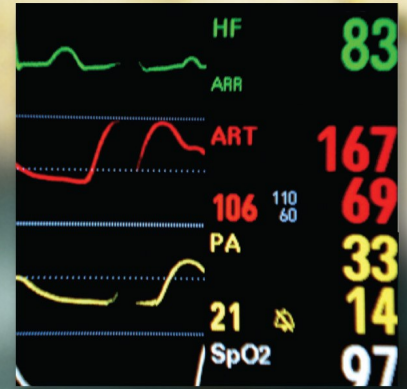
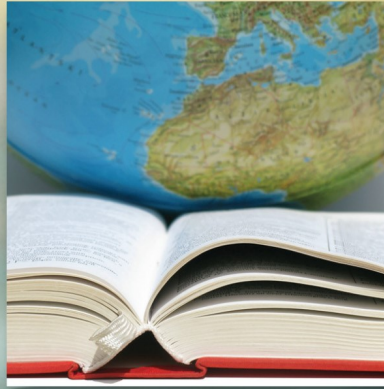
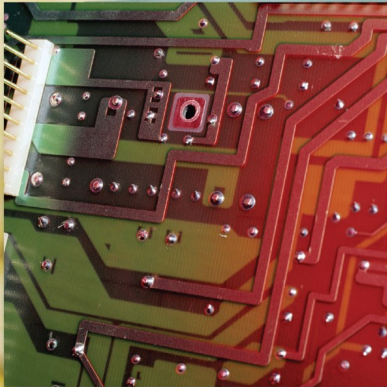


2018 Year in Review



“Turning Information into Insight”



Annual Report 2018

The Institute was founded on the belief that good decisions are driven by good data. Since 2004, it has been our mission to serve organizations and communities by providing empirical, objective research that drives discussion and informs decisions. Our goal is that Institute data and research on a wide range of topics will help policymakers and community leaders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors understand and address some of the region's most challenging problems.

Each year, the annual report gives us the opportunity to thank our generous community of supporters who care deeply about the region they call home. Our work would not be possible without these academic partners, stakeholders, advisory board members, task force teams, and clients who entrust us to solve problems and create opportunities.

These partnerships have helped Institute research initiatives positively impact the region and its residents. Our successes are your successes and it is your commitment that will help ensure that data and research continue to drive decisions that fuel greater economic vitality for business, residents, and the region as a whole. A heartfelt thanks to each of you.



Turning Information into Insight

A collaboration among Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Johnson College, Keystone College, King's College, Lackawanna College, Luzerne County Community College, Marywood University, Misericordia University, Penn State Scranton, Penn State Wilkes-Barre, The Wright Center, University of Scranton and Wilkes University

Thank you to our Academic Partners & Research Sponsors

Academic Partners

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Johnson College, Keystone College, King's College, Lackawanna College, Luzerne County Community College, Marywood University, Misericordia University, Penn State Scranton, Penn State Wilkes-Barre, The Wright Center, University of Scranton & Wilkes University

2018 Research Underwriters

Signature Underwriters

Andrew J. Sordoni Foundation, Luzerne County, PPL Electric Utilities, Sordoni Family Foundation

Contributing Underwriters

Borton-Lawson, Commonwealth Health Systems, Geisinger Health System, Luzerne County Housing Partnership, Mohegan Sun Pocono, Rosenn, Jenkins & Greenwald, LLP.

Supporting Underwriters

Berkshire Asset Management, BlackOut Design, Classic Properties, Greater Hazleton CAN DO, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, Navient, NET Credit Union, OneSource Staffing, PNC Foundation, Sanofi Pasteur, UGI Utilities, Wells Fargo Foundation

Public Media Partner

WVIA Public Media

Indicator Event Sponsors: Hinerfeld Commercial Real Estate

Power Engineering Corp.

Peoples Bank & Trust.

Prudential Retirement Services

The Year in Review

Community Based Research Initiatives

Community-based research is at the core of the Institute's mission. This work, funded by our academic partners and stakeholders, is made available to organizations and communities needing reliable research, data, and best practices to make smart decisions. Studies are focused primarily on northeastern Pennsylvania. **Community-based research funding supports the Indicators Initiative, Task Force Research, the Quarterly Economic Tracker, Cost of Living Index Study, Pillars of a Strong Community Index, the University & College Student Poll, and the College Internship Program.**

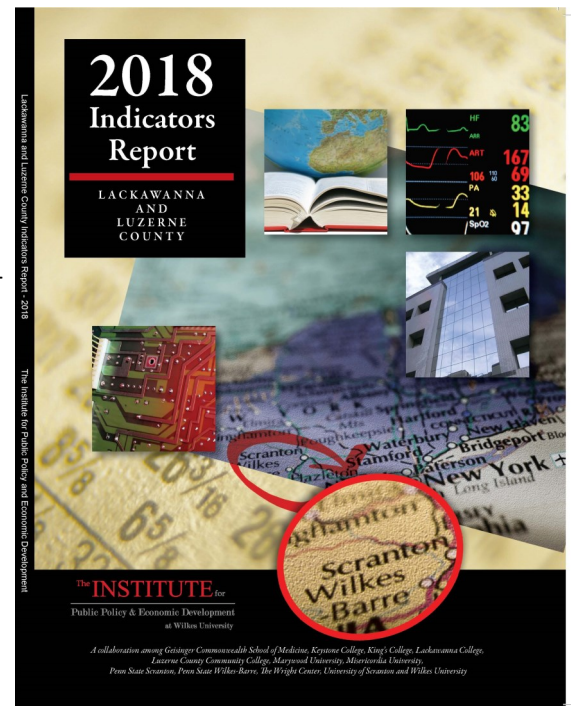
Indicators Initiative 2018

May 10th, Mohegan Sun Pocono

Over 160 guests attended Indicators 2018. The event included the Indicators and task force presentations, a special report on the Pillars of a Strong Community 2018, and a newly created Public Safety Index.

