



# Look to the STARs: Changing the Definition of Skilled.

*Presentation to the Ohio Workforce Coalition*

August 2022



Opportunity  
@Work

**STARs**   
SKILLED THROUGH  
ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

# Introductions



**Bridgette Gray**  
Chief Customer  
Officer



**Jenn Shamy**  
Senior Director of  
Market Expansion



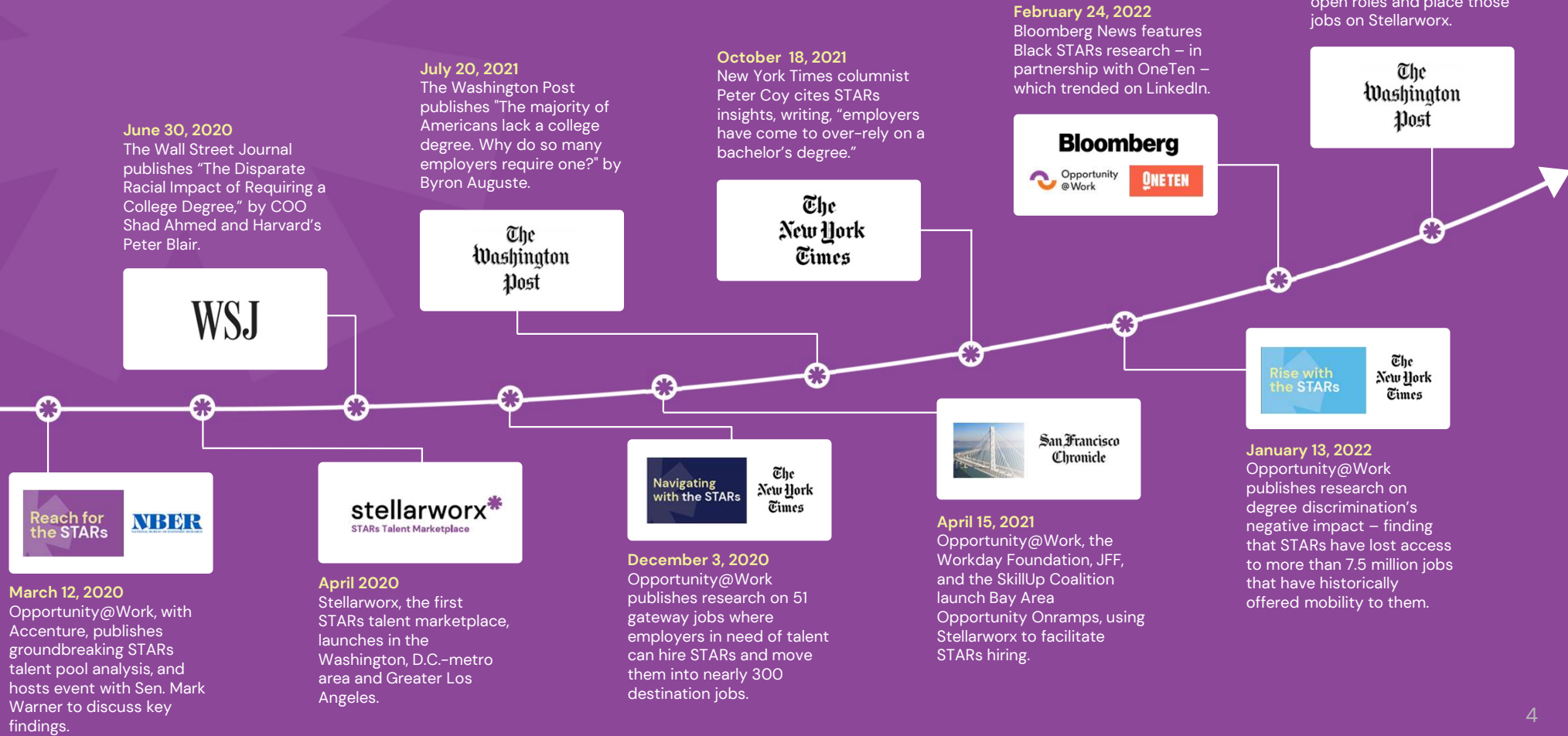
# Opportunity@Work: Who We Are

Our mission at Opportunity@Work is to rewire the U.S. labor market so that all individuals Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs) can work, learn, and earn to their full potential.

In the next decade, Opportunity@Work aims to enable at least 1 million working adults in America to translate their learning into earning – generating a \$20 billion boost in annual earnings.

