

# Economic Impact of Arapahoe/Douglas Works!

2024



  
Arapahoe/Douglas  
**WORKFORCE BOARD**  
C O L O R A D O



October 1, 2024

The Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Development Board is proud to share our annual report for workforce development programs and services provided throughout Arapahoe and Douglas Counties and throughout the Denver metro area.

The most recent employment and wage data available is for Program Year 2021 (PY21), which began on July 1, 2021 and ended June 30, 2022. During this time, regional economic activity from new worker earnings directly attributable to the value added by Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was \$52.7 million. For each public dollar spent, new worker earnings increased by \$9.22.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works! met or exceeded all federal performance measures and the Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Development Board earned High Performing Board designation, demonstrating its leadership in workforce development. Arapahoe/Douglas Works! has been honored with several prestigious nominations and awards, including the Douglas County EDC's Nonprofit of the year nomination, the African Chamber's Partner of the Year award, and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's Excellence in Workforce Award.

We are proud to note that the market value of services provided to local businesses through Arapahoe/Douglas Works! during that same time frame was \$3.7 million. This includes workforce intelligence, job postings, job fairs, hiring events, facilities use, skill assessments, business education, business consulting and public speaking on business solutions.

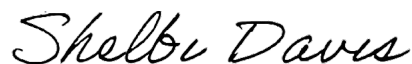
The Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Development Board plays an integral role in the region's economic vitality and continued competitiveness in a structurally scarce labor market. In addition, we provide education partners with real-time labor market data to inform curriculum content. We also provide businesses and economic development partners with data on labor availability, competitive wage scales, and comparative data on employer provided benefit costs.

The following pages illustrate the tremendous positive return on investment of the Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Development Board and Arapahoe/Douglas Works!

Sincerely,



**Peter Hancock**  
Workforce Development Board Chair  
Professional Employment Group



**Shelbi Davis**  
Workforce Development Board Vice Chair  
Charles Schwab



**Sasha Easton**  
Director  
Arapahoe/Douglas Works!



**Patrick Holwell**  
Workforce Economist  
Arapahoe/Douglas Works!

# Background

This report is made possible as a result of statewide efforts by the Colorado Urban Workforce Alliance (CUWA) and the Workforce Intelligence Data Expert team (WIDE) to standardize the methodology of assessing the workforce development system's return on public investment using longitudinal median wage records supplied in aggregate by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) Unemployment Insurance Division (UI).

WIDE members include workforce data intelligence experts from all ten local workforce areas, as well as state data intelligence representatives.

Data presented are for the major workforce development programs operated by Arapahoe/Douglas Works! over five program years. These programs are:

- All Workforce Programs, Staff Assisted
  - All participants who received staff-assistance. This includes Career and Business Services (Wagner-Peyser), Employment First (EF), Colorado Works/Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Parents to Work (PTW), WIOA, and other programs.
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
  - Adult (AD)
  - Dislocated Worker (DW)
  - Young Adult (YT)

Aggregate median earnings data is presented for participant cohorts exiting over five program years:

- Program Year 2017 (PY17) from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.
  - Aggregate median earnings from 2 quarters prior to program entry through 16 quarters (4 years) after program exit.
- Program Year 2018 (PY18) from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.
  - Aggregate median earnings from 2 quarters prior to program entry through 12 quarters (3 years) after program exit.
- Program Year 2019 (PY19) from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.
  - Aggregate median earnings from 2 quarters prior to program entry through 8 quarters (2 years) after program exit.
- Program Year 2020 (PY20) from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.
  - Aggregate median earnings from 2 quarters prior to program entry through 4 quarters (1 year) after program exit.
- Program Year 2021 (PY21) from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
  - Aggregate median earnings from 2 quarters prior to program entry through 4 quarters (1 year) after program exit (this is the latest wage data available for exit cohorts).

Wagner-Peyser and WIOA program funding allocations and expenditures are supplied by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) to ensure transparency in reporting by local workforce centers throughout CO

For each of the programs previously specified, this report provides data on employment sustainability, earnings outcomes, earnings recapture, and return on public funds invested.

Unless otherwise specified, all data used in this report is extracted from Connecting Colorado, which is the Colorado Workforce System's database of record.

# Year-over-Year Return on Public Investment

Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Development Board and Arapahoe/Douglas Works! ROI Year to Year at 2 Quarters Post-Exit (Incremental Value of Workforce Services)						
Program	Measure	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20	PY21
Workforce Programs (Staff Assisted)	Total ROI (addtl. wages - expenses)	\$65,569,341	\$57,017,796	\$44,021,168	\$94,992,900	\$52,688,943
	Total ROI for each dollar invested	\$21.29	\$14.52	\$12.17	\$27.35	\$9.22
WIOA (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Young Adults)	Total ROI (addtl. wages - expenses)	\$6,394,703	\$8,411,935	\$5,185,374	\$6,039,739	\$8,514,130
	Total ROI for each dollar invested	\$3.19	\$2.85	\$2.28	\$2.58	\$2.07

Source: Connecting Colorado, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

The workforce programs cited in this report are funded publicly by the U.S. Government with appropriations from the U.S. Congress flowing through the U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration (DOLETA) to the governors of the states and territories. In Colorado, these funds go to CDLE, which distributes them to the local workforce centers according to a multi-variate formula. Arapahoe/Douglas Works! receives other funding from various sources which is not included in this report.

Return on public investment (ROI) is determined by subtracting the aggregate earnings of each exit cohort at the quarter of enrollment from the aggregate earnings of that cohort two quarters post exit, minus the total public funds spent in the operation of the various programs. The table above shows this as 'additional wages – expenses.'

In the table above, the WIOA programming 'Total ROI' and 'Total ROI for each dollar invested' are a subset of all Workforce Programs Staff-Assisted. For example, the \$8,514,130 total ROI for WIOA in PY21 is included in the \$52,688,943 total ROI for staff-assisted workforce programs.



For example, collective (aggregate) earnings of individuals exiting Arapahoe/Douglas Works! staff-assisted programming in PY21 were \$72,156,500 at quarter of enrollment, and \$130,559,904 two quarters after exit. Public funds expended on staff-assisted programming that year totaled \$5,714,461.

**The ROI equation:**

**\$130,559,904 - \$72,156,500 = \$58,403,404 (collective wage increase)**  
**This is the value of staff-assisted services at Arapahoe/Douglas Works!**

