



ELEVATE

2026 SUMMIT

September 16-17, 2026 | Milwaukee, WI

Draft Agenda | Sessions Subject to Change

SUMMIT registration includes Welcome Reception, breakfast and lunch on Wednesday and Thursday and the Wednesday evening event at the Harley-Davidson Museum.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 | COMMITTEE MEETINGS

9:00a – 5:00p	UI INTEGRITY CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING	N108 AB (1 st floor)
1:00 – 5:00p	PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE COMMITTEE MEETING	N204 A (2 nd floor)
3:00 – 6:00p	HOSPITALITY DESK: EARLY CHECK-IN *Check in & pick up your name badge to attend all meetings & sessions	Exhibit Hall D Pre-Function (3 rd floor)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 | BOARD & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7:00a – 7:00p	BOARD OF DIRECTORS LOUNGE	N207 A (2 nd floor)
7:30a – 7:00p	HOSPITALITY DESK *Check in & pick up your name badge to attend all meetings & sessions	Exhibit Hall D Pre-Function (3 rd floor)
7:30 – 9:00a	BREAKFAST: BOARD & COMMITTEES	Baird Ballroom Pre-Function (4 th floor)
8:30a – 12:00p	UI SIDES OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING	N206 BC (2 nd floor)

8:30a – 5:00p	BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING	N208 AB (2 nd floor)
8:30a – 5:00p	ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING	N206 A (2 nd floor)
8:30a – 5:00p	EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING	N204 BC (2 nd floor)
8:30a – 5:00p	EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING	N107 AB (1 st floor)
8:30a – 5:00p	PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE COMMITTEE MEETING	N204 A (2 nd floor)
8:30a – 5:00p	TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING	N108 AB (1 st floor)
8:30a – 5:00p	WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION COMMITTEE MEETING	N208 C (2 nd floor)
8:30a – 5:00p	WAGE & HOUR COMMITTEE MEETING	N105 (1 st floor)
9:00a – 5:00p	COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING	N205 (2 nd floor)
11:00a – 3:00p	EXHIBITOR SET-UP	Exhibit Hall D (3 rd floor)
12:00 – 1:30p	LUNCH: BOARD & COMMITTEES	Baird Ballroom Pre-Function (4 th floor)
1:00 – 5:00p	UI COMMITTEE MEETING	N206 BC (2 nd floor)

5:30 – 7:00p **SUMMIT WELCOME RECEPTION** Exhibit Hall D (3rd floor)
with Exhibitors

HOSPITALITY DESK *Check in & pick up your name badge before entering the reception.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 | SUMMIT

7:30a – 5:00p	HOSPITALITY DESK *Check in & pick up your name badge to attend all sessions	Exhibit Hall D Pre-Function (3 rd floor)
7:30a – 5:00p	EXHIBIT SHOWCASE	Exhibit Hall D (3 rd floor)
7:30 – 8:15a	HOSTED BREAKFAST	Exhibit Hall D (3 rd floor)
8:30 – 10:20a	OPENING CEREMONIES	Baird Ballroom (4 th floor)

WELCOME

Cami Feek, Commissioner, Washington State Employment Security Department and NASWA Board Chair, Association Year 2025-2026

A WORD FROM OUR DIAMOND SPONSOR | FAST Enterprises

NASWA WELCOME

Scott B. Sanders, President and CEO, NASWA

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SHOWCASE: WELCOME TO WISCONSIN!

ENHANCED WAGE RECORDS: SHIFTING WORKFORCE DATA INTO HIGH GEAR

What are enhanced wage records, and what insights do they provide that traditional wage records cannot? Join us for a panel of state leaders who have implemented enhanced wage records to hear what motivated their efforts, what they've learned along the way, and how these data are elevating our understanding of workers, jobs, and labor markets.

