

The INSTITUTE

at Wilkes University

Summer 2018

Volume 14 Issue 4

“Turning Information into Insight”



The Institute’s research team extends a warm welcome to Johnson College, our newest academic partner! Many thanks to Katie Leonard, President, who has joined our advisory board!



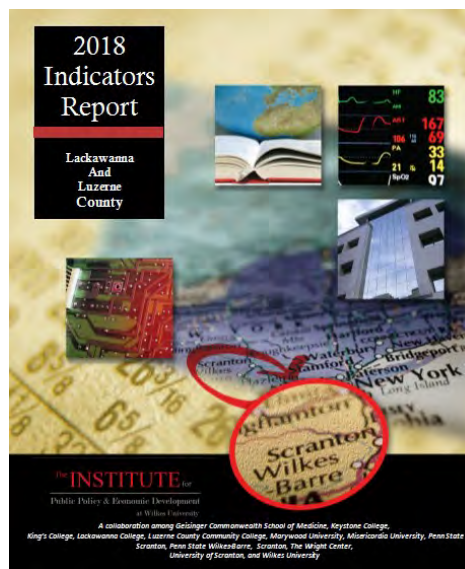
The Institute on WBRE’s Newsmakers

Have you seen The Institute featured on Newsmakers? Jayne Ann Bugda and Andy Mehalschick host Teri Ooms, Executive Director, and Susan Magnotta, Director of Community Outreach, as they discuss the organization’s mission, growth, and impact on Northeast Pennsylvania.

Watch [here!](#)

In this Issue:

- Summer Quarterly Economy Tracker Highlights Area’s Business data and trends
- Honoring a Transition in University of Scranton Leadership
- Local Lawmaker Introduces Policy to Combat the Region’s Opioid Epidemic
- Exciting Task Force Research Underway
- Overview of Current Institute Projects
- Team Updates
- Client Services



Access the 2018 Indicators Report [here](#)

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

Quarterly Economic Tracker, Summer 2018 The region's economic data and trends you need to know.

In this issue of the QET....

- A projected 4,000 jobs in healthcare in the next 5 years
- Housing market update
- Future workforce projections for the region

[Access the QET Here.](#)



Honoring University Leadership

The Institute extends sincere thanks to Reverend Herbert Keller, SJ for his service as the University of Scranton's Interim President until June 30, 2018. The Impact of his leadership continues to reverberate throughout the community. We also extend a warm welcome to Reverend Scott Pilarz, SJ to be inaugurated in September as the University's President once again. His commitments to community engagement and academic success are certain to uphold the Jesuit mission throughout the region.

Research in Action

Senator Baker Makes Headway in the Battle Against Opioid Abuse

In 2016, The Institute—in conjunction with the Health and Health Care Task Force—presented a report on opioid drug challenges in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. Researchers noted that access not only to illegal substances, but also to prescription pain medication, presents one of the region's biggest challenges to combatting addiction.

The following year, Baker was the prime sponsor of Senate Bill No. 978—the Hospice and Home Health Prescription Medication Disposal Act. The legislation sought to allow hospice workers to properly dispose of narcotics and other medications when patients are discharged or deceased.

According to Baker, "As we search for effective solutions to combat the devastating opioid crisis, informed perspectives from within the community are extremely helpful. 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."



The legislation was approved in a 49-0 vote on June 21, 2018 and sent to the governor for his signature.