**\$58,403,404 - \$5,714,461 (collective wage increase minus expenditures) =**  
**\$52,688,943 total ROI for PY21**

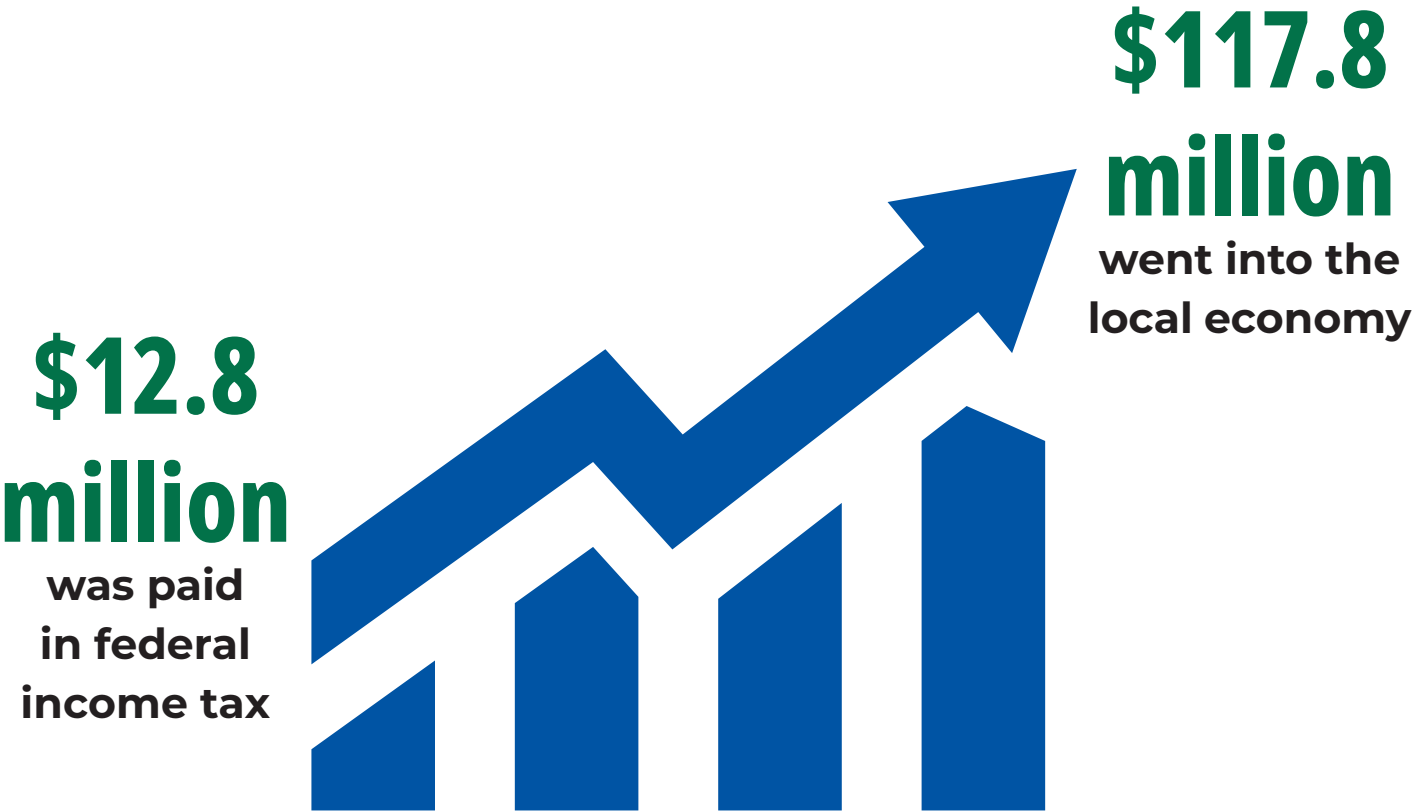
**For each \$1 public dollar spent the return was**  
**\$9.22 in new worker earnings directly attributable to the value of**  
**Arapahoe/Douglas Works! staff-assisted services**

Of this total ROI, an estimated:

- \$12.8 million was paid in federal income tax.\*
- \$117.8 million went into the local economy.

\*Average federal income tax estimated using data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey for calendar year 2021

For every \$1 dollar of public money spent, the return was **\$9.22** in new worker earnings directly attributable to the value of Arapahoe/Douglas Works! services.





# Employment Sustainability

One of the important measures of efficacy for WIOA programming is its employment sustainability. The graph below shows comparative employment sustainability for individuals who were not staff-assisted by Arapahoe/Douglas Works! versus those who received staff assistance through Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA programming.

Reading this graph, 64.0% of exiters who received no staff assistance by Arapahoe/Douglas Works! were employed six months after program exit. By the fourth year after exit, only 57.3% of exiters showed earnings from employment.

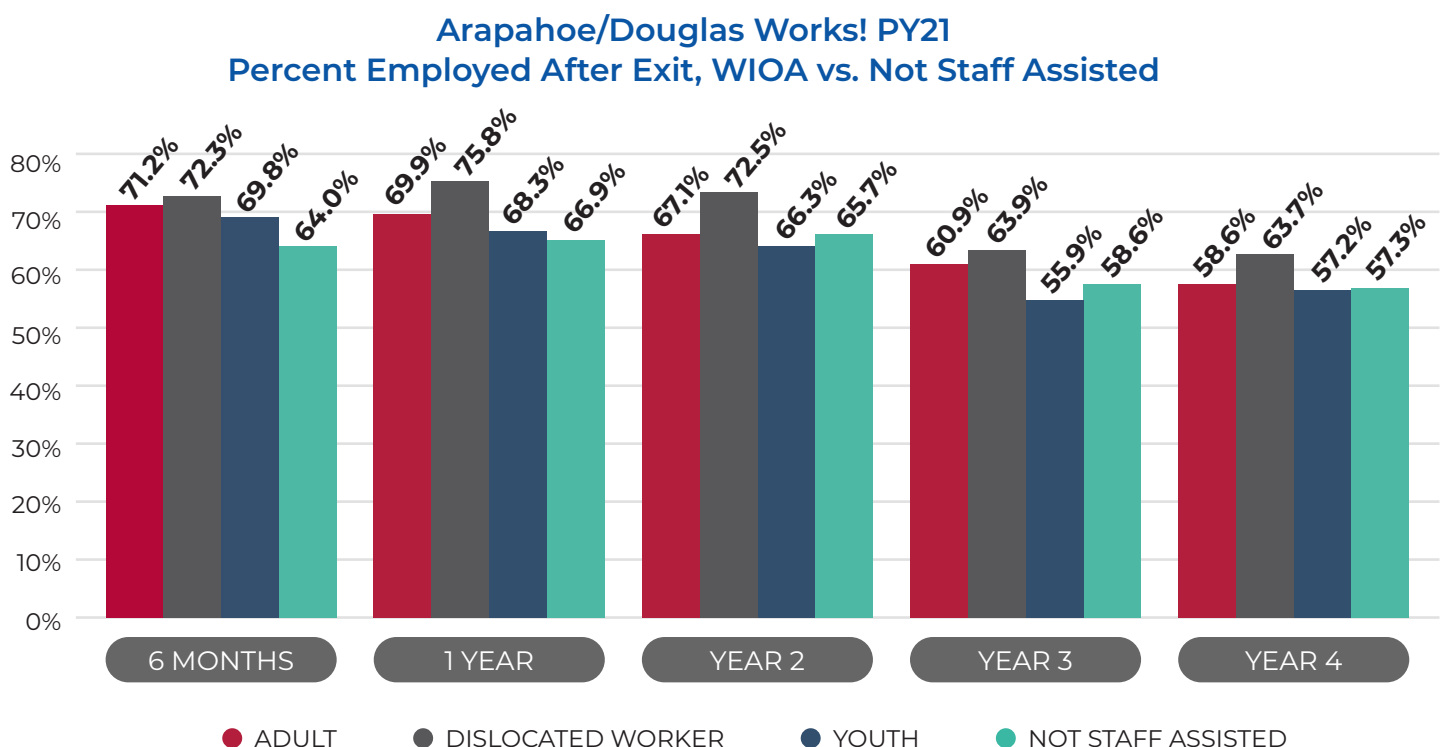
In the Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA DW program, 72.3% of exiters were employed at six months after program exit, and four years after exit, 63.7% of these individuals were still employed.

Based on this, it can be concluded that participants exiting from the Arapahoe/ Douglas Works! WIOA DW program had 6.4% higher employment sustainability. Due to when data on earnings become available, Year 4 post-exit results for all programs in the table occurred during the pandemic, which makes this measure especially powerful as an indicator of the best-in-class service delivery by Arapahoe/Douglas Works!

The bar graph shows that participants who received services through WIOA from Arapahoe/Douglas Works! staff stayed employed at a higher rate than those who registered with Arapahoe/Douglas Works! but did not opt to receive staff assistance.

