

Working Together to create pathways to opportunity



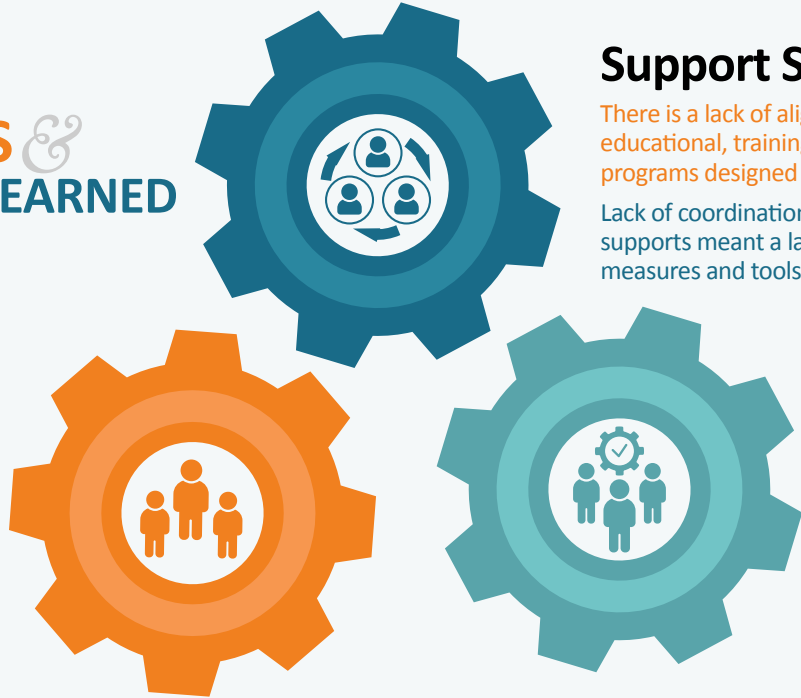
Our **vision** is for Springfield to have thriving communities, where economic opportunity, growth, and resilience is possible for all. **Achieving that vision** requires ongoing, collaborative work to remove systemic and racial barriers and create pathways to economic opportunity and well-being.

CHALLENGES & WHAT WE LEARNED

Residents

Residents experience a variety of barriers to training and employment.

Supports are not well coordinated and don't align with family realities or job needs



Support Systems

There is a lack of alignment among educational, training and support programs designed to support opportunity

Lack of coordination among programs and supports meant a lack of common measures and tools to track outcomes

Employers

Employers can't find qualified workers with current strategies.

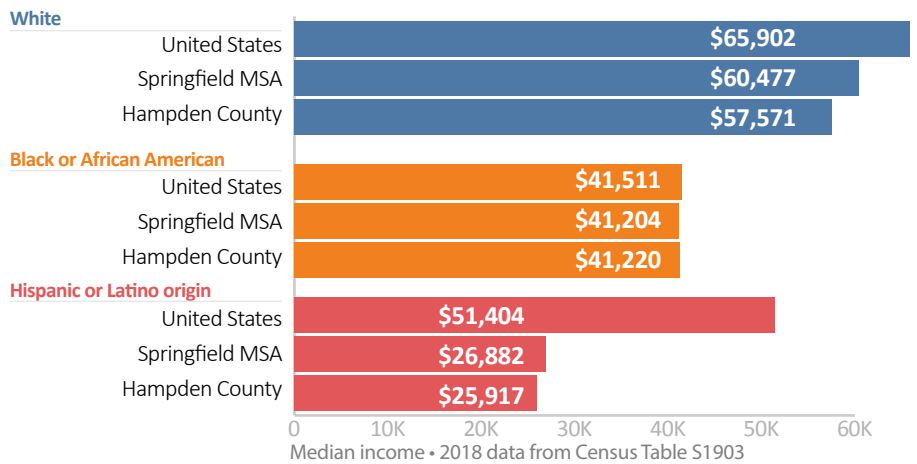
Education, Training and Certificate Programs are often disconnected from job opportunities and pathways

Neither the minimum wage or average wage in Hampden County can feed a family of 3

Hourly Wages*	1 Adult, 2 Children
Minimum Wage	\$14.25
Average Hourly Wage	\$24.35
Living Wage	\$45.75

*Mean Hourly Wage for Hampden County, 2019 based on weekly wage average of \$974/week; preliminary data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Living wage from MIT Living Wage Calculation, 2022

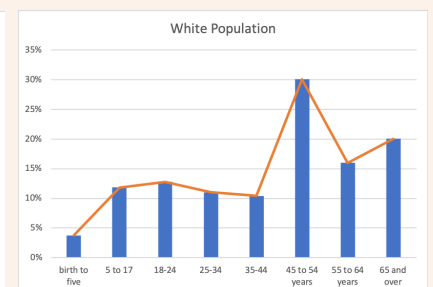
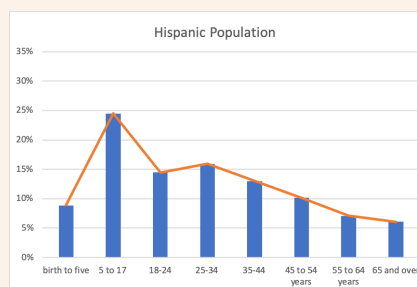
But the median Income of Hispanic Households in our region is roughly half the national average; which is not the case for White and Black households



There are opportunities in demographic change

These changes might put the region in a better position for long-term economic resilience, if we can address some of the challenges that accompany such changes, today.