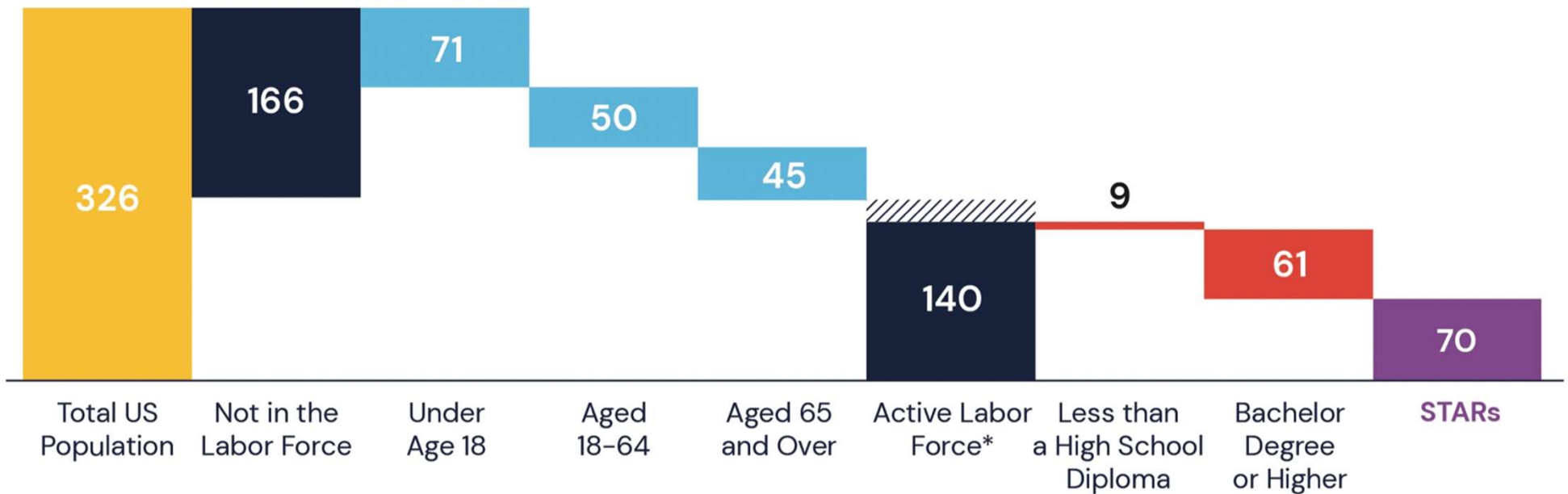
# Gaining Momentum for Skills-Based Hiring

## Selected Media Moments and Milestones



# More than 70 million workers are Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs) instead of a bachelor's degree

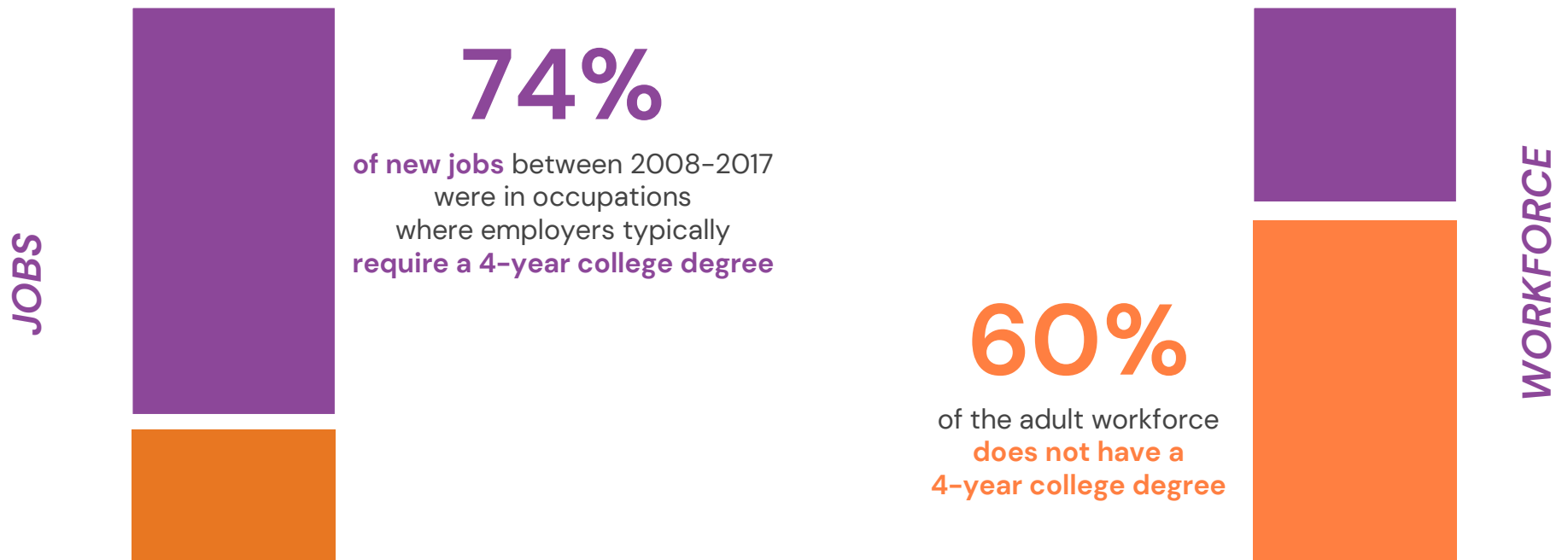
2021 Distribution of the U.S. Population, in Millions.