- Adult – 1.2% better employment sustainability
- Dislocated Worker – 6.4% better
- Young Adult – (0.2%) below\*\*

\*\*Since a positive exit from the WIOA Young Adult program may be employment and/or entry into postsecondary occupational training, this statistic does not fully represent the overall success of Young Adult program exiters. In addition, many participants in the Young Adult program have the sole intent of earning their high school diploma or General Educational Development certification (GED), which is not indicated in this measure.



# Longitudinal Wage Outcomes, Career Services

## Staff-Assisted Workforce Programs

The tables below show longitudinal wage outcomes from 28,094 participants exiting from staff-assisted workforce programming at Arapahoe/Douglas Works! from PY17 through PY21 (beginning July 1, 2017, and ending June 30, 2022). Generally, the term Career Services (funded through Wagner-Peyser) includes job seeker assessments, workshops, assistance in job search, job referrals, data and labor-market informed career navigation, hiring events, job fairs, referrals to community partners, and referrals to WIOA and other programs as appropriate, which may include, but are not limited to, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF)/Colorado Works, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T)/Employment First (EF), Parents to Work, the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), and Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs (DVOPs). Note that WIOA program outcomes are included in these results due to the way the data is extracted from Connecting Colorado.

WIOA and other programs such as TANF/Colorado Works, SNAP/EF, Parents to Work and TAA offer intensive services that may involve braided funding from two or more programs. These can include supportive services and other workforce development services to aid in successful completion of employment and training goals. These services include but are not limited to career services, transportation assistance, short-term rental assistance, clothing, skill assessments, childcare and a variety of learning opportunities, including access to registered apprenticeships and options to re-skill, next-skill and upskill through occupational training leading to industry-recognized credentials.

This combination graph shows a steady upward trajectory of earnings, with median annual earnings growing at an annual rate of 9.6% (calculated from two quarters prior to program entry through four-years post-exit).

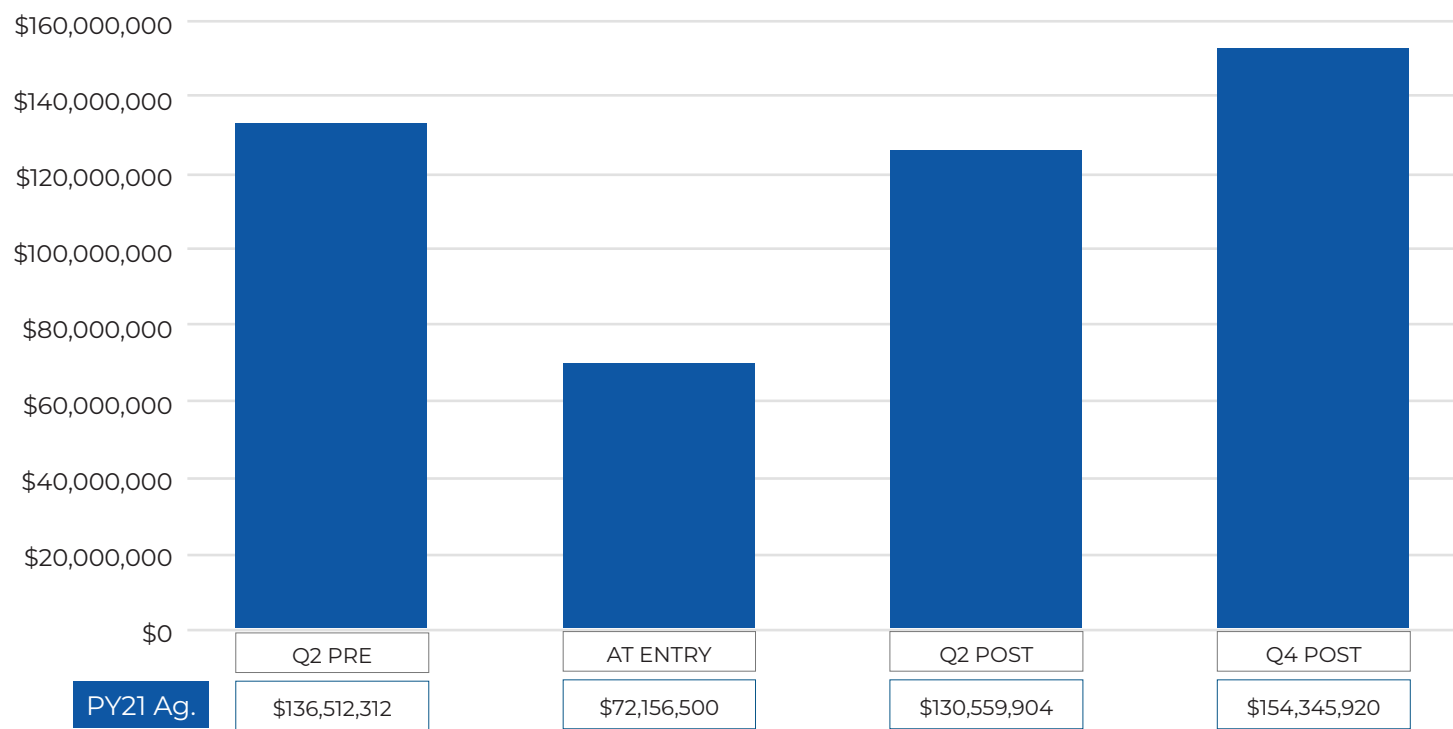
Earnings Recapture and Wage Trajectory PY17 - PY18  
Arapahoe/Douglas Works!  
Staff Assisted PY21 Program Participants





This bar graph shows the aggregate median wage two quarters prior to staff-assisted workforce program entry for 31,249 participants and compares these wages to the aggregate median wage of 28,094 participants from the same group in staff-assisted workforce programs two quarters post exit. The difference between aggregate earnings at entry vs. two quarters post exit is \$58.4 million in new worker earnings directly attributable to the value of services provided by Arapahoe/Douglas Works!. **This demonstrates the impact of Arapahoe/Douglas Works! programs and services on the vitality of our local economy.**

PY21 Staff-Assisted Services, Aggregate Value of Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Services



# Value of Services to Business

Colorado's WIDE group conducted research to determine the value of services workforce centers perform for businesses.

The estimated value of services was determined by ascertaining, in each case, how much a business would have to pay for a comparable service in the private sector.

Services to Businesses, PY21 Arapahoe/Douglas Works!			
Service	Estimated Value	Count of Services	Value
Labor Market Data	\$750	114	\$85,500
Job Postings	\$55	53,875	\$2,963,125
Job Fairs & Hiring Events	\$418	850	\$355,300
Facility Use	\$240	33	\$7,920
Assessments	\$12	70	\$840
Business Education	\$40	477	\$19,080
Workforce Consulting	\$106	2,132	\$226,525
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>57,551</b>	<b>\$3,658,290</b>
Source: Connecting Colorado			

The sources for cost estimates for the various services are as follows:

- *Labor Market Data* – the amount determined is what the current labor market data providers in Colorado have stated they would charge for a stand-alone individual report generated for a single customer.
- *Job Postings* – the cost of a single job posting was determined using the National Labor Exchange published rate of \$55.
- *Job Fairs & Hiring Events* – the cost of job fairs was calculated by taking the average cost from three sources: Best Hire Career Fairs, University of Denver, and a report from National Association of Colleges and Employers.
- *Facility Use* – according to Best Chair, the estimated cost of facility use for hiring is currently \$80/hour with average usage at three hours.
- *Business Education* – Data from Small Business Development Centers in Colorado shows that the average cost of educating a business on operational or regulatory requirements is \$40.
- *Workforce Consulting* – This takes place when business services representatives work with business customers to develop strategies for staying competitive in a structurally scarce labor market. Average costs were calculated using myhrpartner.com and helioshr.com.

