

Where Are the Workers?

Insights from Employers and Working Age Adults in Greater Akron

August 2, 2022 Webinar

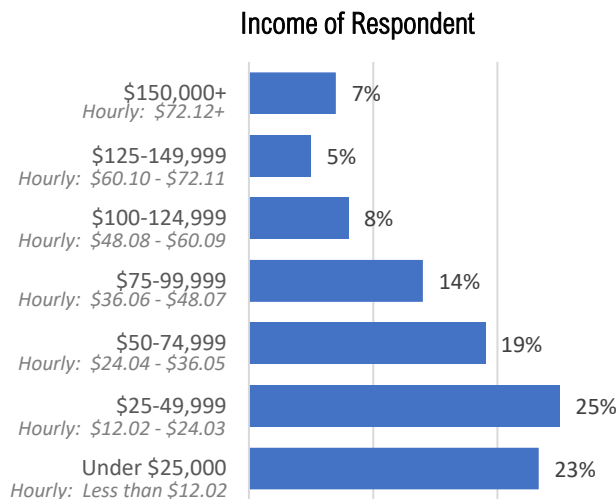
Draft Responses to Questions Posed in the Chat Provided By:

Christine Marshall
 Executive Director
 Summit Medina Workforce Area
christine.marshall@workforcearea2.org

Michelle Collins
 Vice President
 ConxusNEO
mcollins@conxusneo.jobs

1. Can you repeat the average hourly wage of the working age adults surveyed?

Survey participants were asked to provide their total yearly income for their family and the number of individuals in the family who contribute to the income.



# of People Contributing to Household Income	%
1	40%
2	50%
3 or more	10%

2. Why was “Black” pulled out as one of the most selected demographic stats to share?

At ConxusNEO, we seek to remove barriers, increase access to opportunity, and support economic mobility for every resident, and we acknowledge that there is an economic cost to the persistent presence of racial inequity. To address, we must first talk about significant discrepancies related to race that we saw in the research findings, e.g. 20.6% of Black respondents started a business or became self-employed compared to 12.2% of all respondents; 30.1% Black respondents quit or left job in past 12 months compared to 23.1% all respondents and 50% had a job lined up before they quit compared to 43.7% of all respondents; 59% of Black respondents indicated they will look for a new job compared to 47.7% of all respondents; 27% of Black respondents indicated they would prefer to work from office/workplace compared to 35.6% of all respondents; and bigger barriers to employment for Black respondents compared to all respondents were transportation (37.5% compared to 27.5) and discrimination (racial: 41.1% compared to 20.9%, gender: 37.2% compared to 20.4%).

In addition, Elevate Greater Akron, the economic development plan for the Greater Akron area, is intentionally focused on ensuring the Black population is positioned to engage in and share in the benefits of regional growth and prosperity. Of the largest U.S. metro areas from 2005 to 2015, Akron ranked among 10 worst metro area for the decline in the Black employment rate and 5 worst for the decline in Black earnings.

3. Did those who quit their jobs to freelance or start a business, know and understand what it takes to start a business?

This question was not posed to participants and would be a good topic to explore.

4. Do you plan on sharing this great resource with employers and chambers of commerce?

Over 150 companies registered for today’s webinar! The Greater Akron Chamber has provided leadership and support of the *Where Are the Workers?* research and findings have been shared with their members, and findings have also been shared with other chambers, economic development organizations and human resources groups in Summit, Medina and Portage counties. If you have an idea of how to get this information to more employers, please contact us.

5. How was “meaningful work” defined?

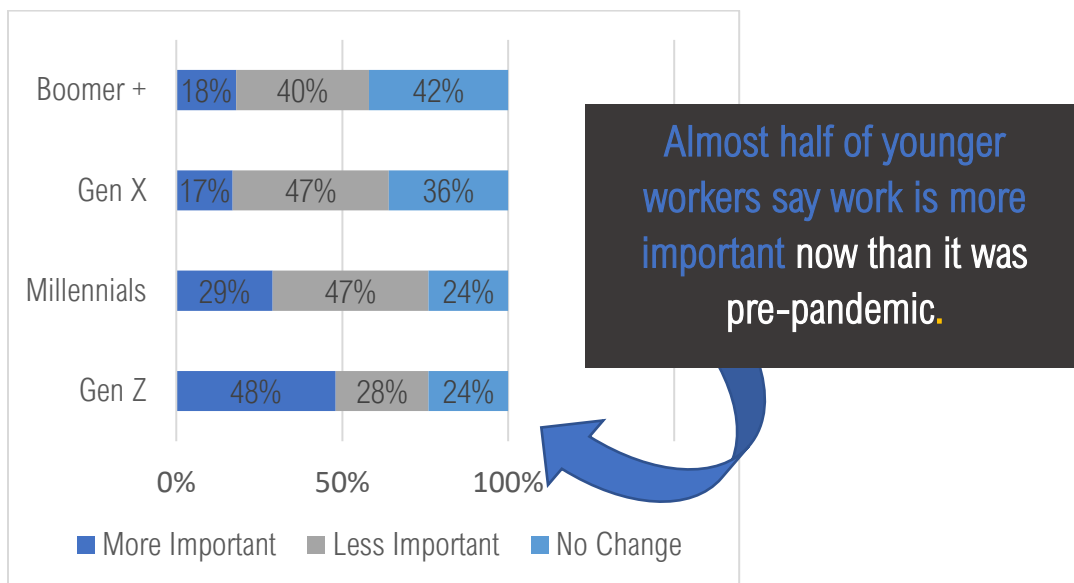
Respondents were asked if the pandemic changed what is important to them about their job. Those who indicated that it had, were then asked what is important to them now that wasn’t before. Responses to this open-ended question were then coded as “meaningful work” and examples of these responses are: “fulfillment in my work,” “doing a job I love,” “being happy at work,” “enjoying what I do,” and “I don’t want to just work anywhere; I want to do meaningful work.”

6. Is there a way to drill down into these results more?

The Center for Market and Opinion Research (CMOR) has done significant analysis, of which not all could be included in a one-hour presentation. An interactive Data Dashboard is being considered that would allow end users to select parameters then view results.

7. Since Gen Z respondents would be up to 25 years old and many may be entering the workforce for the first time, would work have to be more important to them since their previous experience could be considered much closer to none?

This hypothesis may be logical; however, it was not tested in this research study. What we do know from asking survey respondents, “What is important now that wasn’t before,” top answers provided by Gen Z respondents were: financial needs, living each day to its fullest, job stability, health, quality time with family, mental health, flexibility, positive work culture, remote working.



8. The pandemic era was peppered with social-societal issues such as violent police actions and mass shootings. Did any respondents indicate that these incidences forced a change in work-life balance?

While these topics were not expressly asked, some respondents (about 0.5% of all respondents) did mention violent police actions and mass shootings when asked at the beginning of the survey, “What do you think is the most important problem facing you and the people in your community right now?” However, these topics were not mentioned again by respondents when discussing their work or work-life balance.