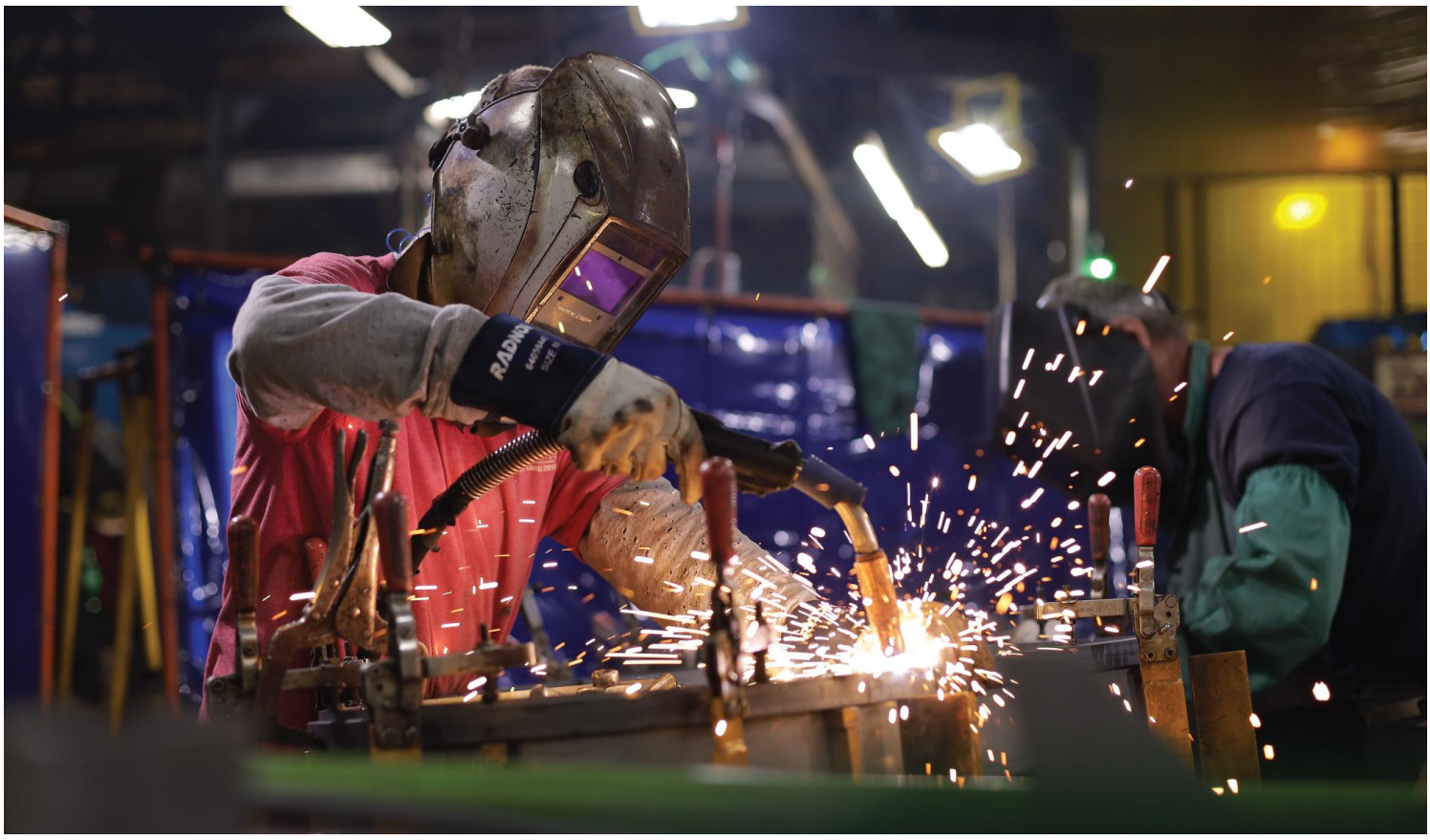
A FRESH LOOK AT TALENT STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

Hours into the first day at my new job, the world had already started to shift. I had just moved to Wichita to begin my role as Vice President of Talent for the Greater Wichita Partnership in January of 2020 when the uncertainty surrounding the Boeing 737 MAX production suspension led the state's largest employer to announce layoffs. Two months later, the global pandemic began impacting our regional workforce. It was clear by the end of the first quarter that no matter how prepared we thought we were, 2020 was going to require us to go off script.