New Task Force Areas of Study

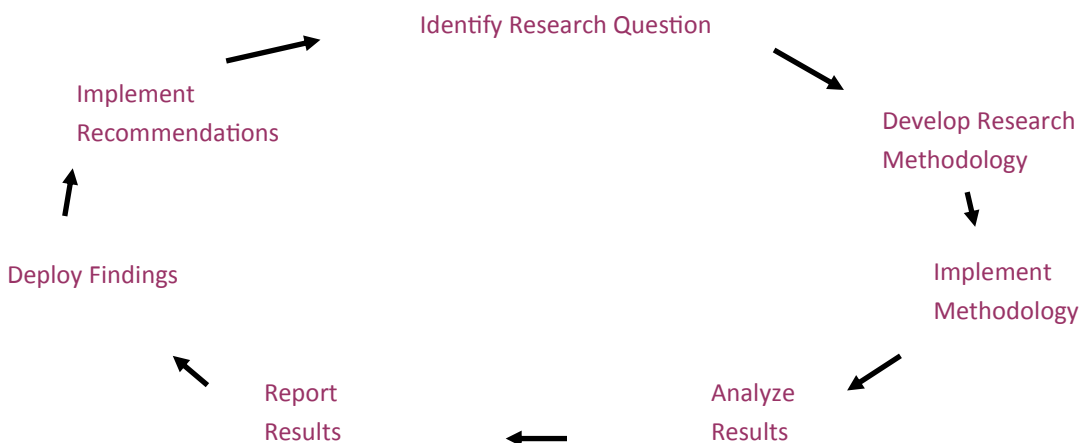
The Institute works closely with regional task forces, which are diverse professional teams. They convene every year to address issues and trends in their respective fields. They generate strategies, plans, and policy solutions based on research to help improve the quality of life and standard of living in the region. The results of the latest round of research will be presented at the annual Indicators Forum in 2019.

Jobs, Economy & Economic Development: The Institute is evaluating the size of the labor market and projected number of jobs due to both expansion and replacement demand throughout 2025. Results will be compared against regional education and degree completion data in order to identify areas of potential workforce shortage.

Education & Workforce Development: The task force has had several discussions on workforce challenges and strategy development. Among the components under consideration are research on regional labor sheds, long-term workforce projections, and strategies to address the top five projected occupation shortages. Career awareness and exploration opportunities (PA Ready), education and training for youth and incumbent workers, dynamics of career change, entrepreneurship, vocational rehabilitation, and other programs and services are also considered aspects of the study. The task force will finalize the project this fall.

Health & Healthcare: A white paper will emphasize the importance of collecting detailed, systematic, and longitudinal health data. It will also include a 'wish list' of datasets for research and explore best practices for collecting and disseminating data in other states and countries. A health score card will align issues against resources while identifying gaps as well as recommendations for closing those gaps. Furthermore, The Institute will prepare a study on food literacy in the region. Attention will be given to socioeconomic, cultural/linguistic, and knowledge/educational barriers to healthy food choices—along with an analysis of regional food deserts and case studies of potential interventions.

Planning, Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure: A follow-up to the 2016 transit analysis will further explore route planning considerations. It will highlight best practices in route planning from peer regions with higher public transit use. Frequency, hours of operation, and route design will be compared with local service to home in on potential areas for adjustment. Additionally, the team will examine commuter patterns of people working in several regional employment hubs. Analysis will detail workforce characteristics, home locations of workers traveling to the employment hubs, and existing travel routes to determine the proportions of people who live in close proximity to direct bus lines.



We've Been Busy! *Learn about some of our latest projects...*

SHINE

SHINE is an after-school project shown to reduce juvenile delinquency and improve academic performance. The Institute manages and reports on the program's impact in both Luzerne and Carbon Counties. Outcomes include enhance reading fluency and comprehension, greater knowledge of STEM subjects, and stronger familial and community relationships.

United Way Child Well Being Index

Indicators such as education, health insurance coverage, and family income paint a picture of child well-being throughout Wyoming Valley. By gathering relevant data and using it to score measures of youth vitality, The Institute underlines local challenges and progress alongside statewide and national benchmarks.



Luzerne County Head Start and Lehigh County Head Start Needs Assessments

Not only do needs assessments reveal valuable insights from key stakeholder groups, they offer strategic analysis and recommendations for the future. Head Start assessments address accessibility of transportation, degree of family involvement, hiring and retention of program staff, marketing and communication, and the possibility of more community partnerships.

Lehigh Carbon Community College S STEM Program Researcher (NSF grant)

By awarding scholarships to low-income students, the Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC) ensures that they receive ample opportunity to earn STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) degrees. The Institute is serving as project researcher, developing assessments, conducting analytics, and presenting findings on data.

Leadership Wilkes-Barre Program Evaluation

The Institute is evaluating the impact of Leadership Wilkes-Barre by developing assessments for the organization's signature programs – Intercollegiate Leadership Wilkes-Barre, Impact Leadership in Education, Junior Leadership Wilkes-Barre, and Executive Leadership Wilkes-Barre. These evaluation tools will be deployed at the beginning and end of each program, and six months after completion.

