



SERVING CHELAN, DOUGLAS, GRANT, ADAMS, OKANOGAN COUNTIES



Students learn about energy at a summer Pre-ETS job tour at Rocky Reach Dam.

## IN THE LOOP | Issue 6, July 2024

Hello {{ contact.FIRSTNAME }},

Welcome to our seventh issue of In The Loop, a monthly newsletter just for SkillSource Board Members and County Commissioners. *Please read all the way to the bottom.* We have an important one-question survey for you, and some save the dates to add to your calendar.

I hope you're having a wonderful summer, and I appreciate all that you do!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa".

Lisa Romine, CEO

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## Board Member Spotlight

We are only able to do this work thanks to all of you, our esteemed board members. This month we're delighted to feature Tad Hildebrand, who has been serving on the SkillSource Regional Workforce Board for seven years.

"Fifteen years ago I found myself unemployed while I was going back to school to become a teacher. My first kiddo was about to be born and I needed to find a job, quick. I walked into the SkillSource office and met with Bonnie who told me about a job in Othello that she thought I might like. She saw potential I didn't know I had and matched me with a job that paved the way for a career in HR and organizational development. I don't know where I'd be today if I had never met Bonnie, and I am so grateful she took the time to meet with me. Over the years I have met many SkillSource staff who are changing lives just like Bonnie. They help people get back on their feet, learn new skills, and realize potential they may not have known they had. These are the kind of people I want to support, and being a board member allows me to do that."

Thank you, Tad! And congratulations on your new business, Pilot Rock Consulting!



"SkillSource is an incredible resource for job seekers as well as employers. They can help them offset initial hiring or training costs, upskill employees, and provide opportunities for people who are willing to learn something new. Every HR professional should have SkillSource on speed dial."

**Tad Hildebrand**  
Pilot Rock Consulting

**Board Member Spotlight**

## Performance Highlight



As of the end of the quarter, SkillSource has **exceeded enrollment goals** for both Federal and State EcSA, and for QUEST. This means we are effectively reaching career seekers with targeted services that help get them onto a path toward self-sufficiency in meaningful careers.

And in other good news, we've seen an **11% increase** in average wages for adults, and a **7% increase** for youth!



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## Summer Pre-ETS

Youth in Moses Lake, Othello, Omak, and Wenatchee have been participating in a summer opportunity that lets them explore a variety of interesting jobs and meet with employers at different jobsites. The opportunity is part of Pre-Employment Transition Services offered in partnership with local schools, DSHS - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and area businesses. Students learn more about their interests, aptitudes, and future goals, and gain tools for self-advocacy to help them flourish in everyday life.

[Read Story](#)



## In Case You Missed It

Last month we opened up applications for the Department of Commerce Small Business Investment Grants and the response exceeded our expectations! Due to a high volume of applications received in the first week, the application period closed on July 8th. We opened up [a new notification list](#) for businesses who didn't get the chance to apply for the grants, and we will engage with that list when additional opportunities arise. The grant rating team will be reviewing applications soon, with awardees announced no later than August 16th.





## FEEDBACK WANTED: Board Retreat Dates

We're beginning to plan for our bi-annual board retreat in March 2025. The retreat will be held in a central location and will begin on a Thursday afternoon and end on a Friday at 4 pm. Please respond [to this one-question survey](#) to let us know your preferred dates for the March retreat.

[Answer Survey](#)

## Newsworthy

Do you get the Wenatchee Business Journal? You may have noticed this point of view article in the July issue, which explains the small business investment grants and the Community Reinvestment Initiative. If you missed the hard copy, you can access the [e-edition here](#).

menting on the campus. She will also support students, faculty, and staff while serving as a liaison with the community and overseeing

services on the campus in the University of Alaska Fairbanks Kuskokwim Campus, the university's largest rural campus, where she was responsible

for the energy and productivity I've experienced from everyone there. I very much look forward to working with our Olanogian communities.

Students can support our diverse group of students, faculty and staff, and someone who can foster our important partnerships in the Olanogian

community. She will also support our diverse group of students, faculty and staff, and someone who can foster our important partnerships in the Olanogian

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## Point of View

### New small business grants increase equity & prosperity

When small businesses prosper, so does our community. We want our community in North Central Washington to know that there are new business investment grants available through the Washington State Department of Commerce, with priority grants to businesses that are owned and operated by individuals who are Black, Latino, or Indigenous. SkillSource aims to connect small businesses in Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Adams, and Okanogan counties with these new funding opportunities in order to help businesses grow and thrive.

Business investment grants have already begun distribution in other parts of Washington. A commercial baker in Tacoma was able to add an

industrial oven to increase their output and bring in more revenue. Another business purchased a new air compressor, which will allow the owner to hire three additional employees and expand his business. Funds from these grants can be used in any number of ways to help a business scale and become more sustainable. This includes capacity building and growth (renting space, purchasing equipment or software), sustainability efforts (environmental, financial, social impact), employee retention, and staff training.

Investment grants are a part of the Community Reinvestment Initiative through the Washington State Department of Commerce. The overarching goal is to ensure that historically marginalized communities gain equitable access to resources, which promotes broader community development and economic resilience. Specifically, the focus of this initiative is to address the disproportionate impacts on certain communities associated with the "War on Drugs." Local business is the lifeblood of our neighborhoods and

communities. These new investment grants will have a positive impact right here at home, strengthening businesses, increasing economic viability, and paving the way for a new era of generational prosperity in North Central Washington.

Find more information and the application for the small business investment grants on the SkillSource website: [www.skillsource.org](http://www.skillsource.org) small business investment grants. Or give us a call, (509) 663-3091.

About SkillSource is a nonprofit agency that

provides leadership, administrative, and oversight for programs created to the development of a skilled workforce in the North Central Washington Development Area. We provide direct services in Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Adams counties, and contract services in Okanogan County. These efforts are overseen by the SkillSource Regional Workforce Board, which is made up of local community and business leaders.

**Lisa Romine**

CEO SkillSource Regional Workforce Board



## DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY

We help you market your business with a trusted strategy to achieve your business goals.

More information: 509 734 4392

29 S. Wenatchee Ave., Suite A, Wenatchee, WA 98801

## Summer School for Staff

SkillSource managers, trainers, and support staff are participating in a four-part training over the summer. The intention of the training is to connect new employees with seasoned staff to examine the “why” behind the work we do, the “how”, and to look at opportunities to improve efficiency with the right tools, resources, and team support. The final session will be in Moses Lake on August 28-29.

[Read the story here.](#)



## Upcoming Events

**BUSINESS AFTER HOURS** - SkillSource will host the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours event on August 22 at the SkillSource center in Wenatchee. Mark your calendars and join us from 5 to 7 pm. There will be live music, local eats, and beverages. The event is free, [please RSVP](#).

**WWA CONFERENCE** - The Washington Workforce Association will host its annual conference in Tacoma on November 12 -14. [See details and register here](#).

Follow SkillSource for Events, News, & More



#### Contact Us

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