



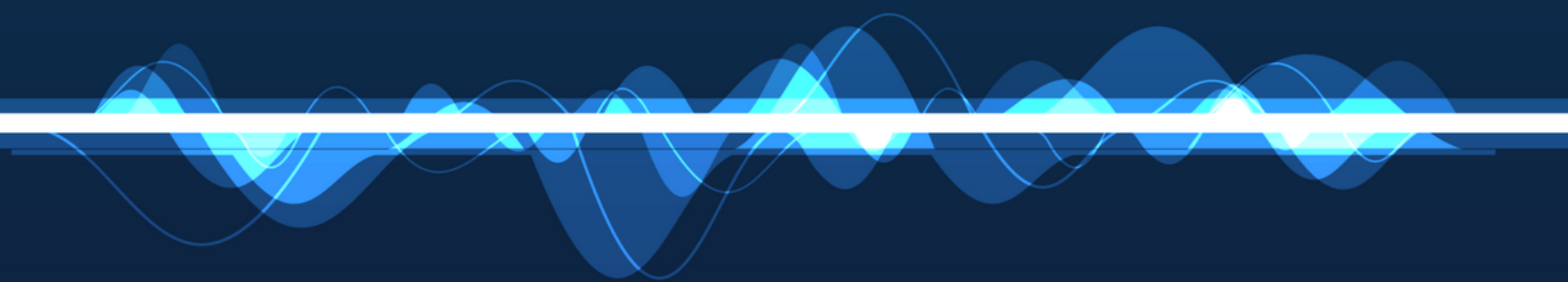
mke tech

2023 Impact Report



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Creating Transformational Change in the Region: The Commitment to a Decades-long Journey



When the MKE Tech Hub Coalition launched in 2019, we embarked on a decades-long journey to drive enduring regional economic prosperity by building an inclusive tech ecosystem. This has set us on a path for creating transformational change.

In our first three years, we focused on critical employer support, regional partnerships and programs to build a foundation for the future. With our members and partners, we scaled our programs to create life changing opportunities for individuals.



In 2023, it marked an expansion of our investment in driving transformational change, focusing on regional strengths like biohealth, energy/water resiliency, and manufacturing. As a region and state, we won three federal awards (The U.S. National Science Foundation Innovation Engines grant, The U.S. Economic Development Association designation as a BioHealth Tech Hub, and The U.S. Recompete Pilot Program).

These wins recognize our national leadership, which will **power our collective light** to the world, while growing our economy and tech ecosystem. We pride ourselves on being good partners, investing our resources and relationships to develop successful outcomes for the region.

Additionally, our year of review would not be complete without artificial intelligence (AI). The MKE Tech Hub Coalition is poised to assist as a partner in AI. Our programs like FUSE and AI Academy build skills in Python, machine learning, ethics, etc. Collectively, our AI programming has attracted over 1K attendees. The collaboration with our AI Advisory team and post-secondary institutions is helping create the programs and skills of the future.

The belief in our mission and support of our 135 members, including corporations, universities, governments, and individuals, has made the year successful. Our purpose is to foster an innovative culture reflective of the diversity our region offers. Here's to many more years of creating transformational change.

-- *Kathy Henrich* & *Molly Mulroy*
CEO Board Chair

Preface

As indicated in the table of contents, we have structured The Impact Report through the lens of our four strategy lanes:

1. Transformational Connections and Partnerships **2. Attracting Tech companies and Talent** **3. Building a Diverse tech talent Pipeline** **4. Scaling the Innovation Ecosystem.**

Throughout the report, each strategy lane is represented by a headline.



Transformational Connections and Partnerships

The Power of the Collective: Going further Together

This Impact Report is a walkthrough of the **progression of tech** at the macro and micro levels. Creating an inclusive tech ecosystem must be measured at a macro level to understand overall **regional progress**. Congratulations to all regional organizations for contributing to our collective growth.