\*We exclude 20 million workers under the age of 25 from our analysis of the labor force to ensure that the majority of the population studied has completed their education.

Source: Opportunity@Work Analysis of the 2021 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series

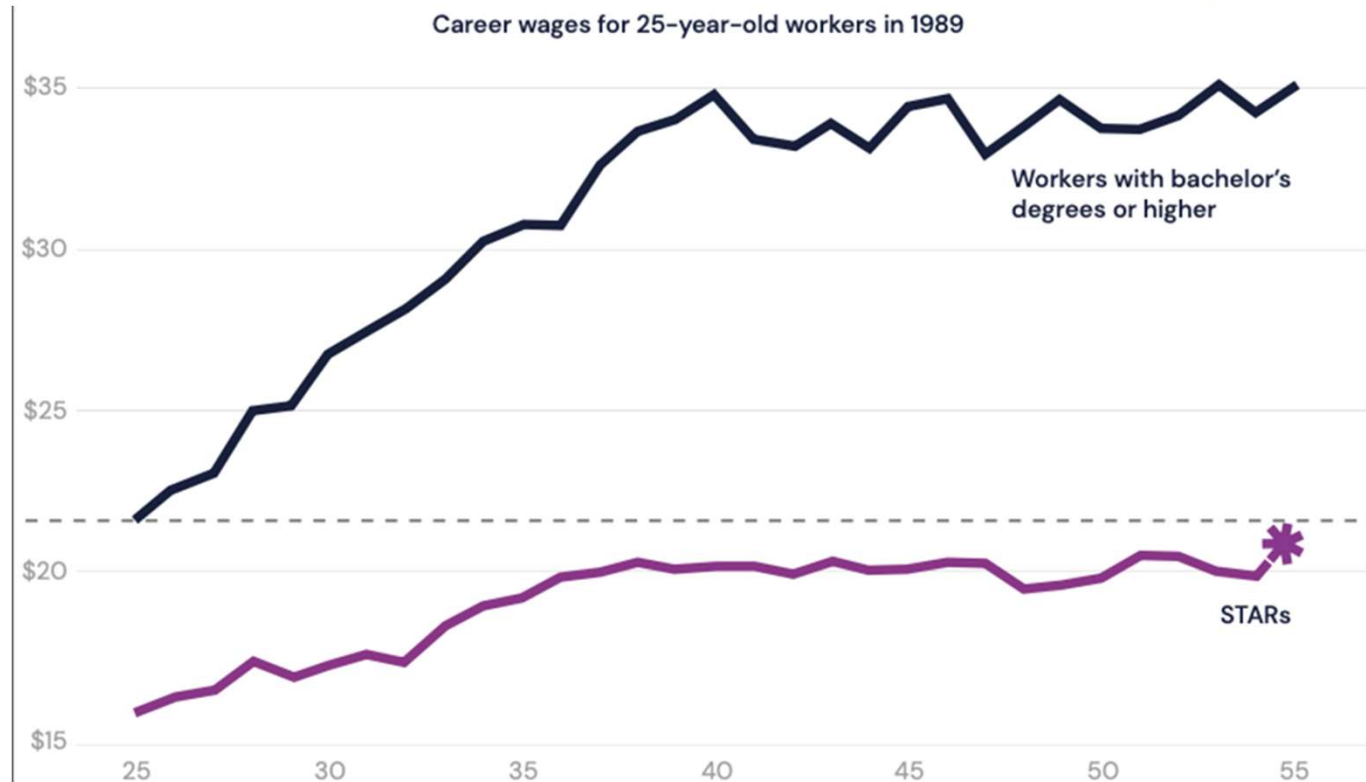
# Job requirements mismatched to workforce



**60% of the workforce has access to only 26% of new jobs**

Source: Blair et al., 2020 "Searching for STARs: Work Experience as a Job Market Signal for Workers without Bachelor's Degrees," NBER.

