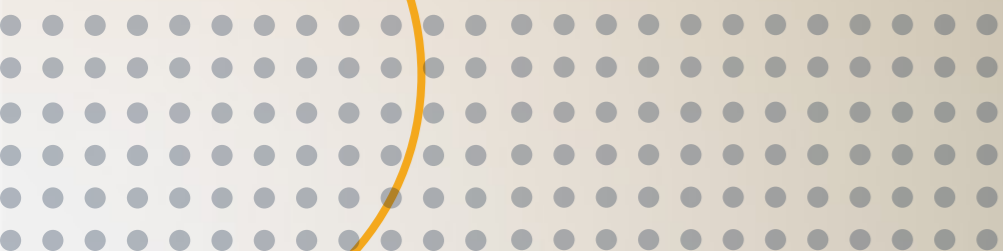




**mke  
tech**

**2021 impact report**



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# A letter from our CEO



Changing the trajectory of any slope requires the infusion of energy. We are proud of the collective energy infused in the SE Wisconsin's tech ecosystem in 2021.

The MKE Tech Hub Coalition was one of the sparks to this energy infusion. In 2021, we grew to sustainable, 110+ member organization, collaborating to grow the MKE Tech Ecosystem. Collectively we multiply each other's efforts and developed solutions that can scale. Diverse voices throughout our board and committee structure have shaped and prioritized these efforts.

These inputs along with research and data, showed where we needed to focus to accelerate our growth. These areas of focus include:

- Attracting talent & businesses, as acquisition is a faster than organic growth
- Building a diverse talent pipeline, our "fuel" to accelerate the transformation
- Scaling the innovation ecosystem, creates jobs while inspiring and attracting talent

As you read this Impact report, you'll see several trends:

**Collective Impact:** We've chosen to invest in areas where collaboration across our members and community can have more impact than any individual organization.

**Partnering for Programmatic Success:** In 2021, we expanded our program offerings through local partnerships. Several of these programs have been recognized both locally and nationally.

**Importance of Connections:** Change at scale requires a systematic, integrated approach. It also requires that individuals and organizations work together towards a common goal.

**Diversity, equity, inclusion infused everywhere:** DEI cannot be a separate activity, but one that is purposeful and infused throughout every program.

**Ready to Scale:** Our entrepreneurial approach has been to build small, test, and then scale. In 2021, we'd developed base assets and programs which are positioned to scale in 2022!

As we look back in our efforts, 2021 will be considered a pivotal year in the Milwaukee Tech Hub Coalition's and the region's journey.

Base systems were created that will enable scale for the future. We look forward to the thrill of the acceleration!

Kathy Henrich  
CEO, Milwaukee Tech Hub Coalition

# mission & vision

The MKE Tech Hub Coalition is a non-profit organization working to **inclusively double tech talent** in the Milwaukee region.

We harness the power of companies, entrepreneurs, educators, community organizations and other area stakeholders to grow tech and innovation for **enduring regional prosperity and life changing jobs.**

# MKE Tech Hub Coalition by the numbers

- Over **110** Member organizations
- Over **105** on Boards and Committees
- Over **2500** Individuals touched by programs and events
- Over **50%** of individuals served by programs from traditionally underrepresented demographics
- Over **60** community partnerships for program and events execution
- Over **100** organizations working together in systematic collaboration groups

# SE Wisconsin\* tech by the numbers

**2300+**  
tech businesses  
(CompTIA)

**80K+**  
tech employees  
(CompTIA)

Top tech areas:  
Advanced Manufacturing,  
Energy/Power Controls,  
Water,  
Health/Bio Tech,  
(WEDC)

