

Imperial County Workforce Development Board and San Diego
Workforce Partnership

Southern Border Region Plan

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1) Background

The Southern Border Region (SBR) is a large and diverse geographic area located at the border with Mexico. Many diverse subregions comprise the Region providing myriad economic opportunities as well as unique challenges for the workforce system to support the disparate needs both of businesses and residents. Our regional plan was established in 2016 in conjunction with our partners and developed three strategic priorities that addressed engaging businesses, career pathway development and human-centered service design. Since then, the SBR has been doing extensive work to better understand the evolving needs of our community. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic we saw, as demonstrated through the research of Harvard economist Raj Chetty¹, that both the American economy and labor market were rapidly changing. The forces of technical innovation, automation and globalization have generated historical levels of wealth and prosperity, while at the same time leaving behind many of our workers, particularly the justice-involved, and their families in low-wage, low-skill jobs that do not pay family-sustaining wages. Now, as we look to the end of the economic closures due to the pandemic, the short and long-term impact to our Region will be unfolding for some time to come. What is clear is that the impact to businesses and workers has been severe in some of the largest sectors, particularly in sectors that had more traditionally low-paying jobs, such as tourism, hitting workers hard who were already struggling.

2) Strategy – Our Pillars

The SBR has established clarity around its goals and lasting partnerships. Now the focus will shift to include infrastructure development that supports equity and jump starts the re-building process in our region. While our pillars provide a strong foundation, we must also acknowledge the reality of the current environment. Our work to date under the regional plan has provided a foundational understanding of the labor market and the equity gaps which exist through research, clear definitions of quality jobs and indicators to begin measuring our progress, tested innovative strategies for true partnerships with high road employers which incorporate worker voice, and piloted person-centric service delivery mechanisms to meet the needs of marginalized populations.

The SBR has **Five Strategic Pillars**. They provide structure and guidance for our work to help San Diego and Imperial County residents out of poverty to self-sustaining careers and help businesses thrive while growing the economies.

¹ Chetty, R., Friedman, J., Hendren, N., & Stepner, M. (2020). The economic impacts of COVID-19: Evidence from a new public database built from private sector data. *Opportunity Insights*.

Our Strategic Pillars



Inclusive Business Growth



Job Quality



**Outcomes-Focused
Funding**



**Population-Specific
Interventions**



2Gen

Job Quality is about simultaneously producing outstanding outcomes for businesses and their frontline workers.

2-Generational solutions are focused on creating opportunities for and addressing needs of both children and the adults in their lives together.

Outcome-Focused Funding focuses on the efficient and effective use of resources to solve intractable social and economic problems.

Inclusive Business Growth focuses on equipping small and mid-sized businesses to compete by meeting their needs for a diverse, skilled workforce.

Population-Specific Interventions focus on deepening our programming which is truly differentiated and standardizing common functions in order to better respond to the needs of the community. This pillar considers how to connect programs, services, and organizations to best serve participants as a whole person.

3) Near Term Post-COVID19 Measures for the Online Experience

While both Workforce Development Boards are engaging as much as possible with remote tools, the accessibility of some communities and particularly those in Imperial County also make this challenging. As such, we are taking a two-pronged approach of improving the online experience and working to make access easier for all.

Between navigating the financial impacts of unemployment or underemployment, enrolling in safety net programs and managing their job search, job seekers already have enough on their plate. They don't have the time and energy to work through a complicated, bureaucratic workforce development system. We are creating an integrated service delivery system to make it easy for job seekers in our region to get the help they need with one phone number to call, self-serve online resources and self-service career appointment scheduling; and we will monitor success with a customer feedback solution.

A primary component of the system is one phone number. Presently, job seekers must know which career centers in the region are closest to them and provide the services they need, find the phone number for those career centers and then get in touch with the right career center for them. We are developing processes, and through regional funding, are creating a contact center solution and service navigation staff so that customers can call one phone number, quickly get in touch with a human being and get to the right career center faster.

4) Workforce and Economic Analysis

When we talk about the Southern Border Region, it's important to recognize that San Diego and Imperial Counties have two vastly different economies with different needs. San Diego is the fifth most populous county in America with 3.3 million people; Imperial's population is 1/18th the size, with 181,000 people. San Diego has a \$252 billion economy; Imperial has a \$6.6 billion economy.¹² Eighteen percent of jobs in Imperial County are on farms, while 0.6% of San Diego jobs are. These populations are also quite distant. The closest two population centers are 90 minutes away along Highway 8. (See Figure 1).

There is wisdom in combining San Diego and Imperial Counties for the sake of regional planning, as the San Diego Workforce Partnership's research resources facilitate planning activities that serve Imperial County, but these counties do not form a unified economy, and if we aggregate labor market information across both counties together (as does EDD's LMID on their [regional planning unit page](#)), we simply won't get an accurate picture of either economy. Insights on Imperial County especially would be lost in the aggregation process, since San Diego's larger numbers will always dominate statistical summaries.

Current Employment and Unemployment Data

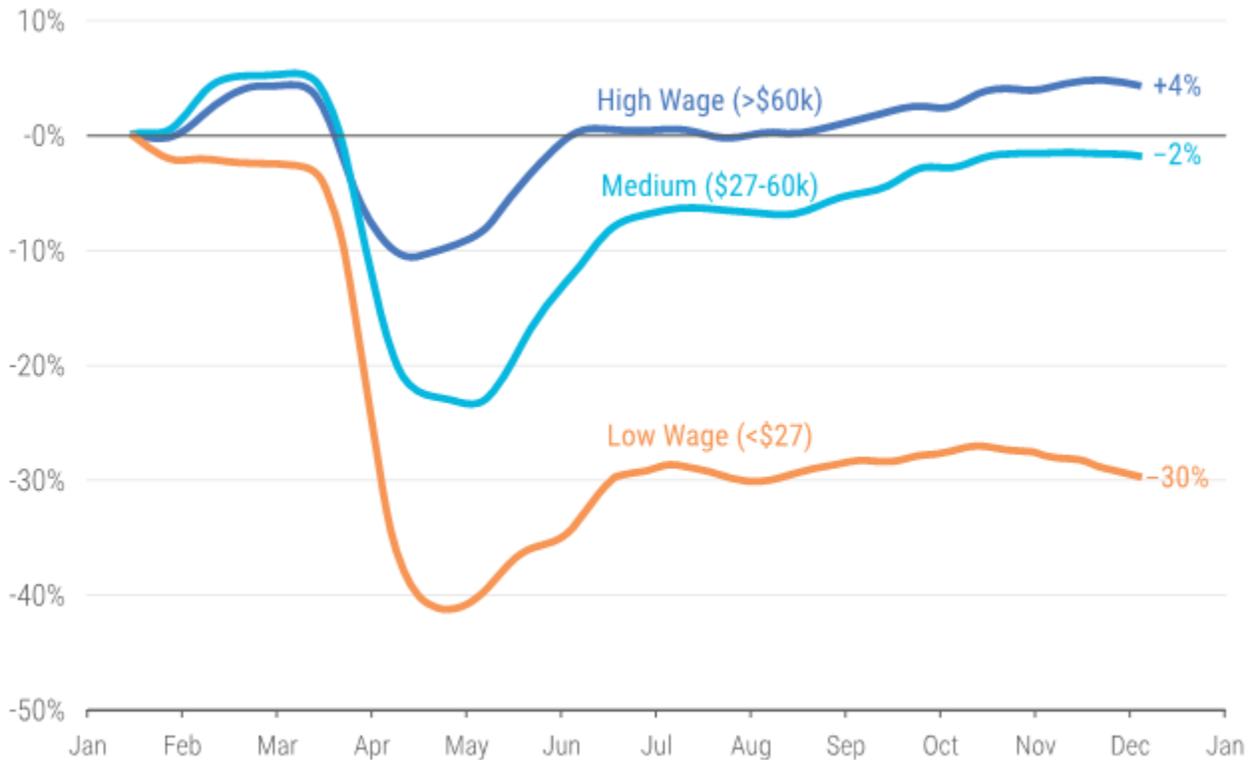
The Covid-19 pandemic has had a drastic impact on regional employment. In San Diego, unemployment quintupled from 3% at the beginning of 2020 to 15% in April. While many jobs have since returned, the recovery has exacerbated existing wealth inequality; payroll data suggests that employment has actually increased among high-income earners (those earning more than \$60,000 a year) since the beginning of 2020, while employment among low wage earners (less than \$27,000) remains 30% lower.³ While a comparable analysis is not available for Imperial County (due to the small population), it is reasonable to expect similar patterns exist there—especially given the

² Emsi analysis based on 2020 Bureau of Labor Statistics and Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

³ Chetty, R., Friedman, J., Hendren, N., & Stepner, M. (2020). The economic impacts of COVID-19: Evidence from a new public database built from private sector data. *Opportunity Insights*.

economic literature demonstrating widespread differences in pandemic unemployment across education levels and incomes.⁴

Figure 1. Change in San Diego County Employment by income level, January 15 to December 5, 2020⁵

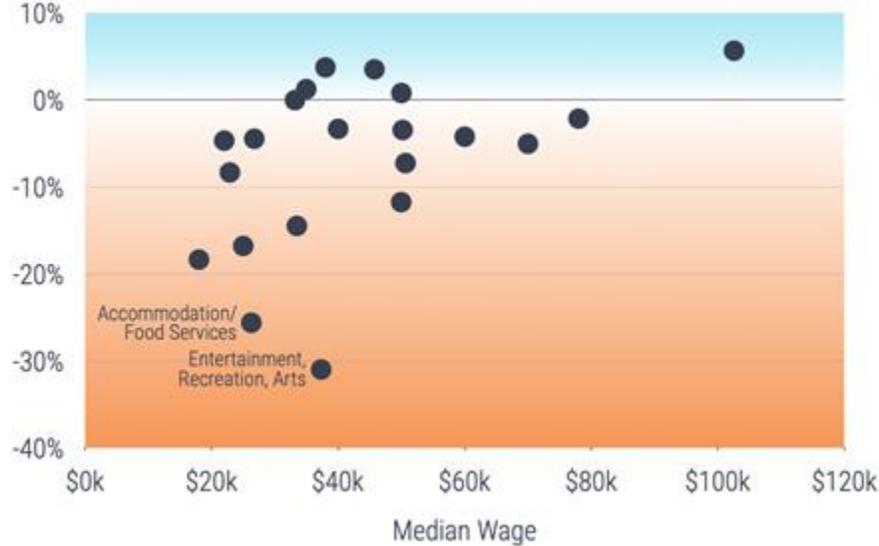


Further evidence for the unequal distribution of pandemic-related unemployment can be found by comparing job losses to median wages across sectors. Figure 3 shows that San Diego sectors with low average wages (like Accommodation & Food Services and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation) experienced the greatest job losses.

