

# Alaska's Workforce Future

## *A Collaborative Approach*

### Building a Workforce for Alaska's Industries



Legislative Lunch and Learn Presentation

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# PRESENTERS

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# ALASKA'S WORKFORCE FUTURE ALTERNATIVE



MARCH 2025

## LIST OF APPENDICES

[Appendix 1: Report of Employer Survey](#)

[Appendix 2: Report of Student Survey](#)

[Appendix 3: Report of Education Focus Groups and Interviews](#)

[Appendix 4: Report of Regional Communities Focus Groups and Interviews](#)

[Appendix 5: Industry Sector Plans](#)

[Appendix 6: Industry Sector Plans Crosswalk \(spreadsheet\)](#)

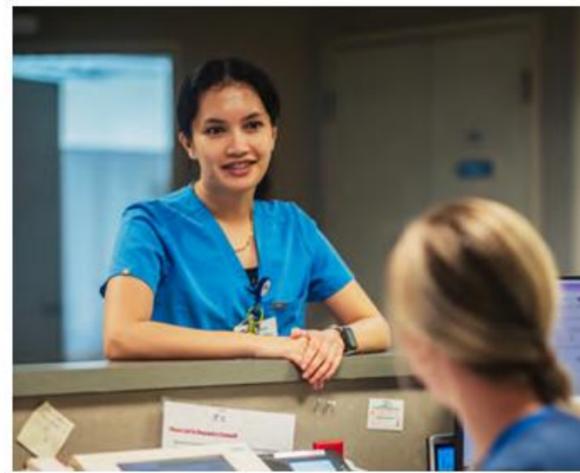
[Appendix 7: IAC Report of Initial Survey](#)

[Appendix 8: Models from Oregon and Colorado](#)

[Appendix 9: Overview of Career & Technical Education in Alaska](#)



Scan the code or go to [alaskasafetyalliance.org/workforce/plan](https://alaskasafetyalliance.org/workforce/plan) to view the full appendices.



## CONCLUSION

*Alaska's Workforce Future* is not just a workforce plan—it is a shared vision for the State's economic prosperity and the well-being of its residents. This comprehensive, data-driven approach was built on the collaborative efforts of stakeholders from across the State, reflecting the diverse needs and opportunities that exist within Alaska's workforce. The goals and strategies outlined in this plan are designed to address the pressing workforce challenges we face, while also seizing the opportunities that lie ahead.

As we move into the implementation phase, the success of this plan will depend on the continued dedication and collaboration of all partners involved—industry leaders, educators, Alaska Native organizations, government agencies, and community groups. The early actions outlined in the Next Steps section will set the foundation for our efforts, but flexibility and adaptability will be key as we incorporate feedback and adjust to evolving conditions.

Together, we can build a stronger, more resilient workforce that meets the demands of today and prepares for the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow. By staying committed to our shared goals and continuously engaging with all stakeholders, we can ensure that Alaska's Workforce Future is one that benefits every Alaskan, securing the State's economic vitality for years to come.



# ALASKA'S WORKFORCE FUTURE



## Six Shared Goals

1

Enhance Career Awareness & Pathways

4

Foster Regional Workforce Development

2

Develop a Skilled & Qualified Workforce

5

Improve Infrastructure & Access to Support Services

3

Retain Alaskans & Attract New Alaskans

6

Ensure Sustainability & Continuity of WFD Efforts

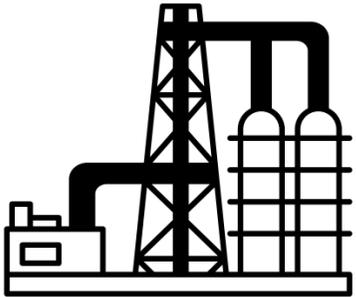
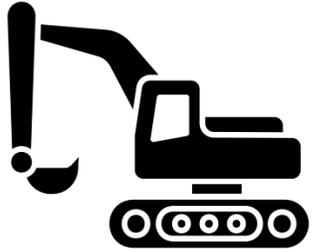
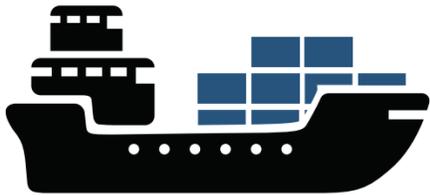


# MISSION

Our mission is to ensure the availability of a highly trained workforce, sufficient to staff Alaska's industries safely and competitively, now and in the future.