# Our focus

Attracting talent  
& businesses

Building a  
diverse talent  
pipeline

Scaling the  
innovation  
ecosystem

Connecting  
community

# Attracting talent & businesses

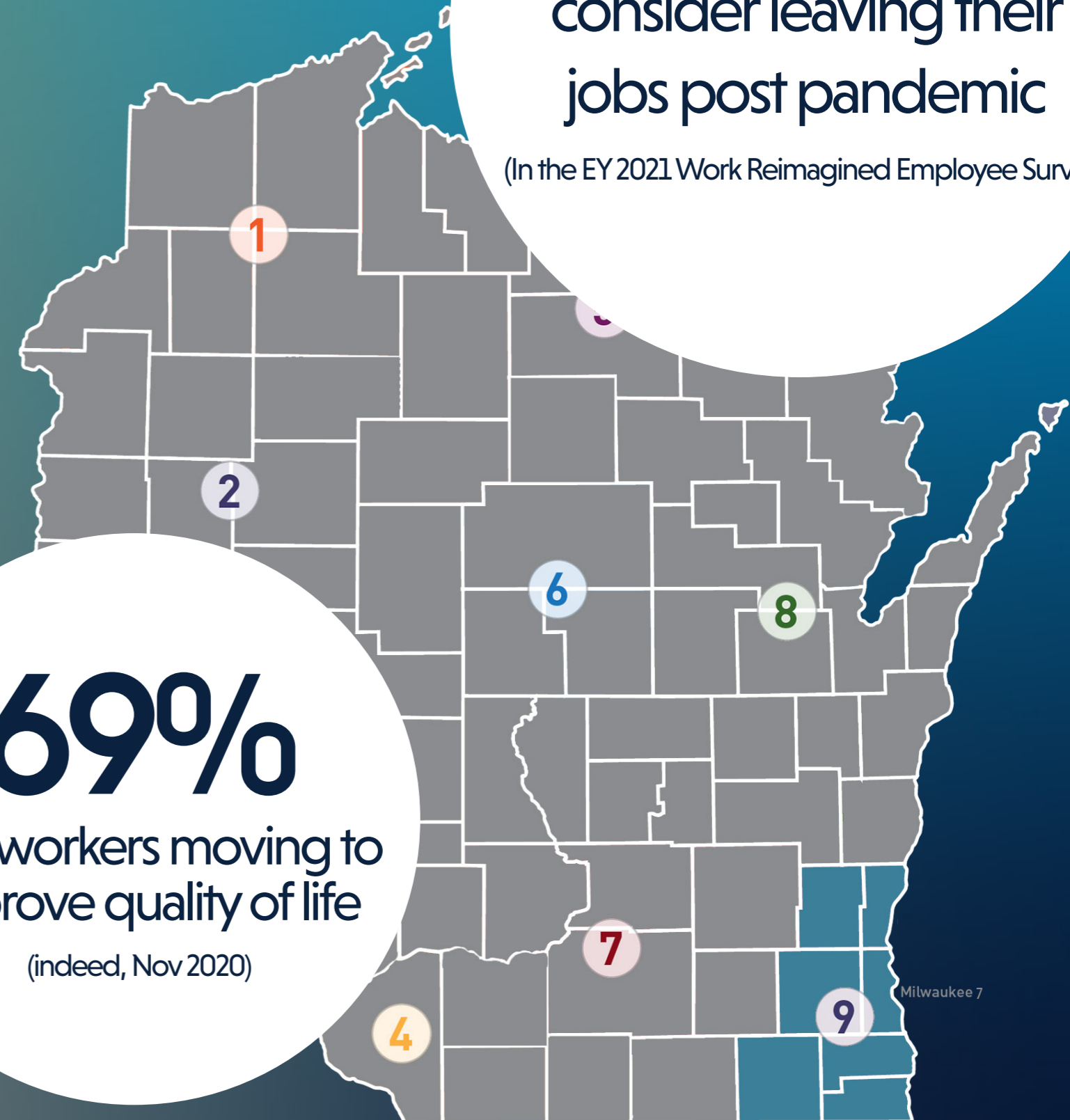
**54%**  
consider leaving their jobs post pandemic  
(In the EY 2021 Work Reimagined Employee Survey)

## Telling Milwaukee's tech story can't wait.

In 2021, COVID-19 continued to turn the world upside down. Amid dizzying change, one reality became obvious. Jobs were no longer tied to location. People had more freedom to choose community first, job second.

This presents a unique opportunity to sell tech workers on the high quality of life that Milwaukee affords. And it requires us to work together to showcase the best of Milwaukee tech.

**69%**  
tech workers moving to improve quality of life  
(indeed, Nov 2020)



# Choose MKE Tech

## Brewing with opportunity

In December, ChooseMKETech.org launched to connect talented tech professionals with top Milwaukee companies and highlight the opportunities that exist within the Milwaukee tech ecosystem.



## Show up where tech talent hangs out

In today's virtual world, you must appear where talent is looking. This year, we built regional relationships to raise the visibility of Milwaukee's tech sector.



## Tech job growth

Companies are choosing to build teams here in Milwaukee with 570 jobs committed to the region.



