



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2021

Contact: Celina Shands (858) 735-2883

Coalition for Adult Basic Education Launches 'Behind Every Employer' Campaign to Help Businesses Solve Skilled-Worker Problem

Bradenton, FL– Employers are faced with multiple challenges in rebuilding during the pandemic that relate to both finding and retaining skilled workforce talent. [The August 2021 National Federation of Independent Business' monthly jobs report](#) revealed that 50% of all small business owners have job openings they could not fill in the current period, far above the 48-year historical average of 22%. The trend toward increasing skills and responsibilities to frontline workers, as well as increased [automation](#), is placing additional skills pressures on employers. There are about 50 million people in the U.S. who qualify as frontline workers according to the [Brookings Institution](#), and these critical workers are faced with the increased pressures of automation and learning new skill sets.

Growing the workforce talent pipeline and helping employers upskill their own workers is a core focus of the Coalition on Adult Basic Education's (COABE) Behind Every Employer campaign that strategically connects companies with education and workforce organizations that provide solutions to their workforce challenges.

"We hear regularly from our employer partners that they are having trouble not only finding the skilled workers but understanding the best strategies to grow and upskill their own workforce. Yet there is a lack of awareness about the public workforce and education systems in place that are meant to help employers solve these critical challenges - - like our workplace literacy programs," said COABE CEO, Sharon Bonney.

Behind Every Employer Advisory Committee Member, Anson Green leads the career advancement solutions for frontline team members at Tyson Foods and commented, "The [latest National Center for Education Statistics data](#) revealed that almost 20% of adults in the U.S. were at the lowest levels on basic education, almost 30% lacked basic math skills, and almost a quarter are at the lowest level of digital problem solving. Workplace literacy programs are available to employers to help improve these skills gaps among their front line workers to stay competitive."

According to research firm [Policy Link](#), companies that invest in the advancement of frontline employees "have seen improved levels of productivity, better customer service and enhanced employer branding." These investments can solve [expensive turnover challenges](#) for businesses which are estimated to cost about one-fifth of an employee's annual salary to replace that worker.

The [Behind Every Employer](#) campaign is led by an advisory committee of business leaders with [COABE](#) and [SkillsUSA](#) to build awareness about public/private industry and education partnerships and solutions. In the Fall of 2021, the campaign will add a locator map to its website that allows employers to find workforce solutions and public workforce and education providers by zip code.

For more information on the campaign, go to www.BehindEveryEmployer.org

###

About COABE

COABE is comprised of educators, administrators, mentors and guides working to improve educational outcomes for adults and build communities. Its nearly 21,000 members create new opportunities for adult students who need a wide variety of educational support. Learn more at www.COABE.org