

W.E.
UPJOHN INSTITUTE
FOR EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH

Senior Director of Regional Economic and Community
Development



The W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research (“Institute”) invites nominations and applications for the position of Senior Director of Regional Economic and Community Development (“Senior Director”).

OVERVIEW

The W.E. Upjohn Institute, a private, not-for-profit, nonpartisan, independent research organization, has been studying policy-related issues of employment and unemployment since its founding in 1932. With approximately 125 staff members and a budget of \$21 million the Institute is headquartered in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Institute research focuses on labor markets, addressing several core areas:

- The causes of unemployment and the effectiveness of social safety net programs in mitigating its effects;
- Education and training systems to improve workers’ employability and earnings;
- The influence of state and local economic development policies on local labor markets; and,
- The Institute also assesses emerging trends affecting workers and labor markets in its core research areas.

The Institute carries out its mission by disseminating its research and through direct services. The communications team makes sure Institute insight reaches the researchers, policymakers, advocates, and practitioners who can put it to use. The Center for Workforce Innovation and Solutions administers federal and state-funded employment and training programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers in Southwest Michigan.

HISTORY

The Institute traces its roots to the concerns of a Kalamazoo industrialist and philanthropist for the well-being of laid-off workers and their families during the Great Depression. In 1932, Dr. W. E. Upjohn, a physician and founder of the Upjohn Company, embarked on a grand experiment of providing land for displaced workers in the community to cultivate gardens or work at the farm co-op he created to provide for themselves and their families. To support the initiative for future generations, Dr. Upjohn created the W.E. Upjohn Unemployment Trustee Corporation and donated 1,100 acres of land and shares of company stock to the Trustee Corporation. Three years later, Congress passed legislation that created the Unemployment Insurance System, which replaced the land as a social safety net with cash assistance to displaced workers. After consulting with national experts on how best to continue to serve the unemployed, the Trustee Corporation created in 1945 what is today the W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Today, nearly 86 years since the inception of the Trustee Corporation, the Institute continues to fulfill Dr. Upjohn’s original mission by researching the causes and consequences of unemployment, experimenting with innovative ways to help the unemployed, and disseminating research findings. Its in-house staff of researchers, complemented by grants to outside experts, analyzes a host of policy-relevant employment issues. As a modern-day equivalent of the “farm” experiment, the Institute’s Center for Workforce Innovation and Solutions strategically plans and administers the delivery of federal- and state-funded workforce programs for the region. Its engagement in both research and operations is a unique feature of the Institute, offering researchers greater insight into the daily issues facing workforce program staff and administrators. In turn, it provides administrators with state-of-the-art research findings and analytical capabilities to carry out their operations more effectively.

MISSION

According to its charter, the mission of the Institute is three-pronged:

- Research the causes and consequences of unemployment and study and investigate the feasibility and methods of insuring against unemployment;
- Devise ways and means of preventing and alleviating the distress and hardship caused by unemployment; and
- Create, experiment with, and put into effect any plan or device that the Board may determine feasible to accomplish that purpose.

The mission statement underscores the importance of incorporating all three elements in addressing the causes and consequences of unemployment. These include the fundamental need to conduct rigorous, high-quality research; the importance of experimenting with new ideas; and the necessity of disseminating research findings and providing technical assistance to those who make policy decisions and to those who administer the programs that provide services to workers and the unemployed who need assistance.

RESEARCH AND MAJOR INITIATIVES

Institute research is primarily focused on U.S. labor markets and addresses several core areas:

- [Education & Workforce Development](#): From early childhood education through postsecondary education and public training programs, The Upjohn Institute's research elucidates how each learning stage and program contributes to a strong workforce.
- [Economic Development](#): Through the study of specific industries, local labor markets, regional policy and planning, and transportation and infrastructure study, The Upjohn Institute research offers insights at all levels and from both the supply and demand sides. Focal areas include manufacturing, tax incentives, and regional collaboration.
- [Labor Market Issues](#): As jobs are changing and the future of work is uncertain due to many pressures, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the Upjohn Institute researches evolving struggles over wages, inequality, immigration, regulations, automation, offshoring, and gig work.
- [Social Safety Net](#): Central to the Institute's mission to address causes and solutions to unemployment is the examination of social safety net programs. The Institute specifically focuses on poverty and income support, unemployment insurance, and worker's compensation and disability benefits. Research assesses the effectiveness of current social insurance programs and explores other strategies to keep people in stable jobs and minimize the effect of economic downturns.