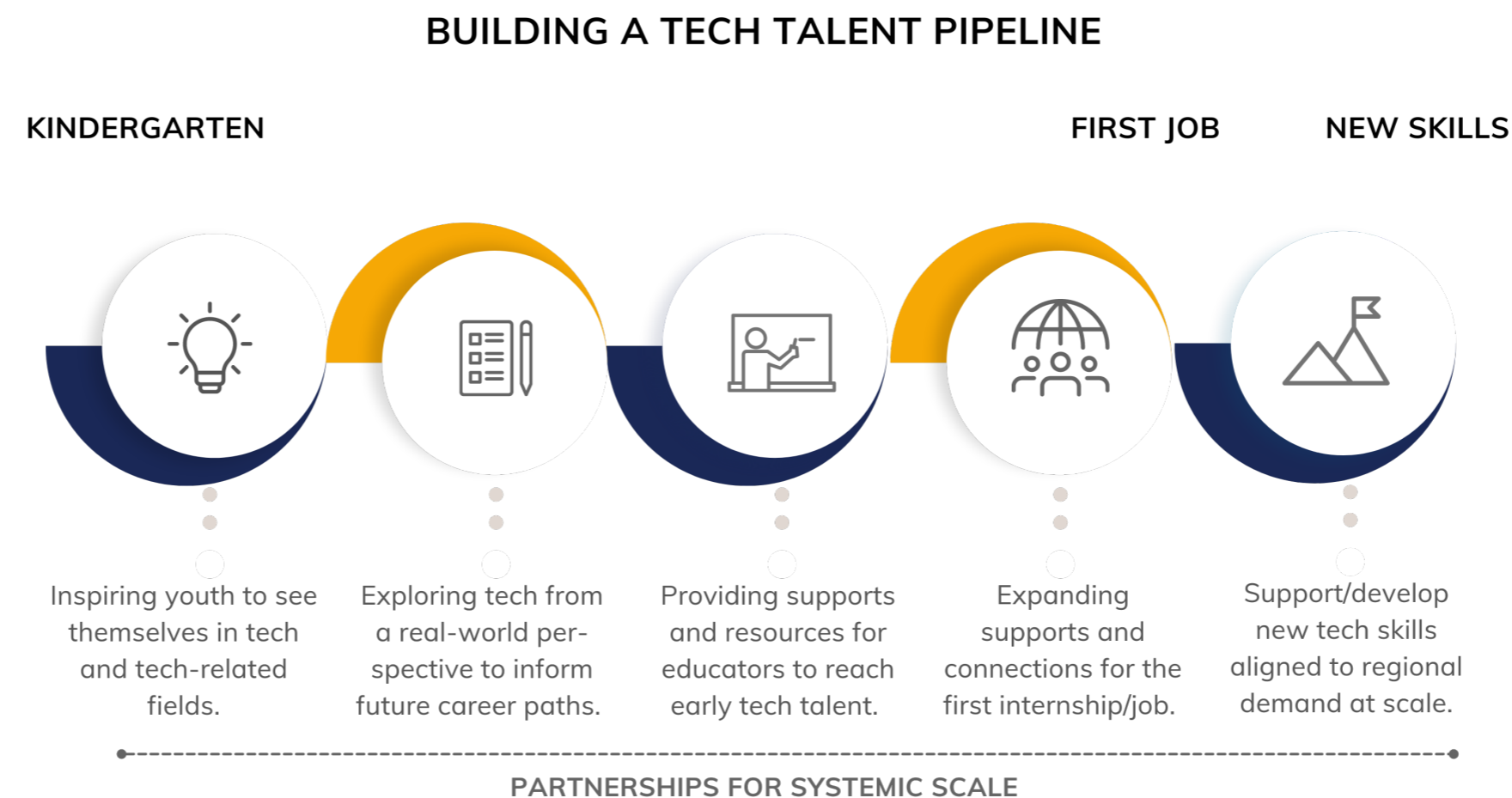
"If you want to be a part of an up and coming tech scene, Milwaukee is a great place to start. The ecosystem is getting more dense by the day, while still being accessible to newcomers." -- Scott Williams, Trivium



# Building a diverse pipeline

As the national need for tech talent outpaces the workforce, SE Wisconsin must deliberately develop talent early on and create new pathways into tech.

In 2021, we created the MKE Tech Talent Accelerator that provides a holistic suite of programs to build and diversify Milwaukee's tech talent pipeline.



**7%**  
Hispanic

**8%**  
Black

**26%**  
Female

(CompTIA, National 2021)

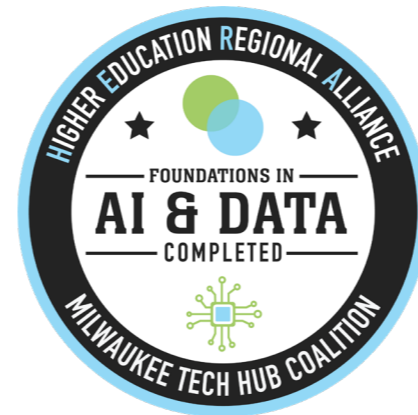
**1.5%**  
national tech  
unemployment rate

(BLS, Sept 2021)

# Summer Pre-Internship

## Preparing students for the future of work in a digital economy

85 students representing 27 schools attended the pre-internship summer program on the Ethics and Impact of Data and Artificial Intelligence. This program was offered in partnership with the Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA) and provided students a real-world perspective on how technology is impacting all industries and their future careers.