The aggregate value of each service was determined by multiplying the cost of a service times the number of services delivered as tracked in Connecting Colorado.

# Characteristics of WIOA Program Populations

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs

WIOA is landmark legislation that is designed to ensure access to quality workforce development services that enable job seekers to enter into growing and sustainable career pathways and opportunities. It also ensures that youth and those with significant barriers receive the navigational and supportive services they need for success in the labor market.

At Arapahoe/Douglas Works!, WIOA programming is integrated with Career Services and Business Services in a way designed to ensure participants next skill, re-skill, and/or upskill for success in the local labor market. Participants may be provided with services, which may include, but may not be limited to, custom career assessments, navigation and planning, supportive services designed to mitigate barriers to success, access to programs to obtain a high school diploma or equivalent, English language learners (ELL) access skills to compete in today's virtual job market, and a plethora of occupational training options including training at a variety of postsecondary institutions, work-based learning options including paid internships and on-the-job training, as well as registered apprenticeship options.

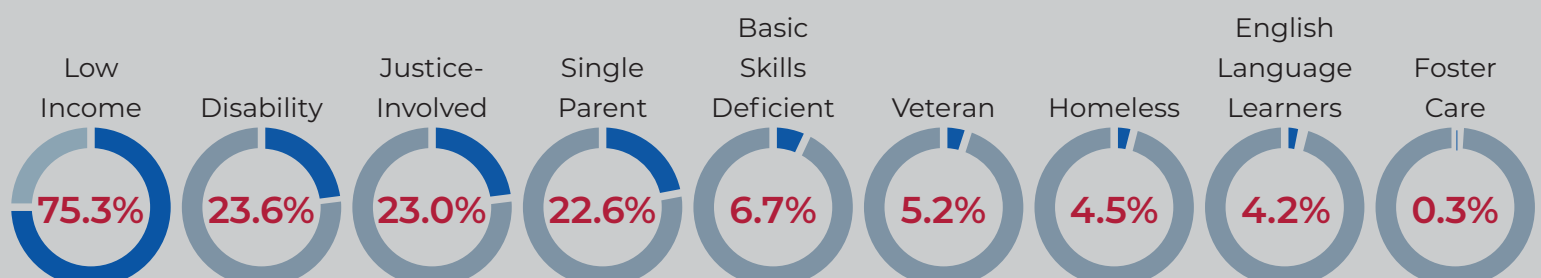
## Characteristics of WIOA Participants

Greater metro Denver is home to a highly educated and technically savvy labor force. According to the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), 49.4% of the population over 25 years of age has a bachelor's degree or higher, and 92.4% has a high school diploma or higher. This educational attainment is significantly above the national average, which is 35.7% bachelor's or higher, and 89.6% high school diploma or higher. Those who come to Arapahoe/Douglas Works! for help in their job search generally need more assistance because they have significant barriers to success in finding and retaining employment. The characteristics of the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Young Adult populations are discussed below. *Note that being a veteran is not necessarily a barrier to success. Rather, veterans are given **priority of service** in all programs offered by Arapahoe/Douglas Works!.*

### **Adult Program (AD)**

The Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA Adult program serves participants in priority of service groups, including economically disadvantaged, receiving public assistance, justice-involved, homeless, foster youth, individuals with disabilities, basic skills deficient, and underemployed. This chart gives insight into the barriers to success in employment faced by WIOA Adult participants exited by Arapahoe/Douglas Works! between April 1, 2019, and December 31, 2021. It is taken from the most recent WIOA Quantitative Evaluation conducted by Arapahoe/Douglas Works!. In this exit group, 589 (85.7%) of the exiters were in one or more target groups, and 291 (42.4%) fell in two or more target groups.

### Characteristics of Adult Program Exiters April 1, 2019 - December 31, 2021 Arapahoe/Douglas Works! (687 Total Exiters)

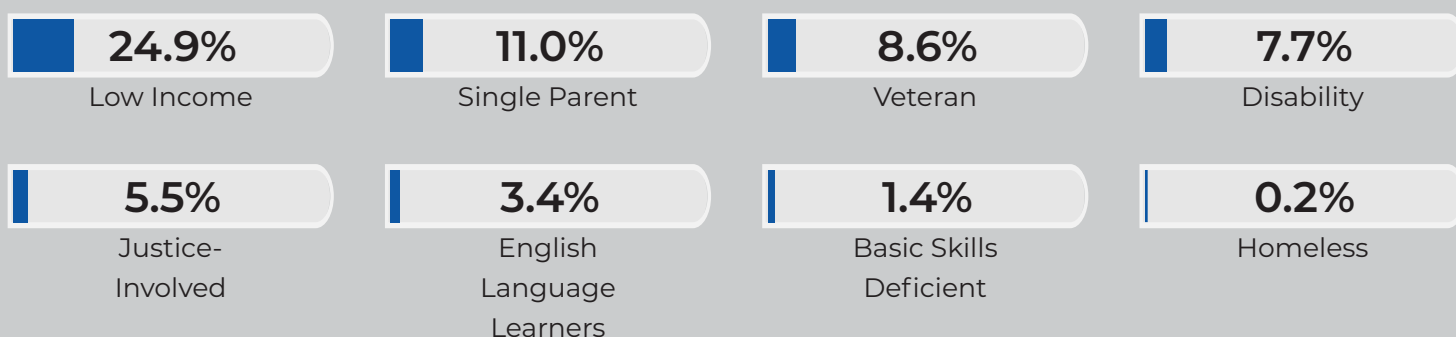


# Longitudinal Wage Outcomes, Career Services

## **Dislocated Worker Program (DW)**

The Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA Dislocated Worker Program serves individuals who have been laid off through no fault of their own due to downsizing or plant closure, as well as displaced homemakers. While this population generally has fewer barriers to success in employment when compared to other program participants, those exiting from Arapahoe/Douglas Works! in the date range specified below did face significant barriers to finding and retaining a new job. Again, those who most need help access WIOA Dislocated Worker programming through workforce centers such as Arapahoe/Douglas Works!. Of the 417 exiters shown, 149 (35.7%) were in one or more target populations, and 45 (10.8%) fell into two or more target populations.

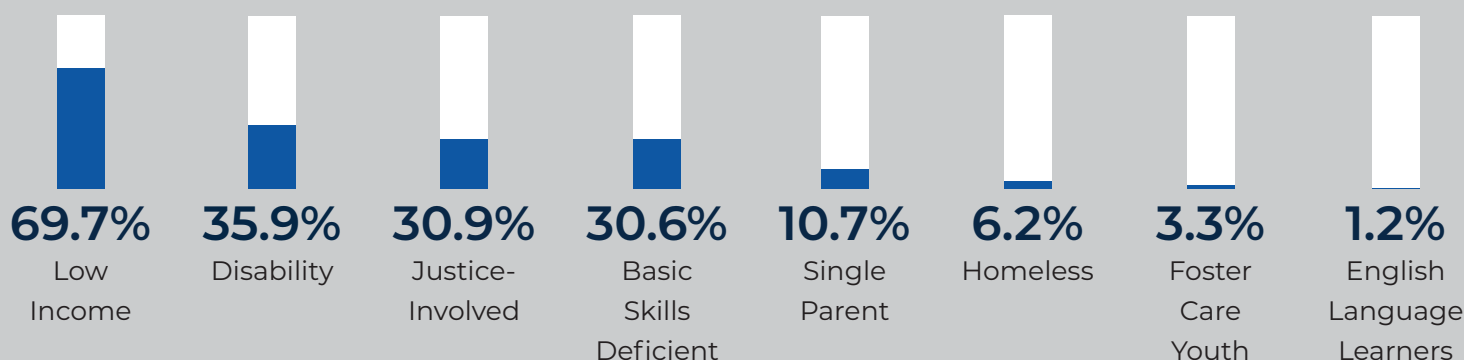
### Characteristics of Dislocated Workers Program Exiters April 1, 2019 - December 31, 2021 Arapahoe/Douglas Works! (417 Total Exiters)