51,714 IT occupations (+1%)
(CompTIA + Racine Kenosha data, 2023)

1928 IT business (+5.2%)
(CompTIA + Racine Kenosha data, 2023)

8.3% growth in virtual workforce
(TECNA Report: Tech Workforce Trends, 2023)

32% more engineering/scientific talent per capita than U.S. average
(Wisconsin Policy Forum DataTool, 2023)

Acknowledgement of Large Projects to the Region

A large announcement of jobs for the region builds momentum for future growth. The year brought more than **600 new tech job announcements**, including **\$1B+ investment** of Microsoft in Mount Pleasant, Johnson Controls' Engineering Center, Husco International Inc's tech employee growth, and zizzi Health's expansion.

Playing a Role in Regional Wins

Milwaukee is well poised to build on its legacy industries to expand and strengthen our tech ecosystem and lead in areas critical to the future of our nation and world: energy/water resiliency, biohealth, and manufacturing. We participated in the preparation of three federal grant wins, which allows for us to compete for more significant wins in the future:

The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) Regional Innovation Engines

The development grant focused on energy/water resiliency for manufacturing and utilities. A collaborative team, led by The Water Council, will compete for the Type II award for up to **\$160M** in the future. The MKE Tech Hub Coalition leads the workforce development planning component of the grant.

U.S. Economic Development Association (EDA)

The designation as a BioHealth Tech Hub, led by BioForward, aims to accelerate Wisconsin's leadership in theragnostic and personalized medicine. This designation and planning award enables the Consortium to compete for **\$60M** in Phase II.

U.S. EDA Recompete Pilot Program

The award, led by Northwest Development Corporation, creates the opportunity to compete for investment up to **\$50M**, supporting economic development in Milwaukee's 30th Street Industrial Corridor.

Driving Connections to Scale Impact

A successful tech ecosystem provides connections and mentoring to help accelerate growth (raise funds, gain customer insights, recruit talent, and form partnerships). We have facilitated over **750** meaningful connections:

- Achieved over **200** purposeful one-to-one introductions
- Leveraged our partnership with Summerfest Tech, where we facilitated over **200** connections through Meet the Experts
- Expanded our partnership with We Pivot, drawing **~200** attendees to Meet the Meetups for WI Tech Month
- Gathered **150** founders and ecosystem builders through specialized roundtable programming, featuring tech experts Ian Hathaway and Tom Davenport

Ultimately, a growing Milwaukee benefits business, healthcare and education systems, making it easier to build, attract and retain talent and startup ventures. Tech and innovation are powering this growth at a rapid pace as they become further embedded in every industry and become critical to the creation of greater economic opportunities for all.



Attracting Tech Companies and Talent

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent waves in shades of blue, green, and yellow. A prominent horizontal white line with a slight glow runs across the middle of the image, intersecting the waves.

Showcasing the Identity of the MKE Tech Ecosystem

We believe Milwaukee is a great place to live and work, and we want to see it thrive, which is why we are helping answer the question, "Why tech for Milwaukee?" ChooseMKETech.org serves as a guide for those in tech looking for a job, relocation, and connection in the MKE Tech Ecosystem. The support for these efforts came from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

- Reached over **1M** individuals by social media advertising
- **Doubled** the number of visitors per month to the site (3K to **6K visitors**)
- Expanded the story of tech in the region through blogs and digital advertising



Building a Diverse Tech Talent Pipeline

The background features a dark blue gradient. A horizontal white line with a soft glow runs across the middle. Below the line, there are several overlapping, semi-transparent waves in shades of blue, green, and yellow, creating a dynamic, abstract pattern.

Powering Students' Futures: Early Exposure Programming & Skilling

MKE Hour of Tech demonstrates the power of the collective, uniting to introduce technology and innovation to the next generation. From our corner, it is encouraging to see the momentum of Hour of Tech grow year over year through the commitment of volunteers, educators and leaders. The initiative was led by Quentin Prince (pictured are students from Notre Dame School of Milwaukee).