Powered by:



This program has really opened my eyes to how all of the different fields within data and AI interact with each other and how my technical skills can be applied in various fields.  
- Ryann, MATC



I'm getting a lot out of the networking process. I hadn't started to build my network before this program, and I didn't know how to build a proper network of people so that's been extremely helpful.  
- Skylar, Carroll University



I'm really appreciative of the diversity in terms of what people are interested in and what has caught student's attention. I've learned a lot through the lens of how the students have interpreted things.  
- Jill, Mentor

**87%**  
diversity among participants

**29** mentors from **10** local companies

**75%**  
earned HERA learning credential

Increased their confidence for starting a career in Milwaukee by **40%**

Reported a **27%** increase in industry-prioritized skill sets

Program Awards:



# Educator In-Service

## Providing resources for educators to support early tech talent

In July, K-12 and collegiate level administrators, educators, career counselors and industry experts came together for a day of learning and exploration of resources that exist at the regional, state, and national level to help build an inclusive environment for computing and related pathways.

**4.7 / 5**

event satisfaction  
score

**88 participants**

from K12, Higher  
Education and  
Nonprofits

Participants said most value came from integration of key concepts and connection between stakeholders to build a strong ecosystem.

# Tech Expo

## Connecting early talent with future employers

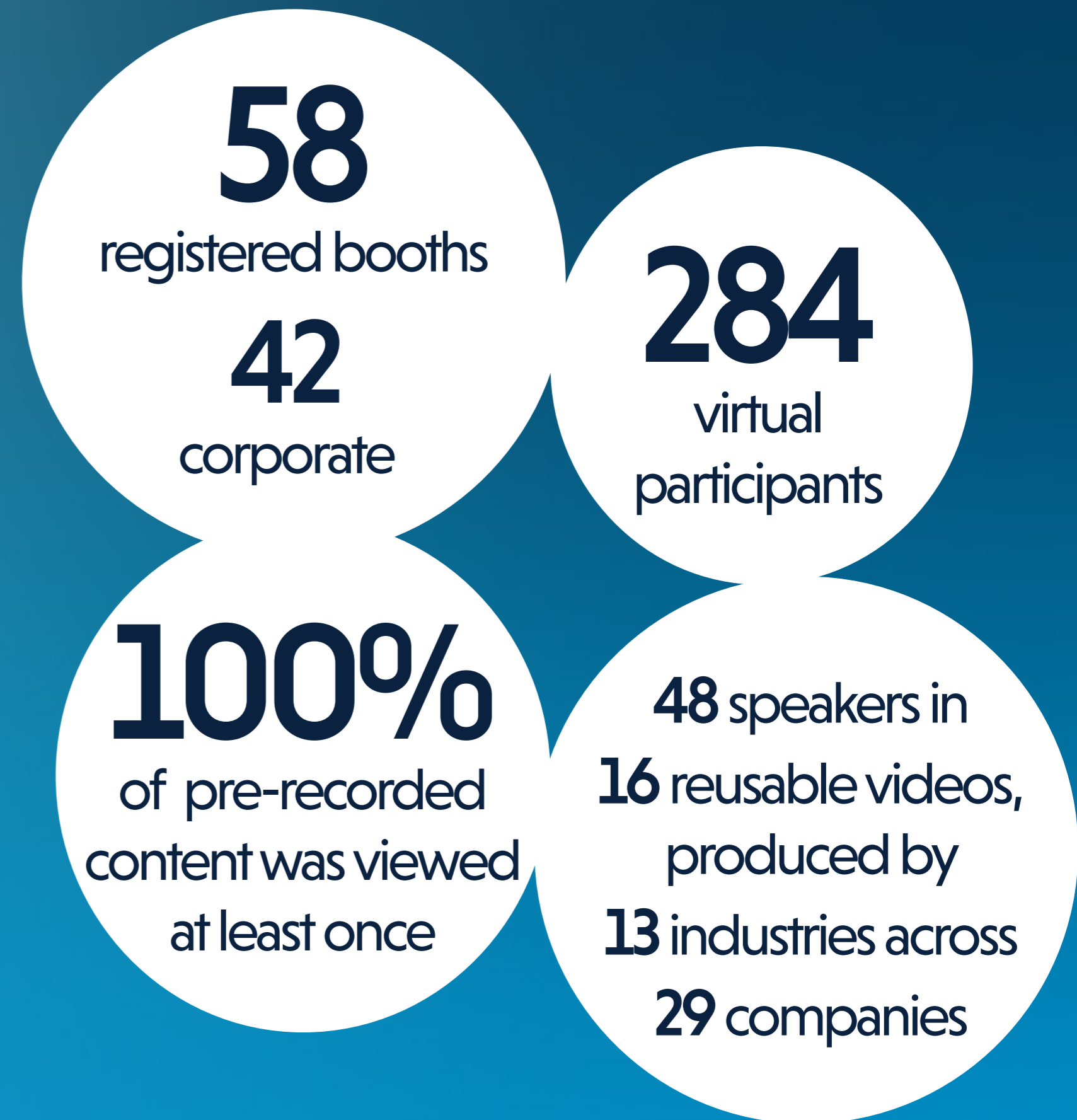
Early & aspiring tech job seekers connected with local organizations during a one-day Tech Expo in September. Participants virtually networked with tech professionals, watched on-demand videos and learned from experts on how to prepare for their tech careers.