Moderator: **Scott B. Sanders**, President and CEO, NASWA

Speakers: **Cami Feek**, Commissioner, Washington State Employment Security Department and 2025-2026 NASWA Board Chair

Glen Hughes, Director, Unemployment Compensation, Workforce West Virginia

Kate Shelby, Commissioner, Indiana Department of Workforce Development

A WORD FROM OUR PLATINUM SPONSORS | TBA

10:30 – 11:00a **COFFEE BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS** Exhibit Hall D (3rd floor)

11:15a – 12:15p **PLENARY SESSION** Baird Ballroom (4th floor)

WISCONSIN'S MODEL FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Secretary Amy Pechacek led an investment of \$168 million from the American Rescue Plan Act and established the Workforce Solutions Initiative, a collaboration with key partners such as Council on Workforce Investment Chair Sachin Shivaram to clear barriers to work and strengthen communities across the state by connecting talent with opportunity. The groundbreaking investment was followed by workforce performance that shattered nearly every existing participation record and builds on Wisconsin's leadership in workforce development to advance the state's economic competitiveness. Workforce Solutions Initiative programs have collectively served more than 128,000 Wisconsinites so far and continue to produce results today.

Amy Pechacek, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Sachin Shivaram, CEO, Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry and Chair, Governor's Council on Workforce Investment

A WORD FROM OUR GOLD SPONSORS | TBA

12:15 – 1:30p **HOSTED LUNCH** Exhibit Hall D

1:45 – 2:45p **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

BREAKOUT 1 – ELEVATING EMPLOYER COMMUNICATIONS: STRATEGIES THAT INFORM, ENGAGE, AND DRIVE ACTION | N204 A

TRACK | COMMUNICATIONS

Employers navigate a complex landscape of programs, policies, and resources. How can state workforce agencies ensure critical messages rise above the noise? This

session explores successful employer communication campaigns across workforce programs. Speakers will share lessons learned, challenges overcome, and strategies that have improved employer awareness, understanding, and action. Attendees will gain practical ideas for elevating their employer communications and achieving greater impact. Panelists will highlight employer communications on PFML, UI, workforce and other programs.

Moderator: **Dawn Dovre**, Deputy Secretary, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation

Speakers: **Chris Barron**, Director of Communications, Washington State Employment Security Department

Kate Kunitz, Chief Strategy Officer, Paid Leave, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Laura Leonard, Communications Manager, Employment Security Division, North Carolina Department of Commerce

Jessica Smith, Public Information Officer, Government Policy and Public Relations, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

BREAKOUT 2 – STATE INITIATIVES FOR UPSKILLING THE NATION’S WORKFORCE FOR AI | N204 BC

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY

As AI's impacts on occupations, workplaces, and the broader U.S. labor market unfold, state workforce agencies are deploying innovative initiatives to upskill jobseekers for the world of AI. In this session, three state workforce agencies will detail how they are approaching AI literacy and skills development amidst a rapidly-evolving technological landscape.

Moderator: **Kelly Folks**, Division Director, Employment and Training, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Speakers: **Stephanie Beckhorn**, Director, Employment and Training, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

Erin Roth, Assistant Secretary, Division of Workforce Development & Adult Learning, Maryland Department of Labor

Rachelle Sharpe, Chief of Staff, Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development

BREAKOUT 3 – PHILANTHROPY AND YOU! | N205

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

This panel discussion highlights the opportunities available to states from the philanthropic community. Learn about models for how your state can engage with philanthropy, hear tips from states who are engaged in these partnerships now, and hear from experts in the field on what works well.

Moderator: **Allison Johnson**, Technical Advisor, NASWA

Speakers: **Dr. Eric Frimpong**, Director, New York State Department of Labor

Dr. Jennie Owen, Professor of the Practice, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University

Andrew Stettner, Assistant Secretary of Unemployment Insurance, Maryland Department of Labor

Matt Zeiger, Chief Programs and Partnerships Officer, GitLab Foundation

BREAKOUT 4 – BUILDING THE UI BENCH: ELEVATING STAFF DEVELOPMENT, ENGAGEMENT, AND RETENTION | N206 A

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

People are the foundation of successful UI programs. Hear from states that have implemented innovative workforce strategies to attract, develop, engage, and retain talented staff. Discover lessons learned, promising practices, and actionable ideas for strengthening your UI workforce and enhancing program performance.