Lackawanna County Bar Association/Equal Access to Justice Committee Needs Assessment

By studying the legal atmosphere in Lackawanna County, and its accessibility to economically disadvantaged populations, the Institute hones an effective framework and service delivery structure. These solutions include a strategic implementation plan along with measures and





Scranton Area Foundation and Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

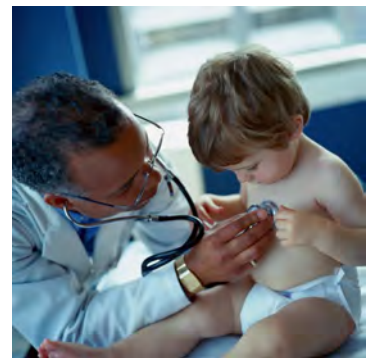
The vision of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Equitable Transit Planning Council is to enhance quality of life for people within the region by improving their access to transportation. The Institute assists this group by researching the challenges surrounding mobility throughout the area.

Geisinger (4Ride Program Evaluation)

Geisinger’s 4Ride Program is a coordinated public transportation effort. The Institute is studying whether access to transportation positively influences social determinants of health—perhaps by reducing emergency room visits and hospital re-admissions, assisting the regular use of prescriptions, improving medical appointment attendance, and enhancing patient-perceived quality of life.

Lehigh Valley Health Network

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act requires healthcare systems to complete needs assessments every three years. The Institute facilitates this process by collecting data from community members, subject matter experts and other stakeholders to create a profile with prioritized health needs.



Moses Taylor Foundation

The Institute gathers and records data to identify appropriate metrics and recommendations for the foundation’s strategic initiatives, which address issues ranging from school-based health to senior isolation. Evaluations and impact reports are completed on an annual basis as well.

Scranton Area Foundation

Collaborations between the Scranton Area Foundation and The Institute cover many exciting projects, such as STEAM programs in Lackawanna County schools and assessments that ensure positive impact of capacity programs on attendee organizations.



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

Economic and Demographic Profiles

Grant and Program Evaluation Support

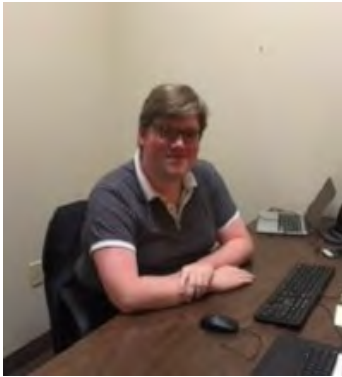
Research Validation and Peer Review

Tourism Strategic Plans

Comprehensive Plans

Asset Maps

Institute Researchers



Chris Ritter, Research Analyst, is a graduate of the University of Scranton and the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

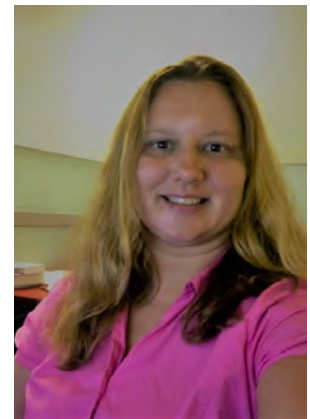


Kara McGrane is an Institute Research Assistant. Kara earned a Master's Degree in Geography from Maynooth University and a Bachelor's in International Relations and Political Science from Syracuse University.



Joe Gallo is an Institute Research Assistant. He comes to us from Rutgers University, where he obtained a Master's Degree in Public

Jill Avery-Stoss is the Institute's Data, Research, and Intern Coordinator. She earned her degree in English and Women's Studies from Penn State University.



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**
- Annual Indicators Forum**
- Quarterly Economy Tracker**
- Student Poll & Internship Program**

Please contact Susan Magnotta at magnotta@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.

<http://www.institutepa.org/PDF/Indicators/2018/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.

http://www.institutepa.org/Regional_Indicators.htm

Quarterly Economic Tracker

This quarterly electronic publication explores the region's economic and business trends.

<http://www.institutepa.org/Economy%20Tracker.html>

Polling Program

Better understand the subject matter interests, public policy views, and civic engagement of our local college students and future leaders.

http://www.institutepa.org/community_research_polls.html

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.**

Thank you to our 2018 Research Sponsors!

The Institute would like to sincerely thank our generous stakeholders who share our vision for a strong regional economy and healthy communities. Your support makes our work possible!

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