I love that Tech Expo was personal and that I could ask questions if needed. I gained so much knowledge from attending. -- Expo participant



It was so good to see all the Coalition Members involved and presented a unified front. It got to the right audience for diversity of reach. -- Booth sponsor



# Hour of Tech

## Igniting an interest for tech in area youth

Area businesses, nonprofits and schools across SE Wisconsin come together to teach an hour of tech to local students during December's Hour of Tech event. This regional week-long experience supports and expands the national Hour of Code movement during Computer Science Week to advance early tech talent in our region.

Powered by:



Promotional support by:



I think my presence and my voice matters here in Milwaukee. And getting my ideas out there and being a part of something larger. I belong here.  
-- Carmen Henry, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee



Programs like Hour of Tech are critically important for our scholars. It gets them exposure to advancements in technology that's important for their future.  
-- Anthony McHenry, Milwaukee Academy of Science



**3x**  
regional goal

**34,858**  
tech mentor hours

**44** participating schools across  
**15** K-12 districts

# Apprenticeships

## Creating new paths into tech

Tech apprenticeships bridge the gap between untapped tech talent and employer's need for highly skilled workers. Launched in 2020, Apprenti of Greater Milwaukee expanded this year with employer support.

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**APPRENTI**



“  
Participating in this apprenticeship program has empowered me to expand my knowledge & experiences from a 7 year career in audio-visual technology and shift into a software development technology career. It is a life-changing opportunity. The program's action-oriented approach helps me learn through doing, which reinforces a deeper understanding of the concepts and gives me the ability to use the information immediately. This has been an invaluable way to gain deeper understanding and build skills at a pace I didn't know was possible.  
-Amy Upthagrove, Apprenticeship Candidate

**\$385k**  
Wisconsin Fast Forward  
Grant to support  
employer sponsors

**2** Apprenticeship  
cohorts with **24**  
participants

**70%**  
from  
under-represented  
demographics

**5**  
participating  
companies, including  
MKE Tech Hub  
Coalition

# Systematic Collaboration Groups

## Scaling impact through purposeful cross-sector partnerships

The Coalition participated in collaborative partnerships throughout the year to expand supports for early tech talent, inform our work and extend opportunities to our members.

- GM-STEM Ecosystem: 5 organizations on Launch Team
- GM-STEM CSforALL Cohort: 7 districts
- GM-STEM Computing Alliance: 12 organizations
- Higher Education Partnership: 5 HERA members
- Preferred Re/Upskilling Provider Network: 10 organizations
- Cream City Talent Collective: 60 organizations involved

Spotlighting ecosystem advancements made possible through purposeful collaboration.



### REGIONAL

- MMAC/CESA1 Greater MKE Regional Career Pathways grant to support Digital Technology Pathway
- Computer Science Toolkit on STEM Forward website
- Inclusion of area technical colleges in NCWIT Extension Services at National level



### STATEWIDE

- Launch of State Plan for Computer Science Education
- Expansion of CSforALL SCRIPT pilot state-wide through CESAs



### NATIONAL

- State of your State “AI Education” Workshop
- CSforALL Policy Brief on AI and Data Science Education

# Scaling the Innovation Ecosystem

Talent is attracted to a strong startup ecosystem. Our programs fill a gap for early-stage founders and spark connections between startups and corporations to fuel growth.

On a per-capita basis, metro Milwaukee attracted less venture capital (VC) investment in 2020 than nearly all of the comparison regions.

\* Wisconsin Policy Forum

Between 2018-2020, the average size of VC deals (1.56M) ranked last among these metros.

\* Wisconsin Policy Forum

# FOR-M Incubator

## Supporting new local founders

FOR-M supports and grows Milwaukee's tech startup ecosystem. The free program offers tech startup founders guidance, connections, and support to kickstart their new business concepts.

