

The Institute

Turning Information into Insight

*Economic, Impact, Health,
Social, and Education
Research, Evaluation, and
Consulting*

The 2020 Indicators Report is now online!

- ◆ Be informed on the economic data and trends that affect the region's future.
- ◆ Learn how the region is progressing on the economy & critical quality of life issues.
- ◆ Empower yourself and your organization with regional data and knowledge for good decision-making in 2020 and beyond.

[Access the 2020 Indicators Here](#)

In this Issue:

- Welcome to a New Supporter
- Many Thanks to Sponsors
- 2020 Task Force Research
- Introducing The Policy Tracker
- New Issue of the QET Available
- Institute Insights into COVID-19
- New YouTube Channel
- Results of the Spring 2020 Student Poll
- Community Based Research and Underwriting Opportunities

Insights into COVID-19 are also at your fingertips!

The Institute's initiative to share comprehensive research regarding the pandemic's impact on the region, as well as recommendations for recovery, is well underway.

[Visit our website](#) regularly for studies specific to the economy, workforce, business and industry, local government, education, social services, housing, health, and emergency planning.

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 or Graduate Medical Education, University of Scranton, and Wilkes University

The Institute extends a warm welcome to our newest supporting underwriter, Topp Business Solutions.



TOPPTM
Business Solutions

It's a pleasure to have the Topp team in our corner!

Many Thanks to Our 2020 Community-Based Research Underwriters and Indicators 2020 Event Sponsors!

Signature Underwriters

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

Contributing Underwriters

Borton-Lawson
Geisinger Health System

Supporting Underwriters

Berkshire Asset Management
BlackOut Design
Commission on Economic Opportunity
FNCB
Greater Hazleton CANDO
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield
M&T Bank
McCarthy Tire
Mohegan Sun Pocono
Navient
NET Credit Union
PNC
Prudential Retirement Services
Rosenn Jenkins Greenwald, LLC
The Luzerne Foundation
The Wright Center for Community Health
UGI Utilities

Event Sponsors

Platinum:

The Wright Center for Community Health

Gold:

Allied Services
Coal Creative
NET Credit Union
Quandel Construction
Scranton Area Community Foundation
UGI Utilities

Silver:

McCarthy Tire
The Scranton Plan

Bronze:

Berkshire Hathaway Guard Insurance Companies
Community Bank
Johnson College
Luzerne County Community College
Luzerne County Visitor Bureau
Marywood University

At Your Fingertips: A Full Round of Research!

The 2020 Indicators Forum may have taken new form, but its impact was as meaningful as always. The research team is grateful to all who participated, including the task force chairs and members who guided the 2019-2020 cycle of community-based research. Follow the links below to learn about a variety of issues affecting the region, along with recommendations for enhancing the well-being of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

[The State of Child Abuse and Neglect in the Region and Beyond](#)

The Health and Health Care Task Force recognized the alarming incidence of child abuse and neglect, which sparked an exploration of these issues and their scope in the region. The subsequent insights shaped recommendations for mitigating the consequences of trauma as well as strategies for prevention.

In June 2019, the Education & Workforce Development (Ed/WFD) and Jobs, Economy, & Economic Development (JEED) Task Forces met to discuss the release of the Economic Competitiveness report presented at Indicators 2019 and to identify a research agenda for the 2019-2020 year.

It was determined at that time that this upcoming year's research should again be a joint effort because of the nature of the two task forces is inextricably linked especially since there was a workforce shortage at the time that was predicted to last at least two decades.

Based on discussion, the group decided that several education and workforce components of the economic competitiveness report should be elevated to their own research briefs. These briefs address job opportunities and higher education completions, skills shortages, workforce automation, and labor demand.

Furthermore, the committee determined that several education and workforce issues were not addressed in the economic competitiveness report. As such, additional briefs were developed to address generational nuances, soft skills, and the value of the trades.

[The Millennial Workforce](#)

[Rethinking the Trades](#)

[Rethinking the Senior Worker](#)

[Soft Skills](#)

[Skills Shortages](#)

[Labor Demand](#)

[Workforce Automation](#)

[Job Opportunities and Higher Education Completions](#)

[The Impact of Transportation in the Logistics Industry](#)

Northeastern Pennsylvania's warehousing clusters are booming. How do they affect local land use and transportation infrastructure? The Planning, Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Task Force answers this question and more.