Moderator: **Holly Newell**, Chief of UI Operations, Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Speakers: **Alphrena Prince**, Assistant Deputy Director, UI, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Chris Russ, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Unemployment Insurance, Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Debbie Welch, Community Outreach Liaison, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Justin Williams, Director, Unemployment Insurance Division, Utah Department of Workforce Services

BREAKOUT 5 – LEVELING UP UI WITH AI: STATE APPROACHES AND RESULTS | N206 BC

TRACKS | TECHNOLOGY; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

States on the front lines of AI adoption share what's working, what isn't, and what's next. This session brings together state UI agencies that have moved beyond the concept stage and are putting artificial intelligence (AI) to work in real UI environments such as adjudication, mentoring, and appeals. Hear directly from states

about how they leveled up their UI operations, the lessons picked up along the way, and the use cases they are already eyeing for the next phase.

Moderator: **Amber Shultz**, Cabinet Secretary, Kansas Department of Labor

Speakers: **Michael Burke**, UCB Director, New Hampshire Employment Security

Mark Costello, Chief of Staff, Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Shahrazad Leden, Director of Lower Authority Appeals, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Kristin Mateo, Acting Director, UI Modernization, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Brandon McClure, Program Manager I, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

BREAKOUT 6 – ENGINES OF INNOVATION: HOW OPEN-SOURCE TOOLS AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE BUILD STATE CAPACITY | N208 AB

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY; WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

State workforce agencies are increasingly partnering across jurisdictions to strengthen analytic capabilities, share best practices, and accelerate modernization efforts. This session will highlight how collaboration among states through the use of open-source tools like R is expanding access to data, tools, and expertise, enabling agencies to elevate their use of analytics to inform policy, improve operations, and better serve customers. Attendees will hear practical examples of cross-state partnerships, lessons learned, and strategies for building sustainable analytic capacity in a rapidly evolving workforce landscape.

Moderator: **Anna Hui**, Director, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

Speakers: **Andrew Estep**, Senior Research and Data Coordinator, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

Mark Rembert, Chief Economist, Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

David Schmidt, Chief Economist, Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation

BREAKOUT 7 – REVVING UP TRANSPARENCY: STATE STRATEGIES FOR WAGE TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS | N208 C

TRACKS | LEGAL; WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

Join state workforce leaders as they share practical approaches to wage transparency legislation and requirements within workforce systems. Learn how states are implementing policies, addressing challenges, and leveraging transparency to support job seekers, employers, and equitable workforce outcomes. Hear about recent research by the National Labor Exchange and the resources offered by NASWA. You will gain insights, lessons learned, and ideas you can apply.

Moderator: **Kisha Scotton**, Administrator, Wage and Hour Bureau, North Carolina Department of Labor

Speakers: **Jane Flanagan**, Director, Illinois Department of Labor
Marissa Hashizume, Economist, NLx Research Hub, NASWA
Daniel King, Associate Director, Office of Wage-Hour, DC Department of Employment Services

3:00 – 3:30p **NETWORKING BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS** Exhibit Hall D (3rd floor)

3:45 – 4:45p **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

BREAKOUT 1 – ENHANCED WAGE RECORDS: CROSS-PROGRAM PERSPECTIVES | N204 A
TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE; WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

States are revving up their interest in enhanced wage records, but the road to implementation looks different across states and program areas. This panel features states at varying stages in the implementation process, with speakers who bring diverse roles across the workforce system. Join us to hear how their states have approached, or are approaching, enhanced wage records, the stakeholders they had to bring along the way, and the lessons they learned en route.

Moderator: **Rachel Weir**, Economist, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Speakers: **Gustavo Aviles**, Labor Market Information and Research Director, Washington State Employment Security Department
Ronnie Clamp, UI Technical Service Director, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce
Lesley Hirsch, Assistant Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

BREAKOUT 2 – ATTORNEY WORKGROUP MEETING | N204 BC

TRACKS | LEGAL

Time for the NASWA Attorney Workgroup members to gather and share promising practices. Open to NASWA Members only.

BREAKOUT 3 – SCALING APPRENTICESHIP THROUGH BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT | N205

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

State workforce agencies will play a key role in launching and scaling up registered apprenticeship programs to meet the administration's ambitious goal of having one million active registered apprentices nationwide. Business engagement is foundational to building new programs, and state workforce agencies are deploying creative solutions to incentivize and streamline employer involvement within the apprenticeship system. In this session, we'll hear how states are advancing business-facing strategies like intermediary supports, pay-for-performance models, and tax incentives to scale apprenticeship across the nation.