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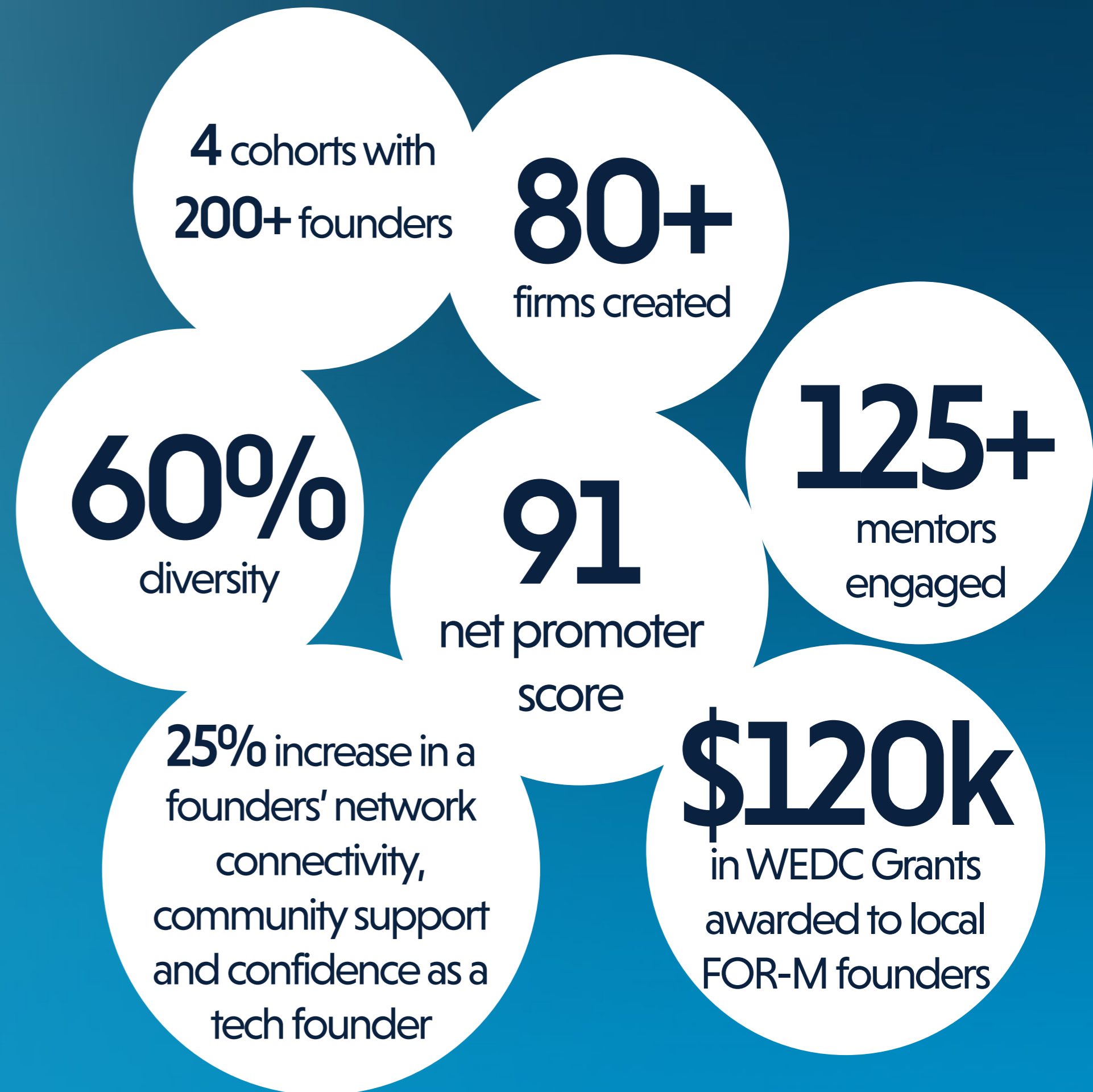


we pivot 



This grant funding will help accelerate Otto's beta testing phase. The FOR-M program helped advance our entrepreneurial journey in a number of ways. The program provided valuable connections with awesome mentors, fresh perspectives on business strategy, and an inclusive community of founders who help each other.

- Harsimran Kalsi, Otto Sciences



# Reverse Pitch MKE

## Flipping the script on pitching competitions

Reverse Pitch MKE is a unique pitching competition where entrepreneurs work with organizations to solve a known critical industry challenge. In its fourth year, we've doubled the pitch challenges and sponsor companies.



"The collaborative and supportive process leaves you walking away with value and exposure regardless of if you win or not. Following the win, you will have long-term support that creates mutual value - creating a true launchpad that can help any company with the right plan go from nothing to success in a relatively short period of time."

– Nathan Harris, Co-founder and CEO, Ease Inc.