[The Housing Divide in Northeastern Pennsylvania](#)

Research conducted by the Housing Task Force answers an important question as well. How do housing affordability and housing security coexist with the same region? The study reveals the dynamics at play and potential solutions to the divide.

Introducing... The Policy Tracker

A new and exciting quarterly publication!



The Policy Tracker is an electronic newsletter featuring policy briefs on issues that have emerged upon analysis of challenges and opportunities facing Northeastern Pennsylvania, as well as examination of legislation in other states.

The Tracker covers state and federal policy-focused research and aims to educate and inform the reader about the challenges, opportunities, and potential non-partisan solutions.

This publication is made possible by the generous support of the Moses Taylor Foundation.

[Access the premier issue now](#)



In case you missed it...

The Summer 2020 edition of the Quarterly Economic Tracker is available! In this issue, find out:

- The latest on COVID-19's impact
- The capacity for resilience in the community
- The unequal distribution of poverty in the region
- And more!

[Access the issue here!](#)

Summer 2020

Quarterly Economy Tracker

The Institute
Turning information into insight

The Institute is a partnership among Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Lehigh Valley College, King's College, Lockwood College, Eastern County Community College, Kutztown University, Mohawk Valley Community College, Penn State Berks, Penn State Schuylkill, The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education, University of Scranton, and Wilkes University

Survey of Businesses Reveals COVID Challenges

By Andrew Chew, Senior Research & Policy Analyst and Junhua Du, Research Intern

The Institute conducted a survey of business owners and managers with the partnership of regional Chambers of Commerce in order to learn more about the challenges facing businesses and adaptations they are making. A total of 160 responses were received, the majority of which were gathered between May 10 and May 21. At that time, both Schuylkill and Lehigh County were in the red phase of the statewide reopening plan. The survey ended on June 7, shortly after both counties had moved to the yellow phase of reopening.

The majority of businesses remained in operation at the time of the survey, but with social distancing, increasing safety precautions or other measures. At the time, only three percent of respondents reported no or minimal changes to operations.

continued on page 2

Actions Taken in Response to COVID-19	
Practicing social distancing for employees and/or customers	69%
Increased cleaning, sanitation, or use of personal protective equipment (PPE)	67%
Changed services or on-site services not available	49%
Increased on-line presence/business location	43%
Limited number of customers inside location	37%
Closed, but with reduced business hours	23%
New products or special offers to attract customers	17%
No or minimal changes to operations	3%

The Economy Tracker is a quarterly publication of The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development which seeks to explore economic data, trends, and issues related to our region's economy. *Subscribe at www.institutepa.org to receive an electronic edition of the Tracker free of charge. In all of its publications, The Institute uses the most current data available at the time of release.*

In This Issue:	Business Survey Results	1	COVID-19 Data Spotlight	7
	Labor Market at a Glance	2	Unequal Distribution of Poverty	8
	What's New at The Institute	3	Unemployment & Health Insurance	9
	Community Resilience	4	Cartography Corner	9
	Effects of GDP Decline	5	Regional PPP Data	10
	COVID-19 Impact on Nonprofits	6	QET Sponsors	11

For more research and analysis on COVID-19's impact, please visit us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and our website!

Institute Insights into COVID-19

Since the launch of this new initiative in Spring 2020, The Institute's research team has been hard at work putting together specialized research on COVID-19's impact as well as recommendations for recovery. Take a look at all we've studied this summer....

Analysis of COVID-19's Impact on the Healthcare System

This study reveals timely information, and puts forth policy recommendations, regarding:

- preparedness of the regional healthcare system to respond to the pandemic
- impact and actions within nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- challenges with the health information technology infrastructure
- effects on the health insurance market
- testing and contact tracing
- funding issues
- long-term implications on the healthcare system

[View it here](#)

The Impact of COVID-19 on Social Services

A comprehensive survey disseminated to social service providers throughout the region informed strategic recommendations pertaining to:

- enhanced reliance on social service agencies to assist with essential needs such as food, medical care, and mental health treatment
- changes in service provision, processes and procedures, staffing and volunteers, and fundraising
- varied impact based on type of organization
- the role of technology implementation of best practices and safety measures

