

**PHOENIX BUSINESS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
INSTILL HOPE STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**December 18, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

Members Present:

Daniel Barajas

Christian Bearden

Karen Carter

Ginger Lane

Jason Schaffner

Sam Wolo

Members Absent:

Lorraine Field

Public Attendees:

Eddie Barojas

Elissa Black

Erica Bennett

Dominic Cota

Diana Figueroa

Thomas Flynn

LaSetta Hogans

Amanda Keams

Christina Lira

Delsy Maldonado

Luis Marquez

Hayden Maynard

James Montoya

Gustavo Nava

Jovanna Parkhouse

Angie Parra

Demitria Robles

Rebecca Tierney

Brenda Urquidi

Ariadna Valentin

Stephanie Varela

Justin West

Action items taken are noted in **bold** print.

1) Call to Order / Roll Call/Introductions:

The Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (Board) Instill Hope Steering Committee (IHSC) Chair Karen Carter called the December 18, 2025, meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll call was completed, and there was a quorum of five members.

2) Approval of the November 20, 2025 IHSC Meeting Minutes:

IHSC Member Ginger Lane motioned to approve the November 20, 2025 IHSC Meeting Minutes, IHSC Member Sam Wolo seconded the motion.

Approved: Daniel Barajas, Karen Carter, and Jason Schaffner

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Motion passed unanimously

Christian Bearden joined the meeting at 9:08 a.m.

3) Community of Practice Update

IHSC Chair Karen Carter shared that the committee would continue to discuss planning for the 2026 Community of Practice meetings to be hosted between January 2026 – June 2026.

Karen shared some of the topics that were included in previous discussions included:

- State of the economy
- Career pathing by industry (Industry panels)
- Healthcare
- Semiconductor
- Skills-First Hiring
- Trades Panel/Construction awareness
- Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship
- Retention and mentorship
- Workers over 50

IHSC Vice-Chair Jason Schaffner asked if there were any local events that they could plan Community of Practice events around. Executive Director LaSetta Hogans shared there were none currently scheduled. IHSC Member Sam Wolo asked if a state of the economy could be included as a standing item. LaSetta shared that a State of the Arizona economy was in the beginning planning stages for an event in June, but that was only once a year.

Jason suggested hosting a Healthcare focused event and also pull in themes of Skills-First Hiring and apprenticeships. IHSC Member Daniel Barajas suggested an event focused on the state of politics and how it affects the non-profit and training system and jobseekers in the system. IHSC Member Christian Bearden suggested a session wrap-up, have a subject matter expert talk about issues that came up with the state legislature and federal government that impact workforce.

IHSC Member Ginger Lane said she liked the idea of career pathing by industry. Karen asked the committee how many events they feel they have capacity to plan between January 2026-June 2026. IHSC Christian Bearden said he could support both Semiconductor, Trades, and Apprenticeship events. Karen asked how many events staff could support. LaSetta Hogans shared that the planning involves getting speakers, securing a space, and arranging catering. ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Project Manager James Montoya

shared it takes about six-weeks to plan an event, including lead time to share the event with the Phoenix Workforce Coalition. Jason suggested they could have three events in the first six-months of the year. LaSetta shared that if these meetings seem valuable, the committee members are encouraged to suggest carrying the efforts forward into the next strategic plan.

Jason suggested hosting an event on Healthcare and Construction/Trades, Daniel suggested following up with an Advanced Business Services event because it's a massive sector. Christian shared that they don't need to separate semiconductor and construction, especially in light of zoning changes that will tie construction and semiconductor together and then consolidate with apprenticeships.

Karen summarized the discussion to suggest there be three events through June:

- February: Advanced Business Services (Championed by Daniel Barajas)
- April: Semiconductor/Trades/Apprenticeship (Championed by Christian Bearden)
- June: Healthcare (Championed by Karen Carter and potentially Lorraine Field)

Daniel suggested that he could arrange three speakers for a panel, someone from finance, someone from insurance, and someone from training providers. He said he could see a labor market presentation to give some information and common language for the discussion. Jason asked if they would talk about who is hiring for what, skills needed, where jobseekers can get training. Daniel said that he was hoping to get more employers in the room, so they could talk about current and future states and develop partnerships.

Sam asked if there would be someone in place who could lead the labor market information discussion, that was typically shared by the former City of Phoenix Economic Director, by February. LaSetta said that staff would work with the data team to get information that would help attendees understand the state of the sector. Daniel suggested that the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity could also be a partner to be involved with the panels.

4) Strategic Tracker Review

IHSC Chair Karen Carter reviewed and shared the strategic plan tracker. She informed the committee that Goal 4.3 is pending completion in January 2026.

5) Call the Public/Open Discussion:

None

6) Future Agenda Items:

None

8) Adjournment:

IHSC Chair Karen Carter adjourned the meeting at **9:48 a.m.**

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