Moderator: **Tonya Neely**, Director, Office of Apprenticeship, Mississippi Department of Employment Security

Speakers: **Victoria Gaitanis**, Vice President of Workforce Program Development, CareerSource Florida

Karmyn Hill, Bureau Chief, FloridaCommerce

Kelly Lapetino, Senior Public Service Administrator, Regional Manager, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Stephanie Mufic, Business Innovation and Strategy Unit Manager, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

BREAKOUT 4 – BALANCING THE BOOKS: SOLVENCY ACROSS PAID LEAVE AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE | N206 A

TRACKS | UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

This session will bring together UI and paid leave program perspectives to explore how states manage long-term financial sustainability in state-administered benefit programs. Through a cross-program panel and audience Q&A, speakers will discuss trust fund health, forecasting, contribution and premium considerations, reserve management, stakeholder communication, and experiences navigating legislative interest in dedicated program funds. Participants will hear practical lessons from both established UI systems and paid leave programs, with a focus on strategies that support program access, fiscal stewardship, and public trust.

- Moderator: **Susan Landis**, Unemployment Insurance Director, Virginia Employment Commission
- Speakers: **Bill Ashley**, Executive Director, Mississippi Department of Employment Security
- Lindi Leahy**, Unemployment Insurance Division Director, Oregon Employment Department
- Tracy Marshall**, Division Director, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

BREAKOUT 5 – SHIFTING GEARS IN UI: STATES SHARE PROMISING PRACTICES | N206 BC

TRACKS | UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Discover how states are leveraging innovative tools and creative strategies to improve their UI programs and deliver better customer experiences. State leaders will share successes, lessons learned, and practical insights that you can apply in your own organization.

- Moderator: **Kris Funk**, UI Administrator, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services
- Speakers: **Nathan Gillie**, Division Chief, California Employment Development Department
- Freyja Gutierrez**, Deputy Administrator, Arizona Department of Economic Security
- Michael Kulyk**, Director, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- J.R. Richards**, Director of Insurance Services, Washington State Employment Security Department
- Todd TilVerold**, Deputy Director, California Employment Development Department

BREAKOUT 6 – ELEVATE IMPACT: MODERNIZING WORKFORCE SYSTEMS FOR THE FUTURE | N208 AB

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY

To elevate how workforce systems serve jobseekers, employers, and staff, systems must evolve. This session explores strategies states are using to modernize technology, streamline service delivery, and align programs. Hear practical lessons, emerging approaches, and how to advance more integrated, customer-centered systems that deliver stronger outcomes.

Moderator: **Mark Duey**, Strategic Technology Manager, Employment and Training Division, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

Speakers: **Paula Bergerson**, Program Manager, Minnesota IT Services, partnering with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Lisa Kissler, Chief Innovation Officer, Washington State Employment Security Department

Michael Luchini, Workforce Product Manager, Washington State Employment Security Department

Ismaila Maidadi, Director of Workforce Services, Washington State Employment Security Department

Ryan Wold, Workforce Development Product Owner, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

BREAKOUT 7 – FROM JOB BOARDS TO TALENT MARKETPLACE: THE NEXT-GENERATION OF LABOR EXCHANGE | N208 C

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY

Moderator: **Amber Gaither**, Senior Director, Data Partnerships, NASWA

Speaker: **Anna Hunter**, Assistant Director, Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services, Arizona Department of Economic Security

Emilie Rafal, Partnership Development & Strategic Growth, 1EdTech

6:00 – 10:00p

90TH CELEBRATION EVENING EVENT Harley-Davidson Museum

Rev up for an unforgettable evening at the Harley-Davidson Museum as we celebrate our 90th Anniversary! Enjoy an evening of networking, food, drinks, entertainment, and the chance to explore one of Milwaukee's most iconic attractions. This milestone celebration is included with your SUMMIT registration. Join us for a night to remember! *Name badges are required.*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 | SUMMIT

7:30a – 5:00p	HOSPITALITY DESK	Exhibit Hall D Pre-Function (3 rd floor)
7:30a – 3:15p	EXHIBIT SHOWCASE	Exhibit Hall D
7:30 – 8:15a	HOSTED BREAKFAST	Exhibit Hall D
8:30 – 9:30a	CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS	