⁴ See for example Kandoussi, M., & Langot, F. (2021). On the heterogeneous impacts of the COVID-19 lockdown on US unemployment

⁵ Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, January 22, 2021 data.

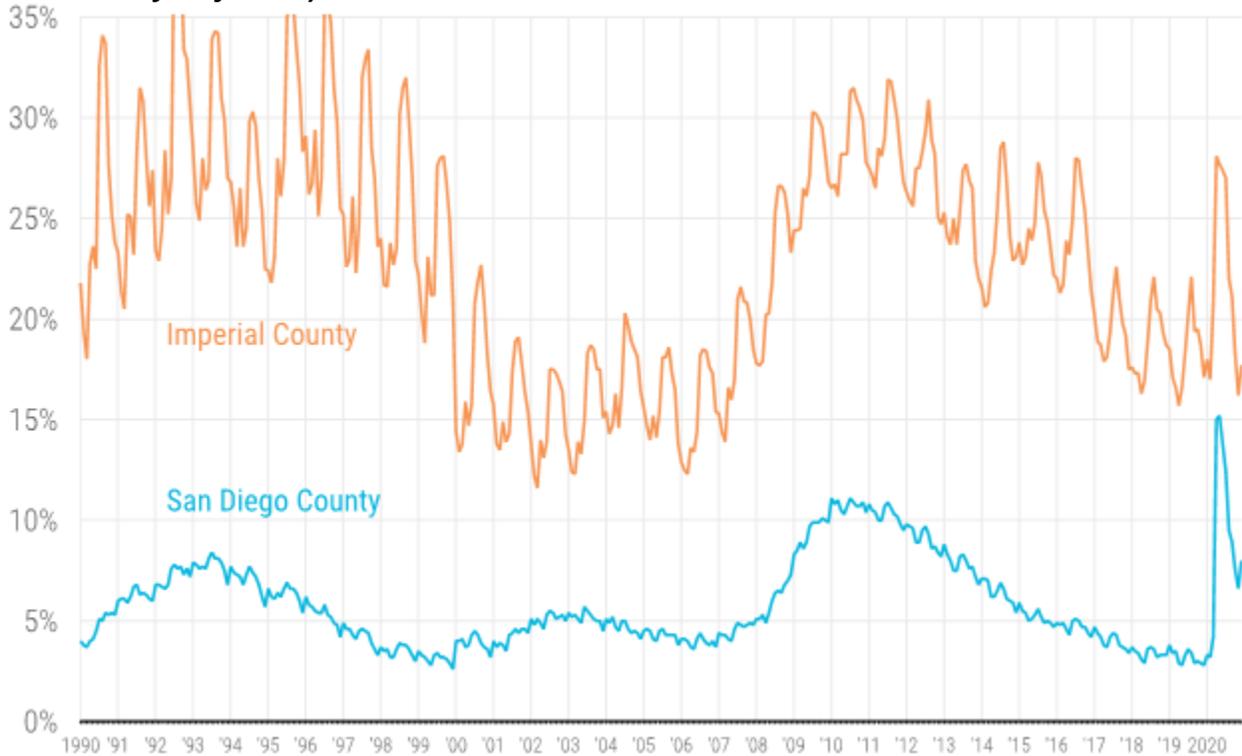
Figure 2. Median wages and change in employment (Dec 2019–Dec 2020) in San Diego by sector⁶



Imperial County also saw a spike in unemployment, but it's important to understand this spike in context. The highest pandemic unemployment rate recorded in San Diego was 15.2%. Imperial County's rate has been higher than that every month for the last 13 years. Moreover, Imperial's unemployment has high (and consistent) seasonal variation due to the large portion of the economy that depends on agriculture. The pandemic certainly caused a spike in joblessness, but 2020's highest unemployment rate was about average for the last decade.

⁶ Internal analysis of 2019 American Community Survey data on wages and Employment Development Department data on employment.

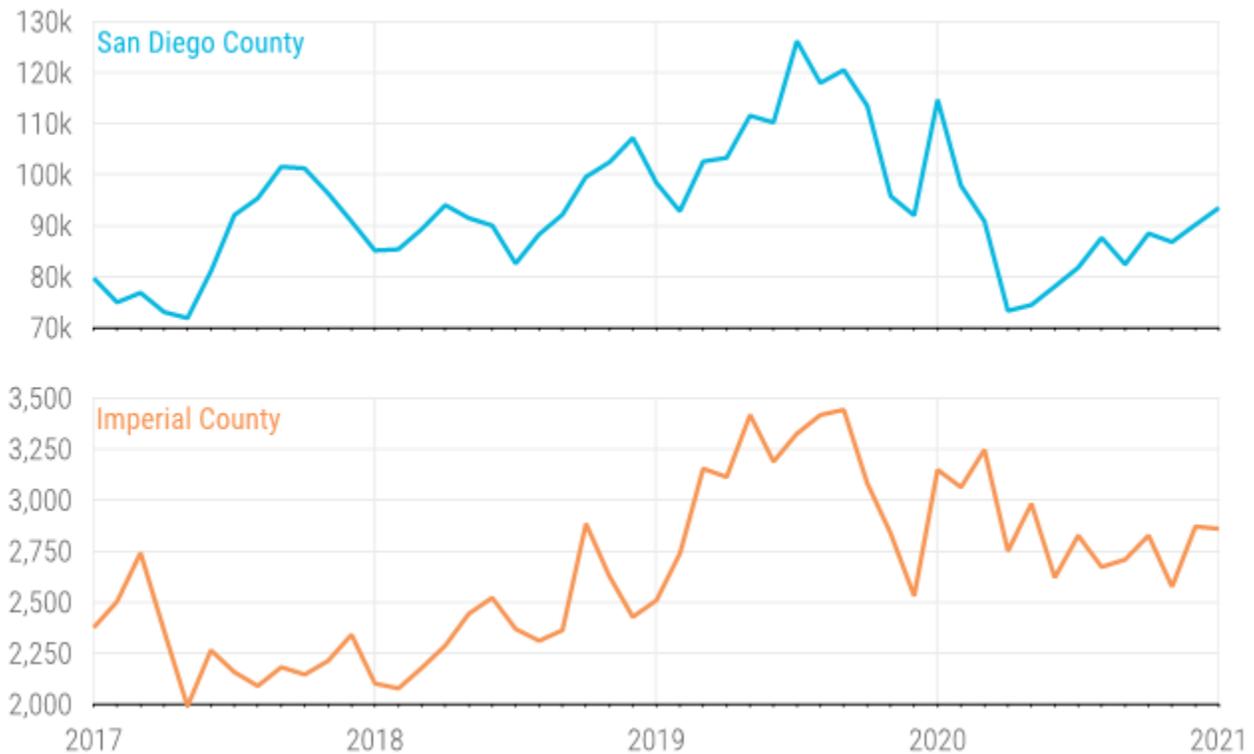
Figure 3. Unemployment in San Diego and Imperial Counties, 1990-2020 (not seasonally adjusted)⁷



In addition to the unemployment rate, job postings can be an indicator of economic health. Monthly unique job postings are highly predictive of actual job openings (and available sooner). Job postings in San Diego exhibited a steep drop at the beginning of 2020, falling by a third, from 111,000 in January down to 73,000 in April, and while they have grown since April, at 93,000 they remain significantly below pre-pandemic levels. Postings in Imperial have decreased since as well, but gradually and by only 10%. Postings in Imperial actually peaked in March when pandemic unemployment was close to its height around the country, but this is less surprising given that March has historically been a strong month for the Imperial economy when viewed through either job postings or unemployment.

⁷ US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment Rate in San Diego County and Unemployment Rate in Imperial County (not seasonally adjusted) [CASAND5URN & CAIMPE5URN], retrieved March 2021 from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Figure 4. Unique monthly job postings in San Diego and Imperial Counties, 2017-2021⁸



Current workforce education and skill level analysis, current employer needs and relevant skill gaps

Education is another area where San Diego and Imperial Counties differ. In Imperial County, 28% of working-age residents (those aged 16–24) lack a high school diploma, and only 19% have an Associate Degree or above. In San Diego, 15% of working-age residents lack a high school diploma and 40% have a degree. In addition to education barriers, 21% of working-age Imperial County residents either do not speak English or do not speak it well (only 7% face this challenge in San Diego County).

⁸ Emsi proprietary job postings data covering 2017-2021.