These topics often call for an integrated approach that brings together various strains of research that use different methodologies, resulting in targeted, [Major Initiatives](#), including:

- [The Promise: Investing in Community](#): This initiative brings together Institute expertise on place-based scholarships and local labor market issues, including economic development policies such as tax incentives and customized business services.
- [Outsourcing: Impacts on the U.S. Workforce](#): This initiative highlights research and researchers examining outsourcing and its implications for workers. The Research Network on Outsourcing supports convenings to discuss new topical research.

The Institute promotes a healthy exchange of ideas through frequent internal seminars and has a seminar series that hosts numerous outside speakers during the year. The former allows research staff to receive feedback from colleagues on preliminary work, while the latter provides the opportunity for intellectual exchange between Institute staff and outside scholars.

Teams led by Ph.D.-level staff and supported by a dedicated corps of research analysts and research assistants, some of whom have master's degrees and over ten years' experience, undertake the Institute's research. Individuals in the research program work collaboratively, and the Institute maintains a flexible method of project assignments for research support personnel which has fostered a cooperative tradition. This research support team is equipped to handle highly complex analyses.

DATA & TOOLS

The Institute invests in state-of-the-art computing, large administrative and specialty datasets, and information resources. This investment allows the Institute to provide technologies to process big data, the capacity and stability necessary to execute sophisticated data analysis, and software to collaborate locally and across the globe. The in-house technical staff maintains systems, provides technical assistance, and keeps abreast of ever-evolving tools and technologies necessary for conducting Institute projects. The Institute's Information Center staff offer research support, provide ready access to most of the literature relevant for carrying out the Institute's research, maintain all Institute research products in its repository, and compile periodic information updates. Due to this infrastructure and expertise, the Institute has served as a data repository for many projects sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, hosts an [interactive map](#) containing all of the nation's Workforce Investment Areas, and tracks several [usage and success measures](#) of the Kalamazoo Promise.

Furthermore, the Institute maintains three interactive databases:

- The [Panel Database on Incentives and Taxation](#), which provides comprehensive information on business incentives for economic development provided by state and local governments;
- The [New Hires Quality Index](#), a consistent way of measuring the earnings power of people taking new jobs each month, allowing comparisons over time; and,
- The place-based college-scholarship [Promise Programs Database](#), which details promise scholarship programs across the country.

THE CENTER FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Regional team's research focuses on applied economic and technical assistance and addresses issues in regional economies, economic development, workforce/occupational development, evaluation, and economic impact modeling and analysis. The team assists corporate, nonprofit, economic, and workforce development entities as well as all levels of government in problem resolution and strategic decision-making. In addition to specific expertise in Southwest Michigan, the team supports organizations across the state and the nation, including government agencies and Fortune 500 companies. The regional team provides economic outlook presentations inside and outside of Michigan, annual economic and employment forecasts for Southwest Michigan's metropolitan areas. It produces a monthly publication, Regional Economic Trends for West Michigan. Each issue summarizes the latest county-level data on employment, job growth, and job postings in an easy-to-read visual format. Reports are available for Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and St. Joseph counties. Special issues will also feature economic forecasts for the region, designed to provide detailed insight and understanding of economic trends.

Furthermore, the team helps clients [analyze suitable databases](#) for their needs, conduct [economic impact studies](#) around projects or industries, provide [community assessments](#), and provide [urban and regional land use and resource planning](#) and mapping insights.