The event also featured *Research in Action* (RIA). RIA are short vignettes from individuals and organizations that have implemented the research and recommendations into programs, initiatives, or policies. Geisinger's 4Ride program was developed as a result of The Institute's 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment; The Institute's land bank recommendation was used by the Housing Alliance of PA to lobby the state for legislation. Further land bank and blight research is being used to inform the Lackawanna County Land Bank program and NeighborWorks Northeast's Blight Initiative. Finally, last year's paper on Oral Health prompted the Scranton Area Foundation and Geisinger Springboard Health to begin convenings around fluoride and implement an actionable strategy. Funding was approved in June 2018 to further their efforts.

Since the event, the report has been distributed to the entire northeast delegation of both federal and state representatives, Indicator sponsors, the local government, and to the public through social media and eblasts.



Pillars of a Strong Community

Pillars of a Strong Community presentations began in 2016 in an effort to measure our region's progress against similar regions across the country. The model is designed to provide a framework for benchmarking our progress regarding overall community strength in four major areas:

- A Diverse and Resilient Economy
- Healthy & Prosperous Families
- Investment in Physical Assets & the Environment
- Civic Engagement & Community Ties

Task Force Research Presentations— Topic-based research is generated from volunteer task force teams consisting of diverse groups of professionals. Insight from their respective helps the team evaluate opportunities to improve our region in critical areas. Representatives from business, government, non-profit, economic development, and institutional sectors serve on the task forces.

Research or policy agendas are established each June. Task force members vet the research and are responsible for distribution and advocacy. This research has served as a basis for statewide legislation, has been used in legislative testimony, and has helped organizations focus on strategic priorities or best practices.

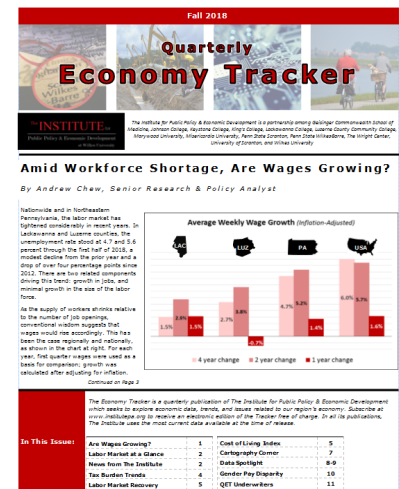
Community Based Research	
<i>Task Force</i>	<i>Task Force Research Topics</i>
Education & Workforce Development	<u>"Fast Growth Occupations"</u> - Research identifying the ten high-growth occupations that will impact the region over the next ten years, with analysis of education and workforce requirements for each.
Housing	<u>"Aging in Place"</u> - An analysis facilitating better understanding of how the region's aging population will affect housing needs, and how the housing market and developers in our region can address the needs of this growing population.
Health & Healthcare	<u>"Social Determinants of Health"</u> - A study of how factors like income, race, and other socio-economic factors impact social and health outcomes in the region. <u>"Health Literacy"</u> - A study on how levels of patient health literacy impact health-related outcomes.
Jobs, Economy and Economic Development (JEED)	<u>"Economic Ramifications of the Unbanked"</u> - A study of the population in the region not using traditional financial institutions. Findings illustrate how lack of access to financial services affects people's lives and impacts the regional economy.
Planning, Land Use, Transportation and Infrastructure (PLuTI)	<u>"The Intersection of Transit and Land Use"</u> - An examination of the practices, design schemes, and policy tools that municipalities can use to expand transportation options like public transit and reduce inequity in transit throughout the region.
Energy	The Institute was funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission to conduct an economic impact study on the effects of the decrease in coal mining. Based on the findings, the region may be able to apply for POWER funding to support economic development projects. The study will be ready in early 2019.
Public Safety	<u>"Community Safety Index"</u> - A new tool to provide a snapshot of public safety indicators in the counties throughout the Commonwealth.

Meet the New Quarterly Economy Tracker (QET)

In an effort spearheaded by Senior Researcher Andrew Chew, The QET was updated and refreshed this year with more features and regional economic data for the business community.

We would like to thank **The Willary Foundation**, our Signature Underwriter, for providing the seed capital for the QET, as well as our generous Supporting Underwriters **PNC Foundation** and **UGI Utilities**.

The Institute has also joined a national effort of **Cost of Living Index (COLI)** researchers to collect data on cost of living indicators. The Institute publishes periodic updates in the QET.



Polling

In 2015, The Institute began a polling initiative to assess the opinions and perceptions of the region's college student population in the region. The Institute polls students at our 13 partnering institutions twice per year - once in the fall on issues of public policy and civic engagement, and then in the spring on post-graduation plans, an assessment of northeastern Pennsylvania, and their levels of preparation for college upon high school graduation.


In March 2018, The Institute received 1,598 responses to the Spring Poll, which assessed the students' opinions about the region and their post graduation plans. Students from all class years, a variety of majors, and part-time and graduate statuses are well-represented in the data.