# American Marine

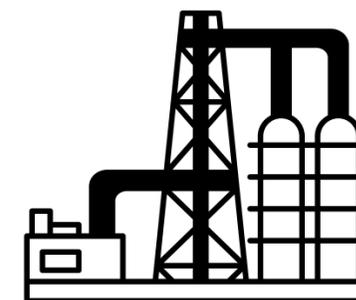
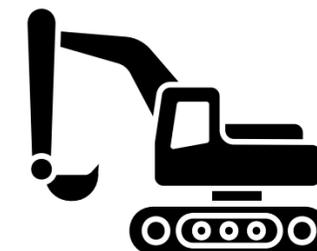
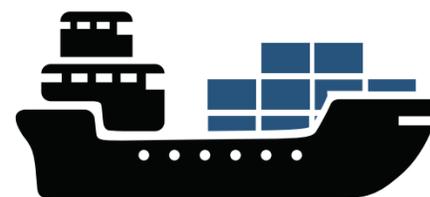




# 1

## Goal 1: Enhance Career Awareness and Pathways

- Boost Industry Career Marketing and Branding
- Strengthen Career Pathway Programs
- Support Career Planning Mentorship





## 2

### Goal 2: Develop a Skilled and Qualified Workforce

- Address Workforce Readiness
- Expand and Improve Training Programs
- Promote Apprenticeships and Internships

## Goal 3: Retain Alaskans and Attract New Alaskans

- Encourage young Alaskans to remain (and return)
- Strengthen the pipelines to craft positions
- Market Alaska's opportunities



# Goal 4: Foster Regional Workforce Development

- Promote local hire
- Leverage regional knowledge on projects



Boardwalk repair in Kwigillingok

# Department of Labor and Workforce Development Efforts



## Goal 1: Enhance Career Awareness and Pathways

- Career Guide Pilot Program
- Resume Assistance in Local Schools
- Youth Focused Job Fairs & Career Clubs



## Goal 2: Develop a Skilled and Qualified Workforce

- Expanded Industrial Electricity & Plumbing programs
- Added Industrial Machine and Maintenance program
- Employment & Training Assistance to 1,702 Alaskans

# Department of Labor and Workforce Development

## Efforts - continued

### Goal 3: Retain Alaskans and Attract New Alaskans

- Opened the Office of Citizenship Assistance, which served >250 legal immigrants in its first year
- Reduced barriers for new Electricians and Plumbers licensing
  - Expanded reciprocity to 30 states across the country with similar requirements
  - Implemented provisional licensing from another jurisdiction for up to one year
  - Allowing comparable military credit toward licensure

### Goal 6: Ensure Sustainability and Continuity of Workforce Development Efforts

# Connecting Talent to Opportunity: The RootEd AK Career Guide Pilot Program

Bridging the gap between Alaska's high school seniors and the skilled workforce.



# The Alaska Paradox: Importing Labor, Exporting Wealth

A dark blue silhouette of the state of Alaska is shown on the left side of the infographic. A callout box with a blue border and white background is positioned over the central part of the map. The box contains the number '34,000' in large white font, and below it, the text 'decline in prime working age population since 2013' in smaller white font. Several orange hexagonal icons are scattered around the map and callout box.

**34,000**

decline in prime working  
age population since 2013

**23%**



of Alaska workers are non-residents.