31K
hours of impact

20K
students reached

89%
diversity of students

300
organizations engaged



Inspiring Talent with NCWIT through Computing

To grow the talent pipeline beyond K-12 education, it requires engagement at the collegiate level. Inspired by data, it is for this reason we have partnered with the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) to introduce computing webinars and speaker series to technical colleges. Grants were offered to participating technical colleges to implement projects:

- In four webinars, **97%** of attendees were inspired to act on their campuses to support diverse talent
- A speaker series created at Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) to provide a diverse student population the necessary inspiration, tools, and skills needed to be academically and professionally successful in computing
- Women in Technology group started at Gateway College to engage a broad and diverse student audience in learning about computing and computing career paths at WCTC
- Thanks to our partners: Molson Coors, Associated Bank and Northwestern Mutual

The Power of FUSE

The FUSE program exists to prepare students for work in the era of AI, particularly those who are historically underrepresented in tech. For eight weeks during the summer, FUSE engages students in professional development workshops and interdisciplinary projects, which focuses on data visualization, Python and AI. This program is free and offered to students of all majors and industry backgrounds with no prior experience necessary. It augments higher education to prepare students for the future of work.

Each student has access to program mentors, who guide them in impactful coaching conversations and networking. Upon completion of the program, participants earn a UW-Milwaukee Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA) learning badge and college credit.

Thanks to our sponsors: CLA Foundation, The Milwaukee Brewers, Generac Power Systems, Rockwell Automation, Northwestern Mutual, Associated Bank, WEC Energy Group

60
participants from
27
different schools

50
mentors participating
representing
20
local companies

74%
earned HERA badge

185 students
Total alumni

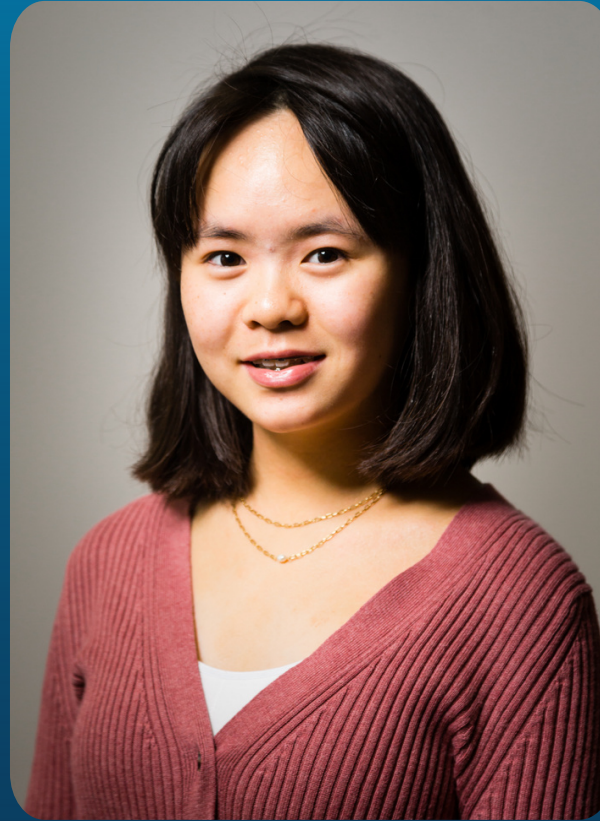


Insight from FUSE Alumni



Amya Camberos, UW-Milwaukee

"Throughout this bootcamp, I learned not only about how AI can be used in different career fields, but also about professional development that can help open opportunities and growth when networking, collaborating, and creating my own brand."



Claire Tian, Brookfield Academy

"From team building to data analysis to artificial intelligence. I really appreciate you providing me these experiences and helping me learn how to make an impact on my community through STEM and technology."



Fernandez Lopez, MATC

"From team building to data analysis to artificial intelligence. I really appreciate you providing me these experiences and helping me learn how to make an impact on my community through STEM and technology."

Evolving the Non-Traditional Pathways Into Tech: Meeting the Needs of Employers

When employers need talent, they can look to a variety of sources and **business models**. Our role is to collaborate with employers to help them look beyond fulfilling their immediate hiring needs, but to work to create a **long-term strategy** which is inclusive of developing talent from overlooked talent pools. In 2023, the MKE Tech Hub Coalition reframed its focus to a market-based approach for tech talent development, including:

- Non-traditional reskilling pathways for tech roles
 - Our goal is to make these non-traditional talent pathways **affordable** for employers. Grants from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and the Department of Labor directly reduced employer costs. These opportunities were showcased to employers and candidates in events throughout the year, including our Talent Ship webinar.