Figure 5. Education among working-age adults in San Diego and Imperial Counties⁹

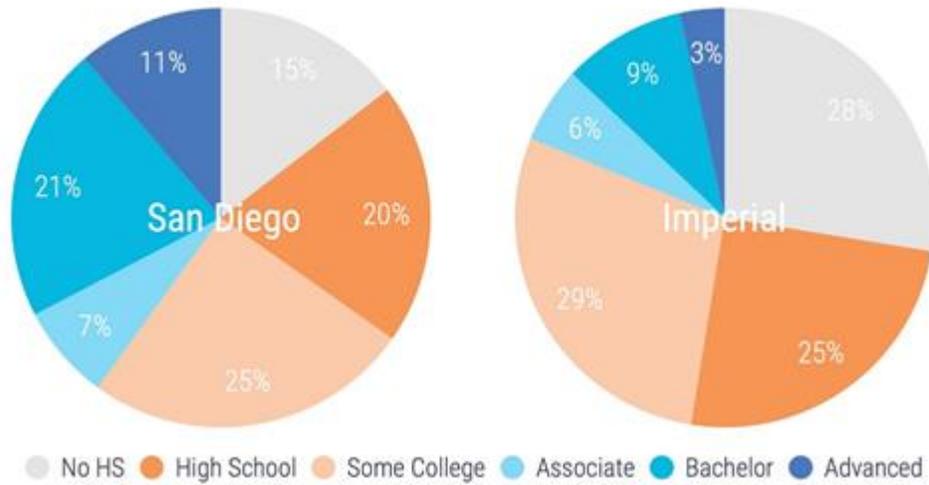
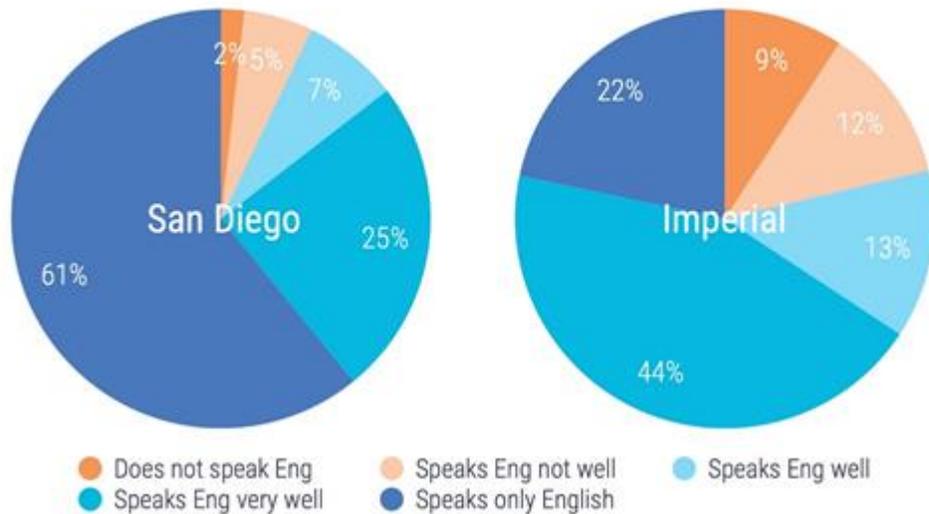


Figure 6. English proficiency among working-age adults in San Diego and Imperial Counties¹⁰



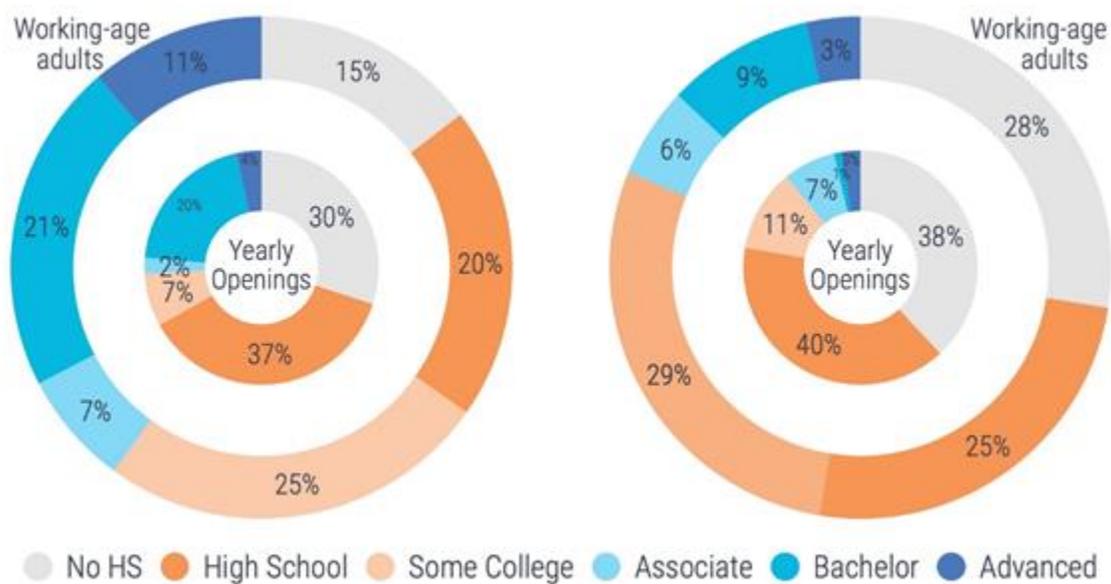
⁹ Internal analysis of 2019 American Community Survey data.

¹⁰ Internal analysis of 2019 American Community Survey data.

Despite the differences in education between San Diego and Imperial Counties, it does not appear that lack of sufficiently educated working-age adults is an obstacle to meeting employers' needs in either county.

Figure 8 is a donut graph displaying two distributions; the outer rings represent the potential supply of workers at each education level (identical to the pie charts in Figure 6). The inner rings show the demand for workers of each education level (using BLS data on annual job openings in by occupation and typical entry-level education for the relevant occupations). Note that employer demand skews lower on the educational spectrum than the population of potential workers. This indicates that the population of potential workers in the Southern Border Region is adequately educated to meet employer demand.

Figure 7. Supply of education among working-age residents and demand for education by employers¹¹



Race, ethnicity, and gender

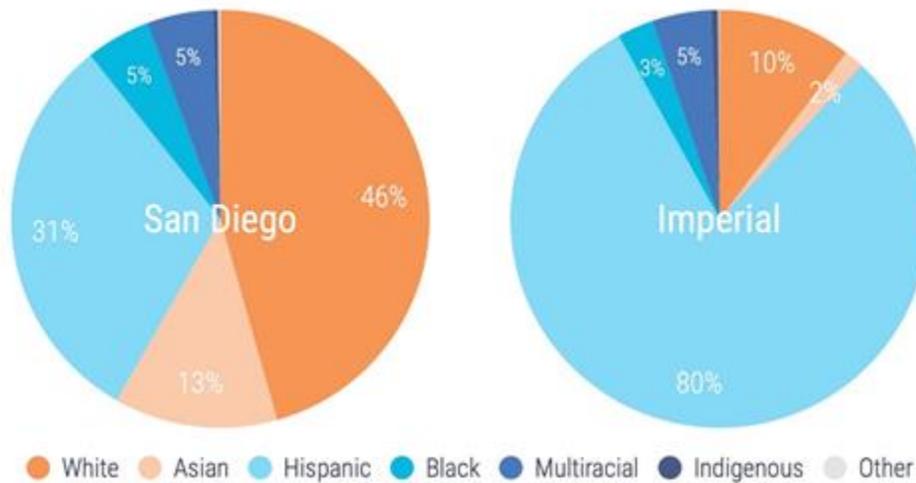
One of the most important developments of 2020 was a strengthened call for racial equity. The Southern Border Region has already begun to respond to that call in several ways—through a focus on disconnected youth of color, and through advocacy with our employer partners for more stable worker schedules and more flexible HR policies, both

¹¹ Internal analysis of 2019 American Community Survey and Emsi data.

of which benefit women and especially mothers. We have also developed plans for supporting employee ownership in industries primarily staffed by workers of color.

To begin with, we must recognize that San Diego and Imperial County have dramatically different racial and ethnic compositions. Figure 9 shows these differences.

Figure 8. Race and ethnicity of working-age Southern Border Region residents¹²



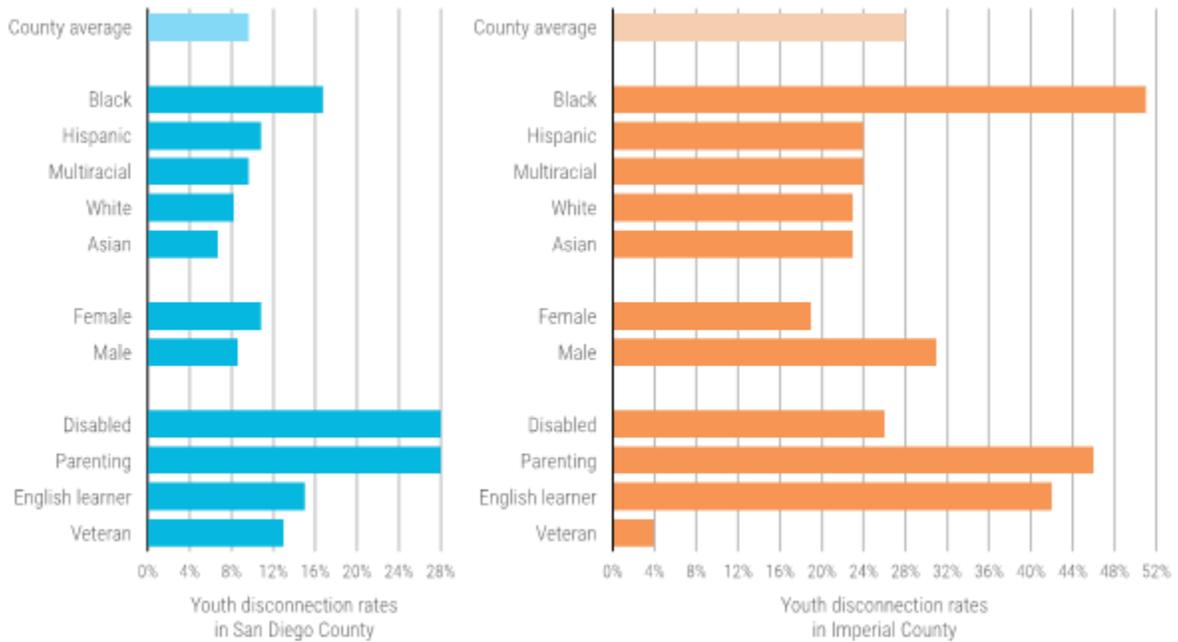
Both San Diego and Imperial Counties have long histories of racial discrimination. We have [published an article](#) and [released a video](#) about the history of racism in San Diego's labor market.