BREAKOUT 1 – POSITIONING FOR SUCCESS: COMMUNICATIONS DURING ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSITIONS | N204 A

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; COMMUNICATIONS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Gubernatorial and agency leadership transitions are pivotal moments for state workforce agencies. Effective communications can play a critical role in helping new governors, agency heads, and directors understand the agency's mission, value, and impact. This session will explore strategies for communicating with new leadership, positioning agencies for success during transitions, and building awareness of NASWA's role and resources. Attendees will learn practical approaches for educating decision-makers, strengthening relationships from day one, and ensuring a smooth transition.

Moderator: **Chris Barron**, Director of Communications, Washington State Employment Security Department

Speakers: **Cami Feek**, Commissioner, Washington State Employment Security Department

Cher Haavind, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Communications Officer, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

Amy Landrum, Director of Communications and Media, Texas Workforce Commission

Steve Pier, Executive Director, Texas Workforce Commission

BREAKOUT 2 – IMPLEMENTING MEDICAID & SNAP WORK REQUIREMENTS | N204 BC

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

State workforce agencies can play an important role in supporting the implementation of the new work requirements for Medicaid and SNAP. In this session, we'll hear from three states about how they are working across health and human services systems to address the many policy, programmatic, and operational

challenges related to the federal government's new work requirements for Medicaid and SNAP.

Moderator: **Michelle McNertney**, Division Administrator, Workforce Services Division, Iowa Workforce Development

Speakers: **Crystal Armstrong**, Administrator, Workforce Services, Montana Department of Labor and Industry

Ismaila Maidadi, Director, Workforce Services Division, Washington State Employment Security Department

Steve Roodvoets, State Administrative Manager, Reemployment Services, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

BREAKOUT 3 – RALLY OF STATES WITH CASE LAW UPDATES, SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION, AND EMERGING LEGAL ISSUES | N205

TRACKS | LEGAL, UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

An opportunity for state workforce agency attorneys and policy staff to report on and ask questions of each other about significant legal cases, legislation, and policy development.

Moderator: **Kevin Lovellette**, Chief Legal Counsel, Illinois Department of Employment Security

BREAKOUT 4 – NEXT LEVEL RESEA: SHIFTING RESEA INTO HIGH GEAR | N204 A

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Four states share their individual approaches for maximizing impact the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. Join in the discussion as we explore policy and operations strategies.

Moderator: **Christina Granderson, PhD**, Project Management Manager, Mississippi Department of Employment Security

Speakers: **Micheal Cockrum**, Reemployment Bureau Chief, Iowa Workforce Development

Kerry Douglas-Duffy, Director, Workforce Innovation and Quality, New York State Department of Labor

LeeAnn Madsen, Assistant Director, Division of Unemployment Insurance, Utah Department of Workforce Services

Mary York, Division Director for Workforce Development, Texas Workforce Commission

BREAKOUT 5 – AI IN WORKFORCE SYSTEMS: FROM PILOT TO PRODUCTION | N206 BC

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY

States are moving beyond AI experimentation to enterprise adoption. This session highlights how workforce agencies are scaling AI from pilots into production across IT modernization, workforce operations, and frontline service delivery. Hear real-world examples, governance approaches, and lessons learned to reduce risk and elevate impact. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to operationalize AI and drive measurable value across workforce systems.

Moderator: **Annie Tietema**, Director of Performance and Technical Management, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Speakers: **Kelly Folks**, Division Director, Employment and Training, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Allison Johnson, Technical Advisor, NASWA

Alyssa Leonard, Senior AI Growth Partner, Eightfold.AI

Stephanie Mufic, Business Innovation and Strategy Unit Manager, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

BREAKOUT 6 – DATA-DRIVEN AND EVIDENCE-BASED: SMARTER DECISION-MAKING FOR A STRONGER WORKFORCE | N208 AB

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE; WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

Hear how states are using data, evaluations, and behavioral insights to strengthen workforce programs, improve service delivery, and achieve better outcomes for job seekers. Learn from real-world examples of data and evidence use in informed decision-making and discover practical tools and resources to help your own agency.

