



0: Introducing *Ready for Work*

Welcome to the *Ready for Work* podcast. Powered by ACT, *Ready for Work* brings you the best and brightest in workforce development and career education with trends, innovation, and actions you can take to help your region's workforce reach its highest potential. Now...let's get *Ready for Work*!

We all have a stake in making our country more competitive. Closing the skills gap and driving economic growth starts at the grassroots level. We refer to this special introductory edition of *Ready for Work* as "Episode Zero" to help you get acquainted with the podcast. I'm your host, Jasen Jones, with the Work Ready Communities team at ACT. With our podcast debut, *Ready for Work* shines the spotlight on voices of excellence in the workforce ecosystem.

What we mean by workforce ecosystem is a group of stakeholders coming together to include education, workforce development, economic development, community leaders, employers, and more – who each have a unique impact on economic development. Think of the ecosystems necessary to sustain human life, such as clean air, food, and water; the workforce ecosystem brings the components together to optimize workforce supply and demand in a custom strategy to meet the needs of your region. If you're an executive, administrator, planner, counselor, or leader for any of the workforce ecosystem partners, you're in the right place.

The *Ready for Work* podcast team is planning bimonthly episodes, where we'll interview experts in the field, share the best from live events, and dive into best practices and our favorite resources. Check back to act.org/readyforworkpodcast to find more information about our guests and links to everything we reference. [Sign up for our newsletter](#) to see everything

ACT Workforce-related. Work Ready Communities can visit workreadycommunities.org for data on your community.

Throughout the year, we'll cover topics that are essential to developing your local workforce such as skills-based hiring and stackable credentials, employer strategies, sector trends, and alignment of training – all of which are helpful for developing talent. We'll also explore strategies for targeted populations to reduce poverty and increase economic impact. The podcast helps make sense of workforce data, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act known as WIOA and workforce development along with economic development strategies that increase the competitive value of your workforce.

Thanks for joining us on this journey with the *Ready for Work* podcast from ACT. For more information on workforce solutions, visit act.org/workforce or workreadycommunities.org.

Subscribe so you don't miss a single episode. Check out *Ready for Work* in your favorite podcast app or simply visit act.org/readyforworkpodcast.

Let's get to work!

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