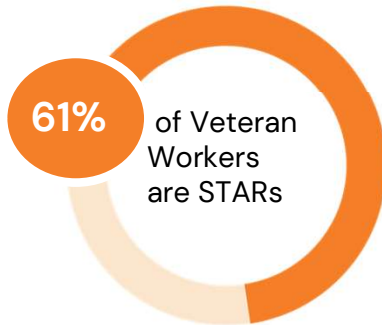
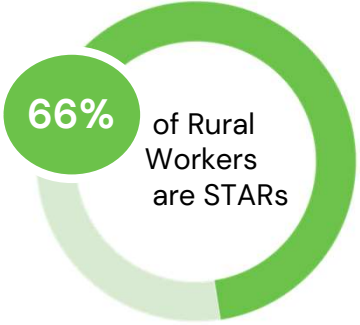
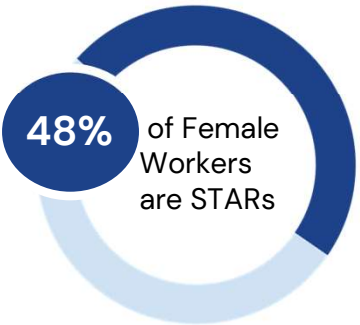
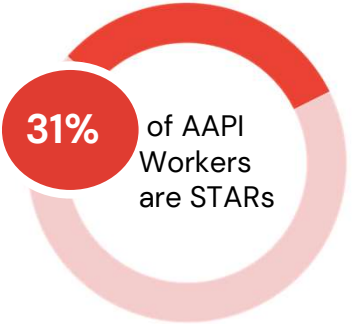
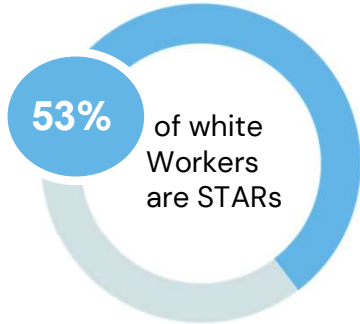
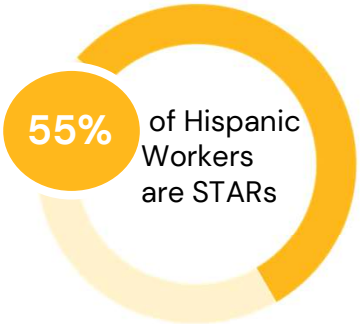
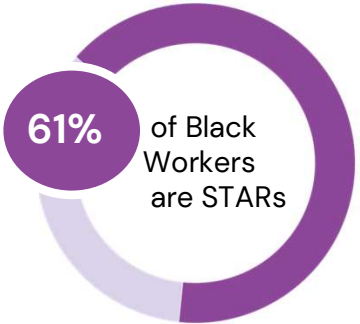
# In 30 years, STARs wages don't catch up to where bachelor's degreed workers start their careers



Note: Median wages in 2019 dollar for workers 25 - 29 years old in 1989 for workers with a bachelor's degree or higher versus workers skilled through alternative routes (STARs). Dotted line indicates median hourly wages for workers with a bachelor's degree at age 25 (\$21.59).

Source: Adapted from Blair, Debroy, and Heck (2021, 3). Data are from the 1989-2019 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) of the Current Population Survey (CPS) microdata accessed via IPUMS.