When deciding where to locate, family matters. The results showed that **students from NEPA are likely to stay in NEPA, but others are not as likely to do so.** Around two-thirds of those from outside northeast Pennsylvania indicated that they are *not likely to stay*, while the same proportion of Northeast Pennsylvania residents suggested they are *likely to stay* -citing “close proximity to family” as the top reason for both staying and leaving. Of students who had internship experiences, those who reported they are likely to stay had a much higher chance of having had internships in the region.



Nearly 75% of respondents indicated that their college or graduate school education prepared them somewhat well or very well for their careers. Less than five percent of respondents felt that their education did not prepare them well.

A total of 2,649 students participated in the 2018 Public Policy & Civic Engagement fall survey. The poll concluded that the **top three most important national public policy issues are the cost of education, healthcare policy, and jobs**. Policies related to taxation were rated the least important.

An overwhelming majority of students are registered to vote, and were very likely to vote in the 2018 midterm elections. **Students felt reasonably well-informed about current events**, crediting the internet, television, and their friends over newspapers, radio, or smartphone apps. Other themes include students' perceptions of the direction of the country and Pennsylvania, along with their levels of participation in volunteerism.

2018 Clients:

Non-profit: Commission on Economic Opportunity (CEO), Geisinger Health System, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, Greater Wilkes-Barre Association for the Blind, Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business & Industry, Leadership Wilkes-Barre, Lehigh Valley Head Start, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Luzerne County Head Start, Maternal & Family Health, Penn's Northeast, SHINE Luzerne County, SHINE Lehigh Carbon County, Lehigh Carbon Community College, St. Joseph's Center, United Way Wyoming Valley

Foundations: AllOne Foundation, Grantmakers Initiative, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, The Moses Taylor Foundation, Scranton Area Community Foundation, The Willary Foundation

Government: Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging

Educational Institutions: Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Primary Care Progress, The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education, The University of Scranton

Thank you to our 2018 Clients

Working to Improve Regional Transportation

Scranton Area Community Foundation & The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

Together with these clients, The Institute is continuing to address the transportation needs of the underserved and vulnerable populations in the region. This underreported challenge to low-income workers trying to find jobs and manage daily life can be a major hurdle to employment and a drain on the economy. In 2018, steps were taken to engage the business community in the initiatives through research and convening assistance, and conducting employee transportation surveys in nearly 10 businesses across the region.



Working to Improve Quality of Life in the Region

Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation on behalf of the Lackawanna County Bar Association's Equitable Access to Justice Committee

The Institute conducted legal needs assessments in Lackawanna County for program and service development.

Helping to Highlight Higher Education Investment and Secure Resources

The Wright Center

The Institute conducted an economic impact study on the organization's operations (to quantify the direct and indirect economic impact generated by the graduate medical education program and the delivery of patient services), and for the construction of their new headquarters and expanded clinic.

The University of Scranton

The Institute conducted an economic impact study on the University's operations.

Helping to Bring Investment to the Region

Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business & Industry

The Institute collects W-B Connect's data, coordinate client service logistics, and completes an annual program evaluation. W-B Connect functions as an entrepreneurial ecosystem. The network facilitates business growth, along with job creation and retention. It also markets the region as an attractive home for expanding enterprises. Services include training, mentoring, networking, technical assistance, and access to other resources. The Institute coordinated traffic through the program while monitoring (and reporting) data and qualitative content.

Penn's Northeast

In September, The Institute produced its first "Talent Report." The publication analyzes the current and forecasted workforce, industry, and educational profiles of both Lackawanna and Luzerne counties. Afterwards, PNE commissioned The Institute to include the remainder of its footprint with Wayne, Monroe, Schuylkill, and Pike Counties.

The Scranton Plan

The Institute conducted a study on the impact of LERTA statewide, with local policy recommendations.

Working to Improve Education Outcomes & Youth Development

Luzerne County SHINE

The Institute continues to support this innovative and successful after-school and summer program with assessment of program data, evaluation, and reporting. The SHINE program began as a result of Institute research indicating that such programs effectively deter youth from participation in gang activity. This project replicated the Lehigh Carbon Community College SHINE model. In just the 2017-18 school year, the SHINE program served over 471 students in pre-K through 8th grade from six Luzerne County school districts.

Lehigh Carbon Community College SHINE

LCCC SHINE celebrated its sixteenth successful year in 2018. For the past five years, The Institute has served as a data analyst and has prepared annual trend data reports that include numerous measures of program outcomes. These are additions to other data-driven reports that can be used for outreach and fundraising.

Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC) S-STEM Research

The Institute will serve as the primary researcher for the LCCC's National Science Foundation S-STEM grant of the Start SMART—Self-Motivated, Academic, Reflective, Talented program. Research will assess e-Portfolios and the STEM program's impact on students.



Working to Improve Education Outcomes continued...

Scranton Area Foundation

The Scranton Area Foundation's Women in Philanthropy program funded a STEAM program that was delivered to several school districts in Lackawanna County and generated interest in STEAM subject matter and careers. The Institute serves as the pilot program evaluator, and developed evaluation protocol to test the model. This application was weighed against a number of competitors and was awarded the two-year agreement in 2016.

Empowering Health Care Clients

Geisinger 4Ride Initiative

The Institute provides program evaluation services to determine whether access to transportation is reducing the negative implications of the social determinants of health on the population in the target geography. The research will measure effectiveness, satisfaction, and outcomes of Geisinger's transportation program on physical and mental health, job outlook, access to food, services, education/training, and other quality of life indicators.

Lehigh Valley Health Network

The Institute conducted the primary research for the health systems' Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in Luzerne County.