## **Young Adult Program (YT)**

The Arapahoe/Douglas works! WIOA Young Adult program participants generally come to workforce centers such as Arapahoe/Douglas Works! for help in obtaining their high school diploma or GED. For many of these participants, occupational training is a secondary goal in their career planning. This means that while Arapahoe/Douglas Works! tracks employment and wage outcomes over time for Young Adult exiters, a positive outcome for this population can include high school graduation or obtaining their GED, entry into postsecondary occupation training and/or employment. The chart below shows barriers faced by Young Adult program exiters. Of the 337 Young Adult exiters, 289 (85.8%) fell into one or more target groups, and 171 (50.7%) fell into two or more target groups.

### Characteristics of Young Adult Program Exiters April 1, 2019 - December 31, 2021 Arapahoe/Douglas Works! (337 Total Exiters)



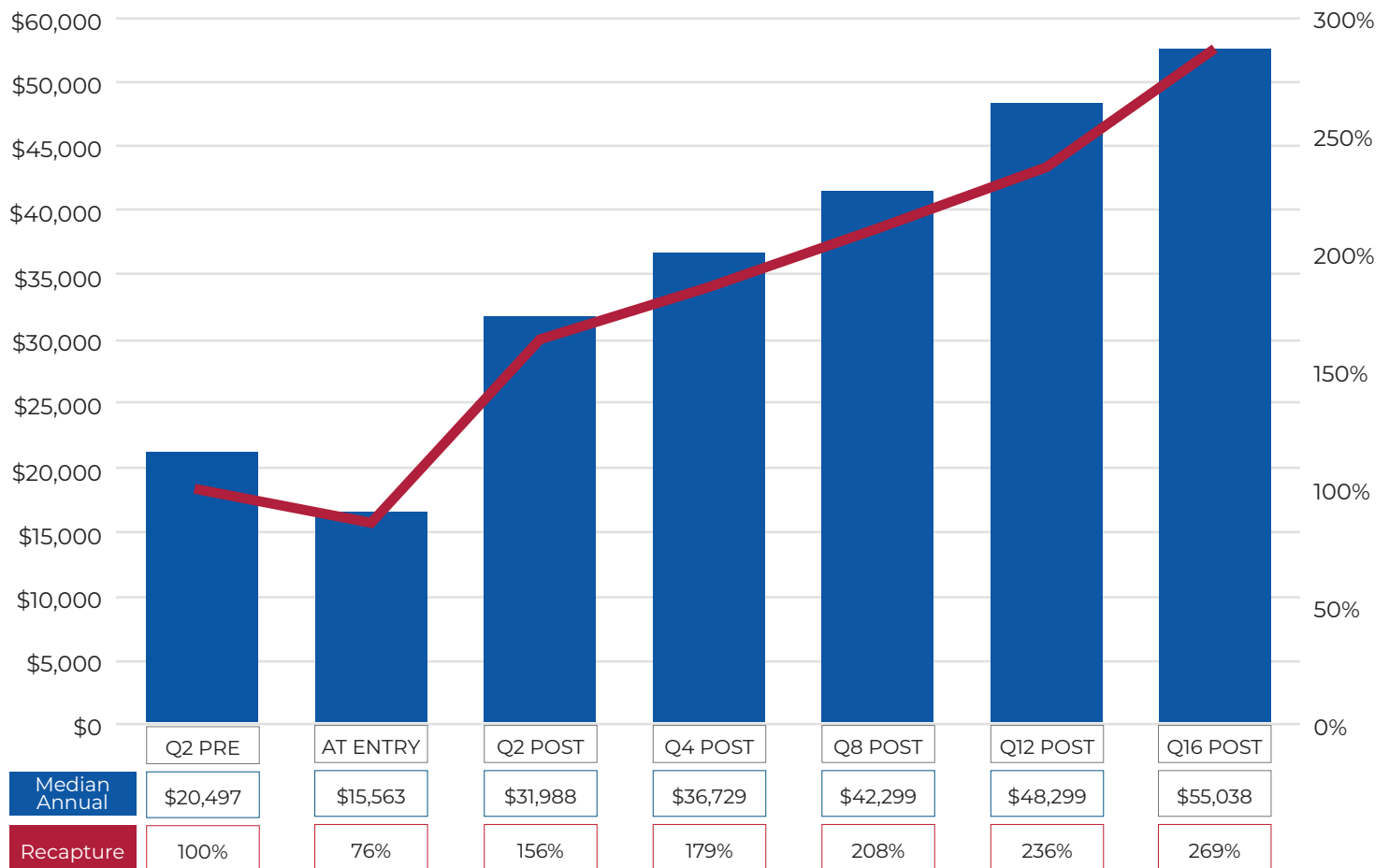
# Longitudinal Wage Outcomes, WIOA Programs

## WIOA Adult Program

Longitudinal wage records were extracted from Connecting Colorado for 779 Adult program exiters two quarters prior to program entry, and 947 exiters two quarters post exit. This combination graph shows a significant upward trajectory of earnings, with median annual earnings between the first year after program exit and the fourth year after exit growing at an annual rate of 14.4%.

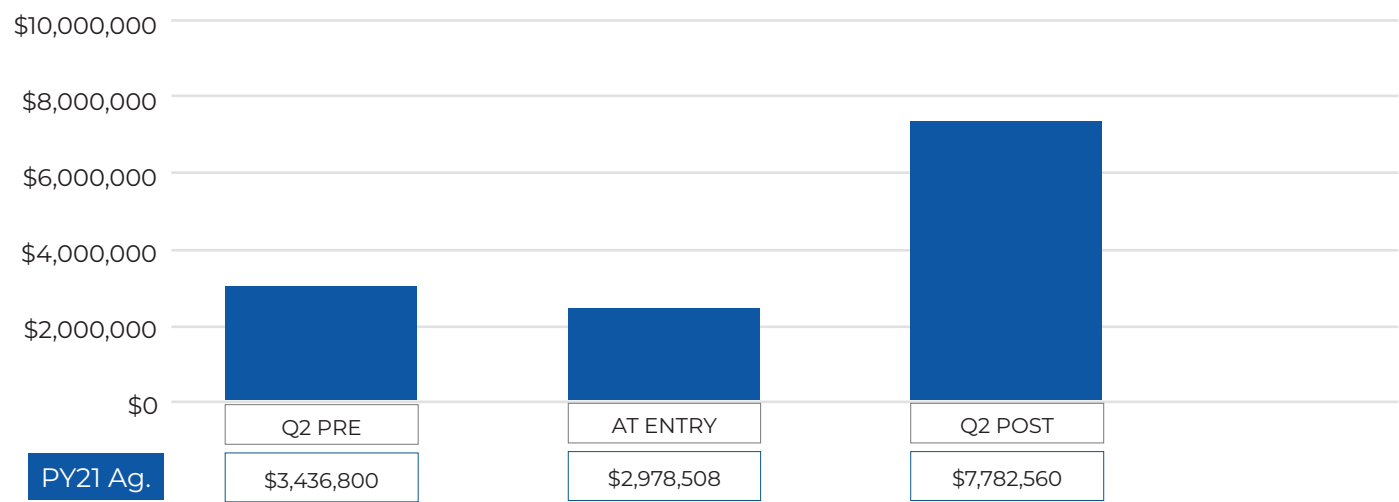
Two quarters after exit, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Adult program participants were earning \$11,492 more per year than they were two quarters prior to program entry.