# Degree Requirements “Screen Out” the Majority of Black, Hispanic, Rural and Veteran Workers

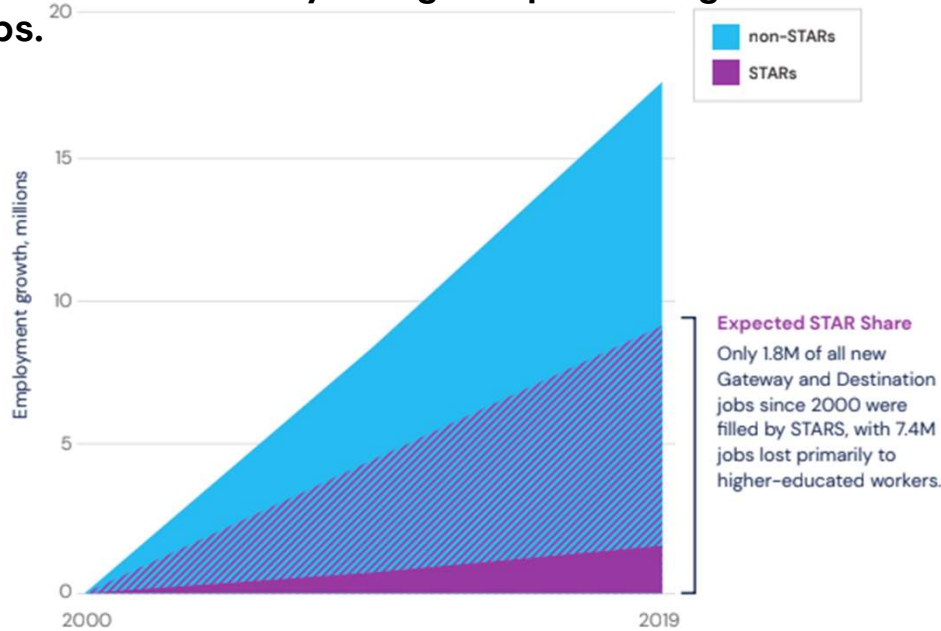


Source: Opportunity@Work Analysis of the 2021 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.



# STARs Lost Access to Almost 7.5M Jobs That Historically Opened Pathways to Mobility

These 30 occupations account for close to half the displacement. Employers can reopen pathways for millions of STARs by hiring and promoting into these key jobs.



Note: Expected STAR employment change assumes that change in employment from 2000 to 2019 would have been equally distributed across STAR and non-STAR workers based on the proportion of workers within each job in 2019, respectively. See Data and Methods section for detailed methodology on displaced STARs.

Source: Opportunity@Work analysis of the 2019 1-year American Community Survey and 2000 Decennial Census, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.

## 30 Key STAR Mobility Occupations

Bookkeeping, Accounting and Auditing Clerks
Business Operations & Mgmt Specialists, All Other
Chief Executives & Legislators
Comp. Scientists, Network Analysts, & Web Developers
Compliance Officers, Non-agricultural
Computer & Information Systems Managers
Computer Programmers
Computer Support Specialists
Customer Service Reps
Designers
Diagnostic Technicians
Financial Managers
First Line Supervisors of Sales Workers
First-Line Supervisors of Admin Support Workers
Human Resource Managers
Human Resources & Training Specialists
Industrial Engineers
Manager in Marketing & Public Relations
Managers, All Other
Medical & Health Services Managers
Meeting & Conference Planners
Office Clerks
Police Officers & Detectives
Purchasing Agents
Real Estate Brokers & Sales Agents
Registered Nurses
Sales Reps Wholesale and Manufacturing
Sales Reps, Services
Secretaries & Administrative Assistants
Teachers & Instructors, All Other

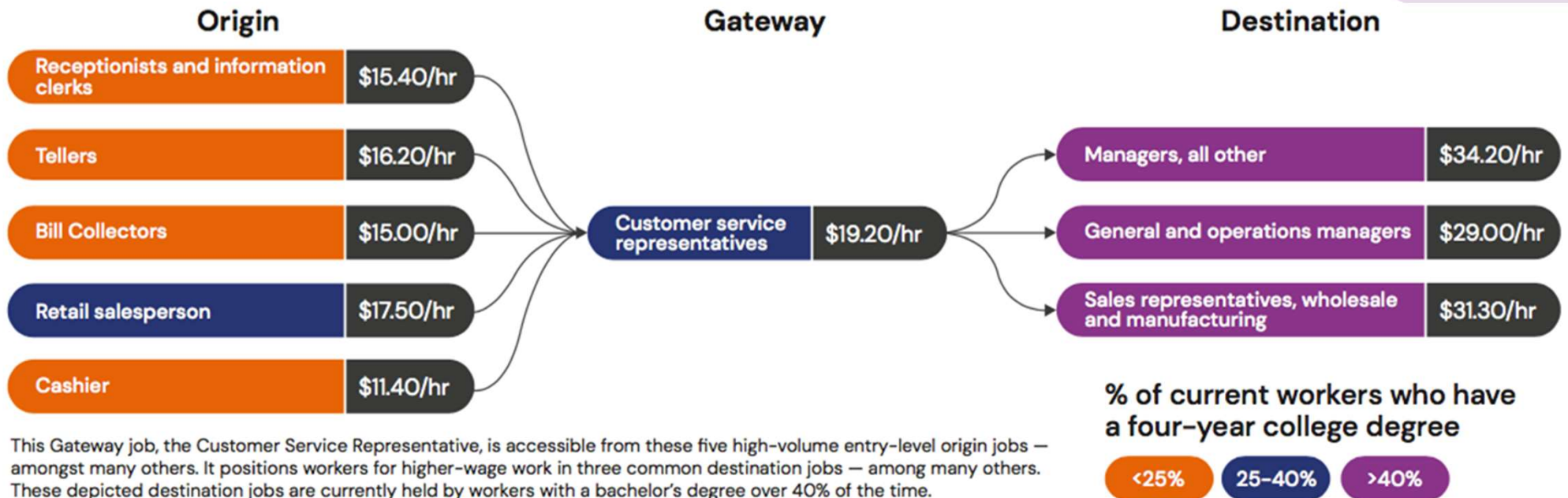
# Many STARs Have the Skills for Higher-Wage work