The Imperial Valley was briefly part of Mexico from Mexican independence in 1821 until the US annexed Alta California in 1848. Imperial County was formed from the eastern half of San Diego County in 1910, when the population was less than 1,500. From 1929 to 1936, between 400,000 and 2 million people of Mexican descent living in the US—most of whom were US citizens—were deported from the United States in an episode of ethnic cleansing euphemistically called Mexican Repatriation. Over a million more individuals of Mexican descent were forcibly deported in 1954, again including US citizens.

We see the legacy of racism in the unequal distribution of youth disconnection in both counties. Figure 10 shows the disparities that persist among our counties' youth.

¹² Internal analysis of 2019 American Community Survey data.

Figure 9. Youth disconnection among various groups in San Diego (left) and Imperial (right) Counties¹³



While the EDD does not provide us with county unemployment numbers by race, ethnicity or gender, we do know that across the US, pandemic unemployment has been more concentrated among women (which is unusual, as most US recessions have disproportionately affected men) and Hispanics.¹⁴

¹³ Internal analysis of most recent available (2018) five-year sample of American Community Survey data.

¹⁴ Alon, T., Doepke, M., Olmstead-Rumsey, J., & Tertilt, M. (2020). *This time it's different: the role of women's employment in a pandemic recession* (No. w27660). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Shibata, I. (2020). The distributional impact of recessions: The global financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic recession. *Journal of Economics and Business*, 105971.

One step we believe is important to address racial equity in Imperial County is the surprising underperformance of government in hiring Hispanic workers. All large *private*-sector industries have workforces that are more than 66% Hispanic, yet all large *public*-sector industries have workforces that are less than 45% Hispanic. We are currently working with public-sector hiring managers to address this problem through paid internships in County departments and shared hiring opportunities. We will continue to expand and deepen these partnerships.

5) Analysis of Industries and Occupations with Emerging Demand

In-Demand Occupations

In San Diego we define in-demand occupations as those with greater than average openings, greater than average growth, and at least a self-sufficiency wage at the entry level or 10th percentile.¹⁵

In Imperial County the self-sufficiency wage is below the state minimum wage so these criteria would result in more in-demand jobs than the local board has bandwidth to address. So we set the minimum openings to 30 to narrow the list down to two dozen occupations.

Table 1. In-Demand Occupation Criteria

	San Diego County	Imperial County
Minimum openings per occupation	61.41	30
Minimum growth per occupation	2.948%	2.948%
Self-sufficiency wage	\$17.65	\$10.72

¹⁵ Self-sufficiency wage estimated by the University of Washington Center for Women's Welfare (selfsufficiencystandard.org).

Below is a list of San Diego's and Imperial Counties' in-demand occupations and sectors.

Table 2. San Diego County In-Demand Occupations

SOC Code	Occupation	Entry-Level (10th percentile) Wage	Typical Entry-Level Education
47-2042	Floor Layers, Except Carpet, Wood, and Hard Tiles	\$18.83	None
47-4011	Construction and Building Inspectors	\$18.57	High school
53-2031	Flight Attendants	\$19.21	High school
43-5031	Public Safety Telecommunicators	\$19.28	High school
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$19.63	High school
33-3051	Police and Sheriffs Patrol Officers	\$26.14	High school
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	\$26.18	High school
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	\$34.57	High school
31-9097	Phlebotomists	\$17.72	Postsecondary nondegree
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	\$21.47	Postsecondary nondegree
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$22.02	Postsecondary nondegree
33-2011	Firefighters	\$22.14	Postsecondary nondegree
17-3021	Aerospace Engineering and Operations	\$20.17	Associate degree

	Technologists and Technicians		
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	\$20.24	Associate degree
31-2011	Occupational Therapy Assistants	\$20.46	Associate degree
19-4099	Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians, All Other	\$20.72	Associate degree
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	\$20.90	Associate degree
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	\$21.09	Associate degree
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technologists and Technicians	\$22.14	Associate degree
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	\$24.13	Associate degree
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	\$28.69	Associate degree
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	\$41.00	Associate degree
21-1029	Social Workers, All Other	\$18.75	Bachelor's degree
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	\$19.65	Bachelor's degree
13-2098	Financial and Investment Analysts, Financial Risk Specialists, and Financial Specialists, All Other	\$20.19	Bachelor's degree

13-1198	Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	\$20.41	Bachelor's degree
13-1141	Compensation, Benefits, and Job Analysis Specialists	\$21.43	Bachelor's degree
13-1041	Compliance Officers	\$22.00	Bachelor's degree
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	\$22.27	Bachelor's degree
13-1111	Management Analysts	\$22.36	Bachelor's degree
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	\$22.47	Bachelor's degree
17-1011	Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	\$22.78	Bachelor's degree
11-9039	Education Administrators, All Other	\$22.79	Bachelor's degree
19-2041	Environmental Scientists and Specialists, Including Health	\$23.24	Bachelor's degree
11-3011	Administrative Services and Facilities Managers	\$24.46	Bachelor's degree
19-2042	Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists and Geographers	\$24.88	Bachelor's degree
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$24.90	Bachelor's degree
27-3042	Technical Writers	\$25.21	Bachelor's degree

15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	\$25.52	Bachelor's degree
25-4022	Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	\$25.55	Bachelor's degree
17-2051	Civil Engineers	\$26.93	Bachelor's degree
15-1245	Database Administrators and Architects	\$27.02	Bachelor's degree
29-1031	Dietitians and Nutritionists	\$27.17	Bachelor's degree
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	\$27.69	Bachelor's degree
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	\$28.09	Bachelor's degree
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	\$28.50	Bachelor's degree
11-2031	Public Relations and Fundraising Managers	\$28.68	Bachelor's degree
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	\$29.06	Bachelor's degree
17-2011	Aerospace Engineers	\$29.58	Bachelor's degree
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	\$29.72	Bachelor's degree
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	\$30.86	Bachelor's degree
17-2199	Engineers, All Other	\$31.75	Bachelor's degree
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	\$31.79	Bachelor's degree
29-1141	Registered Nurses	\$32.16	Bachelor's degree

11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	\$32.38	Bachelor's degree
11-2021	Marketing Managers	\$32.90	Bachelor's degree
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	\$33.67	Bachelor's degree
11-3031	Financial Managers	\$33.67	Bachelor's degree
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	\$34.55	Bachelor's degree
15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	\$34.88	Bachelor's degree
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	\$45.82	Bachelor's degree
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	\$48.53	Bachelor's degree
11-9121	Natural Sciences Managers	\$49.60	Bachelor's degree
19-3039	Psychologists, All Other	\$18.13	Master's degree
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	\$19.82	Master's degree
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators	\$20.42	Master's degree
15-2041	Statisticians	\$25.68	Master's degree
19-3051	Urban and Regional Planners	\$27.60	Master's degree
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	\$31.11	Master's degree
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	\$32.24	Master's degree

29-1071	Physician Assistants	\$33.76	Master's degree
11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	\$33.96	Master's degree
15-1221	Computer and Information Research Scientists	\$36.05	Master's degree
11-9032	Education Administrators, Kindergarten through Secondary	\$36.73	Master's degree
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	\$49.25	Master's degree
19-1021	Biochemists and Biophysicists	\$23.14	Doctoral/professional degree
19-1042	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	\$24.71	Doctoral/professional degree
19-3031	Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	\$30.98	Doctoral/professional degree
29-1123	Physical Therapists	\$33.14	Doctoral/professional degree
29-1131	Veterinarians	\$40.41	Doctoral/professional degree
29-1228	Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	\$53.27	Doctoral/professional degree

Table 3. Imperial County In-Demand Occupations

SOC Code	Occupation	Entry-Level Wage	Typical Entry-Level Education
53-7061	Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	\$12.00	No formal educational credential
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$12.00	No formal educational credential
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$12.00	No formal educational credential
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	\$12.00	No formal educational credential
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	\$12.00	No formal educational credential
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	\$12.00	No formal educational credential
53-3058	Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	\$12.00	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	\$12.00	High school diploma or equivalent
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	\$12.00	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	\$12.00	High school diploma or equivalent
33-9098	School Bus Monitors and Protective Service Workers, All Other	\$12.00	High school diploma or equivalent
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	\$12.13	High school diploma or equivalent

21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	\$13.85	High school diploma or equivalent
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	\$12.00	Some college, no degree
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	\$12.00	Postsecondary nondegree award
31-9092	Medical Assistants	\$12.43	Postsecondary nondegree award
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$16.53	Postsecondary nondegree award
11-9198	Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling; and Managers, All Other	\$12.29	Bachelor's degree
25-3031	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	\$16.61	Bachelor's degree
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	\$21.40	Bachelor's degree
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$26.79	Bachelor's degree
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$26.89	Bachelor's degree
29-1141	Registered Nurses	\$30.52	Bachelor's degree
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	\$28.84	Doctoral or professional degree

To support job seekers and workers and to enhance them professionally in career pathways to reach resilience and sustainability, the region is in the scaling phase of our economic analysis and labor market studies. My Next Move, our customer facing tool, has been launched and it continues to expand the real time information and services available to users. The focus now is on adding in additional, population specific components (such as MilGears for veterans) which address equity gaps uncovered through the research. Success will be measured through the usage and results produced by the tool (kiosk) as well as through customer feedback surveys. These learnings will enable us to adapt our programmatic interventions to ensure they are truly

serving the populations most in need, as outlined in the Population Specific Intervention pillar from the SBR's strategic pillars.