**Earnings Recapture and Wage Trajectory PY17 - PY21**  
**Arapahoe/Douglas Works!**  
**WIOA Adult Program Exiters**



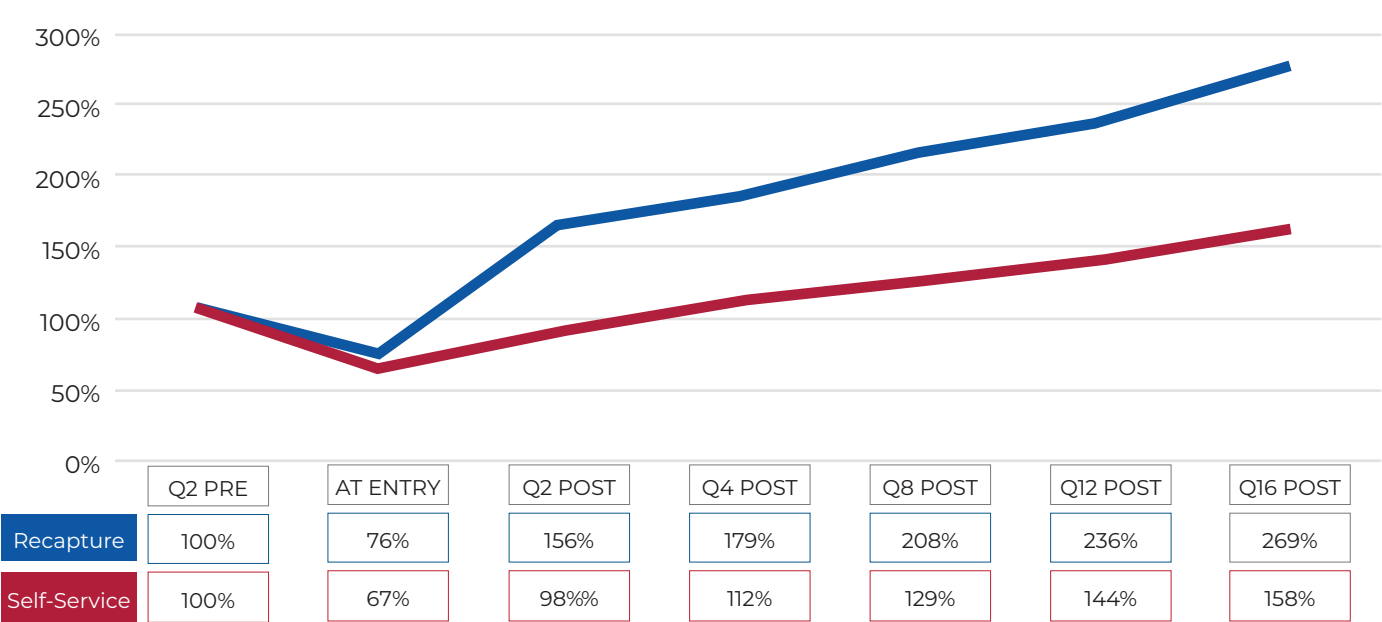
The aggregate value of Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA Adult services for these five exit cohorts was over \$4.3 million. This represents new worker earnings that are directly attributable to the value of WIOA Adult services provided through Arapahoe/Douglas Works!.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works!  
PY21 WIOA Adult, Aggregate Value of Services



When tracking wage recapture, Adult exiters had a much steeper and more meaningful wage recapture trajectory than those who did not receive assistance from Arapahoe/Douglas Works! staff. The line graph below clearly illustrates the effectiveness of Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Adult program services.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works!  
Earnings Recapture, WIOA AD PY21 vs. Self-Service





# Longitudinal Wage Outcomes, WIOA Programs

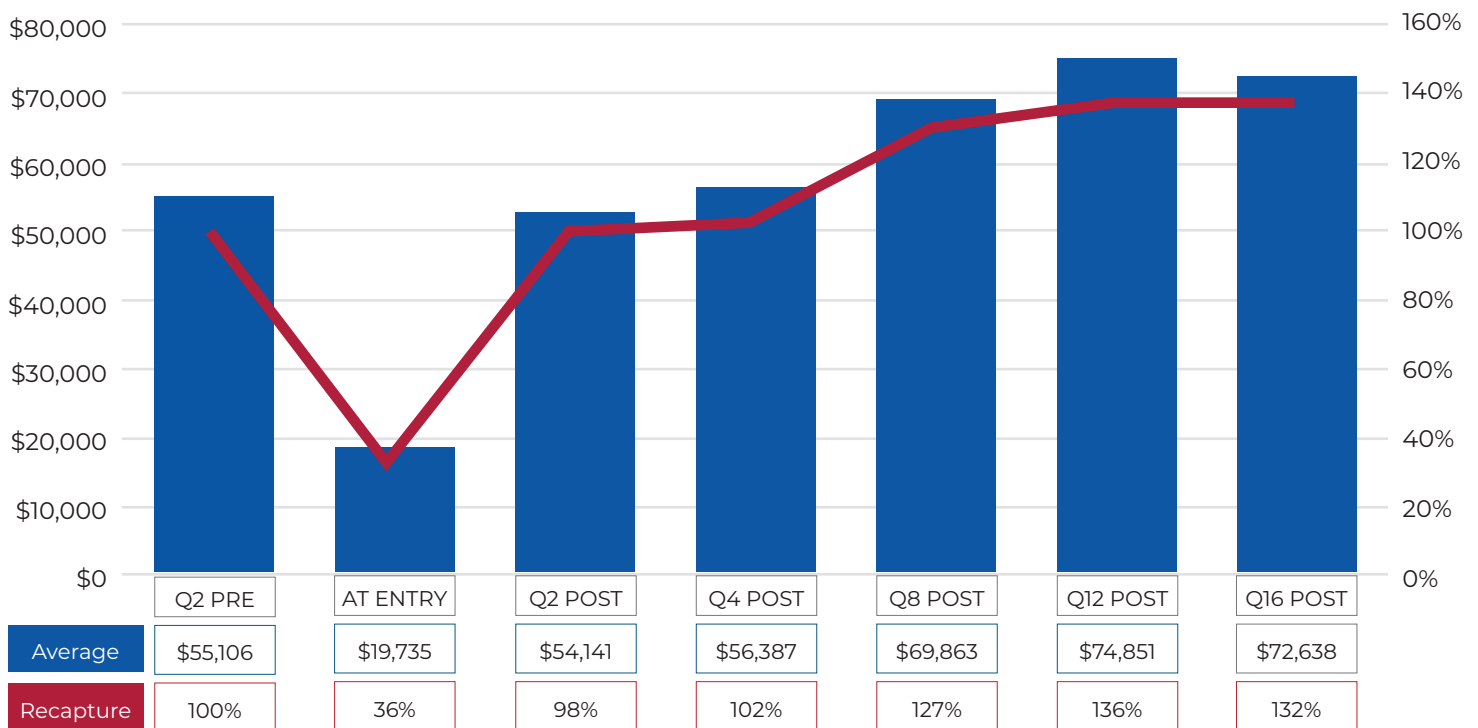
## WIOA Dislocated Worker Program

Longitudinal wage records were extracted from Connecting Colorado for 600 Dislocated Worker program exiters two quarters prior to program entry, and 610 exiters two quarters post exit. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program serves participants who were laid off from their jobs for no fault of their own, lost jobs due to plant closure, or are displaced homemakers.