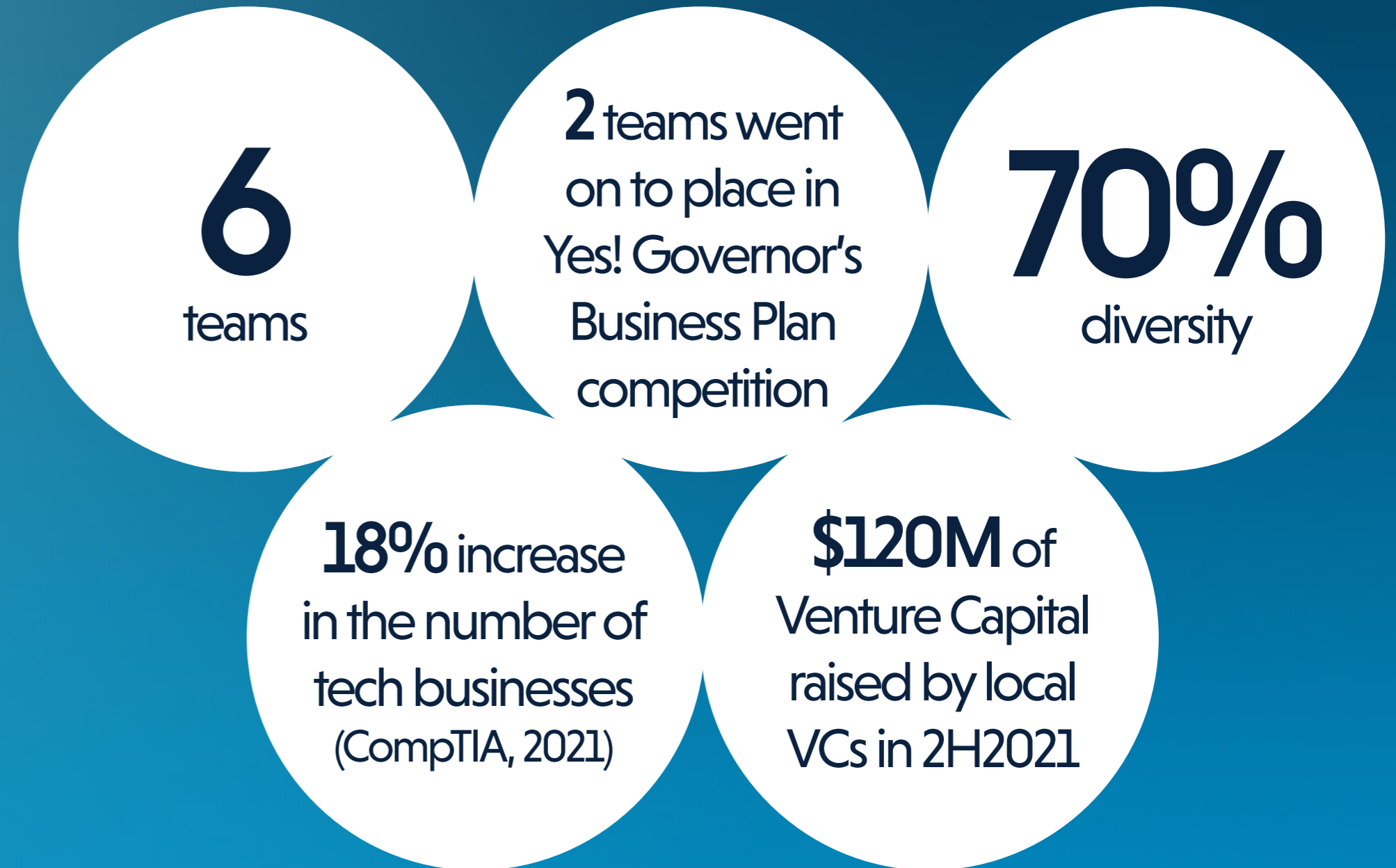


# Reverse Pitch High School Edition

## Growing student entrepreneurs

Utilizing the same challenge statements, students created solutions and competed for prizes with their creative solutions and business plans to solve the problem statement.

Powered by:



# Connecting Community

## Connections and Community

As a community, we're only as strong as our ecosystems. Purposeful discussions and chance meetings build partnerships and industry connections for sustainable growth.

Tech Ecosystems need to be understood as a community that requires active nurturing and maintenance in order to thrive and grow.

(World Economic Forum, 2015)



The efforts to ignite the tech innovation pipeline in Milwaukee has evolved over the last six years. Those early pioneers heroically kindled many opportunities to connect talent with needs. Two years ago, the MKE Tech Hub Coalition created an ecosystem of these resources available to all interested parties. Now it's easier and more efficient to achieve everyone's goals. Thanks to the MKE Tech Hub Coalition to facilitate making connections and accelerating our efforts for Milwaukee to become a world class innovation environment!



-- Mike Speckman, Executive/Founder, formerly of Silicon Valley

**84**  
press mentions on Coalition work, programs and member involvement

Sponsored Milwaukee Business Journal "Tech Awards" to showcase best of tech

**36**  
presentations by Coalition staff to educate public on the tech sector

**4**  
quarterly member meetings to connect and learn from each other

**339**  
intentional community connections between potential collaborators, funders, clients

**191%**  
growth of Coalition membership in 2021

# Milwaukee Tech Week

Powered by:



## Celebrating Tech & Innovation in the Milwaukee region

In its inaugural year, Startup Milwaukee Week merged to become Milwaukee Tech Week, a weeklong celebration of tech, designed to connect, educate, and celebrate innovation across Southeast Wisconsin.

50  
Tech Week events  
run by over 45  
community  
partners

1800+  
participants

## MKE Tech Pulse

### Tracking the growth of the greater Milwaukee tech industry

We launched MKE Tech Pulse in April to begin tracking and reporting on metrics that drive towards our mission. The data provides a snapshot on the overall health of the ecosystem and shares key leading indicators to track how our region is progressing over time.

