment Survey

This Employment Survey is part of a study for the Kenosha Area Business Alliance (KABA) and its regional partners. They want to better understand the region's workforce—whether people are happy with their jobs, the way people travel to work, and the needs of the people who are employed. The W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research was hired to conduct this study.

The survey questions are designed to find out about (1) your daily travel to work, (2) your job and what's important to you about it, (3) how you feel about working in Kenosha County, and (4) you. Many people work at more than one job. For this survey, we would like you to tell us about the job where you work the most hours per week.

Thank you for taking this survey. The survey is fairly short and should only take about 10 minutes to finish. ***All data will be kept private, will not be shared with your employer, and will never be presented publicly in a report.*** Your information will be used only for research purposes.

**Please note that all questions require an answer.**

For information on the labor market study being conducted by the Upjohn Institute, please contact the Kenosha Area Business Alliance. By email, you can ask for Heather Wessling Grosz, Vice President of Economic Development (hwessling@kaba.org) or Brooke Infusino, Director of Talent Development (binfusino@kaba.org). You can also call KABA at 262-605-1100.

If you have any trouble filling out the survey online, please contact Jason Preuss at 269-343-5541 or preuss@upjohn.org.

If you have any questions about the content of the survey or are uncertain about any of the survey questions, please contact Claudette Robey at 269-343-5541 or robey@upjohn.org.

### PART I: Your Travel to Work

1. What is the zip code of your home and your work?

Zip code of home \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code of work \_\_\_\_\_

If zip code of work is not known, what is address of work? (address & city) \_\_\_\_\_

2. How far (in miles) do you travel to work each day? \_\_\_\_\_ miles

3. How do you travel to work? (please check one)

☐ By car (usually drive alone)

☐ By car (with others in a car pool)

☐ By Amtrak

☐ By Metra

☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. How much time (in minutes) does it usually take you to get from your home to work? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

### PART 2: Your Job and What's Important to You about It

5a. What is/are the major product(s) or service(s) that the company you work for makes or provides?

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5b. Please identify your employer's product(s) or services(s) in the areas below (please check one). If you are unsure about which category to use, please check "Unsure."

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Real estate, rental, leasing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mining, quarrying; oil & gas extraction                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional, scientific, technical services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities  | <input type="checkbox"/> Management of companies & enterprises        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction   | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational services                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing  | <input type="checkbox"/> Health care & social assistance              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale trade  | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, entertainment, & recreation            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retail trade (any retail)                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation & food service                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation & warehousing                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Public administration (government)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information (media, publishing, cable)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance & insurance                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative & support; waste management & remediation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other services                               |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure                                       |

6a. What is your job/job title? \_\_\_\_\_

6b. Please identify your job by using the categories below (please check one). If you are unsure about which category to use, please check "Unsure."

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management occupations                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Food preparation, serving-related occupations    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business/financial operations                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Building & ground cleaning/maintenance           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer/mathematical occupations                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal care & service occupations              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture/engineering occupations                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales & related occupations                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life, physical, social science occupations               | <input type="checkbox"/> Office & administrative support occupations      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community/social service occupations                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Farming, fishing, & forestry occupations         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal occupations  | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction/extraction occupations              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education, training, library occupations                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Installation, maintenance, & repair occupations  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Production occupations                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Health care practitioners, technical occupations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Military specific occupations                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Health care support occupations                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation, material moving                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Protective service occupations                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, design, entertainment, sports, & media occupations |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____   |   |

7. How long have you worked for this employer?    \_\_\_ Less than 1 year    \_\_\_\_\_ years

## Appendix 2: Survey Instrument

8. We would like your opinion about what is important to you in your job. Using a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = Not at all important, 2 = Not important, 3 = Somewhat important, 4 = Important, and 5 = Very important), how important to you are the following in your job?

Job Characteristics	1 = Not at all important	2 = Not important	3 = Somewhat important	4 = Important	5 = Very important
Having career advancement opportunities/ability to be promoted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being paid fairly for the work that I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having good benefits (For example: insurance, time off, retirement)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having opportunities for long-term employment (job security)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being satisfied with my work schedule (For example, flexible shifts, work from home)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having good managers/supervisors (For example, fair, willing to listen)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being comfortable where I work (For example, safety, physical setting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having what I need to do my job (For example, tools, equipment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with people who are qualified and competent to do their jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having training/education opportunities available to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enjoying my job/the work that I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having a reasonable commute to/from work each day (in time and/or distance)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having a balance between life/work and not having to choose between the two	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being in a workplace that is welcoming to everyone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receiving feedback from supervisor(s) that not only helps me in my job, but also helps me grow as a person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix 2: Survey Instrument