St. Joseph's Center

The Institute assisted St. Joseph's with the development of a strategic plan by evaluating historical trends and patterns, competitive analysis, and identifying assets, gaps, and service needs of their patient and client population.

Primary Care Progress (PCP)

PCP is a national non-profit that brings together an inter-professional community of change-makers to transform primary care. They partnered with The Wright Center for The Catalyst Project, a yearlong program that cultivates student leaders while addressing community health needs in four locations across the country. Medical school chapters across the country engage in a national learning collaborative with hands-on guidance and support to catalyze conversations about primary care innovation and transformation. The Institute is serving as a subject matter expert in community health needs assessment data collection, analysis, synthesis and planning for the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Chapter. The Institute has instructed several national live didactics on these topics, assisted in the preparation of student materials, and served as coach to provide individualized assistance to the chapters as they implement their project.



Helping Non-Profits and Foundations

Helping Non-Profits Successfully Pursue Their Missions

Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging

The Institute conducted an assessment to identify the needs of the senior population, future seniors' expectations, and the needs of family and caregivers in order to inform the agency's long-term strategic plan.

United Way Wyoming Valley

Child Well-Being Index— The Institute updated the index it developed in 2017 to measure child well-being on 11 parameters, such as poverty level, school outcomes, safety, and health. The measurements are used to form a single score and help the organization gauge its progress in addressing regional childhood poverty. The index also compares the region's progress in childhood wellness parameters to those similar areas.



United Way Wyoming Valley Berwick Needs Assessment

The Institute conducted a needs assessment in the Berwick area in order to identify priorities for community support.

Luzerne County Head Start

The Institute conducted a needs assessment by gathering and analyzing student and community data to identify strategic priorities for the organization. This information will help Luzerne County Head Start ensure that it is providing the best services to the region and effectively addressing the needs of impoverished children through its program.

The Institute completed an economic impact study to highlight employment and tax impact of the organization's operations in Luzerne and Wyoming Counties - especially Luzerne County - to examine Head Start's influence in the region.

Lehigh Valley Head Start

The Institute prepared a profile of the Lehigh Valley Head Start service area to include basic demographic and socioeconomic statistics on the region, along with relevant statistics pertaining to child abuse, substance abuse, community health, and prenatal care. Additionally, The Institute conducted a needs assessment by gathering and analyzing student and community data to identify strategic priorities for the organization.

Commission on Economic Opportunity (CEO)

CEO worked with The Institute to conduct a formal community needs assessment to meet the requirements of its federal grant, and also to develop its strategic objectives for the next two years. The process includes the development and deployment of several survey instruments, synthesized with secondary data to identify community needs.



Helping Non-Profits continued

Leadership Wilkes Barre (LWB) - LWB is working with The Institute to conduct an evaluation of its five major programs, and to prepare an impact report. The project will evaluate participants using a mixed-methods approach over a span of 18 months. The data gathered will serve as the basis for the evaluation and formal economic impact study.

Greater Wilkes-Barre Association for the Blind now Northeast Sight Services

The Institute conducted market research and engaged various organizational stakeholders to assess branding-related issues and provide information for marketing and outreach including a name change to Northeast Sight Services.

Maternal & Family Health

The Institute conducted a needs assessment to help the organization identify areas that need to be addressed to best serve the community. A strategic plan was formed, including implementable recommendations for action.



Foundations

AllOne Foundation

The Institute will conduct a program evaluation for the organization's autism program for the next few years. The Autism Collaborative Centers of Excellence (ACCE) was formed to enhance the service delivery system and minimize the service gaps for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families living in Northeastern and North Central Pennsylvania.

Moses Taylor Foundation (MTF) Program Evaluation

The Institute is serving as the program evaluator for the new MTF five-year strategic initiatives – school-based health and senior isolation. These two initiatives form the cornerstone of MTF efforts through 2023. Working with the Foundation, The Institute is developing metrics and protocol to measure outcomes through a formal evaluative process. Responsibilities include gathering data, preparing research briefs, and assisting with two planning retreats.

Scranton Area Foundation

The Institute created and is implementing an evaluation process of the Foundation's Capacity-Building Initiatives. SAF formed the Center for Community Leadership and Nonprofit Excellence with the Moses Taylor Foundation to serve the non-profit community by making education and training from national experts available. Through this program, organizations can increase effectiveness, efficiencies, and community outcomes.



The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

The Institute analyzed workforce, business, and economic data to better understand regional workforce trends and the current job market, and to identify workforce development opportunities for specific populations. The project also assessed the availability of programs to help create the workforce needed in the region.

The Willary Foundation

The Institute completed an asset matrix of social services providers and details regarding their scopes of services in the region. The purpose of the project was to develop a gap analysis, find potential areas of collaboration based on the extent of regional issues, and identify duplication of efforts. This research will help the foundation identify not only grantees but also services that need to be created or expanded.

The Institute Review

Your insight into economic and policy news from the local to the international levels.

Grantmakers Initiative

The concept was developed by LaTida Smith, President and CEO of Moses Taylor Foundation, in an effort to provide foundations, their grantees, and the community at large with education and information on a variety of issues that affect the region, their work, and their clients. One of the funded initiatives resulted in a bi-weekly publication called the *Institute Review*. In addition, a public policy initiative was developed and implemented whereby The Institute developed an issues briefing booklet with policy recommendations on education, work-force, public safety, environment, government, health care, and social services. The booklet was presented to the federal and state northeast delegation in a private retreat in September. The Scranton Area Foundation supported the initiative.

