



National Association
of Workforce Boards

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

4/26/18

CONTACT:

Kenny Cunningham

703.785.9067

Communications@nawb.org

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE BOARDS AND JFF ANNOUNCE NEW “AWAKE” INITIATIVE

The Advanced Workforce Analytics and Knowledge Exchange (AWAKE) was first announced at NAWB’s Forum 2018

Washington, D.C. – Today two preeminent organizations leading America’s workforce development efforts announced a new collaboration: *Advanced Workforce Analytics and Knowledge Exchange (AWAKE)*. The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) and JFF (Jobs for the Future) have developed AWAKE to integrate best practices, policy ideas, programmatic innovations, and the use of data and technology into the 550 workforce development boards and the 2,500 American Job Centers across the country, which impact more than 15 million Americans each year.

This new initiative was highlighted by NAWB CEO Ron Painter at [The Forum 2018](#), NAWB’s signature annual event which was held last month in Washington, D.C. AWAKE will be led by Josh Copus, former NAWB COO, and housed within JFF’s recently announced [JFFLabs](#), which provides strategy, innovation, and acceleration services to scale workforce and education solutions.

“Workforce boards are the last mile of job creation,” said NAWB CEO Ron Painter. “But they require continuous innovation to address the needs of the American workforce today and tomorrow. AWAKE will be used to pilot, test, and scale new solutions more efficiently and effectively than ever before.”

“AWAKE is a commitment to pool our knowledge, to better understand trends, and to respond collectively to the challenges on the horizon,” added Josh Copus. “Through this initiative, we will awaken the power and potential of a national network of workforce change makers and increase the opportunities for more American workers and businesses to participate in and help grow our economy.”

“The current state of workforce needs an infusion of transformational thinking,” said Maria Flynn, NAWB Board Member & JFF President and CEO. “As one of JFFLab’s initial collaborations, we’re excited to provide AWAKE with such an opportunity to reinvigorate, optimize, and reimagine a system of this size and importance.”

NAWB and JFF believe that not enough has been devoted to understanding the existing marketplace. This scattershot approach to solution-building and product-testing has led to uneven application of new technologies and the absence of a roadmap and process for how to improve practices from an operational, financial, and strategic standpoint. AWAKE will research, examine, measure and rank local efforts across the country that bridge policy, programmatic innovation, and the use of data and technology within this workforce system that connects regional employers to centers that support Americans.

To learn more about the AWAKE initiative, visit: <http://nawb.org/documents/AWAKE%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

###

About the National Association of Workforce Boards (<http://nawb.org>): The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) represents approximately 550 Workforce Development Boards and their 12,000+ business members that coordinate and leverage workforce strategies with education and economic development stakeholders within their local communities, to ensure that state and local workforce development and job training programs meet the needs of employers.

About JFF (Jobs for the Future) (<http://jff.org>): JFF (Jobs for the Future) is a national nonprofit that drives transformation in the American workforce and education systems. For 35 years, JFF has led the way in designing innovative and scalable solutions that create access to economic advancement for all. Join us as we build a future that works.