Through the Community Development team, the Institute supports the [Kalamazoo Promise](#). Formed in 2005 by a group of anonymous donors, the Kalamazoo Promise is the nation's first universal, place-based college scholarship. Thanks to the Promise, students who attend Kalamazoo Public Schools from kindergarten through high school graduation can receive full-tuition scholarships to earn a college degree or certificate at any of Michigan's public colleges or universities, plus 15 of the state's private liberal arts colleges. Diverse communities and organizations have retained the Community Development team to examine the design, feasibility, impact, and potential cost of [new Promise programs and related community initiatives](#).

This team also oversees the [Southcentral Michigan Planning Council](#) (SMPC), which is one of 14 regional planning organizations in Michigan established by state legislation. SMPC represents Region 3, comprised of Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and St. Joseph Counties. SMPC aims to improve the economic, environmental, and fiscal health of member organizations through transportation, land use planning, environmental planning, economic development, and efficient local staff. The team also invests in the future by supporting Michigan's early childhood development and is responsible for community partnerships and assessments, specifically with the City of Kalamazoo.

THE CENTER FOR WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND SOLUTIONS

The Institute operates several direct services supporting state and local workforce development. The largest, Michigan Works! Southwest, administers federal- and state-funded employment and training programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers in four Southwest Michigan counties. Since 1973, the Institute has been the administrative entity for local, federal, and state employment and training programs. Currently, the service delivery area encompasses four counties with a combined population of nearly 500,000. For FY 2020, services were provided to more than 5,200 participants through nine programs with a total budget of over \$10 million from more than 50 funding sources. The major workforce development programs are under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and provide job training and reemployment services to dislocated workers, disadvantaged adults, and youth. The Upjohn Institute also administers several programs through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant, including Partnership, Accountability, Training, and Hope (PATH) for individuals receiving cash assistance, refugee assistance programs, job training under the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), partnerships for adult learning, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for displaced workers, and general employment services funded by the Wagner-Peyser Act.

The Center recently signed an agreement to be the administrator of the Employer Resource Network (ERN) for the State of Michigan. This network provides on-site wrap around services for employees in need of assistance. The ERNs are financed through state grants and employer contributions.

The Center also administers the Neighborhood Employment Hubs program. This grant-funded work brings employment and social safety net services directly to high poverty areas by operating within trusted neighborhood locations like churches, schools, and businesses. This model is designed to tear down barriers to seeking and obtaining employment support by meeting community members where they are.

The newest addition to the Center is the Pulse program, which works on an array of child-care related issues, including pay equity for childcare professionals and early child-care outcomes for our region.

PUBLICATION AND COMMUNICATION

In order to accomplish its mission of alleviating unemployment, the Upjohn Institute aims to reach policymakers and practitioners, academic and policy researchers, and the media with research and best practices.

The Institute has a long history of disseminating its work through traditional academic channels of books, working papers, newsletters, and peer-reviewed publications. [Upjohn Press](#), the Institute's publication program, helps accomplish this by producing books and ebooks that offer rigorous yet accessible exploration of topical, policy-relevant issues. The first monograph published by the Institute, *Full Employment in Your Community*, appeared in 1947. Since then, some 225 books on a wide variety of labor-related issues have been published. In celebration of the Institute's 75th Anniversary in 2020, the Upjohn Press released its back [catalog of books](#) in Open Access format. Focused on highly relevant topics, these titles have been recognized by Princeton University's Industrial Relations Section as being "Noteworthy in Labor Economics and Industrial Relations," one of the highest honors attainable for books in this discipline. Since its release, over 100,000 downloads by over 5,000 organizations have occurred. The Institute is also home to [Economic Development Quarterly \(EDQ\)](#). EDQ is a peer-reviewed journal dedicated to publishing and bringing to the attention of policymakers, decision-makers, and researchers the latest quality research findings in economic development. The Institute also publishes a monthly report designed to deliver up-to-date information on local economic conditions to the West Michigan community called [Regional Economic Trends](#).