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Scranton Area Community Foundation and the Moses Taylor Foundation, we are proud to help support the development and publication of The Institute Review, a new periodical from The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development.

We can't underscore enough the importance of an informed and engaged public, and support The Institute's mission of turning information to insight. To that end, The Institute Review was designed with the goal of relaying a relevant blend of regional, state, national, and international news on economics and policy in an abridged format to local stakeholders.

We hope organizations and individuals find it useful in aiding their decision-making and enhancing their overall knowledge base.

Sincerely,

LaTida Smith

President, Moses Taylor Foundation

Laura Ducceschi

President, Scranton Area Community Foundation

Regional and State



image from Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania

Lehigh Valley agencies work to put homeless families in affordable housing. Representatives from local governments, health institutions, and other community organizations are working together to prevent and end homelessness in Lehigh Valley. The Lehigh Valley Regional Homeless Advisory Board aims to improve access to affordable housing, health care, and support services.

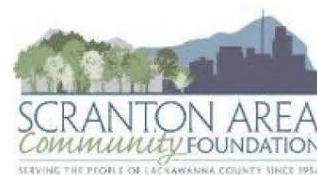
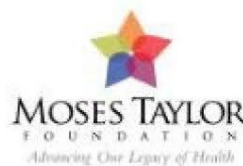
[Click here to read the full article](#) □



A collaboration among Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Johnson College, Keystone College, King's College, Lackawanna College, Luzerne County Community College, Marywood University, Misericordia University, Penn State Scranton, Penn State Wilkes-Barre, The Wright Center, University of Scranton & Wilkes University

Turning Information into Insight

This publication is supported by the Moses Taylor Foundation and the Scranton Area Community Foundation, with the purpose of relaying relevant news and research in an abbreviated format to local stakeholders.



2018 News

Welcoming the newest additions to our Research Team

Two team members moved on to other opportunities. We wished luck to Research Assistants, Duncan Mayer, MS, as he left to pursue his Ph.D. in social work at Case Western University in Cleveland, Ohio, and to Erin McCormick, who left to pursue research opportunities in the Washington, D.C area.

The Institute welcomed Chris Ritter, Research Analyst, Research Assistants Joe Gallo and Kara McGrane, and Jill Avery-Stoss as our Research, Data, Intern & Administrative Coordinator.

The Talent Report

In the fall of 2018, The Institute unveiled the Talent Report to help address the workforce challenges and opportunities the region will face in the next decade. The report analyzes the current and forecasted workforce, and contains industry and educational profiles of Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. It showcases the top sectors and occupations in the region based on the number of employed workers. Fastest-growing industries and occupations are highlighted along with anticipated job growth, in addition to replacement demands and exits and transfers within each industry.



Talent Report

The Institute Review

Supported by the Moses Taylor Foundation and the Scranton Area Community Foundation, The *Institute Review* (IR) is an electronic bi-weekly publication. The online publication was designed to relay a relevant blend of regional, state, national, and international news on the economy, health, social service, policy, and equity. As part of the Grantmaker Initiative, designed to educate and inform the community on issues and solutions to inform planning and decision-making build.

Mini-Indicators

The W-B Chamber hosted the first Mini Indicators event at the THINK Center on September 5th. The Institute shared important research and data to help address regional workforce development, and the economic and quality-of-life trends critical to the future of our region. The program was live-streamed and recorded, with 473 views, 22 engagements, and a reach of 2,228 to date. The event was made available through video streaming to members of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce and the Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce.

Newsmakers

Last summer, Teri and Susan sat with Jayne Ann Bugda and Andy Mehalshick for their Newsmakers program. It was an opportunity to discuss the mission of The Institute, and outcomes from our regional research initiatives.



Marketing Report

Indicators Marketing

There are now two options for organizations to partner with The Institute. Our Research Underwriter levels of giving and benefits will remain the same. These are our trusted partners who support our community-based research year-long and receive recognition throughout that time. In 2018, we added a separate Indicators Event Sponsorship, which provides an opportunity for other organizations and individuals to partner with The Institute.

Social Media Marketing

In addition to Facebook and Twitter, The Institute added a Linked In page to its social media marketing platform in May of 2018. The number of followers has reached 111 and growing by the month.

Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Equitable Transit Workshop

The Institute was asked to present information on both its research protocol and transit study findings that informed the Scranton Area' Foundation's NEPA Moves Initiative. The Institute conducted an initial study commissioned by the Federal Reserve Bank in 2017—2018. As a result of its findings and the implementation of NEPA Move's, The Institute is continuing the research needed to advance the strategic priorities. The Federal Reserve Bank conducted the December summit to inform leaders from York, PA and Atlantic County, New Jersey as they develop their equitable transit initiatives for 2019.

Legislative Testimony

Senate Policy Committee

April 2018—Teri presented testimony on Business and Employment Trends in Pennsylvania to the Senate Democratic Policy Committee at their hearing on *Our Students, Our Workforce and the Jobs of Tomorrow*.

House State Government Committee Hearing

June 2018—Teri presented The Institute's economic impact study on prison closures in NEPA to the House State Government Committee Hearing on Prison Closures. Ooms joined the Secretary of Corrections, and the President of Pennsylvania State Corrections Officers Association and a liaison from the Pennsylvania State Troopers Association.