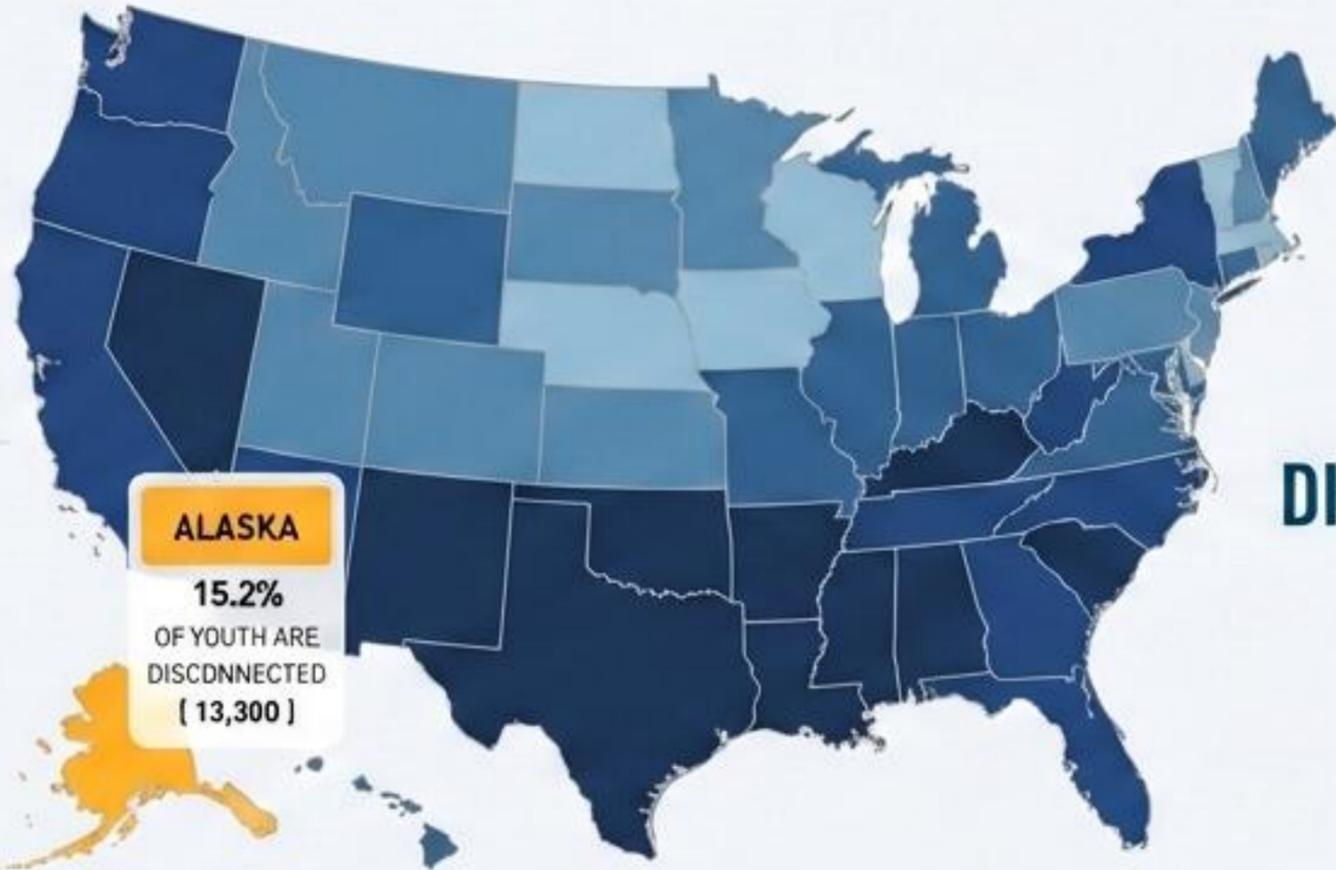
**\$3.8 Billion**



in wages leaves the state annually  
(17% of every dollar earned).