Moderator: **Marissa Hashizume**, Economist, NLx Research Hub, NASWA

Speakers: **Susan Dickinson**, Director, Office of Unemployment Compensation Benefits Policy, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

Nicol Nicola, Director, Division of Economic & Demographic Research, Office of Research and Information, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Emma Northcott, Ph.D., Senior Manager, Multistate Data Collaborative, NASWA

Allan Porowski, Principal Associate, Abt Global

BREAKOUT 7 – ELEVATED INSIGHTS: USING DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS TO STRENGTHEN UI PERFORMANCE | N208 C

TRACKS | UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Data is more than a measurement tool. It is a catalyst for improvement. This session explores how states can use UI data to identify trends, uncover process gaps, and gain a deeper understanding of system performance. Through discussion and shared experiences, we will examine strategies for turning data into action, driving continuous improvement, and strengthening program outcomes.

Moderator: **Jason Schnuk**, Deputy Unemployment Insurance Administrator, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Speakers: **Jeremy Busse**, Data Analyst Specialist, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Katie Dishnica, Director, Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Chaitrali Rajesh Ghanekar, Senior Data Analyst Researcher, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Joshua McKenna, Determinations Director, Idaho Department of Labor

Bea Murphy, Bureau Chief, Idaho Department of Labor

Beth Wilde, Adjudication Manager, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

9:45 – 10:15a **COFFEE BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS** Exhibit Hall D (3rd floor)

10:30 – 11:30a **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

BREAKOUT 1 – IS YOUR DATA TELLING THE RIGHT STORY? COMMUNICATING LABOR MARKET INFORMATION TO NON-TECHNICAL AUDIENCES | N204 A

TRACKS | COMMUNICATIONS; WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

Data is only valuable when people understand what it means and why it matters. This session explores how state workforce agencies can translate complex labor market information (LMI) into clear, compelling stories for employers, policymakers, agency leaders, job seekers, and the public. Learn how communications and LMI teams can partner to transform data into actionable insights through dashboards, visualizations,

reports, and other tools. Attendees will leave with practical ideas for using data to tell a stronger workforce story.

Moderator: **Rachel Moskowitz**, Economic & Research Analysis Bureau Chief, New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

Speakers: **Darlene Carnopis**, Bureau Chief Research and Communications, Idaho Department of Labor

Chris Cannon, Chief Communications Officer, Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Nicol Nicola, Director, Division of Economic & Demographic Research, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Craig Shaul, Labor Market Research Manager, Idaho Department of Labor

BREAKOUT 2 – IMPROVING ON YOUTH PROGRAMS | N204 BC

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Youth Programs are critical for equipping the next generation with the skills they need to thrive in the workforce of tomorrow. In this session we will showcase programs, partnerships, and initiatives that are connecting youth and young adults with sustainable career pathways.

Moderator: **Scott B. Sanders**, President and CEO, NASWA

Speakers: **Renee O'Day**, Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator, Division of Employment & Training, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Sarah Swanson, Commissioner, Montana Department of Labor and Industry

Liz Texeira, Vice President & Managing Director, Experiential Learning, Britebound

BREAKOUT 3 – ELEVATE YOUR GAME: THE JEOPARDY! OF WORKFORCE AND UI FINANCING | N205

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

A highly interactive jeopardy-style workshop session to strengthen collaboration between finance and program staff, teach complex grant/fiscal concepts in practical ways, and improve engagement and retention.

Moderator: **Stephan Demeritte**, Division Chief Financial Officer, North Carolina Department of Commerce

Speaker: **Emily Ward**, Director of Administrative Services, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation

BREAKOUT 4 – FROM MODERNIZED TO FUTURE-READY: WHAT'S NEXT FOR UI IT SYSTEMS | N206 A

TRACKS | TECHNOLOGY; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Modernizing UI IT systems is a major investment, but the work doesn't stop there. This panel discussion brings together states to share how they are planning the road ahead to keep their systems future-ready, resilient, and ahead of ongoing system upkeep challenges. From adopting emerging technologies to preparing for the next recession or major event, hear how states are maintaining their systems and continuing to deliver quality services.