This figure shows the high skills overlap between two sales roles. The first is accessible to STARs, while the second is less so. About 96,000 STARs have made this transition in the five-year period from 2017 to 2021.

Source: Opportunity@Work analysis of the O\*NET 25.3 Database and 2017 to 2021 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.

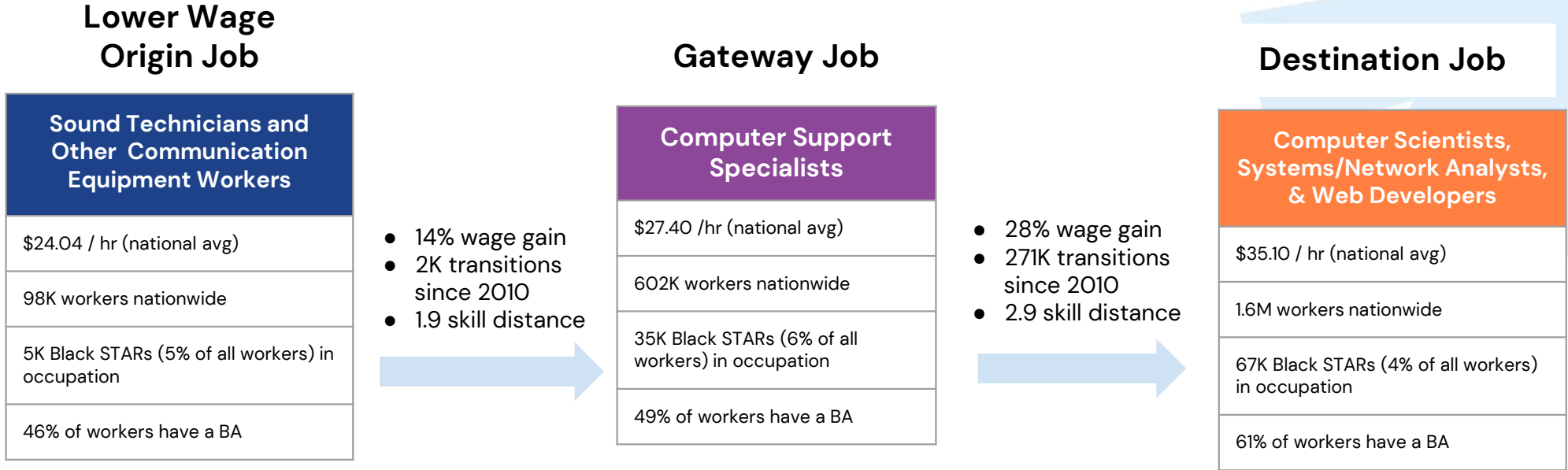
# Specific origin jobs open up better-paying transitions.



This Gateway job, the Customer Service Representative, is accessible from these five high-volume entry-level origin jobs — amongst many others. It positions workers for higher-wage work in three common destination jobs — among many others. These depicted destination jobs are currently held by workers with a bachelor's degree over 40% of the time.

# EXAMPLE: Skill Pathways for IT Support & Development

Since 2000, 95K STARs have missed opportunities in these Gateway and Destination jobs



Source: Opportunity@Work analysis of the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) 25.3 Database; 2019 1-year American Community Survey; and 2012 to 2021 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.