Regional Indicators

Communicating Industry Workforce Needs to Supply-side Partners

The Talent Pipeline Management process, funded through JP Morgan Chase's Advancing Cities project, has become the leading practice in San Diego. This work, while just beginning through the San Diego Regional Economic Development Council, also includes partners like the San Diego and Imperial County Community College District (SDICCCA) and the San Diego and Imperial Labor Council bringing the value outcomes to the entire Region. Talent Pipeline Management is designed to address skilled talent shortages in high-demand occupations within priority sectors. By engaging employers at the start of the process up front, vetted opportunities are created for job seekers that align with the needs of the employers, UP FRONT. Working closely with employers, Preferred Talent Providers (education and training partners) will engage to support industry recognized credentials as well as identifying immediately available positions for the graduates.

Policies Supporting Equity and Improving Job Quality

To reach equality of opportunity those practices, systems and policies that have enabled, perpetuated or failed to reverse the trend of growing inequality of opportunity must give way to a new way of thinking about workforce and economic development. As a region, we continue to make changes to our systems and partnerships so that education and training become a lifelong practice and access to networks, resources and knowledge is available to all. Our five pillars keep focus on our work around quality jobs, worker voice, guiding workers and employers toward sustainable career pathways, and expanding our work with specific populations. The boards in the Southern Border Region have adopted the core values of Equity and Inclusion:

- Equity – The proactive assessment and implementation of policies, practices, behaviors, and actions that result in access to opportunities, fair treatment and equitable impact and outcomes for ALL customers, staff, and stakeholders
- Inclusion – To create safe spaces that foster a culture where everyone feels welcomed, seen, respected, supported, valued, and empowered to fully participate.

Furthermore, the Region has adopted the Listen Learn Act framework to continue improving the equity work. The Listen Learn Act framework centers BIPOC voices and enables all three focus areas to receive appropriate attention. The internal staff, community and especially program participants, as well as our partners in business, will have input through this framework to create a wholistic approach to equity and inclusion. While each Board will approach the framework in a way that best serves their County, the commitment to the process will spotlight strategy and policy toward improvements.

6) Identifying Shared Populations and Developing Targeted Service Strategies

From a service delivery perspective, we focus on population specific interventions, as outlined in our strategic pillars. We believe the best way to support special populations is through adapted versions of the Individual Placement Support (IPS) model. The success of the IPS model with individuals dealing with mental health issues has been widely documented. What is even more promising is that the model is showing to be effective with other population groups such as homeless, at-risk of homelessness, CalWORKs recipients, justice-involved individuals and individuals with physical or mental challenges that result in long term unemployment and SSI stipends. Adult education programs also align their programming with the IPS model. As targeted populations often suffer from trauma, and often have experience with multiple barriers (i.e.: justice-involved & homelessness), we believe that by incorporating a model that focusses on mental health supports, we will address deep and systemic barriers to ensure long-term engagement of services.

The IPS Model is a Team Based approach that targets competitive employment opportunities. In order to achieve success, the employment specialist works in tandem with the community stakeholders which are assisting in housing, mental health, food and clothing. The team comes together at set times to discuss each case in order to eliminate barriers, provide support and achieve rapid movements to stability. Bringing together the right combination of support is key.

The IPS model allows participants to receive services based on their current need and provides help in an environment of their choice. Specialists meet with the participant in a location and at a time that is convenient for the participant. During the pandemic, we have been able to meet the need for frequent virtual touch points.

IPS can have far reaching effects when executed properly. Stability for participants is key and the IPS for employment model takes into account the other factors that may be barriers to stability. IPS does not assume that the first job a person receives will be the last job. This relieves the stress and sense of hopelessness and failure that may arise from a wrong fit in employment. The specialist works with the employee and employer to provide a bridge and advocate for both.

Implementation of the IPS Model:

SBR can use the IPS Model for all targeted population individuals who have indicated their desire to work. Using a rapid employment model, IPS has a goal of getting an individual to a face to face (this can be virtual) meeting with an employer within 30 days of the time that they identify as willing to work.

Once the participant is interested in employment, specialists engage in the following:

- Work one on one with the participant to determine suitable types of work based on current skills, interests, barriers and strengths to develop an individualized employment plan

- Offer counseling with regard to public benefits, since the potential loss of benefits upon getting a job can sometimes serve as a disincentive to seeking employment
- Support the participant's rapid job search and placement in a competitive paid position they desire
- Offer ongoing vocational supports such as one-on-one job coaching, and on-the-job training and credentialing
- Integrate employment assistance with other supportive services to better help the individual work through employment barriers
- Continually reassess the client and provide additional support or re-placement as new barriers emerge

IPS Employment Specialists will identify employers within the appropriate sectors and facilitate interviews. The first job may not be the right fit, so a participant may go through several jobs before stabilizing with permanent work. The Employment Specialist will be a part of this process.

Employment Supported Fidelity Scale:

The evidence based IPS model has been used for over 25 years within clinical settings for those with mental health challenges and has high rates of success. SBR commissioned a fidelity scale model consisting of criteria specifically designed for non-mental health settings to ensure that the program is structured and operating within evidence-based practices for IPS.

We are currently focusing on four core populations: veterans, mature workers, outh and justice-involved, as well as exploring opportunities to support immigrants and individuals with disabilities. Some highlights of current efforts:

Veterans

The SBR is collaborating with the company developing an online tool, MilGears, approved by DoD, to help veterans translate their careers in the military to the civilian labor market, over and above basic credentials. This would enable soon to be veterans to map their assigned jobs and duties while in the service to the civilian world. The expectation is to connect MILGEARS to My Next Move so the Region staff can support all military in better understanding what they bring in skills (technical and non-technical), as well as their communication of those skills to potential employers. The system will also help educate the veteran on family sustaining career pathways in the SBR. In this way, veteran clients will receive the most robust understanding of LMI data, career pathways and the individual's journey.

Youth

Guiding young adults ages 16–24 on a path to success through skill building, education, social capital, and job-based experiences is a key part of our work. The Southern Border's goal is to reduce the rate of disconnection in San Diego and Imperial counties, especially in those neighborhoods where the gap is the greatest. Last year there were

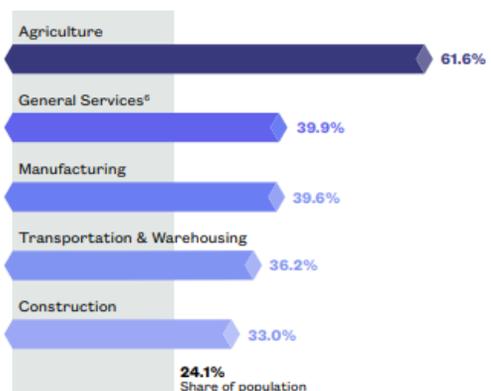
42,000 16 to 24-year-olds in the southern border region who were neither in school nor employed. Our region's opportunity youth research is crucial to guiding interventions that prioritize development of the young workforce, creating opportunities for those who are disconnected to correct course early in their working life. We have refined our focus each year of this research, focusing on different segments of disconnected youth to address the most pronounced inequities. For example, while we have observed the overall youth disconnection rate declining over the past three years, the rate in certain sub-regions has increased. This signals us and our community partners that more focused effort should be placed on youth in these areas. Our goal this year is to explore the dynamics of disconnection more deeply. While we will replicate our prior analyses, the data only provides a point-in-time count. We know anecdotally that disconnection is frequently non-chronic—youth may experience weeks or months of disconnection, interspersed with periods of school or work. We will explore ideas for gathering data to highlight the life events that cause these detours, helping the region to support these youth more effectively. Supporting the ongoing work in the opportunity youth space, the youth report refresh will be shared throughout the Region with partners electronically and will inform program design.

Immigrants and Refugees

Immigrants and refugees are a vital part of the Southern Border community, representing 25% of the population in San Diego and 34% in Imperial—with an additional 22% being second-generation Americans born to immigrant parents. Immigrants contribute 25% of all tax revenue in San Diego and 41% in Imperial.¹⁶ The Southern Border frequently tops all other California counties in refugee arrivals, with San Diego welcoming more than 40,000 refugees since 1995. The immigrant populations in the community are diverse, with large numbers of individuals coming from Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, China and Iraq.

Immigrants currently make up a significant portion of the workforce in several key industries¹⁷ such as agriculture, general services¹⁸ and manufacturing. Retail is also one of the top eight industries that these individuals are placed in shortly after arrival and hospitality is among the top three. Nationally, immigrants make up nearly 1 in 3 hotel workers and a quarter of food service workers; rates are even higher in California. The Southern

Immigrants are punching above their weight in several key industries in the metro area, making up significant shares of the workforce.



¹⁶ [Internal analysis of American Community Survey data.](#)

¹⁷ <https://welcomingsd.org/data/>

¹⁸ General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.

Border's work with the immigrant and refugee population has found that many skilled immigrants—those with credentials and degrees from their home country—are often placed in low wage jobs within these industries due to either delays in or lack of support to convert a credential from a home country to the US equivalent. Lack of a quality job places a great strain on the immigrant and their family and often requires newcomers to leverage social services despite their years of knowledge and experience.