As part of the Institute's strategic planning process, a new position of Senior Director of Media and Publications Strategy was added to the executive team in 2020 and a full communications staff was established. This team has been working to revamp the Institute's approach to communications strategy with a focus on digital excellence. Plans are in place to relaunch upjohn.org in 2022 to allow for enhanced integration of the work of various Institute teams, as well as the ability to establish wide-reaching content and product strategies. In recent years, the Institute has also furthered its social media presence, created shorter formats such as policy briefs for Institute research products, and used webinars and interactive databases for significant releases. Additionally, the Institute has built relationships with other organizations that share its interests, and, through coordinated efforts, help amplify the Institute's message.

GOVERNANCE

A seven-member, self-perpetuating [Board of Trustees](#) governs The Upjohn Institute. Board membership consists of leaders in education, business, law, and healthcare and are individuals who reflect both regional and national perspectives.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP

[Michael Horrigan](#) took over as the Upjohn Institute's president in March 2019 and is an expert in education and workforce development as well as labor market issues. Mike worked for over 32 years at the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). He rose through the ranks as a division chief, the director of the National Longitudinal Surveys Program, and assistant commissioner in two offices. He served as associate commissioner for the Offices of Prices and Living Conditions before taking his role of associate commissioner in the Office of Unemployment and Unemployment Statistics in 2014.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The Institute is fully committed to an environment of diversity, equity, and Inclusion. Recent developments include the establishment of an active Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, new and updated employee policies which support equity, and comprehensive organization wide DEI training. Ongoing work includes developing strategic processes to create diverse applicant pools for all positions, conducting structured new employee onboarding that is supportive of diversity and equity, and making equity a priority as part of management development education and training.

FINANCES

Dr. Upjohn's generous gift in creating the Trustee Corporation has provided the primary financial means to support the Institute's activities. The endowment, valued at approximately \$250 million today, provides the Institute with unique opportunities for long-term sustainability, consistency in purpose, and the freedom to research issues and experiment with innovative approaches deemed most pertinent to its mission.

The organization has annual outlays of \$21 million. Because of the endowment, the Institute enjoys a level of independence from funders that gives its work an extra level of credibility. Since its inception, the Upjohn Institute has used that independence responsibly to conduct research and disseminate its findings.

KALAMAZOO AND THE REGION

Kalamazoo is a diverse and progressive metropolitan area in southwest Michigan, halfway between Chicago and Detroit. Located 35 miles east of Lake Michigan, Kalamazoo is nestled amid rolling hills, woodlands, and inland lakes and near a variety of amenities. *The New Yorker* dubbed Kalamazoo "a little Athens" because of the variety and vitality of cultural activities found in the city. The area boasts theater productions, a highly acclaimed symphony, chamber music, choral festivals, and the internationally renowned Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. These cultural activities take place within a county with a population of roughly 265,000.

The Institute sits amid a rich educational community that includes several institutions of higher education: [Kalamazoo College](#), a small, private residential liberal arts college; [Western Michigan University](#), a large public research institution with a nationally-recognized medical school; and [Kalamazoo Valley Community College](#), a two-year public institution. With a diverse range of scholars and researchers at its fingertips, the Institute is ideally located for continued partnerships that benefit both the nation and the community in which the Institute was born.

THE NEXT SENIOR DIRECTOR

Reporting to the President of the Upjohn Institute, Michael Horrigan, the Senior Director of Regional Economic and Community Development is responsible for creating a strategic vision and directing the work of two departments within the Upjohn Institute: the Division of Regional Economic Development and the Division of Community Development. The Senior Director provides direct supervision to the staff of the Division of Regional Economic Development, which currently consists of two Regional Analysts and a Mapping and Data Visualization Specialist, as well as to the Director of the Division of Community Development, who in turn manages staff assigned to the SMPC and the Kalamazoo Promise.