Photo Source: www.pacapital.com



Academic Accomplishments

Student Interns — In 2018, 16 undergraduate students successfully completed internships, representing five of The Institute's 13 partnering higher education institutions. These students represented a variety of disciplines, including finance, economics, public policy, computer science, business administration, and sociology. They contributed to community-based research as well as the 2018 Indicators and multiple client projects. Together, they completed 2,290 hours of work and received skills training and mentoring in the process. Many of these students elected to receive academic credit for their internships.



In a survey of their experiences, students identified “strengthening writing and research skills, the ability to network with research professionals, real-life job experience, and exposure to fields of research” as some of the greatest benefits of their internships. In terms of the most interesting aspects of their internships, students mentioned “writing up narratives for the surveys, learning about the local community, and working with the Cost of Living Index.”

Board Notes

In fall 2018, we welcomed Tracey Brundage, Ph.D. to The Institute board. Tracey is replacing the prior Keystone College President, David Coppola, Ph.D. We thank David for his contributions to our board and look forward to having Tracey contribute her experience, enthusiasm, and insight to our organization.

We were excited to welcome Katie Leonard, Johnson College, to The Institute board, and also to have Johnson College become our 13th academic partner. We look forward to working with Katie, knowing her energy and innovative ideas will be great contributions to The Institute.

In 2017, we welcomed Reverend Herbert Keller, University of Scranton, to our board and thank him for the gift of his service. Rev. Scott Pilarz, S.J., replaced Father Keller at the University and joined our board in 2018. We appreciate his continued support in hosting an Institute office on the University's campus, and are grateful to have him as a valued and contributing board member.

A Tribute to a Special Friend



William (Bill) B. Sordoni

William B. Sordoni served as the Inaugural Vice Chairman of The Institute from 2004 to 2014, and was involved with The Institute prior to its formal foundation. He was integral in the development of the organization's initial structure and work plan, and served on the hiring committee with other business and higher education leaders.

While Bill and his family foundation have been the largest financial contributors to The Institute's community-based research, most are not aware of his interest and engagement of the work at a very granular level – nor are they aware of his intense and fierce mentoring that continued until the time of his passing (May 23, 2018).

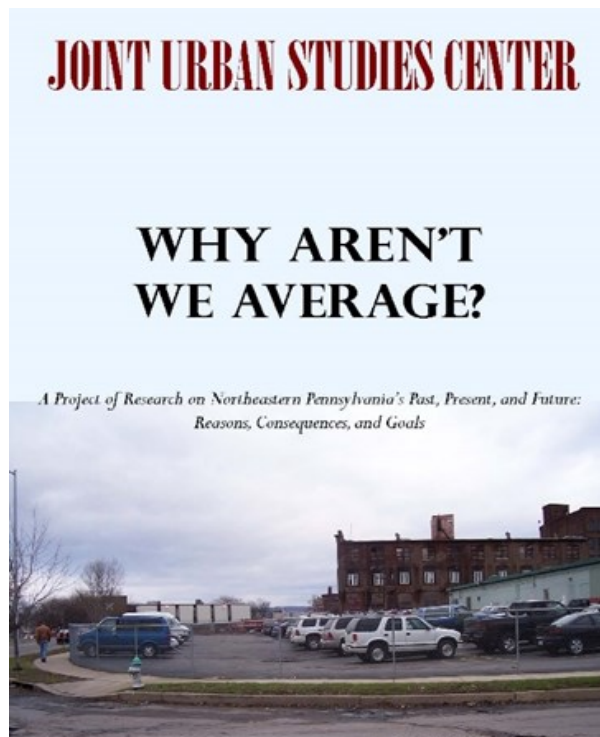
Bill was very active with The Institute and conceptualized the original *"Recession Tracker"* followed by the *"Economy Tracker."* Bill was also very involved with one of The Institute's earliest studies – *"Why Aren't We Average?"* Bill reviewed the research methods and was involved in the layout, graphics, and design work.

Bill was an extremely intelligent, creative, and thoughtful human being.

Once he retired as Vice Chair, I had the honor of being called his friend.

That was just his style. Our meetings were regularly held over coffee and cookies, and included advising, performance review, discussion on regional events, and his unique blend of humor and bad jokes. Those sessions are irreplaceable.

To my mentor and friend, thank you. You are deeply missed.
Teri Ooms



Welcome to Johnson College, our Newest Academic Partner

We were very excited to welcome Johnson College as an academic partner in 2018. We value their commitment to workforce development in the region, as well as their unique position to help address this need. This partnership will undoubtedly be great for The Institute and the region at large. Thank you to Katie Leonard, President and new board member, for her support of The Institute.



Intern Follow Up

Institute Intern Making a Difference

Misericordia University graduate and former Institute intern, Michael Dubinski, is currently serving with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Minneapolis, MN and working for a non-profit that aims to meet the communication needs of people who are homeless. He is empowering them to use their voices and their voting power to improve the community.

"I am writing to you to thank you, as well as the rest of the staff, for all of the support and guidance you gave me during my time at the Institute. Although I think that a career in public policy *research* may not be the best fit for me, you helped to reaffirm my passion for public policy as a means to make people's lives and the life of a community better. You also helped to give me a deeper understanding and appreciation for what goes into crafting good public policy and what a great service that is. The work being done at the Institute is a beacon of hope in our community that promises a better future for the region, *our home*."

Dream Job

John (J.J.) Cahill, another former Institute intern, is now an Election Coordinator with Edison Research in New Jersey. In a recent note to The Institute, J.J. indicated that his internship set him apart from other candidates and is the reason he was hired. J.J. interned during the summer of 2017 and graduated with an Master of Arts in Political Science from East Stroudsburg University after having earned his BA in Political Science from Marywood University.