[View it here](#)

The GDP Impact of COVID-19 on North-eastern PA

This report was developed to estimate the pandemic's effects on gross domestic product (GDP) and model the macroeconomic outcomes. It answers questions about the following:

- the future of the area's leading industries and occupations
- projections in regarding employment, income, and overall output
- losses for local and state governments, associated with tax revenue and licenses and fees

[View it here](#)

The Impact of COVID-19 on Business & Industry

Virtually all organizations have been forced to adapt and adjust to comply with changing regulations and ensure the safety of workers, customers, and the broader community. This study:

- explores the struggles of businesses throughout the region
- uses targeted economic data to detail the various types of severity of disruption they face
- Offers recommendations for mitigating industry vulnerability and embracing resilience

[View it here](#)

Client Solutions

Market & Feasibility Studies
Indicators- Indexes
Community Needs Assessments
Housing Studies
Economic Development Strategies
Economic and Tax Impact Studies

Survey Research
Industry Studies
Workforce Studies
Education Studies
Policy Analysis
Site Selection Research
Arts & Culture Studies

Economic and Demographic Profiles
Grant and Program Evaluation Support
Research Validation and Peer Review
Tourism Strategic Plans
Comprehensive Plans
Asset Maps

The results are in...

Results of the 2020 post-graduation poll are now available!

This annual poll answers the following questions:

- What values and priorities affect students' decisions to remain in the region or relocate after graduation?
- What do they look for in job opportunities?
- What are their perspectives on NEPA?
- What roles do internships and graduate programs play?
- And more!

POST GRADUATION—WHAT'S NEXT 2020

The Institute
Turning Information into Insight

A partnership 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 for Graduate Medical Education, University of Scranton, and Wilkes University

The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development (The Institute) launched a polling program in 2014. The Institute regularly polls students at its partnering higher education institutions. These polling and survey research services are part of The Institute's menu of services offered to all types of clients.

This 2020 poll assesses students' opinions about the region and their post-graduation plans. A total of 1,576 students participated in this poll. Students from all class years, a variety of majors, and part-time and graduate students are well-represented in the data.



Differing values and priorities affect students' likelihood to remain in NEPA after graduation. Students who intend to remain in the region after graduation are likelier than average to assign higher value to a location's proximity to family and its suitability to raise a family, but are less likely to value entertainment, recreation, or dining options—or its diversity or inclusiveness. Conversely, students who plan to depart the area after graduation are likelier to value diversity, inclusiveness, and those entertainment, recreation, and dining options—while downplaying proximity to family and friends, along with suitability for raising families.

When evaluating job opportunities, students want to apply what they've learned. They also want to make a positive impact. When asked to rank six possible factors to consider when evaluating job opportunities, students placed opportunities *in their desired fields* higher than any other option, with 62.0 percent placing the category first or second on their lists. The *ability to make a positive difference* was second on the rating scale. Nearly 39.0 percent of the respondents afforded it a high level of importance.

"The more I learn about this region—my new home—and as I settle into its community of higher education providers, I am struck by all sorts of possibilities yet to be unlocked. This poll tells us what our future leaders need and desire, what they plan to achieve, and what we must do to cultivate an environment of success for them in Northeastern Pennsylvania. With this valuable insight at our fingertips, I am eager to collaborate with other educators and professionals. Together we can inspire students to invest their vibrancy and talent into the area, and yield transformative results."

Greg Cant, Ph.D., President, Wilkes University

The Institute – Turning Information into Insight

[Explore the brief here](#)

Big news!

The Institute:

Now on

YouTube!

Tune in now!

It's the perfect place to view task force presentations, updates on the COVID-19 pandemic in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and more.

Be sure to subscribe!

Are You Interested in a Partnership?

Do you feel a personal connection to the culturally-rich northeast? Would you like to further invest in the region? If so, we invite you to join our growing list of generous community of supporters. Your underwriting will help The Institute provide our community with data and research that promotes informed decision-making and leads to greater economic vitality for the area.

Your partnership will contribute to:

- Task Force Research
- Indicators Report
- Quarterly Economy Tracker
- Regional College Student Poll
- Regional College Internship Program

Please contact Teri Ooms at ooms@institutepa.org to discuss the possibilities!