In a dynamic American economy where more than 70% of jobs require some type of post-secondary credential, the Southern Border believes it is not only critical to help foreign-born workers strengthen their English skills and earn industry-recognized credentials but more importantly, to help those who already have credentials understand how to navigate US system to set immigrant families on a path to economic mobility through quality jobs¹⁹ and connections to high road employers.

As we continue to refine our online delivery mechanisms, the system will also be able to collect robust data on specific areas such as English language acquisition, digital skills and digital literacy through identification of online engagement with the curriculum and follow-on case manager connections for those who choose to do so. This will help us expand our programming for these particularly important areas to better serve our immigrant customers region wide and do so in a way that is relevant for each County individually.

Mature Workers

Many Americans are working well past the traditional retirement age of 65, into their 70s and 80s. Over the coming decade, workers 55 years and older will be the fastest-growing segment of the workforce, gifting our communities with the opportunity to learn and grow from their years of professional experience.

In the Southern Border Region, we know that everyone deserves an opportunity to achieve meaningful employment, regardless of age, zip code, background or anything else. By leaving a key talent pool behind we leave valuable skills on the table, which hurts businesses and the economy. The San Diego Workforce Partnership is currently piloting a program for Mature Workers and if successful will look to expand it to Imperial County.

The SBR has identified a multi-pronged approach to pilot employment assistance to mature workers to reduce the gap in re-entering the workforce. The pilot will initially be conducted in San Diego County with mature workers serving organizations such as the senior centers. The funding from this grant is expected to be used as a match to private sector funding of the same amount to support mature workers in either rapidly re-entering the workforce or engaging in work activities for financial and social gain. The co-funded pilot is a three-pronged approach that:

¹⁹ San Diego Workforce Partnership definition of job quality

- Builds on the research conducted under the SS 2.0 grant (currently ongoing) to deepen understanding and available data of the demographics, issues, and opportunities impacting seniors and mature workers in the Region to inform a human centered design approach for service delivery
- Increases awareness of the current and future challenges posed by the aging population, aimed at San Diego business, civic, and political leaders – and the public generally – inspiring urgent and bold action related to policy, budget priorities, and corporate practices
- Takes immediate steps in the current senior service delivery system to build a 21st century model that meets the workforce development and financial security needs of aging citizens in the Southern Border Region that includes, support services, case management, peer job coaching, workshops and paid internships (return-ships)

Justice-Involved

SBR, San Diego County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff's), San Diego County Probation (Probation), and Second Chance, along with Imperial County WDB, are the primary partners that aim to expand our impact on reducing recidivism and improve education and employment outcomes among justice-involved youth. The Prison2Employment (P2E) Initiative has greatly contributed to our ability to serve this targeted population. In the planning phase of P2E, SBR identified the following guiding principles as the roadmap to our work with justice-involved:

1. Change is driven by trusting relationships. This includes partnerships across supporting organizations and justice-involved individuals.
2. If organizations seek to support justice-involved individuals, the best time to reach them is before they are released from custody.
3. A job is not always the first step toward self-sufficiency.
4. If justice-involved individuals believe that all an organization cares about are achieving employment placements, they will not communicate challenges that are relevant to their path toward self-sufficiency.
5. Organizations that want to support this population need to agree on a model of service that provides justice-involved individuals experience over the organizations' operational preferences.

The program focuses on:

1. Preparing for release through career exploration and realistic identification of immediate need
2. Creating stability through a continuum of intensive focused post release wraparound services
3. Developing self-sufficiency through subsequent employment and educational opportunities

Pre-Release Career Exploration & Work Readiness

Pre-release services involve training and workshops integrating employment and education planning, career discovery, resume building, interview coaching, and segment and employer targeted job fairs that integrate the cognitive behavioral approaches currently conducted by the Sheriff Counselors in the facilities.

Prior to release, the specialist, Sheriff and Probation staff will meet with the participant and set an appointment to begin post release services based on individual choice and need. This team holds meetings throughout the participants last 90 days of custody to discuss participants choices and progress which all contribute to the post-release plan.

Post Release Services: Individual Placement & Support

Upon release, the same specialist that supported the individual pre-release makes the first contact post-release. This first meeting is best within the first 48 hours of release. The post-release plan guides the meeting agenda and priority of services. Employment is not the first action step in this meeting, but rather stabilization of basic needs is prioritized. The intensive supportive services provided through P2E allows for connection to housing supports, purchase of hygiene products, and distribution of computers with hot spot accounts to remain in contact with the team of support staff. All of the subsequent meetings include some discussion of basic need supports to ensure there is continued revisiting of goals and needs to increase security.

Once the participant has been supported to address needs such as housing, sobriety counseling, probation requirements, etc., the focus of post-release meetings will shift to rapid employment. Initial employment assessment and first face to face employer contact by client or employment specialist for a competitive job occurs within 30 days (one month) after post-release period beings. Support for the participant's rapid job search and placement in paid positions they desire.

Post Release Services: Education, Training & Employment

Participants choosing education are assessed to determine options for high school completion or equivalency, college readiness, apprenticeship and other school options. Participants receive financial coaching on how to provide for basic needs during hours of school operation.

Employment tends to be more applicable and reasonable due to the need to make money, when compared to education for this target population. SBR has found success in placing this target population in manufacturing and construction during the pandemic, and customer services and hospitality pre-pandemic. Participants are coached that the first placement may not be the best fit, but rather a part of the roadmap to find a better job, and then a career. Supportive services continue to be a part of the discussion

during follow-ups to ensure that participants can be supported through to the first paycheck, and subsequent paychecks.

Employer Attitudes Towards Hiring Justice-Involved: Advocacy for Economic Equity

SBR believes that an important part in our work to connect justice-involved individuals with employment and training opportunities is also to advocate on the interrelation of racism in the justice system. We released an article on the Nexus of systemic racism, criminal justice and economic opportunity found [Linkages](#). The article reviews the disparities between incarceration and economic mobility, and a call to action to hire justice-involved jobseekers.

In addition to our advocacy work, included in the SBR P2E Planning Grant was research on employers' attitudes toward hiring justice-involved workers. SBR wrote a report that established the following facts:

- Most employers do hire applicants with criminal histories.
- A criminal history does not predict a prospective employee's likelihood of committing crime at work.
- Employees with criminal histories make significant contributions to their organizations.
- Having a criminal history is not unusual among American workers.
- Criminal records are biased reports of criminal behavior.
- Through widely used, criminal background checks are unreliable.

The report has been disseminated to numerous community-based organizations and other stakeholders that are involved in working with justice-involved. The report was constructed into a presentation that included local research on racial equity gaps in San Diego conducted by our senior economist. These presentations have been widely popular with our Workforce Development meetings, County Council meetings and open to the public webinars. The California Workforce Development Board is currently exploring platforms for presenting the report to a wider state audience of regional partners that are also involved in the P2E work.

7) Shared Services, Training/Education Resources for Target Populations

The SBR employs multiple processes to ensure there are available participant resources that can be shared by staff and partner staff. One important resource is the Career Coach online tool that aids the exploration and understanding of LMI, career pathways and in-demand occupations for both Imperial and San Diego Counties. The research done to populate this tool is conducted by the regional economist, while the regional research application director aids in the deployment and understanding of the information. Additionally, the region regularly pilots in one Board's geography and then shares learnings. Finally, the region has a single regional coordinator and regional training lead.

Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment

In addition to the job quality strategy addressed below in depth, the 2-Gen pillar engages families in support of workers moving into family sustaining jobs and in turn those workers help businesses thrive and the economy grow. The approach recognizes that families come in all different shapes and sizes and that families define themselves. Specific focus is on

1. Postsecondary Education and Employment Pathways
2. Early Childhood Education and Development
3. Economic Asset
4. Health and Well-Being
5. Social Capital

Throughout the Region, multiple programming and partner engagements support these strategies.