Moderator: **Brett Flachsbarth**, Director, UI Support Center, NASWA

Speakers: **Raju Gadiraju**, CIO, Division of Employment Security, North Carolina Department of Commerce

Anna Hunter, Assistant Director, Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services, Arizona Department of Economic Security

Anupam Rathi, Managing Director, UI Programs, Kansas Department of Labor

Andy Stettner, Assistant Secretary of Unemployment Insurance, Maryland Department of Labor

BREAKOUT 5 – ELEVATING EFFICIENCY: THE POWER AND FUTURE OF THE UI SIDES EXCHANGE SYSTEM | N206 BC

TRACKS | UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Join us as we explore the purpose and functionality of the various UI SIDES exchanges, how they streamline communication and improve the timeliness and accuracy of unemployment claims processing, and the important role UI SIDES plays in promoting program integrity. We'll also share recent enhancements and future initiatives and provide a look ahead at how UI SIDES will continue to evolve to support the needs of our partners and stakeholders.

Speakers: **Christina Corbett**, Senior Manager, UI State Information Data Exchange System, NASWA

James Cotter, Senior Director, Integrity Systems, NASWA

BREAKOUT 6 – FULL THROTTLE: ACCELERATING DATA SHARING ACROSS SECTORS AND STATE LINES | N208 AB

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

Data doesn't stop at agency doors or state borders, so why should your strategy? Join NASWA's Multistate Data Collaborative and its partner network for a high-energy conversation on breaking down silos, tackling shared roadblocks, and revving up cross-sector, cross-state collaboration. We encourage you to come ready to engage in the conversation!

Moderator: **Emma Northcott**, Senior Manager, Multistate Data Collaborative, NASWA

Speakers: **Jessica Cunningham**, Director, State Data Innovation, MDRC
Anna Hui, Director, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Khristian Monterroso, Senior Associate, Data and Technology Innovation, APHSA

BREAKOUT 7 – SKILLS-BASED HIRING IN ACTION: NATIONAL & STATE PERSPECTIVES | N208 C

TRACKS | ADMINISTRATORS; EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Join us for an engaging discussion on what's driving the shift toward skills-first strategies and how states, technology leaders, and workforce organizations are putting these approaches into practice across hiring, labor exchange, career navigation, and employer engagement. Panelists will share lessons learned, real-world examples, and actionable insights attendees can bring back to their own agencies and organizations.

Moderator: **Paul Daniels**, Senior Manager, NLx Research Hub, NASWA

Speakers: **Efrem Bycer**, Head of Workforce and Climate Partnerships, LinkedIn
Lesley Hirsch, Assistant Commissioner, Research & Information, New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development
Mike Sanders, Data Expert, PhD Student, George Washington University – Trachtenberg School

11:45a – 1:00p

**SALUTE TO OUR LEADERSHIP
AWARDS LUNCHEON**

Baird Ballroom (4th floor)

NASWA's 2025-2026 Board of Directors
and Committee Chairs will be recognized

	with awards for their service during the Association Year.	
	11:45a-12:30p Luncheon	
	12:30 -1:00p Salute to Leadership Awards	
1:15 – 2:30p	90TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING	Baird Ballroom (4 th floor)
	This meeting is only open to state administrators and state members who are eligible to vote for their state.	
1:15 – 2:30p	CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS	

BREAKOUT 1 – ELEVATING WORKFORCE INTEROPERABILITY: BUILDING THE TECHNICAL BACKBONE FOR ETPL AND WORKFORCE PELL | N204 A

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY

As states work to modernize workforce systems and elevate service delivery, interoperability has become a foundational requirement—not a future aspiration. The expansion of Workforce Pell Grant eligibility for short-term, workforce-aligned programs places new demands on state systems to exchange timely, trusted data across Eligible Training Provider Lists (ETPL), workforce case management systems, education data systems, and performance reporting infrastructure. This session will explore how states can elevate workforce system design by treating interoperability and standards as strategic infrastructure—supporting program eligibility determination, performance accountability, and cross-agency collaboration without increasing system complexity or vendor lock-in.