Research in Action

Demonstrating the Value of Performing Arts

Will Beekman, Executive Director of the F.M Kirby Center for the Performing Arts, said, "I can tell you in no uncertain terms that your impact study has been a huge help to us in obtaining sponsorships dollars as well as support from local and national foundations. When they see the impact that the Kirby Center is having on the community, they are much quicker to support our theater and the programs that we offer. We include your study in all of our requests, and it is making a huge difference for us."



Research in Action ...continued

It is our goal that policymakers and community leaders put Institute research into action to address big challenges and help improve our region. Here are just a few examples of positive outcomes that have resulted, in part, from Institute research in 2018.

Addressing the Opioid Crisis

On June 21, 2018, legislation was approved to allow hospice workers to properly dispose of narcotics and other medications when patients are discharged or deceased. This was previously not allowed and was a barrier to helping people who battle addiction to these substances. Recommendations from a 2016 Institute Health and Healthcare Task Force study were part of the impetus behind the legislation. **Senator Lisa Baker**, who sponsored the bill, said, “The idea for this bill came from the Wyoming County coroner, but the research conducted by The Institute, and the input from professionals such as Dr. Susan Sordoni and individuals who run hospices, was indispensable in crafting and successfully moving legislation that was recently signed into law.”



Making Strides in Improving Regional Transportation

Institute research and recommendations for improving regional transportation were integral to the NEPA Moves initiative to help improve transportation in the region.

“The research conducted by the Institute for Public Policy and Economic Development was integral in helping us to shape the strategic direction of the NEPA Moves transportation initiative at the Scranton Area Community Foundation. The focus groups that the Institute conducted found a clear connection between an individual’s barriers to access transportation



and his or her inability to commute to employment, which in turn directly impacts our regional workforce challenges. I feel that the Institute is a valuable partner to have at your table when addressing any regional challenge or potential opportunity.” - **Laura Ducceschi, MBA, MA, President & CEO, Scranton Area Foundation**

Geisinger Health System Transportation Program

In 2013, The Institute published the first regional community health needs assessment. This assessment identified the need for enhanced transit to easily get to health care appointments. Geisinger leader and Institute supporter Connie Schintz vowed to address transportation so that it would not be an impediment to health care. In 2017, the issue resurfaced in new Institute research commissioned by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia for the Scranton Area Foundation’s NEPA Moves initiative. As a result, Geisinger Health System advanced its commitment to help its patients and health plan members. On April 1, 2018, a GHS transportation service became available. Eligible patients get rides to doctor appointments, labs and testing facilities, pharmacies, and even to social service offices.

Improving Dental Health in the Region

The information and recommendations offered in The Institute’s 2017 Health & Healthcare Task Force report on “Oral Health Challenges in the Region” was the impetus behind the creation of a regional Dental Council focused on fluoridation efforts and providing education and dental care for the uninsured and underinsured.

Promoting Tourism and History

The Institute prepared a feasibility study on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western (DL&W) Railroad Station for the Nicholson Heritage Association in 2014. The primary recommendation was to move forward with restoration to establish a visitor center and community space. The Association moved forward with the recommendations and the study became part of a package for fundraising and community support. In the fall of 2018, renovations using a PennDOT grant commenced on the station.

Tackling Blight in our Communities



Institute recommendations from 2017 research on the impact of blighted properties were used to help launch a county-wide Blight Plan in Lackawanna County in 2018. Under this effort, The Lackawanna County Land Bank and NeighborWorks Northeastern Pennsylvania partnered to form a new Lackawanna County Blight Task Force and lead the implementation of the plan. “The Institute’s report on the impact of blight in our community was eye-opening for us” said **Jesse Ergott, President & CEO of NeighborWorks**. “We used the research as a call to action which allowed us to bring municipalities and other partners together to address the issue on a greater scale.” Luzerne County officials have also used the recommendations to address blighted properties there.

Lackawanna County Land Bank Creation

In 2011, The Institute’s study on the Impact on Housing in the Pennsylvania Appalachian Region as a Result of Marcellus Shale Production recommended that the Commonwealth adopt land banking legislation. Thanks to the Housing Alliance of PA, that study was personally delivered to the every member of the General Assembly. In 2012, the Land Bank Act was signed into law. According to **Jesse Ergott, President and CEO of NeighborWorks Northeastern PA**, this and a subsequent Institute Brief on Land Bank Best Practices (2014) helped to pave the way for the Lackawanna County Land Bank’s creation in 2015 and sales of properties in 2017. Today, the Lackawanna County Land Bank is one of the most active in the Commonwealth, having acquired and sold nearly 100 blighted properties for side yards to existing neighbors, land for new housing construction, and lots being maintained as neighborhood green space.

Helping our Seniors Safely Remain in their Homes

Neighborworks of Northeastern Pennsylvania is expanding a program to help ensure older homeowners can live safely and independently in their own homes for as long as possible. Integral to the process was The Institute’s 2017 research study on “Aging in Place,” which provided valuable recommendations to help address the financial and physical barriers for seniors wishing to stay in their homes as they age.

