



# ARE YOU READY TO MOVE AHEAD?

## WE'RE HERE TO CLEAR A PATH FOR YOU.

Supporting local youth is a primary focus for United Way, and we are committed to investing in young people in our community to help them make a "180" in their lives. We're doing this by removing barriers and supporting students on the path to *successful employment and income stability*.

**This is not just another jobs program.** There are plenty of employers looking for trained workers, and Workforce180 is the bridge: connecting job training and certified skills with stable, long-term employment. Participants in our Workforce180 initiative learn specialized skills and earn certifications for in-demand careers. When a student successfully completes their certification, employers are waiting!

### HOW DOES WORKFORCE180 WORK?

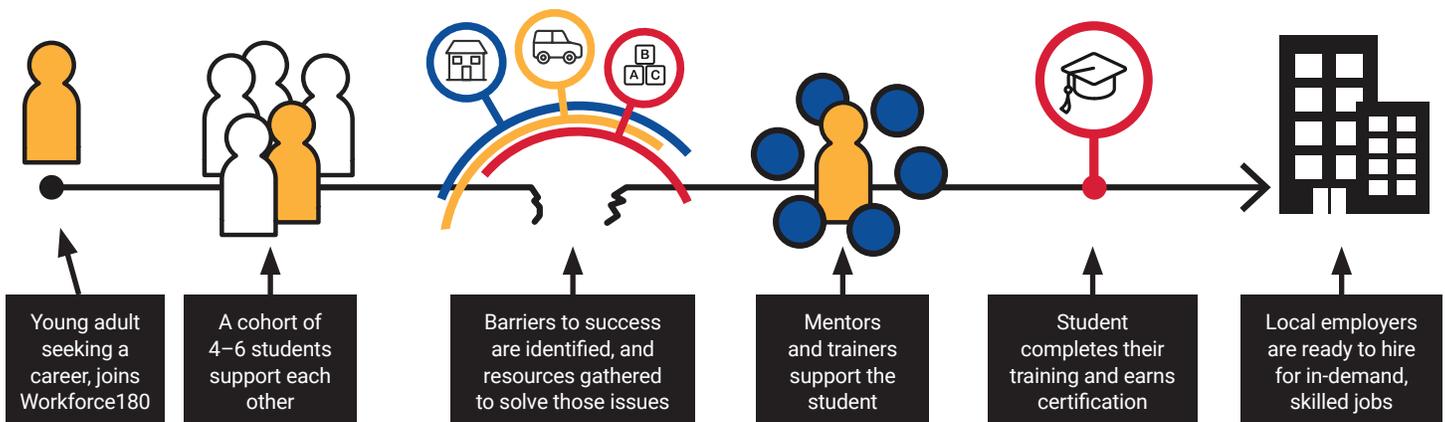
**WHO:** 18–30 year olds who do not have a career path, and whose income and work situation is unstable

**WHAT:** Students are brought together into a peer support group (cohort) of 4–6 participants plus 1–2 volunteer mentors who provide guidance and encouragement.

**THEN WHAT:** United Way invests in career training for the participants, in fields such as Certified Nursing Assistant, Paramedic training, Early Childhood Education, or the trades (welding, plumbing, electrical, etc.)

In addition, United Way staff works with each participant to determine what barriers exist that would keep them from successfully completing the path to certification. They then gather the necessary resources – such as social services, shelter assistance, childcare – to help solve those problems. Each cohort group meets regularly to support one another, as well as receive support from professional trainers, mentors, and even potential employers.

**Participants who have successfully completed the Workforce180 pathway say this team approach made a huge difference to them – they knew their mentors and United Way were beside them, making sure they had what they needed to succeed.**



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## ARE YOU READY TO START YOUR CAREER PATH?

If you can see yourself earning a certification that will lead to an in-demand career, but would benefit from mentorship and support of United Way partners, apply to join an upcoming Workforce180 cohort.

There are currently 55 students pursuing credentials in Nursing, Paramedic, Phlebotomist, Early Childhood Education, Welding, Graphic Design, and more. And as we work to increase our number of mentors and prospective employers the opportunities for our grads grow, too! Looking forward, we would like to add other career tracks such as technology, agriculture and a variety of options in the trades.

**NEXT STEPS:** To learn how you, or someone you know, can become part of Workforce 180, call United Way of McLean County at **309-828-7383** or email **klorenz@uwaymc.org**.

# WORKFORCE180 TRANSFORMS LIVES!

## MEET AJ.

**"Workforce180 is the one thing you need to take the burden off your shoulders. It's an overwhelming thankfulness that I have for this program. They see you as a human and they want to help you because you are a human."**

AJ graduated from the Paramedic program at Heartland in May 2022, with the national exam this summer. Since the age of 16, AJ has had a passion to work in the medical field and is now a Paramedic for an area Fire Department!



## MEET MONIQUE

**"I have 4 children and my eldest son is autistic. I have a passion for art and portrait drawing, and someday would like to start my own business."**

Monique is pursuing a career in early childhood education and earned straight A's in 4 classes last semester! She aspires to earn an associates degree at Heartland Community College, and has already achieved her Level 2 Infant/Toddler Credential.

## MEET KOLLIN

**"I like how the mentors stay in contact with you and keep you on track... they are making a huge difference in my life and other kids' lives. I am now a step ahead of the game in changing my future!"**

Kollin has always been interested in working with his hands, which is why he enrolled in Heartland's welding certificate program after high school. He will be bringing his skills to a fabricating shop in the area.



United Way  
of McLean County

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