

SOLVE WORKFORCE

NECHAMBER POLICY BRIEF

Empower Every Hardworking Nebraskan

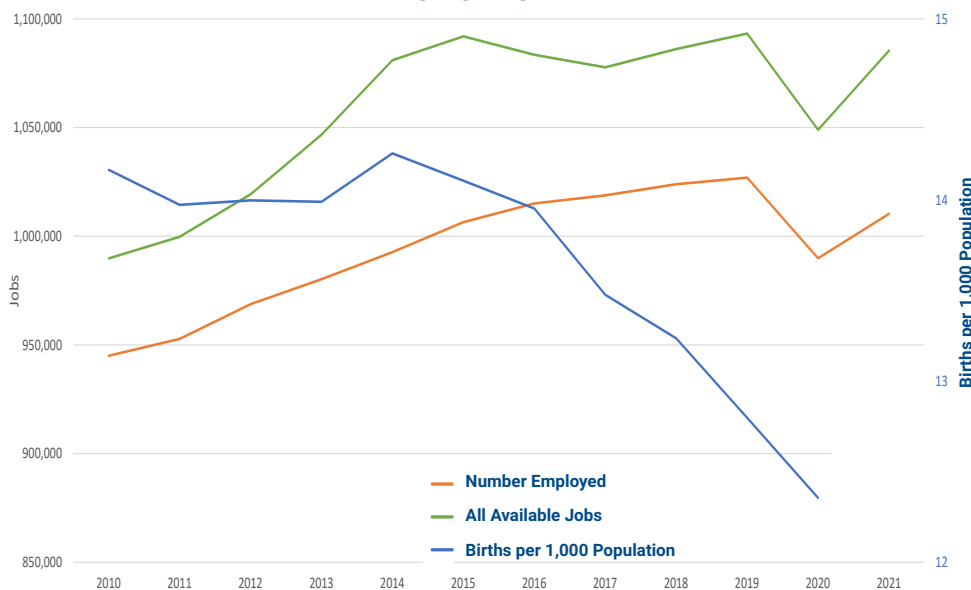
CHALLENGE

Birth rates have been declining since the 1950s and 1960s, while demand for the products, services and food delivered by Nebraskans have steadily and successfully grown.

Already feeling a **workforce squeeze** before 2020 (with 30,000 to 50,000 jobs available at any given time), the pandemic dealt a debilitating blow to the pool of available talent for Nebraska employers. About 15,000 Nebraskans have yet to reenter the workforce. Participation rates have only recovered to 2018 levels.

Having posted the **lowest state unemployment rate in recorded history** and at least two jobs available per job seeker, the crisis is acute.

Nebraska Birth Rates, Labor Force and Available Jobs 2010-2021



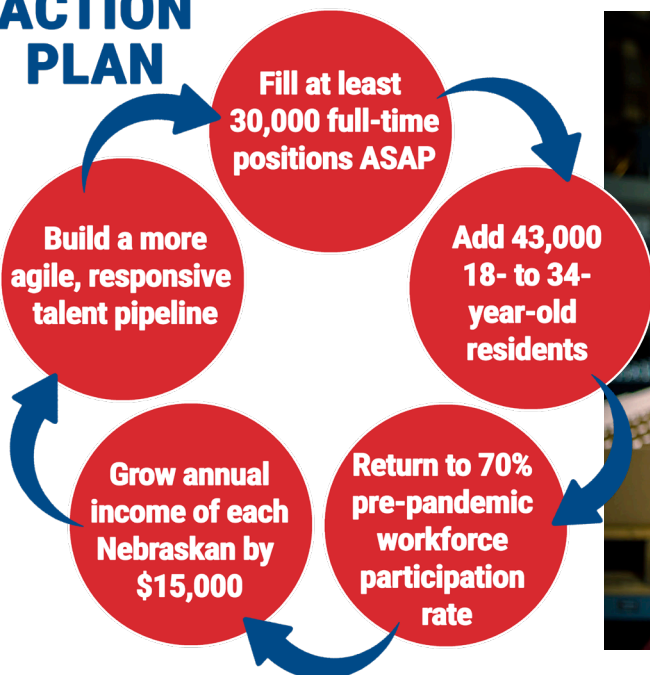
Sources: Birth rates: UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, Labor Force: U.S. Federal Reserve, Average Available Jobs: Nebraska Department of Labor

OPPORTUNITY

Offering a **great quality of life**, burgeoning **remote work opportunities**, **high-paying jobs**, a **robust logistics network**, and **safe, friendly and scenic communities**, Nebraska can, not only regain its **workforce and economic prowess** heading into the pandemic, but surpass it.

We are presented with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to **enhance quality of life** for all Nebraskans, **attract new residents** looking for change, and court and keep **employers with great jobs**.

ACTION PLAN



LEGISLATIVE SOLUTION

Massively **scale up** Nebraska's successful **internship, apprenticeship and workforce training programs** using **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** funds. Spur re-entry and reskilling opportunities for existing talent and help students secure Nebraska careers.



POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. Immediately remove barriers to workforce reentry and reskilling
2. Enhance well-being of all Nebraskans with higher-paying, high-demand jobs
3. Actively connect thousands of students with Nebraska careers and employers
4. Remove barriers to employer participation in state workforce training
5. Ensure equitable access to career advancement
6. Attract thousands of new residents and talented workers to Nebraska

I. INTERNSHIPS

Expand by three times Nebraska's historic commitment to **internship** and **creation** and **career placement** across the state in just three years.

Broaden acceptable uses for **internship funding** and **remove business barriers** to offering programs, exposing more students to career opportunities across the state.

InternNE NE Dept. of Economic Development	
Existing	Good Life Game Changer ARPA Proposal
Funding: \$9.4 million 2011 - 2021	ARPA Funding: Additional \$30 million 2022 - 2024
Maximum Award: 50% of intern wages; 75% of Pell Grant-eligible student intern wages \$5,000 max per internship per company 5 interns per company One-year internships	Maximum Award: \$7,500 per internship per company 250 interns per company Up to two-year internships
Eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Grades 11, 12, post-secondary- Full-time students only	Eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Grades 11, 12, post-secondary- Full-time students- Part-time community college students
Acceptable Uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Intern compensation	Acceptable Uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Intern compensation, housing and transportation- Intern tuition reimbursement- Program development, implementation & assessment- Equipment, training tools, curriculum

Workforce Training Grants NE Dept. of Labor

Existing	Good Life Game Changer ARPA Proposal
Funding: \$11 million federal and state funds in 2020 NE Worker Training Program - \$918,762 awarded in 2020 Registered Apprenticeships through WIOA (Workforce Investment Opportunities Act) - \$9,635,903 awarded in 2019	Appropriation: Additional \$20 million 2022 - 2024
Average Awards: <i>Customized Job Training Fund</i> <i>NE Worker Training Program</i> - \$8,971 <i>WIOA Registered Apprenticeships (NDOL)</i>	Maximum Award: \$50,000 max per project
Eligibility: - Businesses, economic development or workforce organizations, nonprofits, education partners - Federally registered apprenticeships - Potential employees only	Eligibility: - Businesses, economic development or workforce organizations, nonprofits, education partners - Federally registered apprenticeships - Customized job training and customized apprenticeship models (i.e. German, ICATT, internal training, etc.) - Current and potential employees
Acceptable Uses: - Wages - Ask NDOL for others	Acceptable Uses: - Wages or stipends - Apprenticeship program development - Equipment, tools, simulators, technology - Curriculum, assessment marketing - Program development, contracts and consultants

II: APPRENTICESHIPS AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

Boost Nebraska's annual funding for **apprenticeship** and **customized workforce training programs** by 60% for three years.

Broaden acceptable uses to **remove typical business and employee barriers** to participation, as well as **expand program eligibility** to include targeted training models.

DID YOU KNOW?

55%

Interns become full-time employees

80%

Interns accept positions near internship

2,000

Internships created through InternNE

87%

Employment rate of apprentices

\$50,000

Average starting wage for apprentices

\$1.47

Return in productivity per \$1 invested in apprenticeships

Sources:

1. Intern Data: National Association of Colleges and Employers

2. Apprenticeship Data: U.S. Department of Labor

3. Customized Job Training Data: NE Dept. of Economic Development





The **Good Life** isn't just a state. It's a state of mind.

thegoodlifeiscalling.com

The Good Life is Calling Test Campaign Results

October 14 - November 30, 2021

Outcome	% exceeded expectations
92 million impressions	+33%
114,000 clicks	+28%
30 million video views	+51%
47,000 website visitors	
Social Media Response (82% positive)	

III. NATIONAL TALENT RECRUITMENT

Win the hearts and minds of talented, **young entrepreneurs, problem-solvers and makers**, looking for their next home or place to raise a family. Dedicate an extra **\$50 million investment** in the state's targeted, national marketing and talent recruitment campaign called **The Good Life is Calling**. This follow-on investment appropriately maintains momentum of the state's initial \$10 million allocation.

Blueprint Nebraska's **Growing the Good Life** report called for an influx of **43,000 18- to 34-year-olds** by 2030 to **revitalize Nebraska communities, population and workforce**. When great jobs are everywhere, and remote work is a viable way of life, no time or expense should be wasted.

IV. Federal Immigration Reform

Prioritize the workforce shortage in legal immigration policies. Reform and expand worker visa and temporary worker programs. Deliver permanent certainty related to legal status of current residents and requirements going forward. Provide sufficient controls over illegal immigration.

Nebraska's Workforce Training Track Record A Case for Game-Changing Investment

InternNE		
	Before ARPA Funding 10 Years	Projections after ARPA Funding 3 Years
Total Awards	\$9.4 million	\$50 million
New Internships Filled	1,995	4,500 - 6,700*

*Based on maximum award of \$7,500 per internship

Nebraska Worker Training Program

Full analysis coming soon



Good Life Game Changer Proposal Partners

Leaders of chambers and economic development organizations from across the state joined forces on a proposal to quickly ramp up workforce initiatives, talent attraction, innovation and economic infrastructure using American Rescue Plan Act funds. The proposal complements economic development initiatives outlined in the Blueprint Nebraska statewide strategic plan. <https://www.nechamber.com/good-life-game-changer.html>