Community-Based Research

Access the latest regional research on the Institute's website. www.institutepa.org

Regional Indicators Data & Research

Indicators data tracks the region's progress over time. They include economy, healthcare, environment, education and infrastructure measures.
<https://institutepa.org/perch/resources/indicators18.pdf>

Task Force Research

Recent and archived research studies identify and address the region's challenges. This research is a driving force behind many important economic development and community revitalization initiatives, which produce positive outcomes for our area.
<https://institutepa.org/indicators.php>

Quarterly Economic Tracker

This quarterly electronic publication explores the region's economic and business trends.
<https://institutepa.org/economy-tracker.php>

Polling Program

Better understand the subject matter interests, public policy views, and civic engagement of our local college students and future leaders.
<https://institutepa.org/polling-program.php>

Who We Are

The Institute is dedicated to empowering business and community leaders with researched-driven strategies for informed decision-making.

We conduct community-based, empirical research to identify the opportunities and challenges unique to our region, and offer innovative solutions for the problems facing our communities. **This research is funded by generous academic partners and sponsors who share our vision for a strong regional economy and vibrant communities.**

Thanks to our 2020 Research Underwriters!

Sincere thanks to our generous stakeholders who share our vision for a strong regional economy and healthy communities. Your support makes our work possible!

Signature Underwriters

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

Contributing Underwriters

Borton-Lawson
Geisinger Health System

Supporting Underwriters

Berkshire Asset Management
BlackOut Design
Commission on Economic Opportunity
FNCB
Greater Hazleton CANDO
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield
M&T Bank
McCarthy Tire
Mohegan Sun Pocono
Navient
NET Credit Union
PNC
Prudential Retirement Services
Rosenn Jenkins Greenwald, LLC
The Luzerne Foundation
The Wright Center for Community Health
Topp Business Solutions
UGI Utilities

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 for Graduate Medical Education
University of Scranton
Wilkes University

Locations in:
Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, PA
www.institutepa.org
570.408.9850

Staff

Teri Ooms – Executive Director
ooms@institutepa.org

Andrew Chew – Senior Research & Policy Analyst
chew@institutepa.org

Megan Stachowiak—Research Analyst
stachowiak@institutepa.org

Joseph Gallo – Research Assistant
gallo@institutepa.org

Kara McGrane – Research Assistant
mcgrane@institutepa.org

Jill Avery-Stoss—Research, Data & Intern Coordinator
averystoss@institutepa.org

Follow us on Twitter, Facebook & LinkedIn



Advisory Board

Chairman - Gregory Cant, Ph.D., Wilkes University
Vice-Chairman – Frank Joanlanne, Borton Lawson

Heather Acker — Gentex Corporation
Ron Beer , MHA, FACHE – Geisinger Health System
Don Brominski, UGI Utilities
Tracy L. Brundage, Ph.D. — Keystone College
Terry Casey — Chancellor Financial Group
Cornelio Catena—Commonwealth Health System
John Cefaly — Cushman & Wakefield
Robert Durkin — Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce
Dale Jones, Ph.D. — Penn State University Wilkes-Barre
Charles Kasko — Simplex Homes
Thomas Leary — Luzerne County Community College
Katie Leonard, Ed.D.—Johnson College
Robert Luciani — Prudential Retirement Services
Jill Murray, Ph.D — Lackawanna College
Kevin O’Donnell—CAN DO, Inc.
Kathleen Owens, Ph.D.—Misericordia University
Mary Persico, IHM, Ph.D. — Marywood University
Rev. Scott Pilarz, S.J. — University of Scranton
Alana Roberts, PPL Utilities
Eugene Roth — Rosenn, Jenkins, & Greenwald, LLP
John J. Ryan, C.S.C., Ph.D. — King’s College
Steven Scheinman, MD — Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine
Bill Sordoni — Sordoni Construction
Matthew Sordoni — Sordoni Construction
Linda Thomas-Hemak, M.D. – The Wright Center
Marleen Troy, Ph.D., — Wilkes University
Wico van Genderen—Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business & Industry
Lucyann Vierling — Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance
Marwan Wafa, Ph.D. — Penn State University Scranton
Tara Mugford Wilson, Power Engineering Corporation
John T. Yudichak — Pennsylvania State Senate