# THE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL OF ALASKA'S YOUTH

## REALITY



## THE DISCONNECT

## AMBITION

# 89%

of high school seniors explicitly state they very much want to get more education after high school.

# Navigating the Barriers to Entry

## PERCEPTION



Overcoming the narrative that trades are a “backup plan” rather than high-skill, high-wage careers.

## ACCESS



Geographic isolation, lack of transportation to job sites, and training costs.

## SYSTEM ALIGNMENT



The disconnect between school schedules and employer training needs.

# THE SOLUTION: DEDICATED CAREER ADVISORS



## RURAL FOCUS

Specifically designed for **rural high schools** (currently serving 8 rural school districts in Alaska).



## AUGMENTATION, NOT REPLACEMENT

Advisors work alongside **school counselors** to ensure every senior has a concrete plan.



## HOLISTIC SUPPORT

Advisors handle the “**logistics of life**”—housing, transportation, and interview prep—solving the **actual** points of failure for rural students.

“ rootEd Advisors are people who help people plug into opportunities.”

# The Rooted AK Focus: From Conversation to Completion

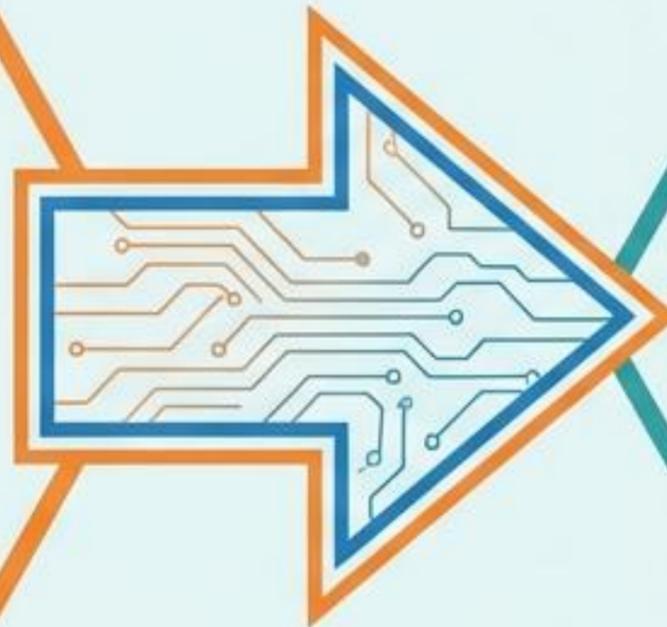


# PILOT EXPANSION: CURRENT & FUTURE REACH



## CURRENT PILOT DISTRICTS

- Nenana City
- Galena City
- Dillingham City
- Bristol Bay
- Southwest Region
- Lake and Peninsula



## EXPANSION DISTRICTS

- Alaska Gateway
- Delta/Greely
- Copper River
- Southeast Alaska Districts:
  - Annette Island
  - Chatham
  - Haines
- Hoonah
- Hydaburg
- Juneau
- Kake
- Ketchikan Gateway
- Klawock
- Pelican
- Petersburg
- Sitka
- Skagway
- Wrangell
- Yakutat



Rooted **AK**

# Pilot: CTE Intensives

**Blend of collaborative 40-hour trainings for students across the region**

**Goal:** Overlapping career guidance to help students build skills, find out what they like to do, and then support them in taking the steps to launch.

**Southeast Education to Career Consortium** forming in partnership with SE AK districts, SHI, Tlingit and Haida, Southeast Trades Unions, UAS, and Many others.

Newly forming **Alaska Regional Career and Technical Interior Consortium (ARCTIC)** with Delta Greeley School District, Copper River School District, and Alaska Gateway School District.