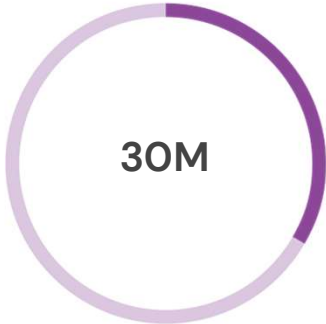
# A way to understand STARs paths to higher wage work



**Shining STARs**  
are in high wage roles today



**Rising STARs**  
have the skills for significantly higher wage work (70% higher on average), based on their current role

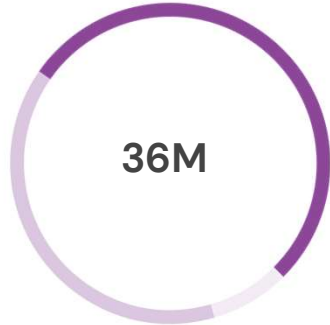


20M in low-wage roles

10M in middle-wage roles



**Forming STARs**  
do not yet have the skills for significantly higher wage work, based on their current role



19M in middle-wage roles

14M in low-wage roles

3M are Opportunity Youth

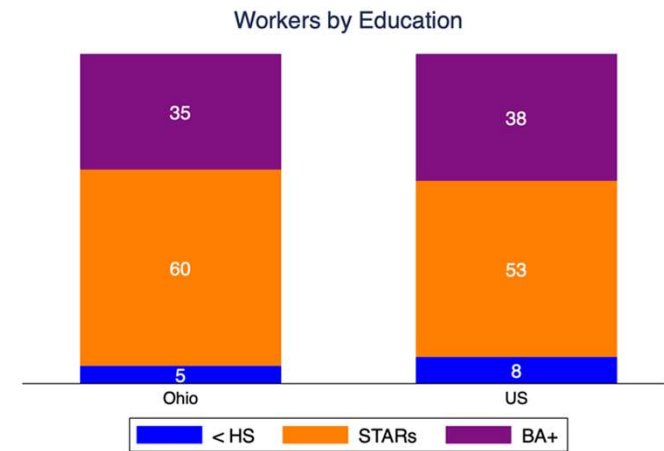
<b>In Ohio</b>	<b>106,000</b> <i>Shining STARs</i>	<b>1.4M</b> <i>Rising STARs</i>	<b>1.6M</b> <i>Forming STARs</i>
----------------	--	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

# Workers in Ohio are More Likely to be STARs

60% of workers in Ohio are STARs

STARs make up 60% of the labor force in Ohio, compared to 53% of workers nationally. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Ohio has the 16th highest proportion of STAR workers, comparable to states such as Alabama and Wisconsin in terms of the distribution of STAR workers.

	All Workers	Less than High School Diploma	STARs	Bachelor Degree
Ohio	5.1M	276K	3.0M	1.8M
		5%	60%	35%
United States	144M	11.7M	76.9M	55.4M
		8%	53%	38%





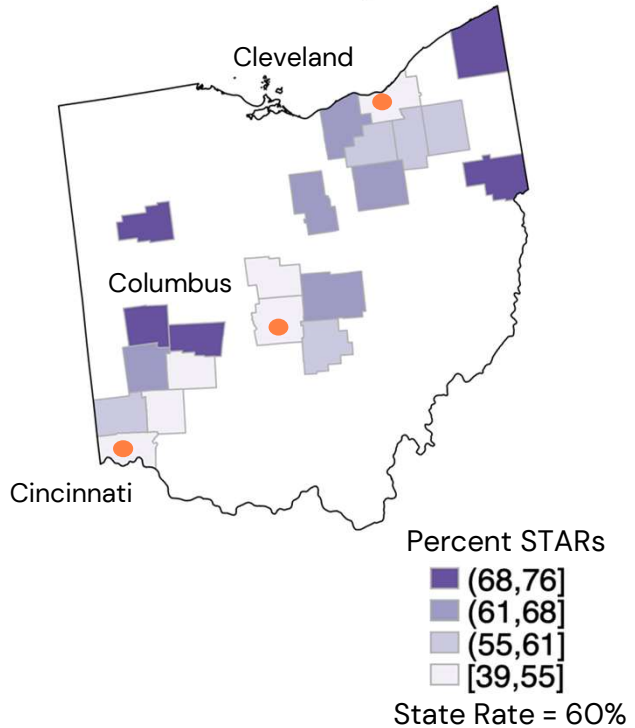
# There is a Great Degree of Geographic Variation in the Workforce

In Some Counties  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Workers are STARs

Large metro areas attract higher educated workers, in Franklin County (Columbus) less than half of all workers are STARs (47%)

Alternatively, in Clark county (Springfield) more than 3 out of every 4 workers are STARs (76%).