This combination graph shows an upward trajectory of earnings with median annual earnings between the first year after exit and the fourth year after exit growing at an annual rate of 7.62%. Dislocated Worker exiters were adversely affected by the pandemic as shown in the slight downturn four years post exit.

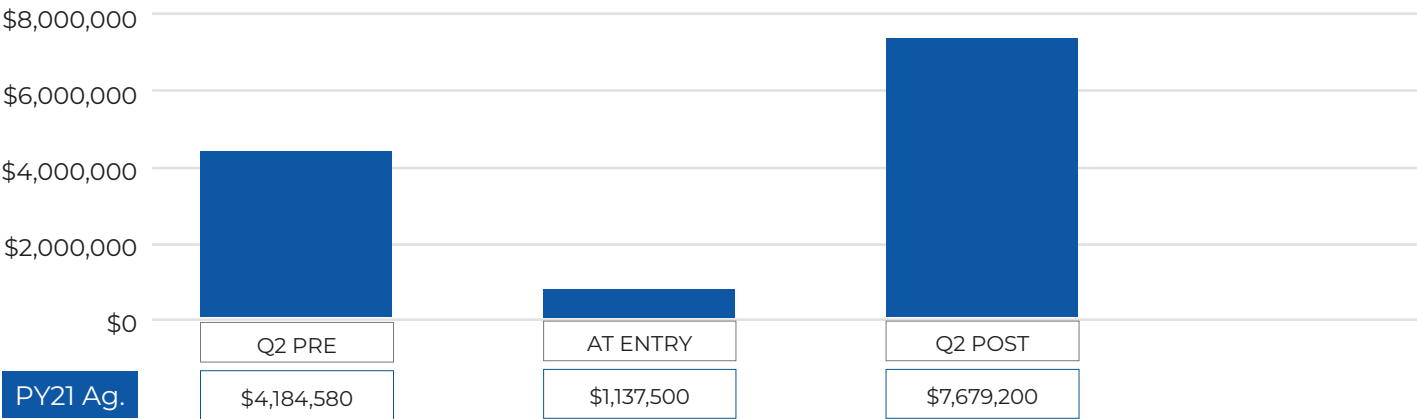
**Individuals who participated in the Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Dislocated Worker program had recaptured all their prior earnings by one year post exit. By the second year after exit, they were earning \$14,757 more annually than they were two quarters prior to program entry.**

**Earnings Recapture and Wage Trajectory PY17 - PY21  
Arapahoe/Douglas Works!  
WIOA DW Program Exiters**



The aggregate value of WIOA Dislocated Worker services for these five exit cohorts was nearly \$3.5 million. This represents new worker earnings directly attributable to the value of services provided to Dislocated Workers through Arapahoe/Douglas Works!

Arapahoe/Douglas Works!  
PY21 WIOA DW, Aggregate Value of Services



# Longitudinal Wage Outcomes, WIOA Programs

## WIOA Young Adult Program

Longitudinal wage records were extracted from Connecting Colorado for 424 Young Adult program exiters two quarters prior to program entry, and 523 exiters two quarters post exit.

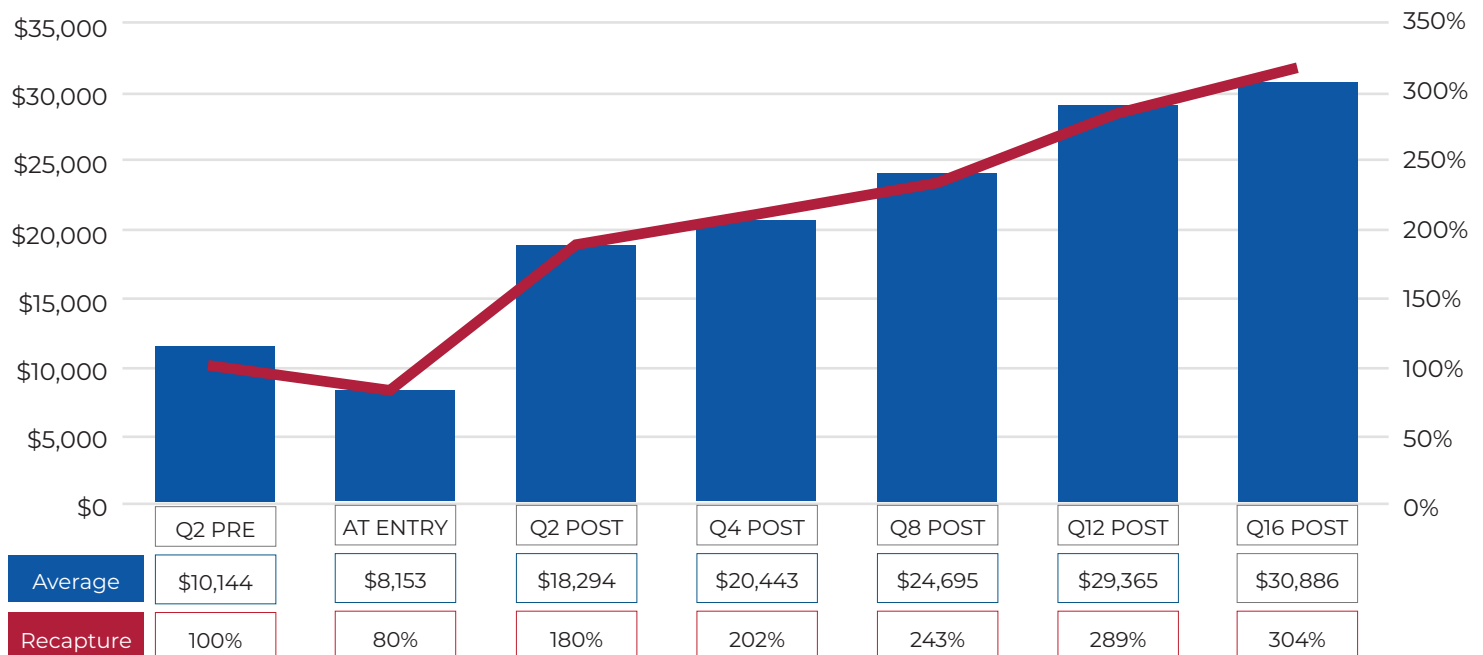
The Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA Young Adult program serves eligible participants who are economically disadvantaged, receiving public assistance, or are individuals with disabilities. Other barriers facing these young adults are pregnancy or parenting, justice-involvement, homelessness, foster youth, lack of high school diploma or GED, and basic skills deficient.

It is important to note that although employment and wage outcomes are not measured for this population, many young adults who participate in WIOA through Arapahoe/Douglas Works! come to the agency for help in obtaining their high school diploma or GED, as opposed to seeking employment.

This combination graph shows a robust upward trajectory of earnings, with median annual earnings between the first-year post exit and the fourth-year post exit growing at a very rapid annual rate of 12.64%. Note that Young Adults may exit into postsecondary occupational training, training with part/time employment, or employment. This population was generally not as adversely affected by the pandemic due to the ability to readily obtain new work at entry levels.