The incumbent works collaboratively with both external stakeholders and Institute staff. In particular, the position requires working closely with the Senior Research staff, on major research initiatives, and with workforce development programs to identify projects that bridge the world of research and policy with practical applications to both local and regional economies. Additionally, the Senior Director will take on the following opportunities and challenges:

Opportunities and Challenges

- **Expand the Institute’s visibility and engagement with the public:** The next Senior Director will possess a facility in engaging with a wide variety of people, in both small and large settings, to aid in raising the visibility of the Institute. Prioritizing external engagement, the Senior Director will be an “out and about” leader in the community, ensuring that current relationships are well-maintained, that new and potential relationships are explored and cultivated, and that research and scholarship are disseminated in a publicly consumable and impactful way.
- **Champion diversity, equity, and inclusion:** The next Senior Director will ensure that the Institute is a diverse, welcoming, and inclusive workplace. Serving as a model in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion, the Senior Director will support the recruitment, retention, and promotion of individuals from diverse backgrounds within the Regional Economic Development and Community Development teams. Furthermore, the Senior Director will extend this mentality to the Institute’s work product to serve the needs of an ever-diversifying public.
- **Bring together research and applied initiatives:** As the Institute continues to encourage cross-departmental collaboration, the Senior Director will have a unique position from which to continue to bridge research and applied work. They will introduce innovative and creative strategies that bring together staff to engage each other’s work in pioneering and impactful ways and will inspire collaboration across research, regional operations, and national engagement.
- **Serve as a strategic and valuable member of the Institute’s leadership team:** In concert with the Board, the President, and senior leadership, the Senior Director will aid in strategic visioning, adapting the work of the Institute to meet changing needs and new challenges, and implement the current strategic plan. At this pivotal stage in its history, the Institute is willing to take informed risks to achieve even greater success and impact at regional, national, and internationally levels. The Senior Director will serve as a valuable contributor to these efforts.
- **Foster innovation around the future of work and information dissemination:** As the country and globe emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Institute is thinking ahead to its long-term impact on the workplace and employment. The Senior Director will foster innovation within current endeavors and in developing new opportunities to address changing conditions. Furthermore, the Senior Director will promote the exploration of strategies to improve outreach efforts, reach more stakeholders, and provide timely and relevant information about the research and other activities of the Institute to its audiences and partners.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The incoming Senior Director will further illuminate the work and impact of the Institute, demonstrating a deep understanding of the national dialogue around issues of labor and unemployment. The successful candidate will have a Ph.D. in public policy, economics, or a related field along with at least four years of relevant work experience, or they will hold a master's degree and at least six years of relevant work experience. Additionally, the next Senior Director will possess many of the following qualities and characteristics:

- Experience with and a passion for practical economic impact analysis;
- Desire to seek opportunities to work with organizations and community leaders on workforce and economic development projects and in solving economic problems;
- Strong quantitative skills, including financial management and oversight experience;
- Familiarity with academic publishing;
- Facility with writing reports;
- Passion for engaging with and making presentations to both lay and professional audiences;
- Demonstrated leadership experience and a collaborative managerial style, with regards to both staff and projects;
- Diplomacy and listening ability to engage a diverse group of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners;
- The ability to support and develop people, inspiring collaboration, mutual respect, and shared momentum;
- A proven commitment to building trusting and collaborative relationships;
- Unwavering dedication to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment;
- Capacity to motivate researchers to compete for and complete high-value projects;
- A record of research accomplishment in an employment-related field; and,
- Ability to lead with inspiration, vision, and intellectual depth.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Evaluation of candidate materials will begin immediately and continue until a new Senior Director is named. Nominations and applications can be sent electronically and in confidence to:



Shelly Weiss Storbeck, Global Education Practice Lead
and Managing Director
Anne Koellhoffer, Senior Associate
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For more information, please visit Upjohn Institute's home page at upjohn.org.

The Upjohn Institute is an Equal Opportunity Employer and as such, is committed to affirmative action steps to help achieve a goal of equality in the treatment of employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, age height, weight, national origin, veteran or disability status in hiring, promotion training and development, compensation, transfer, termination, disciplinary action, and all other personnel actions and Institute related functions and activities.