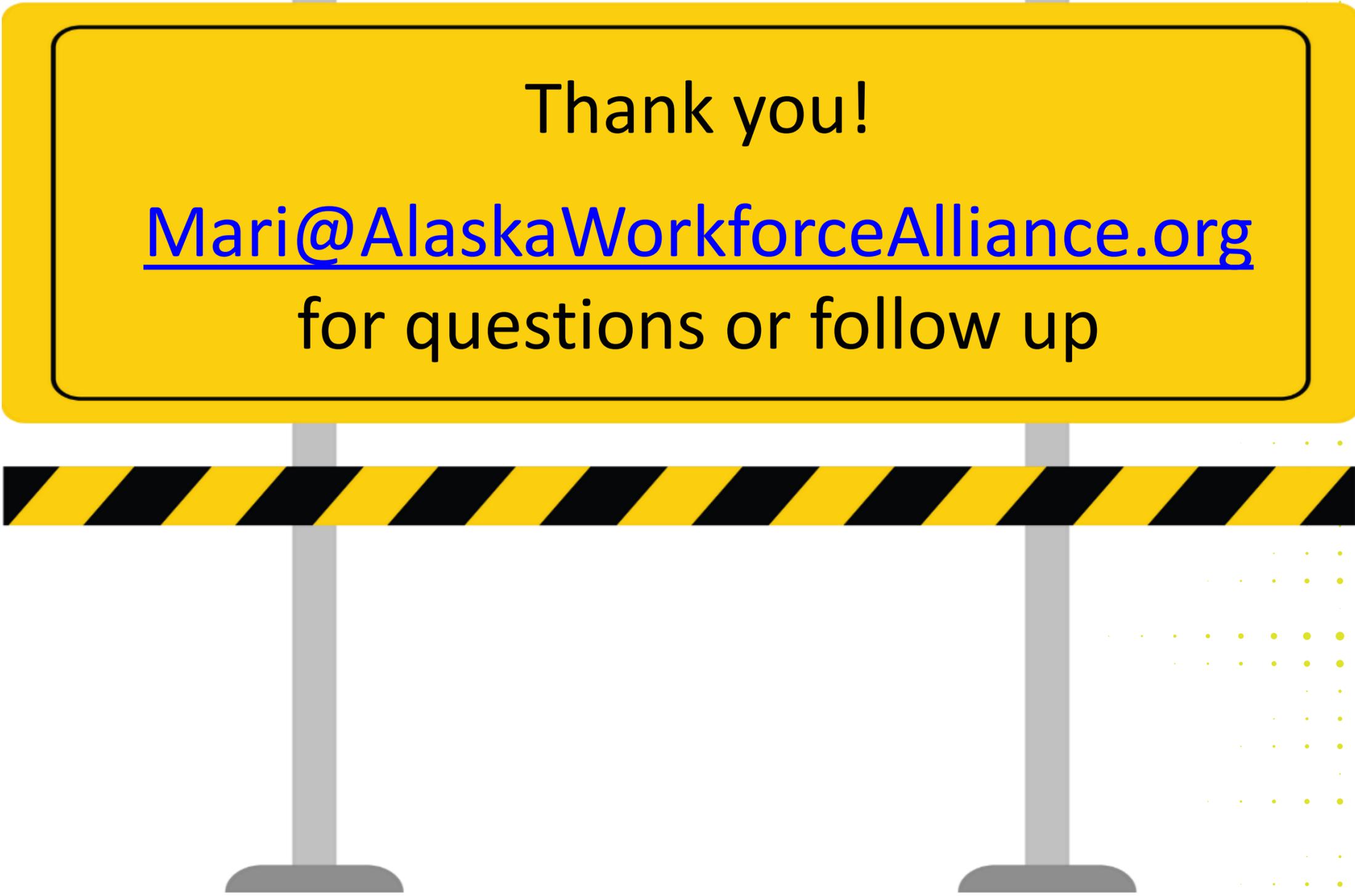


# The 10-Year Vision for Alaska



**If we succeed, what will Alaska look like?**

A self-sustaining local workforce, thriving rural communities,  
and students who feel seen, supported, and skilled.



Thank you!

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for questions or follow up