Evolving the Non-Traditional Pathways Into Tech: Continued

- Apprenticeships in partnership with Apprenti
 - Apprenticeships reskill new hires and existing employees for new positions via **structured training** programs that combine on-the-job learning with classroom instruction. This training can be **customized** to meet the employer's needs
 - Our employer's experience shows:
 - Mentoring and inclusivity equips the talent to thrive
 - Lower tech talent turnover due to increased loyalty
 - Increased team satisfaction

7
apprentices in 2023
42
total through
program

90%
retention since
inception of program

33
average age
63%
diversity
36%
women

7
employer sponsors

Evolving the Non-Traditional Pathways Into Tech: Continued

- Partnering with Brooksource to deliver skilled Tech Talent
 - Brooksource is among the many tech skilling providers, partnering with the MKE Tech Hub Coalition. In alignment with Preferred Provider Network members like i.c.stars, Mars Returnship, TekSystems, and others, Brooksource equips individuals from untapped talent pools for careers in tech.
- The MKE Tech Hub Coalition collaborated with Brooksource to build a program focused on AWS and Security, leveraging a Department of Workforce Development Fast Forward grant.

38
individuals reskilled
with tech skills

39%
women

58%
non-white

11%
veteran

55%
unemployed

26%
underemployed/part-time

Advancing Our Workforce through AI Upskilling

In 2023, following the introduction of OpenAI's ChatGPT, we saw an increase of demand for AI skilling. To continue meeting employer demand, the MKE Tech Hub Coalition leveraged local connections, national partnerships and federal funding to expand market-responsive AI upskilling for our employers.

- AI Academy – this program is offered in partnership with North Carolina State University, leveraging an existing U.S. Department of Labor grant that covers **\$7K** scholarships for each participant
 - **15** new participants in 2023 for **66** total
 - **3** new employers – total of **8** employers
- Bridging the gap in AI career Pathways
 - Leveraging this experience, MKE Tech Hub Coalition partnered with HERA in 2023 to gather employer **input on gaps** in market offerings to **build AI skill sets**
 - This experience will help us continue to provide **refined offerings** through regional partnerships in 2024
- Developing our AI Talent Community
 - In October 2023, an advisory team was formed to help retain AI talent in the region. This drew over **200** individuals. We look forward to refining this initiative in 2024 with Midpoint Ventures as our partner.



Scaling the Innovation Ecosystem

The background features a dark blue gradient. A prominent horizontal white line with a blue glow runs across the middle. Below this line, there are several overlapping, semi-transparent waves in shades of blue, green, and yellow, creating a dynamic, abstract pattern.

The Impact of FOR-M on the Startup Community

From idea to startup, FOR-M is a network designed to support the entrepreneurial journey. The program, powered by The Commons and We Pivot, is free to increase community access. By participating in the program, alumni are eligible to compete for financial awards of **\$10K**. These awards are determined by a panel of investors from the MKE tech community, providing expert feedback to all applicants to help them understand the steps required in receiving funding.

FOR-M by the numbers:

- In 2023, **40 founders** participated in the incubator
- Nearly **250 alumni** to date with **59%** from traditionally underrepresented demographics
- **\$160K** of grants given to FOR-M alumni in 2023 (**\$360K** over 3 years); Overall diversity of 2023 awardees: **81%** (**56%** BIPOC, **50%** female)
- **50** jobs created since 2020



The MKE Tech Hub Coalition: Summary of Impact

The MKE Tech Hub Coalition: Summary of Impact

Milwaukee has a high density of innovators advancing traditional industries. The MKE Tech Hub Coalitions worked as a change agent with its members and partners to achieve the following results in 2023:

- Distributed over **\$300K** in grants to advance startups, reskilling, and diversity in education
- Hosted over **250** events impacting more than **20K** students and **1K** professionals (tally includes MKE Hour of Tech)
- Grew to **135** members
- Expanded visibility of tech in the region:
 - Nearly **40** media interviews
 - Nearly **30** presentations on diverse tech talent pipelines, AI, and regional innovation
- Donated more than **200** hours of staff time to the community in support of regional tech initiatives (E.g., Wisconsin Policy Forum board and committees, Wisconsin Innovation and Wisconsin Tech Council awards committees)
- Informed more than **30** federal, state, and local elected officials on tech and AI
- Represented Milwaukee in national coalitions, including the Technology Councils of North America and the National Talent Collaborative



Thank you to our members and partners for your continued support. Our work can only be accomplished through your generosity and engagement.

Acknowledgements

Our Board

Molly Mulroy, Chair, WEC Energy Group

Sangeetha Rai, Vice Chair, Northwestern Mutual

Dan Renouard, Treasurer, Baird

Rebecca Janutis, Kohls

Wendy Schafer, Advocate Aurora Health

Mike Maschek, Incpetion Health & Froedtert Health

Gwenn Peters, Rockwell

Rashi Khosla, MARS Solutions Group

Mara Lord, Medical College of Wisconsin

Matt Moeser, Coninuous Technologies

Gordon Nameni, PhD, August Brown

Dr. Victor Amaya, Data You Can Use

Jason Fields, Madison Region Economic Partnership

Our Team

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Joe Poeschl, Director of Engagement

Antonio Davis, Director of Content

Aaron Drews, Research and Grant Manager

Valerie Linton-Reed, Operations Manager

Gwen Viegut, Marketing Associate

Members

Gold

Northwestern Mutual
Advocate Aurora Health
Johnson Controls
Kohls
WEC Energy Group

Silver

Froedtert Health
Rockwell Automation

Bronze

Accenture
American Family Insurance
Associated Bank
Badger Meter
Brooksource
Capgemini
Children's Hospital Wisconsin
Clarios
Codeworks
Concurrency
Data Holdings
Deloitte
Ernst & Young
GalexE Solutions
Godfrey & Kahn
HSA Bank

Bronze (cont.)

Infosys Limited
Johnson Financial Group
Komatsu
Landmark Credit Union
MARS IT Corp
Medical College of Wisconsin
Milwaukee Bucks Inc.
Molson Coors Brewing Company
PwC
Baird
Skygen USA
SysLogic, Inc.
TEKsystems
UFS
Vaco
Verizon
West Bend Mutual Insurance

Community

Alliant Energy
August Brown
Aurora WDC
Beyond STEM
BioForward
Block Time Financial
Boothcentral

Community (cont.)

Carroll University
Cascade Asset Management
CGI
City of Milwaukee
Clifton Larson Allen
Collabera
Comcentia
Concordia University
Connect Business
Continuus Technologies
Data You Can Use
Demantic
Dev10
Digital Intelligence
Dinvy
Expedient
Experis GmbH
Formlabs
Gearbox Labs Inc
Gofarwell
Harqen
Health Payment Systems
HPGM
Husch Blackwell LLP
i.c.stars

Community (cont.)

Ideawake
J.H Findorff & Son
Journey House
Lanex
Maydm
Metro MLS
Milwaukee Area Technical College
Milwaukee County
Milwaukee School of Engineering
MMAC
Naviant
NCWIT-WI
New Horizons Worldwide LLC
New Resources Consulting, LLC
NEWaukee
Northwoods
NVISIA
NVNG
Penrod
Penta Technologies
Pyramid Consulting
Randstad USA
Rex Academy
River Run Computers
SHARP Literacy

Community (cont.)

Signalwire
Silver Linings Systems
Skills Pipeline
Society for Information Management
STEM Forward
Talimer
TEALS
The Business Journals
The Water Council
Tutatara
United Way of Greater Milwaukee
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Versiti
VISIT Milwaukee
Wisconsin IOT Council
Wisconsin Technology Council
Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce
Women in Technology Wisconsin
Women's Entrepreneurship Week
Xorbix Technologies
Yahara Software
Young Enterprising Society
Zizzl
Zywave

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