## National Partners

### Creating systems for growth and learning

The Coalition is connected to national organizations that inform and align our work in SE Wisconsin to best practices elsewhere.

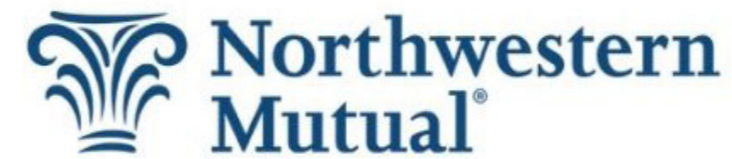


**Thank you**  
**Thank you**  
**Thank you**  
**Thank you**  
**Thank you**  
**Thank you**  
**Thank you**

**Thank you to every member, volunteer, mentor and partner who played a part in making this happen. This work would not be possible without your help. We can do so much more together.**

# Members

## Platinum



## Gold



## Silver



## Bronze



# Members

## Community level

Aerox	Experis ManpowerGroup	Teals Program	SignalWire	WI Veterans Chamber of Commerce
August Brown	Expedient	Milwaukee Business Journal	SilverLinings	Women's Entrepreneurship Week
Aurora WDC	Farwell	Milwaukee County	Skills Pipeline	Women in Technology WI
Beyond STEM	Gearbox Labs	MSOE	SIM	Yahara Software
BioForward	Dev10 Genesis10	Naviant	Southeastern WI Chapter Association	YES
Booth Central	Harquen AI	NCWIT Aspirations in Computing	for Talent Development	Zizzl
Caravela IOT	HPS	Milwaukee Business Journal	STEM Forward	
Carroll University	Healthtech MKE	New Horizons	Talimer	
Cascade Asset Management	HPGM	New Resources Consulting	Trivium	
CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen)	Husch Blackwell	Newaukee	Tuatara	
Cohesity	i.c.stars Milwaukee	NVNG Investment Advisors	United Way	
Collabera	Ideawake	Penta Technologies	University of Wisconsin Milwaukee	
Comcentia	Lanex	Pyramid Consulting	Visit Milwaukee	
Concordia University Wisconsin	Marquette University	Randstad	Wisconsin Inno	
Connect Business Consulting	Milwaukee Area Technical College	Rex Academy	Wisconsin IOT Council	
Continuus Technologies	Maydm	River Fun	Wisconsin Startup Coalition	
Dickmeyer Boyce	Milwaukee 7	Sharp Literacy	Wisconsin Technology Council	

# Our Governance

## Our Board

The MKE Tech Hub Coalition operates in alignment with the strategic direction provided by its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is comprised of representatives from our Founding and Gold members, representatives elected from other membership tiers, and community representatives at large.

Molly Mulroy, Chief Information Officer, We Energies (Chair)  
James Hischke, Vice President Technology Workforce Programs, Northwestern Mutual  
Wendy Schafer, System VP HIT Strategy & Operation, Advocate Aurora Health  
Eric Senn, Vice President, Global Digital Business Development, Johnson Controls  
Rebecca Janutis, Vice President, Chief Information Security Officer, Kohls  
Rashi Khosla, Founder and CEO, MARS Solutions Group

Mara Lord, Senior Vice President, Medical College of Wisconsin  
Dan Renouard, Managing Director, Strategic Initiatives, Baird  
Marlena Eanes, Regional Manager, Microsoft TEALS Program  
Matt Cordio, Founder, Skills Pipeline  
Gordon Nameni, PhD, Managing Director, August Brown  
Jason Fields, CEO, Madison Region Economic Partnership

## Our Advisory Team

The Advisory Team prioritizes Subcommittee recommendations across initiatives and advances them to the Board for action. Member representatives include leads elected by their subcommittees and representatives from our Founding, Gold, and Silver members.

## Our Committees

105 active committee members across 10 committee teams provide governance and strategic input. Subcommittees prioritize efforts within each initiative and develop creative solutions to drive talent supply and demand strategies.

# Our program sponsors



# Our program partners



# Community partners

Intentional strategic partnerships create greater impact than what can be achieved alone. This year, we worked with over **50 local & regional organizations** to advance the mission and extend impact across the community in meaningful ways.

# Stay connected

Stay connected and informed by signing up for our newsletter on our website: [www.mketech.org](http://www.mketech.org).

Keep up with #mketech news on social media:

LinkedIn:  
[linkedin.com/company/mketech](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mketech)

Twitter:  
[@MKETechHub](https://twitter.com/MKETechHub)

Facebook:  
[facebook.com/mketechhub](https://www.facebook.com/mketechhub)

Instagram:  
[instagram.com/mketechhubcoalition/](https://www.instagram.com/mketechhubcoalition/)

Email us at [contact@mketech.org](mailto:contact@mketech.org)