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Markle Partners with State of Colorado, LinkedIn, edX, and Local Education Providers and Employers to Launch Rework America Connected—a Partnership to Build a 21st Century Digital Labor Market to Create More Opportunities for Colorado’s Middle-Skill Jobseekers

Denver, CO – Markle Foundation CEO and President Zoë Baird today joined with Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, Lt. Governor Joe Garcia, LinkedIn Co-Founder Allen Blue, edX President and COO Wendy Cebula, Intertech Plastics CEO Noel Ginsburg and Senior Vice President and COO of Kaiser Permanente Colorado Nancy Wollen to announce **Rework America Connected**, a partnership that will build on major initiatives already underway in Colorado and use new technologies and programs to better connect and support jobseekers, employers, and educational providers.

This announcement comes in conjunction with Governor Hickenlooper’s efforts to create the Business Experiential-Learning Commission to ensure middle-skill workers have the training to meet the needs of Colorado employers.

Rework America Connected will provide opportunity for many more Americans to qualify for good paying careers, whether or not they have a college degree. It will benefit employers by allowing them to more effectively fill available positions with skilled employees. More than half of all American employers say a lack of skilled workers is the reason so many jobs remain unfilled.

Rework America Connected, being built in partnership with LinkedIn, Arizona State University, and edX, will work with the State of Colorado and Colorado employers and educators to connect, enhance, and scale efforts underway through technology, as well as offer new tools and resources. The program aims to help connect individuals—from the skilled, mid-career worker whose job has been reshaped by technology to the retail worker looking for a leg up into a middle-skill career—to career and education opportunities and develop a more qualified workforce for Colorado employers.

“As the digital economy continues to rapidly change our work lives, we have an opportunity here in Colorado to help thousands land middle-skill jobs that offer them a way toward meaningful career paths,” said **Markle CEO and President Zoë Baird, who leads Rework America**. “There are so many people who have the capacity to move into better jobs, and so many businesses who need skilled workers; now we need to connect both and put opportunity within reach. Imagine the possibilities if businesses use concrete skill sets as their benchmarks for employment, and

education and training providers offered credentials that identify a job seeker's capabilities. We could open doors for so many who are ready to tackle a wide range of work and who want the opportunity to thrive in today's economy."

"Colorado has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country, but we know there is still work to do, especially for middle-skill jobs," said **Gov. John Hickenlooper**. "Innovative approaches like Rework America Connected will help end the skills mismatch and create a transparent job market that offers Coloradans a chance at a career path with real advancement potential, aligning with the goals of the new Business Experiential-Learning Commission."

Rework America Connected will provide cutting edge technology tools and resources to jobseekers, employers, and educators—from data and dashboards on industry-specific talent needs to flexible, innovative educational and training content from online providers like community colleges and boot camps. It will also deploy a sophisticated recruitment effort to engage and connect middle-skill workers of all types, a population that is often underserved and disconnected from job opportunities and education tools.

"LinkedIn's vision is to create economic opportunity for every member of the global workforce," said **LinkedIn VP Product Management and Co-Founder Allen Blue**. "With Rework America Connected, we are taking another step towards achieving that vision. Through greater transparency between employers, educators, and jobseekers, we're aiming to create greater economic opportunity for middle-skilled workers."

"Working with Rework America Connected, we will empower organizations to create high-quality online learning experiences and credentials valued by employers to help jobseekers gain the knowledge and skills needed to advance their careers," said **edX President and COO Wendy Cebula**.

Employers welcomed Rework America Connected as an important tool to help expand their business.

"Across the state, advanced manufacturing companies deal with the challenge of finding skilled workers to fit our needs, which is why Rework America Connected will create a bridge to help our industry grow," said **Noel Ginsburg, Intertech Plastics CEO**. "We have more need for skilled workers than ever before—and we are excited to use Rework America Connected to find new employees and help Colorado's economy continue to excel."

Colorado will be the first state in the nation to participate in Rework America Connected and Phoenix will be the first city. Rework America Connected chose these locations for their track record and commitment to job creation, education, and innovation, as well as their commitment to building partnerships aimed at improving the lives of its citizens.

Employers, jobseekers, educational institutions, and community-based organizations interested in participating in the program are welcome to visit www.reworkamericaconnected.org to join the coalition or sign up for more information. Rework America Connected can also be found on Facebook at Rework America and on Twitter [@ReworkAmerica](https://twitter.com/ReworkAmerica).

Rework America Connected is a key part of the Markle Foundation's Rework America initiative, which is driving real solutions to the disruptive changes brought on by technology and globalization. Rework America's 56 members are leaders from across a diverse spectrum who work to drive innovations to create opportunities for Americans in today's networked economy. Most recently, Markle's members collectively [authored the book](#), "*America's Moment: Creating Opportunity in the Connected Age*," which calls on leaders from all sectors to create new paths for good and meaningful work, offers an agenda for action, and outlines recommendations to navigate the changing economic landscape of the connected age.

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Rework America Connected is now known as Skillful.

About Markle and Rework America

Markle leverages the potential of information technology to drive solutions to some of the nation's most pressing problems in the areas of health, the economy, and national security. Markle's current initiative, Rework America, is focused on accelerating innovations that use the forces of technology and globalization to return opportunities to Americans in today's rapidly changing networked economy. For more information, visit markle.org, follow the foundation on Twitter @MarkleFdn, and visit [Rework America](#).