8) Regional Sector Pathways

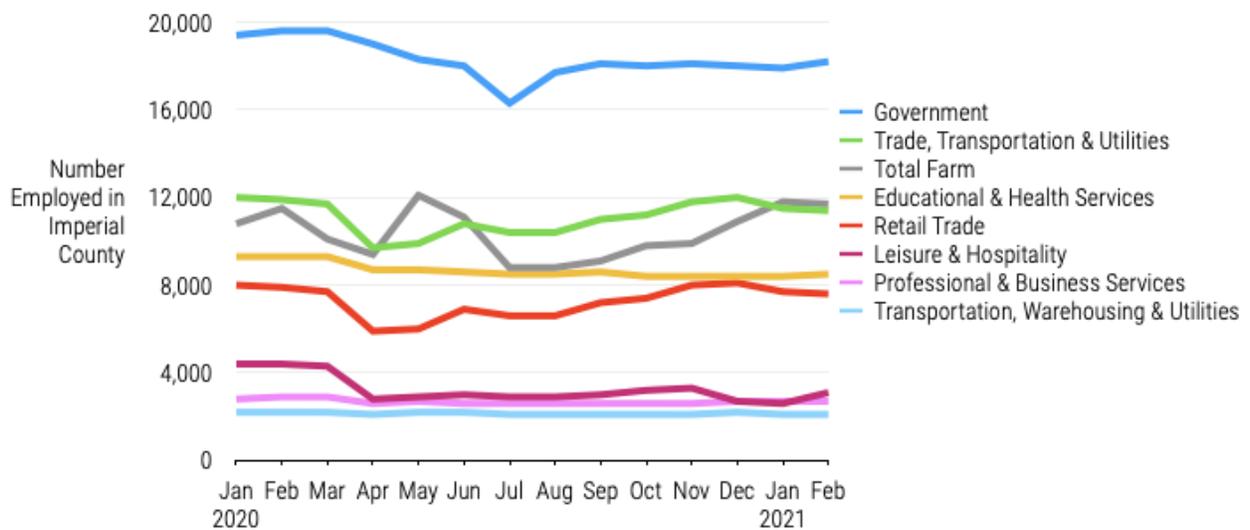
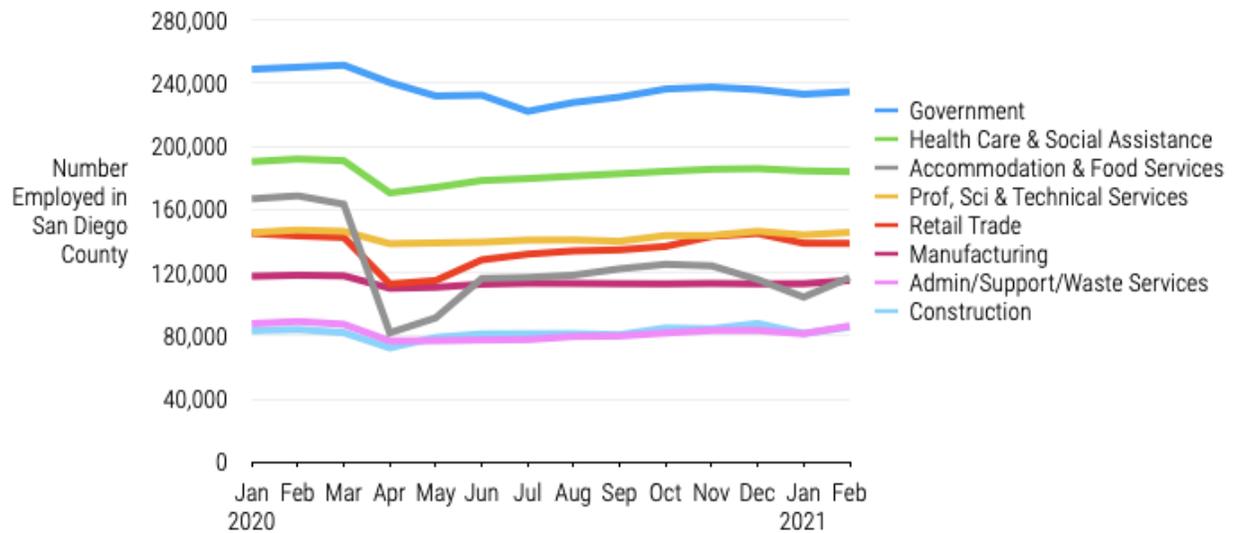
Two very diverse local workforce boards comprise the SBR. However, research has shown that they share some very important sectors. Understanding those shared sectors and how residents of both Counties can enter them and grow their careers to reach family sustaining employment has been an on-going effort in the Region.

9) In-Demand Industry Sectors or Occupations

While our regional efforts to serve our residents are driven philosophically by our five pillars, our efforts are also guided tactically toward supporting the greatest employment needs in the region. This required regularly refreshing our priority sectors and priority occupations based on changes in economic conditions and labor market data. In late 2018 as part of the regional plan refresh, the SBR research team identified a set of priority occupations (previously in demand jobs) for each County—occupations that have high and growing numbers of jobs and pay at least a self-sufficient wage at the entry level. While these hot jobs can be found throughout the economy, they are highly concentrated in four priority sectors that are shared between the two counties in our region. These sectors include Education & Human Development, Health Care, Public Administration and Energy, Construction & Utilities. By focusing on these shared priorities, each local area will be able to leverage resources and best practices of the other. In addition to our four regional priority sectors, the SBR research team identified three local priority sectors that recognize the unique economic drivers of each local area. In San Diego County these sectors are Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences R&D, and ICT & Digital Media. In Imperial County, these sectors are Retail, Leisure & Hospitality, Agriculture, and Advanced Transportation & Logistics. With these in mind, the SBR looks to continue to innovate how we bring services to businesses and job seekers.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, some sectors have shown to be more resilient than others (see charts below), however, the final results will not be known for some time. At present, the Region is working in the Energy, Construction and Utilities sector with the High Roads Construction initiative and Health Care continues to be an in-demand area. For a list of the in-demand occupations, see Tables 2 and 3 above.

10) Top Eight Sectors of the San Diego and Imperial Counties²⁰



²⁰ "Internal analysis of EDD's LMID employment data

11) In-Demand Sector and Occupation Initiatives

Through the Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) framework, employers will engage in a nationally recognized framework established by the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation and applied locally through initiatives in cities throughout the United States. It is an employer-led, demand-driven workforce process that applies supply chain management strategies to talent acquisition, reducing the skills gap and solving for skilled talent shortages. Employers play an expanded leadership role as the “end customers” of regional education and training systems by engaging in a six-step process that includes employers engaging in collaboratives and demand planning, communicate competency and credential requirements, analyze talent flows, build talent supply chains and participate in continuous improvement.

Through this process, education and training partners are made aware of the emergent needs in quality jobs and provide up to date training and education for upskilling employees or new employees. In addition to these pre-vetted training providers, space is made for engaging other industry partners providing recognized credentials like centers of excellence and other focused providers.

By beginning with employer partners who directly inform training investments and are committed to hiring from our talent pool, we will set candidates up for even greater success from the outset: with a clear pathway from career interest to training/certifications to quality jobs with employers who are eager and willing to hire from a pre-qualified pool of talent. This demand-informed approach ensures all training investments result in skilled talent that meets industry need.

This initiative is aligned with the Region’s strategic pillars of Job Quality, Inclusive Business Growth, Outcomes-Focused Funding and Population Specific Interventions. It also supports the SBR’s advocacy for success metrics that are not yet part of the Workforce system but will align with outcomes and introduces a replicable model for other workforce development boards of demand-driven programming that results in greater impact.

Finally, this initiative enhances the opportunity for braided funding to promote greater flexibility in training and support to enable job seekers and employees to engage in training that provides mobility to resilient and in-demand occupations and sectors. Without this flexibility that is afforded by the Education and Training Program List (ETPL) process, access to flexible emergent training and credentials needed for businesses to recover and compete in the new and rapidly changing environment, in the post COVID 19 period.

12) High Road Workforce System

Defining Quality Job

The region has created a job quality framework and set of indicators which inform all of our work.



We believe that the path forward is to rebuild equitably and doing so requires strong infrastructure that is equipped to meet the evolving needs of both businesses and our job seekers. One important building block of equity is job quality. Efforts to improve the quality of jobs help to shift centers of power by equipping workers, paying fair wages that sustain families and providing career ladders and employee ownership opportunities.

Prioritizing Employers with Quality Jobs and Potential Policies for Them

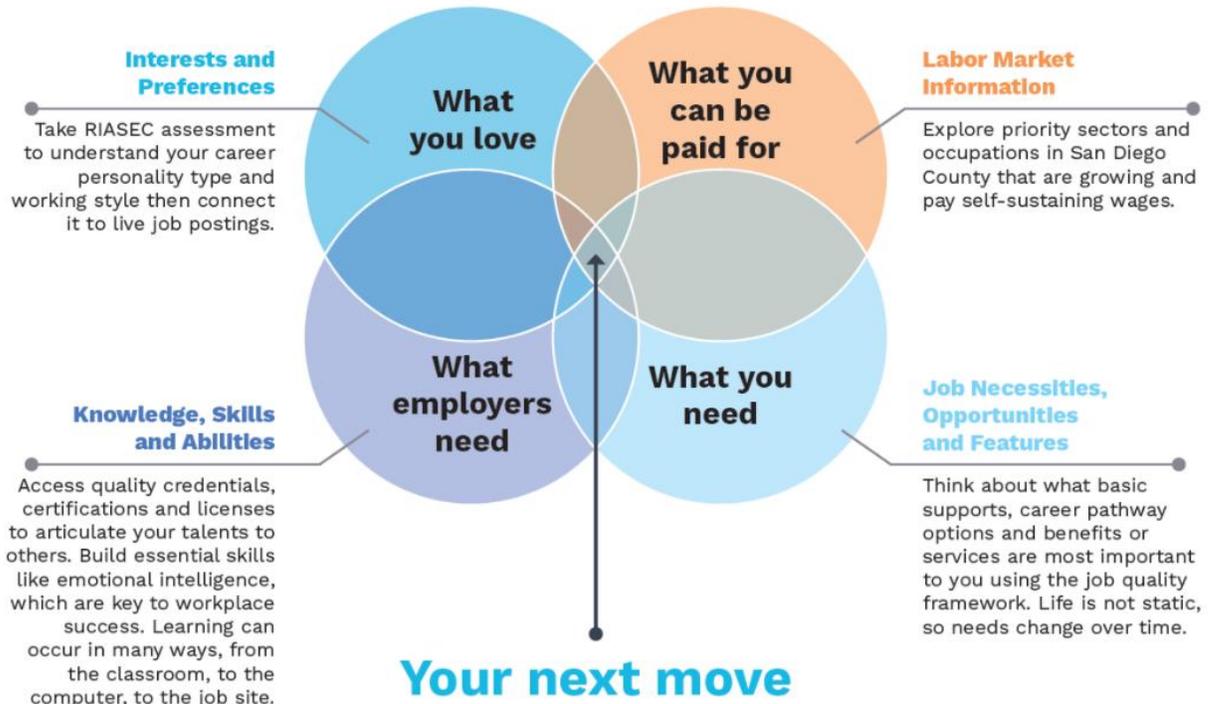
The SBR believes strongly that quality jobs are not a luxury. They are not a sidebar. They are not something we can push off until after the pandemic crisis has passed. The creation, protection and elevation of quality jobs will take focus and partnerships. Job Quality is about simultaneously producing outstanding outcomes for businesses and their frontline workers. A good job not only pays well but also gives workers the stability and support they need to care for their families and take the next step in their careers. Good jobs also support business growth by helping the business meet and exceed its bottom-line goals. Quality undergirds equity and through equity our other four pillars (population specific interventions, inclusive business growth, outcomes-focused funding and 2-Gen solutions) help our residents out of poverty by engaging businesses and workers to create pathways to family-sustaining income.