9. How much do you agree with the following statements about how well your employer provides the following job qualities for you and your coworkers? (Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree or disagree, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly agree)

Job Characteristics	1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither agree nor disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly agree
My employer provides career advancement opportunities/ways to be promoted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am paid a fair wage for the work that I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My employer offers good benefits (For example: insurance, time off, retirement)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My employer offers opportunities for long-term employment (job security)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My employer does a good job of setting up work schedules (For example, flexible shifts, work from home)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My employer, in general, has good managers/supervisors (For example, fair, willing to listen)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The company provides a good workplace (For example, safety, physical setting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My employer provides the things that I need to do my job (For example, tools, equipment, technology)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My company hires people who are qualified and competent to do the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training/education opportunities are available to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My employer gives me opportunities to do the work that I do best	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My employer is located within a reasonable time and distance to/from home each day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My company encourages me to balance my work and life, rather than having to choose between the two	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My company does a good job at offering a workplace that is welcoming to everyone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The feedback that I get from my supervisor(s) not only helps me in my job, but also helps me grow as a person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix 2: Survey Instrument

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### PART 3: Your Opinion about Working in Kenosha County

**Instructions: If you do not live in Kenosha County, please answer question 10b. Mark all that apply. If you do live in Kenosha County, please answer question 10a and then skip to question 11.**

10a. How long have you lived in Kenosha County? \_\_\_\_ Less than 1 year \_\_\_\_ year(s)

10b. Why do you commute into Kenosha County? (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ Already own or live in a community outside of Kenosha County that I/we like
- ☐ Spouse/significant other employed outside of Kenosha County
- ☐ Wanted to be near family/my family lives outside of Kenosha County
- ☐ Did not find the right house in Kenosha County
- ☐ Did not find the right neighborhood in Kenosha County
- ☐ Heard negative things about Kenosha County from friends, family, or real estate agents
- ☐ Thought that the public schools in Kenosha County were below average
- ☐ Concerned about crime in Kenosha County
- ☐ Low home/property valuation
- ☐ Lack of cultural things to do
- ☐ Lack of shopping/retail
- ☐ Taxes
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

11. How long have you worked in Kenosha County? \_\_\_\_ Less than 1 year \_\_\_\_ year(s)

12. What do you like about working in Kenosha County? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. What do you dislike about working in Kenosha County? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### PART 4: About You

14. Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female

15. Age ☐ 18–24 ☐ 25–34 ☐ 35–44 ☐ 45–54 ☐ 55–64 ☐ 65 & older

16. Highest education Level (please check one)

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Did not graduate from high school | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical school graduate | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school diploma/GED           | <input type="checkbox"/> Skills certification      | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate degree   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some college                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree        | <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.             |



### 17. Income

- ☐ Less than \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000–\$14,999
- ☐ \$15,000–\$19,999
- ☐ \$20,000–\$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000–\$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000–\$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000–\$39,999
- ☐ \$40,000–\$44,999
- ☐ \$45,000–\$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000–\$59,999
- ☐ \$60,000–\$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000–\$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000–\$124,999
- ☐ \$125,000–\$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000–\$199,999
- ☐ \$200,000+
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

***As a reminder, all data will be kept private and will not be shared with your employer and will never be presented publicly in a report.*** Your information will be used only for research purposes.

If you would like to be entered into our prize drawing, please provide your email address. Your email address is not linked to your survey responses and will remain private.

Please return this survey by mail to: **Claudette Robey, Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 300 South Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007**

Thank you for completing our survey!

# Appendix 3:

## Email to Employers

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*Instructions to Employer: This is a sample email that you can send to your employees the first week to announce the survey.*

### Kenosha Region Employment Survey

[NAME OF COMPANY HERE] would like you to take part in a survey so we can learn more about the county's workforce.

The survey is part of a study of Kenosha's workforce being sponsored by the Kenosha Area Business Alliance (KABA), who hired the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research (Upjohn) in Kalamazoo, Michigan to do this study.

The survey includes questions (1) about your travel to work each day, (2) about your job and what's important to you about it, (3) about how you feel about working in Kenosha County, and (4) about you.

It's short and should only take 7 to 10 minutes. You may take the survey from a company computer. ***Upjohn will keep all data private and will not share these data with our company, and will not present the data publicly in a report.*** Upjohn will only use your responses for research purposes.