Moderator: **Amy Hiltunen**, Director, Workforce Support Center, NASWA

Speakers: **Lesley Hirsch**, Assistant Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Emilie Rafal, Senior Director, Ecosystem Lead, Workforce, 1EdTech

BREAKOUT 2 – BUILDING STRONGER BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS: STATE STRATEGIES IN ACTION | N204 BC

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Fostering successful business partnerships is vital to the work state agencies do every day. In this session, state presenters will highlight successful employer partnerships and

promising practices for engaging employers that they've implemented in their state and share takeaways that will help you to build stronger relationships with businesses.

Moderator: **Jim Pfarrer**, Workforce Operations Director, Oregon Employment Department

Speakers: **Stephan Demeritte**, Division Chief Financial Officer, North Carolina Department of Commerce

Pavithra Lakshminarayan, Business Representative, Sector Strategies and Industry Partnership, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Howard Miller, Assistant Director, Business Engagement & Sector Strategies, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Laneice Runnells, District Director, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Kenneth Walker, Deputy Director, DC Department of Employment Services

BREAKOUT 3 – UNCHARTED ROAD: NAVIGATING AI'S IMPACT ON THE LABOR MARKET | N205

TRACKS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING; TECHNOLOGY; WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

This workshop features states and researchers sharing approaches to understanding AI's impact on the changing labor market. Panelists will discuss research motivations, stakeholder engagement, and data access strategies, along with early insights and next steps for states building AI labor market research.

Moderator: **Jessica Cunningham**, Director, State Data Innovation, MDRC

Speakers: **Rick Hendra**, Senior Fellow and Director, Data Strategy and Innovation, MDRC

Vicki Moore, Deputy Division Chief, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency

Coretta Pettway, Deputy Director, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Mike Sanders, Data Expert, PhD Student, George Washington University – Trachtenberg School

BREAKOUT 4 - BUILDING DATA FOUNDATIONS AND STRATEGIES TO REACH NEW HEIGHTS IN UI PROGRAM INTEGRITY | N206 A

TRACKS | TECHNOLOGY; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Building strong data foundations and strategies start with the right infrastructure. This workshop examines how states are setting up and expanding data warehouses and data lakes to support unemployment insurance program integrity and beyond. Explore how centralizing data across programs unlocks better analysis, more meaningful dashboards, and stronger decision-making, with use cases such as fraud detection and prevention and connecting to the integrity data hub (IDH), and more driving better outcomes for your agency.

Moderator: **Kendrah Gonzalez**, IDH Support Team Manager, NASWA

Speakers: **Davis Brown**, Integration Systems Engineer, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

Gregg Kallajian, Operations Coordinator, Connecticut Department of Labor

Satya Mukkavilli, Integration Systems Engineer, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

Caroline Pratt, UI Integrity Director, Connecticut Department of Labor

Chris Tonjes, CIO, DC Department of Employment Services

BREAKOUT 5 – ELEVATE YOUR STORY: A SOCIAL MEDIA ROUNDTABLE | N206 BC

TRACKS | COMMUNICATIONS

Join this interactive roundtable to discuss the opportunities and challenges of managing an effective social media presence for workforce and public-sector organizations. Bring your questions, share what's working, and learn from peers on topics such as platform selection, content planning, audience engagement, accessibility best practices, managing comments, and doing more with limited staff and budgets. Designed as an open forum, this session will be shaped by attendee participation, with opportunities to submit questions and discussion topics in advance.

Moderator: **Diane Watkins**, Chief Strategy Officer, DC Department of Employment Services

Speakers: **Haley McCoy**, Communications Director, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Jonathan McNair, Chief Public Information Officer, Alabama Department of Workforce

Erin Turbitt, Public Information Officer, Policy, Research & Communications, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

Kaitlyn Waynick, FAMLI Communications Strategist, Colorado
Department of Labor & Employment

2:45 – 3:15p	NETWORKING BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS	Exhibit Hall D (3 rd floor)
3:25 – 4:30p	CLOSING PLENARY SESSION	Baird Ballroom (4 th floor)

WASHINGTON, DC UP TO THE MINUTE

What workforce leaders need to know about the current state of play on Capitol Hill and the Administration.

John Colbert, *Co-Founder, Capitol Hill Partners*

INTRODUCTION OF NEW AY2026-2027 BOARD CHAIR & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brad Barger, Assistant Director, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2027 SUMMIT & ADJOURNMENT OF THE 2026 SUMMIT

Scott B. Sanders, President & CEO, NASWA