The SBR also realizes that having a full-time job no longer provides the economic security it once did. The [true narrative](#) of low-income work for many in America is one of near constant instability: intermittent work, seasonal work, variable hours, unpredictable schedules. Such jobs not only fail to pay enough for decent food and shelter for a worker's family, they risk health, disrupt family life, undermine dignity and often deny the worker's voice within the workplace, creating massive social impact. [Nearly 50%](#) of Californians are working but struggling with poverty. [More than half](#) of people receiving Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), known as CalFresh in California, are working. Creating and growing more good jobs is essential to our community. [This is about](#) providing individuals and families with the benefits of their labor, giving them the opportunity to a higher quality of life and building a prosperous future for all.

In recent focus groups with local service-sector workers, we learned how unpredictable, last-minute scheduling wreaks havoc in workers' family lives. A growing body of research shows that unpredictable schedules are associated with a host of negative outcomes for workers and their children. In focus groups with employers, we have learned that providing stable schedules in the face of fluctuating customer demand can feel impossible. To address job quality challenges we are:

- Convening an advisory council of local stakeholders to help us build consensus around steps we can take to foster stable schedules without jeopardizing the survival of small businesses
- Working to help businesses create quality jobs, workers advocate for and seek out jobs that lead to economic opportunity and security, and policymakers support policies that advance the dignity of work
- Prioritizing use of WIOA funding wherever possible on jobs at or above living wage

- Leveraging Rapid Response/Layoff aversion funding to support business feasibility assessments for employee ownership models
- Testing the Working Metrics tool as a mechanism to track job quality considerations as part of our procurements as well as possible service to businesses
- Creating videos to help educate job seekers on what job quality is for them
- Continuously expanding our [High Road Kitchens](#) project as a way to address job quality and equity in the restaurant sector
- Integrating job quality into our My Next Move framework (see image below)



The SBR has established goals to embrace by 2025. They are:

1. 100% of our job seekers receive training or coaching to determine what job quality means for them
2. 80% of our internal placements and 100% of our staff are in a role which meets at least one job quality indicator per category: Job Necessities, Job Opportunities and Job Features
3. At least one local, state or federal bill is passed that improves job quality (e.g. stable scheduling policies)

13) Underserved and Unserved Communities - Access and Support

A key component of our regional plan implementation is the execution of work in each of our five pillars. These pillars support the State Plan's overarching policy objectives of fostering demand-driven skills attainment, enabling upward mobility for all Californians, and aligning, coordinating and integrating programs and services. Three of these pillars—population specific interventions, inclusive business growth and job quality—

weave together the components necessary to set diverse populations on a road to economic mobility through clear career pathways, innovative delivery mechanisms and partnerships with high road employers.

Not every person needs the same support to get into and keep a high-quality job; a one-size-fits-all approach to workforce development simply does not work. Successful service delivery is about listening to the unique needs of each population and individual. In addition to applying a human-centered approach to the services available at our [career centers](#), we are leveraging the implementation process of our regional plan to make sure we have solutions which are custom designed for the particular needs of individuals and families while working toward impact goals that can be felt (and seen in data) across entire populations.

In a dynamic American economy where more than 70% of jobs require some type of post-secondary credential, the Southern Border believes it is not only critical to help foreign-born workers strengthen their English skills and earn industry-recognized credentials but more importantly, to help those who already have credentials understand how to navigate US system to set immigrant families on a path to economic mobility through quality jobs²¹ and connections to high road employers.

Additionally, while we have observed the overall youth disconnection rate declining over the past three years, the rate in certain sub-regions has increased. This signals us and our community partners that more focused effort should be placed on youth in these areas. Our goal is to explore the dynamics of disconnection more deeply. We will explore ideas for gathering data to highlight the life events that cause these detours, helping the region to support these youth more effectively.

For these and other target populations, the Region will engage them through the work with business and population specific interventions discussed above in the strategic pillars, in conjunction with partners, to provide new and existing stackable credentials to support resilient and family sustaining employment. In this way, the work will expand networks and systems and continuously improve the work to best serve the residents of both Counties.

14) System Alignment

The SBR employs programming across the Region as makes sense given the geography. As an experiment with funding opportunities, the Region has engaged in programming around mature workers, leveraging multiple funding sources to enable a single case manager to work with job developers in both Counties and local case managers in Imperial County to provide job search training and internships for mature workers. The trainings, produced with Regional funding, will be available past the period of the programming to ensure broad coverage in Imperial as well as in San Diego Counties. However, service strategies are shared most effectively by engaging one or

²¹ San Diego Workforce Partnership Job Quality definition at <https://workforce.org/?s=job+quality>

the other Boards in pilot work with certain populations and sharing the learnings to engage culturally competent programming throughout the Region.

15) Regional Administrative Cost Arrangements

The SBR has employed a strategy of using pooled resources for the past four years. It engages the existing talent within each local workforce board for regional insights and programming. It also uses single site housing of online tools that are available to all regional staff and partner staff. Examples include the My Next Move and Career Coach tools that are housed on the Workforce Partnership website and trained regularly by the regional research application director who is on the Workforce Partnership's staff. Other shared staff in addition to the regional Organizer are the regional economist performing labor market and special population research across the region and by specific location, as well as pandemic research for the local areas. Moreover, it was determined that it made sense to engage an integrated services manager to focus on online/remote experiences for all customers including "no wrong door" access, remote training and consolidation of eligibility information in a single location. This is a first step and one within a strategy of streamlining the system to make it easier for participants to move between partners to support their specific needs. As this work develops, more systems will be considered to address ongoing community and participant issues around hardware and software accessibility to support participant access to online training.

Additionally, the SBR has determined that because of the structures of each local board, the Workforce Partnership will provide fiscal agent support for regional funding. Each board benefits from the work, is provided those opportunities that make sense locally and the regional organizer oversees the work to ensure that the integrity of the regional concept is maintained.

16) Appendix A - Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

The Southern Border Region held 3 Zoom meetings. Because many stakeholders could be interested in both Region and San Diego plans, the Zoom meetings were divided into two parts offered three times. Imperial County was on a different timeline, and with the smaller county network, was able to hold two local stakeholder meetings at a later date.

The regional planning meetings were held by Zoom to enable stakeholder engagement while ensuring maximum safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Outreach for Region/San Diego and Imperial County was by email. Imperial County also contacted some local stakeholders by telephone. The email lists included the last plan update list, Attachment 3 of Directive WSD20-05 and were then thoroughly reviewed and updated to ensure the widest and most inclusive dissemination possible. The final email list had 135 contacts. The invitations were sent by the regional organizer via Outlook in three identical emails. Seven contacts were undeliverable. They were researched and new addressees found for the organizations and those individuals received the invitation.

The following summary is provided:

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Email	All present and past partners and interested stakeholders for Region and San Diego based on last community conversations, current work and those who were indicated in the Directive	68 attendees at 3 meetings. CBO, education and government, both local and state, were represented between	See above

17) Appendix B - Public Comments

The Southern Border Region received one emailed comment during the 30-day period. The comment was reviewed with each item noted in a draft document as a comment block for leadership to determine next steps. The first eight items referred to the analysis section of the plan. Based on these suggestions, the regional economist reviewed and updated the analysis items or ensured greater clarity as appropriate.

As can be seen in the following comments, the author was looking for specific descriptions in the plan around adult education partnerships. While education partnerships, including all education and training partners were addressed, leadership recognizes that the comments indicated a level of specificity that is not the intent of the plan but rather a more broadly encompassing discussion of system and network engagement and development. The stakeholder's comments are verbatim as follows:

page 3 bottom - sounds good but what does that look like (a customer journey could be helpful)

page 4 - important to consider SD and Imperial separately. But the same should be true for SD - we have pockets where poverty reaches almost 40%)

page 5 - I would hope for more recent data on figure 1 - it is available, I believe (The Economic Summit hosted by USD had some interesting data from SANDAG.)

page 10 - date needs to be stated for these data

page 11 - top paragraph - interesting approach!

page 13/figure 10 - this graph is somewhat misleading when only showing percentage (would need n)

page 13 - the economic pulse database does have data on that, I believe; last sentence "We hope" - but this is a plan, so what is the plan beyond hope?

page 14 and following - where is this information coming from? Is it up to date? The Centers of Excellence in Labor Market Research materials look a little different?

page 23 and following - the IPS model is great but how envisions SDWP partnering and learning from others who already do this (other than clinical setting/DOR)? This comes across as if only SDWP can do this - when, for example, adult ed already strives to work like this?

page 26 - I think a word on how pandemic has disproportionately affected this population would be important - and a partnership with adult ed needed

page 27 - mature workers - this would be such an awesome opportunity to support those to become credentialed teachers within adult ed - it would be a true pipeline and could rely on funding through AB104 and our adult ed consortia

page 29 - "employment tends to be more ..." yes - but that's true for others, too - I think it would need to be braided - paid for education/training while already employed is needed

pages 34 - 38 seem out of/in the wrong place (feels almost like it should be at the beginning)

18) Appendix C - Signature Pages

Southern Border Regional Plan

The San Diego Workforce Development Board approves the regional plan for submission to the state.



Signature

Sammy Totah

Workforce Development Board Chair

Name

Role

4/15/2021
Date

**SOUTHERN
BORDER
REGION**