Informing Planning

“The Institute conducted a Community Needs Assessment for our organization in both 2016 and 2018. With input from our staff, the Institute developed unique assessment tools for both the population we provide service to and our community partners. Their research, studies, data collection and secondary data identify local trends and gaps in service. This work provides a basis for submitting applications to funding sources and provides back up information on issues that affect our agency at the local level.” **Gene Brady, President & CEO, Commission on Economic Opportunity**

“**United Way of Monroe County** contracted the services of The Institute in 2016 to conduct a comprehensive Community’s Needs Assessment for Monroe County, and to assist the organization in the development of a Strategic Plan. The results of the needs assessment highlighted the significant financial instability challenges facing the community, especially the high level of cost-burdened households in the community and the need for food systems strengthening. The strategic planning process, coupled with the results of the needs assessment, led to the organization’s adoption of a “Collective Impact” approach as a model to help the community to better achieve its poverty-reduction goals. United Way quickly began to see positive results from its enhanced approach. It helped to create and support the Pocono Mountains Hunger Coalition (poconohunger.org), focused on convening agencies and streamlining efforts in the hunger-relief sector. Homelessness coordination improved dramatically, with more and more collaborative efforts in the sector that have leveraged additional resources from regional and state sources. In addition, United Way of Monroe County was empowered to explore ways to fulfill some of the aspirational goals established through plans developed by the Institute. Because of this, United Way began exploring increased strategic partnerships with **Pocono Alliance**, recognizing the unique role that agency was already serving within the Collective Impact space. This led to the eventual pursuit of a merger between the organizations to increase community capacity and ability to move the needle on homelessness, hunger, access to quality education, and financial instability. The two agencies just announced their intent to merge in February 2019.” **Micheal Albert, Outgoing President United Way Monroe County and Michael Tukeva, Incoming President, United Way Monroe County**

The Team



Teri Ooms, Executive Director

Teri was appointed Executive Director of The Institute in 2004. Since its inception, she has been responsible for all facets of research, organizational strategy, and management. Her strategic skills have allowed The Institute to expand its services to the private and non-profit sectors for research and analysis. Under her direction, The Institute has completed over 100 client and community-based studies. These studies have resulted in new jobs, new programs, sustained initiatives, and new legislation throughout Pennsylvania and New York. Ooms also serves on a number of local and regional non-profit boards. She holds an MBA in finance and a bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Scranton.



Andrew Chew, AICP, Senior Research and Policy Analyst

Andrew is a policy, economic development and urban planning professional. He is experienced in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), statistical software, and other technologies to perform data analysis and policy research. Andrew joined The Institute in 2013. He holds a master's degree in city and regional planning from Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University and a bachelor's degree in political science from Muhlenberg College.



Susan Magnotta, Director of Community Outreach

Susan is responsible for marketing, business development, fundraising, and community outreach. She joined The Institute team in January of 2017. She is a graduate of Villanova University with a bachelors degree in English. Prior to joining The Institute, Susan enjoyed a successful career with Pfizer Pharmaceuticals in both the Harrisburg region and northeastern Pennsylvania.



Chris Ritter, JD, Research Analyst

Chris was appointed Research Associate in 2016 and joined The Institute full time in 2018 as a Research Analyst. During his time here, Chris has served as a researcher for the several task forces and engaged in qualitative research and analysis as well as public policy recommendations. Chris holds a J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where he was an Articles Editor for Penn Law's Journal of International Law and a member of the school's Civil Rights Law Project. He is also a Summa Cum Laude graduate from The University of Scranton.



Joseph Gallo, Research Assistant

Joseph is responsible for providing research support for a variety of projects at The Institute, in addition to assisting with outreach and working with interns. He has experience in qualitative and quantitative research, as well as analytical writing. Joseph graduated from Rutgers University in 2017 with a Master of Public Policy (MPP). He also holds a BA in international relations from SUNY Geneseo, where he wrote and presented an honors thesis about the role of global norms in causing the Arab Spring revolutions.

The Team



Kara McGrane, Research Assistant

Kara works under the supervision of the Executive Director on community-based and client projects by way of data accumulation, qualitative research, and analysis. She supports The Institute with event logistics as well as administrative functions. Kara is a graduate of Maynooth University, with a master's degree in geography, and of Syracuse University, with a bachelor's in international relations and political science. Kara is also an Adjunct Professor in the history department at King's College.



Jill Avery-Stoss, Research, Data, Intern and Administrative Coordinator

Jill joined The Institute in June 2018 to fill the newly-created role. Following a successful career in the nonprofit sector, Jill directed her attention to online content creation and editing. She produced hundreds of articles, press releases, and other copy on a wide array of topics. Jill studied English and Women's Studies at Penn State University. Her background and knowledge of underserved populations are ideally suited to the region's development needs.



Saidat Abidemi Sanni, Graduate Assistant

Saidat joined The Institute in January 2017. She is currently in her third year of the MBA program at Wilkes University and the first International Kirby Graduate Scholar of the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. Saidat is a 2015 graduate of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (Lautech) Ogbomosho, Oyo State, Nigeria. There she earned a degree in statistics and was valedictorian of her class. At The Institute, Saidat works with the staff on community-based projects, research, data compilation, extraction, and report generation under the supervision of the Executive Director.



Monica Lazorick and Mary Ann Condo, Administrative Support

Monica Lazorick has been with The Institute for four years as a participant of the Luzerne County Mature Worker Program. Mary Ann Condo, a graduate of the Mature worker program, has continued to volunteer her time at The Institute. She has been with the organization since 2013.

Condo and Lazorick conduct back office operations such as data entry and verification, clerical support, and meeting logistics. Mary Ann has 20 years of experience with Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania and five with Berkheimer, providing basic accounting functions. Monica has 25 experience in commercial banking throughout Pennsylvania.

The Institute

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