**Individuals who participated in the Young Adult Program had nearly doubled their prior earnings by the second quarter post exit and were earning \$7,692 more annually than they were two quarters prior to program entry.**

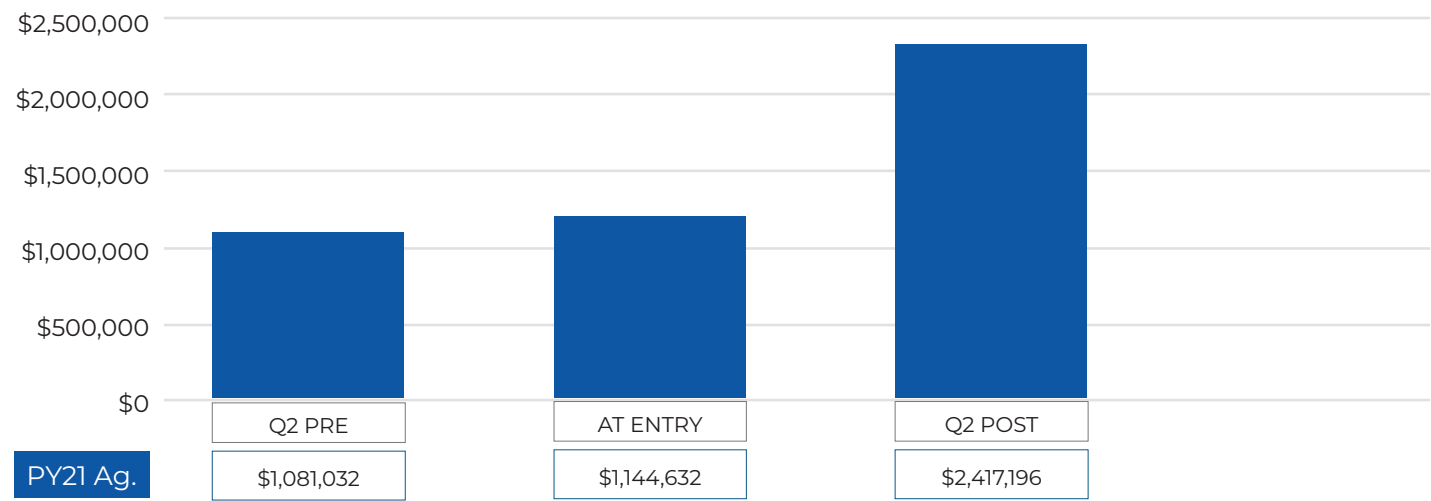
**Earnings Recapture and Wage Trajectory PY17 - PY21**  
**Arapahoe/Douglas Works!**  
**WIOA YT Program Exiters**



Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA Young Adult programming is comprehensive and is designed to keep participants from leaving school prematurely, help them attain their high school diploma or GED, and gain access to career pathways that offer economic security and professional growth. Participants receive comprehensive career assessment and planning, supportive services, referral and co-enrollment in other programs with services that may contribute to success, and access to job seeker workshops, job referrals, hiring events, job fairs, mentorship and coaching, and a variety of occupational training work-based learning options. PY21 Young Adult exiters received training in a variety of fields, including healthcare, transportation, advanced manufacturing, hospitality, office and administrative, and installation and maintenance repair occupations.

The aggregate value of WIOA Young Adult services for these five exit cohorts was \$1.3 million in new worker earnings directly attributable to the value of WIOA Young Adult services at Arapahoe/Douglas Works!

Arapahoe/Douglas Works!  
PY21 WIOA YT, Aggregate Value of Services



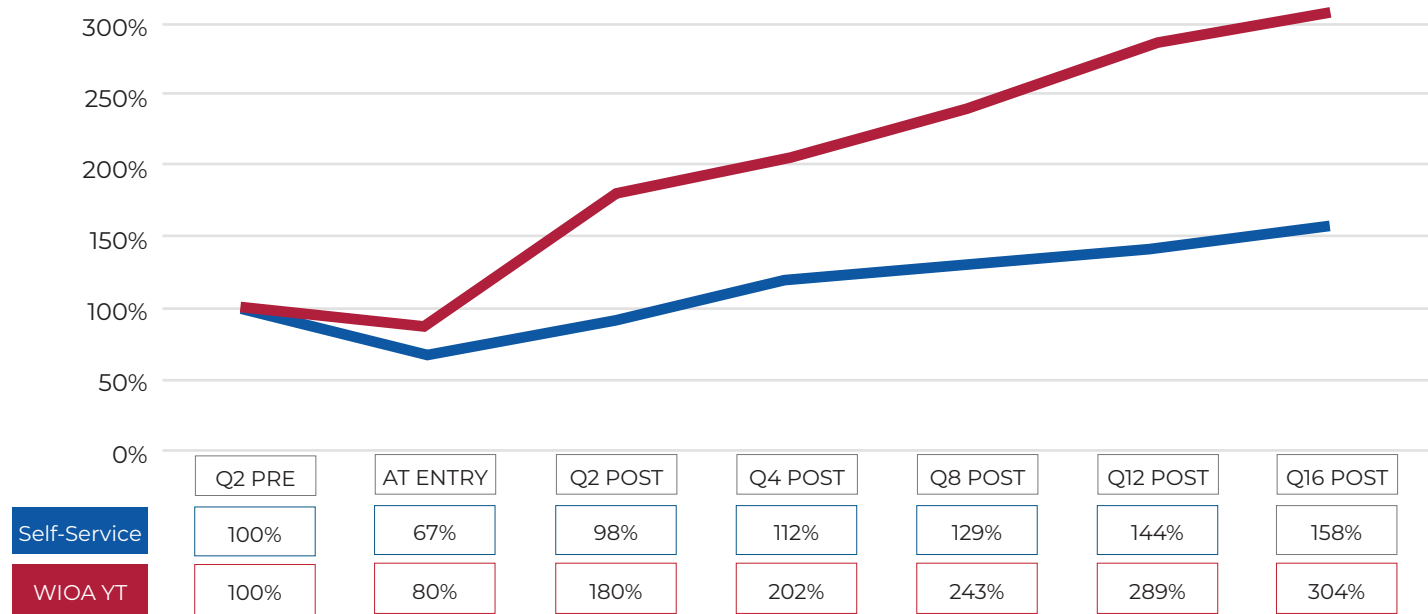


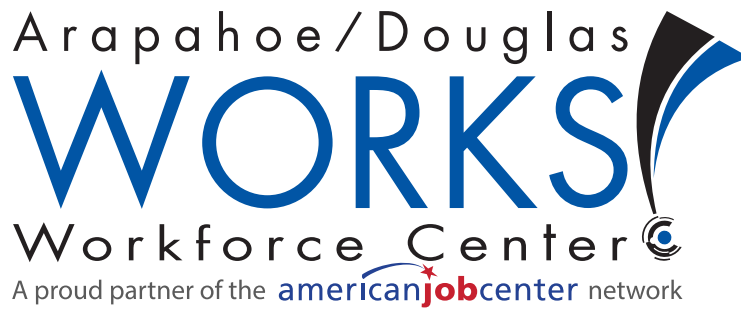


WIOA Young Adult Program

It should be noted that many of the Young Adults served were ‘idle’ at program entry, meaning they were not engaged in either school or work. The median annual earnings for exiters during the PY17-PY21 period two quarters prior to program entry was \$10,144. Two quarters after program exit, participants were earning \$18,294 annually, and this went up to \$30,886 four years after program exit. The diverging trend lines on the graph suggest that Arapahoe/Douglas Works! WIOA Young Adult services were very effective in engaging participants in lucrative career pathways vital to the local economy.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works!  
Earnings Recapture, WIOA YT vs. Self-Service, PY 16- PY20





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Arapahoe/Douglas Works! is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Arapahoe/Douglas Works! programs are federally funded with \$18,730,452.65 (~78 percent) through the U.S. Department of Labor. Additionally, ~22 percent (\$5,326,786.07) is financed by non-federal sources.