In 2019, the Partnership team launched a well-researched Talent Marketing Blueprint with clearly defined strategies and initiatives to attract, retain and develop talent in the region. In 2020, we found ourselves navigating through a year of unimaginable changes to our world and workplaces. We focused on reassessing this ever-changing situation to figure out what our region needed most in real-time. Now in 2021, it's critical for us to fine-tune our talent strategies and initiatives to balance economic recovery with long-term growth.

The Partnership Talent Team worked with partners to re-evaluate community needs and possibilities. We evolved our Talent priority into three overarching and actionable items to attract talent, retain talent and support talent development:



Build the workforce of the future for in-demand jobs

The pandemic accelerated advancements in technology, which will continue to change the way we all do work. It's critical for

our community to understand and address the impact of those changes so that we can build a dynamic workforce with evolving capabilities that meet the needs of new jobs, especially in the areas of manufacturing and automation.

We're currently working with Wichita State University's Public Policy and Management Center, as well as other partners, to research what it means for our region to build the workforce of the future. From identifying opportunities to increase work-based learning programs to promoting reskilling opportunities to strengthening career advancement skills, we're looking at the big picture for the future workforce.

Cultivate a talent-focused culture to retain and attract talent

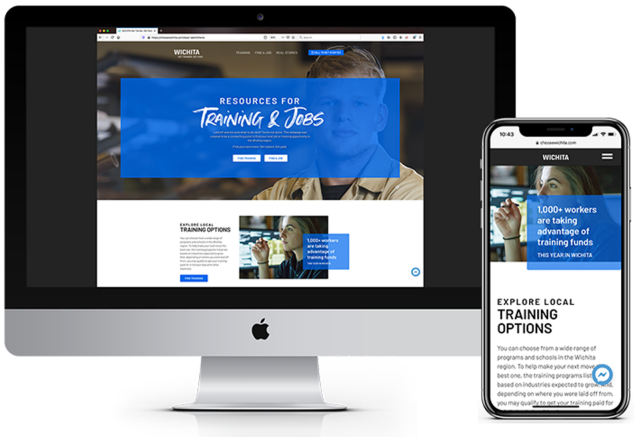
Businesses who are human-centered are succeeding in the global talent attraction and retention competition. With the impact and lasting effects of 2020, we have a unique opportunity to work together to examine, facilitate and promote a community-wide culture focused on talent. This includes the many ways that businesses are run – policies, structures and cultures – to keep Greater Wichita competitive.

To facilitate this process, we've launched a Morning Meet-Up event series as a space for local human resources and talent

professionals to share challenges and successes in forming such cultures within their organizations. We'll also continue to deliver insights and expertise regarding recruitment and culture trends to help businesses elevate their talent practices.

We strive for a workforce where individuals can be creative, dynamic and resilient, and to accomplish that, we must exhibit those same qualities in the ways we recruit, develop and engage our talent.

Position Greater Wichita as a top place to live, work and play



In 2020, we reallocated dollars earmarked for advertising to external target audiences in order to establish the "Get Trained. Get Paid." talent retention campaign with community partners, including the City of Wichita, Sedgwick County and Workforce Alliance of South-Central Kansas. This holistic re-employment strategy communicated training, funding and job opportunities for affected workers in the region and successfully helped provide resources to employees of all ages looking to upskill and reskill. This strategic marketing campaign ran from November-December 2020, and we are currently working on the next phase to continue those efforts.

Get Trained. Get Paid.
Talent Retention Campaign Results

10M+
AD IMPRESSIONS

10K+
WEBSITE USERS

5,000
EXPRESSED INTEREST IN LOCAL JOBS OR TRAINING

$500K
SECURED IN TRAINING FUNDS FOR LOCAL STUDENTS

In 2021, we will return to a more balanced approach of aggressively selling the region to increase the volume of potential candidates considering Wichita, while also working to retain existing talent to support economic recovery.

In closing, the more businesses that are involved in the attraction, retention and development of talent, the more our entire region will benefit. I encourage business leaders to use the free resources developed and updated by the Partnership Talent Team through the Choose Wichita Employer Toolkit.

Please feel free to reach out to discuss how to get more involved in making the region the prime destination for all talent.

Anne-Marie Coughlin, Executive Vice President of Talent

View a blog from Andrew Nave regarding the increase in business announcements and project activity

Learn more about our Talent priority

View all blogs