The white population is older - 65% are over 45, but nearly 65% of our growing Hispanic population is under 34.



OUR SOLUTION

Collaboration

Before our initiative, there were 43 organizations doing something in workforce development, but not connected in any way.

Springfield WORKS engages and aligns employers, educators, community leaders, and jobseekers to address the economic needs of both residents and our local businesses.



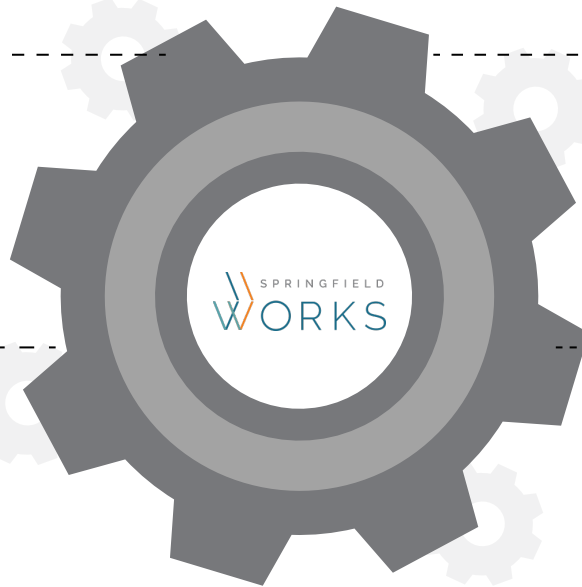
Our strategies and achievements

Develop

Develop New Frameworks to Guide the Workforce System: *We implemented new approach for effective resident outreach.*

Improve

Improve the Effectiveness of Service Providers Seeking to Enhance the Skills and Capacities of Low-income Job Seekers: *We developed and implemented two generation/Whole family approach to careers model.*



Influence

Influence Employer Hiring and Worker Advancement Practices: *We engaged employers to shift approach to hiring for entry-level positions and on advancement practices.*

Advocate

Advocate for Policy Improvements: *We introduced legislation to mitigate the benefits "cliff effect."*

Investing in Springfield WORKS means opening the road to economic resilience for more working families.

WE ARE:

- ▶ Increasing efficiencies, reducing duplication, and adapting immediately to changes in the economic landscape
- ▶ Providing employers, educators and residents with new tools and strategies to navigate that landscape
- ▶ Removing roadblocks, opening and connecting pathways to opportunity, building on and scaling up what works

THAT MEANS:

- ▶ Anyone in Springfield will be able to find a job who wants one, retain the job, and increase earnings through career growth
- ▶ Systems are aligned to support an effective workforce ecosystem
- ▶ Employers are able to hire and retain qualified workers that match their needs



Core Partners & Leadership Team

Baystate Health; City of Springfield; Community Foundation of Western Mass; Dress for Success Western Mass; Economic Development Council of Western MA; HCS Head Start; Holyoke Community College; Mass Mentoring Partnership; MGM Springfield; MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board; MassHire Springfield; Parent Villages; Springfield Partners for Community Action; Springfield Public Schools; Springfield Technical Community College; Tech Foundry; United Personnel; WayFinders; Women's Fund of Western Mass

Cross Sector Design, Implementation & Program Partners

Employers: Baystate Health; Big Y; Cartamundi; City of Springfield; Health New England; MGM Springfield; Pride Stores; Springfield Public Schools; United Personnel (Lenox Tools, Yankee Candle, Other Manufacturers)

Community Based Agencies & Family Voices: Christina's House; Department of Transitional Assistance; Dress for Success Western Mass; Educare Springfield; Hampden County Sheriff's Department; HCS Head Start; Home City Development; Mass Mentoring Partnership; Parent Villages; ROCA, SkillSmart; Springfield Public Schools; Springfield City Library; Springfield Housing Authority; Square One; WayFinders; Western Mass Employment Collaborative

Educators: Bay Path University; Dress for Success Western MA; Holyoke Community College; HCS Head Start; Training & Workforce Options; Springfield Partners for Community Action; Springfield Technical Community College; Tech Foundry; United Way of Pioneer Valley

Workforce Boards: MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board; MassHire Springfield

EDC of Western Mass & Baystate Health Anchor Collaborative

Baystate Health; Big Y; City of Springfield; City of Holyoke; Comcast; Holyoke Community College; Springfield College; UMass Amherst

Funders

Baystate Health (Aspen Institute); City of Springfield; Community Foundation of Western Mass; Economic Development Council of Western MA; Federal Reserve Bank of Boston; Holyoke Community College; Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation; MA Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development; SkillSmart; Springfield Partners for Community Action; Springfield Public Schools; Women's Fund of Western Mass