We encourage you to finish the survey. Your ideas are valuable. If you wish, your name will also be put in a drawing for prizes. One prize winner will be drawn at the end of each week. The sooner you complete the survey, the better your chances of winning one of these prizes:

- For those completing the survey by March 4th, Kenosha Kingfish 4-Pack tickets to First Base Club
- For those completing the survey by March 11th, Snap-on Rolling Tool Case
- For those completing the survey by March 18th, \$50 Gift Card to Jockey International

The last date to complete the survey is Friday, March 18th.

You can begin the survey by clicking on this link: <http://www.upjohn.org/surveys/kenosha-employment-survey/start.php>.

For information on the study, please contact the Kenosha Area Business Alliance at 262-605-1100.

If you have any trouble filling out the survey online, please contact Jason Preuss at 269-343-5541 or [preuss@upjohn.org](mailto:preuss@upjohn.org).

If you have any questions regarding the content of the survey or are uncertain about any of the survey questions, please contact Claudette Robey at 269-343-5541 or [robey@upjohn.org](mailto:robey@upjohn.org).

We appreciate your time in completing the survey.

Signature of company representative

*Instructions to Employer: This is a sample email that you can send to your employees the second week to remind them to complete the survey.*

### Kenosha Region Employment Survey

Just a reminder that [NAME OF COMPANY] are inviting you to take part in a survey of those who work in the Kenosha region.

The survey is part of a study of Kenosha's workforce being sponsored by the Kenosha Area Business Alliance (KABA), who hired the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research (Upjohn) in Kalamazoo, Michigan, to do this study.

The survey includes questions (1) about your travel to work each day, (2) about your job and what's important to you about it, (3) about how you feel about working in Kenosha County, and (4) about you.

It's short and should only take 7 to 10 minutes. You may take the survey from a company computer.

***Upjohn will keep all data private and will not share these data with our company, and will not present the data publicly in a report.*** Upjohn will only use your responses for research purposes.

We encourage you to finish the survey. Your ideas are valuable. If you wish, your name will also be placed in a drawing for prizes. One prize winner will be drawn at the end of each week. The sooner you complete the survey, the better your chances of winning one of these prizes:

- For those completing the survey by March 11th, Snap-on Rolling Tool Case
- For those completing the survey by March 18th, \$50 Gift Card to Jockey International

The last date to complete the survey is March 18th.

You can begin the survey by clicking on this link: <http://www.upjohn.org/surveys/kenosha-employment-survey/start.php>.

For information on the study, please contact the Kenosha Area Business Alliance at 262-605-1100.

If you have any trouble filling out the survey online, please contact Jason Preuss at 269-343-5541 or [preuss@upjohn.org](mailto:preuss@upjohn.org).

If you have any questions regarding the content of the survey or are uncertain about any of the survey questions, please contact Claudette Robey at 269-343-5541 or [robey@upjohn.org](mailto:robey@upjohn.org).

We appreciate your time in completing the survey.

Signature of company representative

*Instructions to Employer: This is a sample email that you can send to your employees the third week to remind them to complete the survey.*

### **Kenosha Region Employment Survey**

This is your final chance to finish the survey.

The survey is part of a study of Kenosha's workforce being sponsored by the Kenosha Area Business Alliance (KABA), who hired the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research (Upjohn) in Kalamazoo, Michigan to do this study.

The survey includes questions (1) about your travel to work each day, (2) about your job and what's important to you about it, (3) about how you feel about working in Kenosha County, and (4) about you.

It's short and should only take 7 to 10 minutes. You may take the survey from a company computer.

***Upjohn will keep all data private and will not share these data with our company, and will not present the data publicly in a report.*** Upjohn will only use your responses for research purposes.

We encourage you to finish the survey. Your ideas are valuable. If you wish, your name will also be placed in a drawing for a valuable prize. Please complete the survey by March 18th for a chance to win

- A \$50 Gift Card to Jockey International

Your survey must be completed by March 18th.

You can begin the survey by clicking on this link: <http://www.upjohn.org/surveys/kenosha-employment-survey/start.php>.

For information on the study, please contact the Kenosha Area Business Alliance at 262-605-1100.

If you have any trouble filling out the survey online, please contact Jason Preuss at 269-343-5541 or [preuss@upjohn.org](mailto:preuss@upjohn.org).

If you have any questions regarding the content of the survey or are uncertain about any of the survey questions, please contact Claudette Robey at 269-343-5541 or [robey@upjohn.org](mailto:robey@upjohn.org).

We appreciate your time in completing the survey.

Signature of company representative