2019: STARs as a Percent of the Ohio Labor Force: by Counties



County	% Of State Workforce	% STARs
Unidentified	37%	67%
Franklin	13%	47%
Cuyahoga	11%	55%
Hamilton	7%	48%
Summit	5%	58%
Montgomery	4%	62%
Butler	3%	58%
Lorain	3%	65%
Warren	2%	46%
Delaware	2%	39%
Medina	2%	55%
Licking	2%	63%
Fairfield	1%	61%
Greene	1%	54%
Portage	1%	57%
Clark	1%	76%
Richland	1%	68%
Wayne	1%	65%
Miami	1%	72%
Columbiana	1%	75%
Allen	1%	71%
Ashtabula	1%	73%

Source: Opportunity@Work analysis of the 2019 1-year American Community Survey, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.

# Workers in Ohio are Overwhelmingly White, and White Workers are More Likely to be STARs

81% of workers in Ohio are White, compared to only 62% nationally

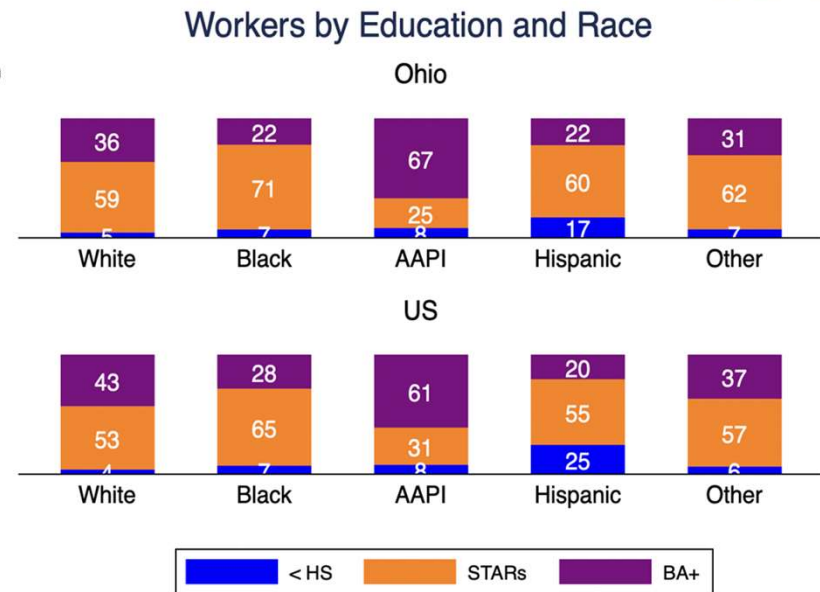
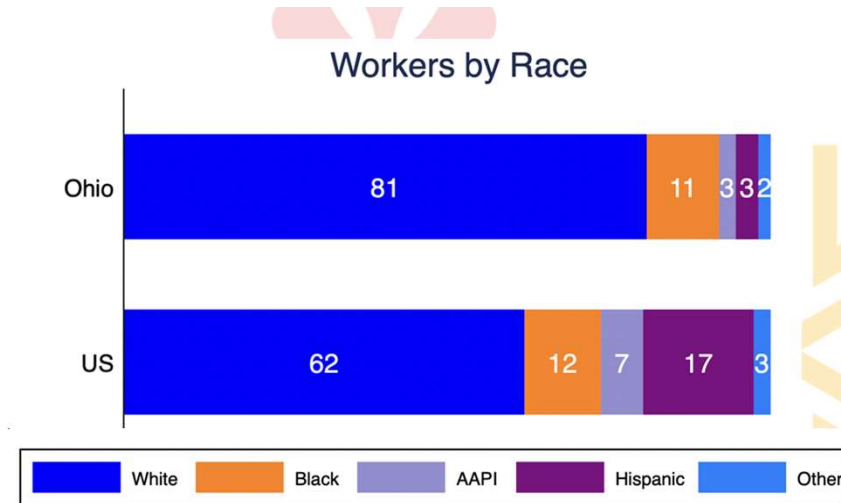
- White workers in Ohio are also more likely to be STARs compared to the National average

Blacks are the largest minority group and have the largest proportion of STAR workers compared to other race or ethnicity groups

- 71% of Black workers in Ohio are STARs

Only 3% of workers in Ohio are Hispanic, much lower than the national rate of 17%

- Hispanics in Ohio are more likely to have a high school diploma and be STARs





# Ohio Offers a Unique Economy With Targeted Opportunities for STARs

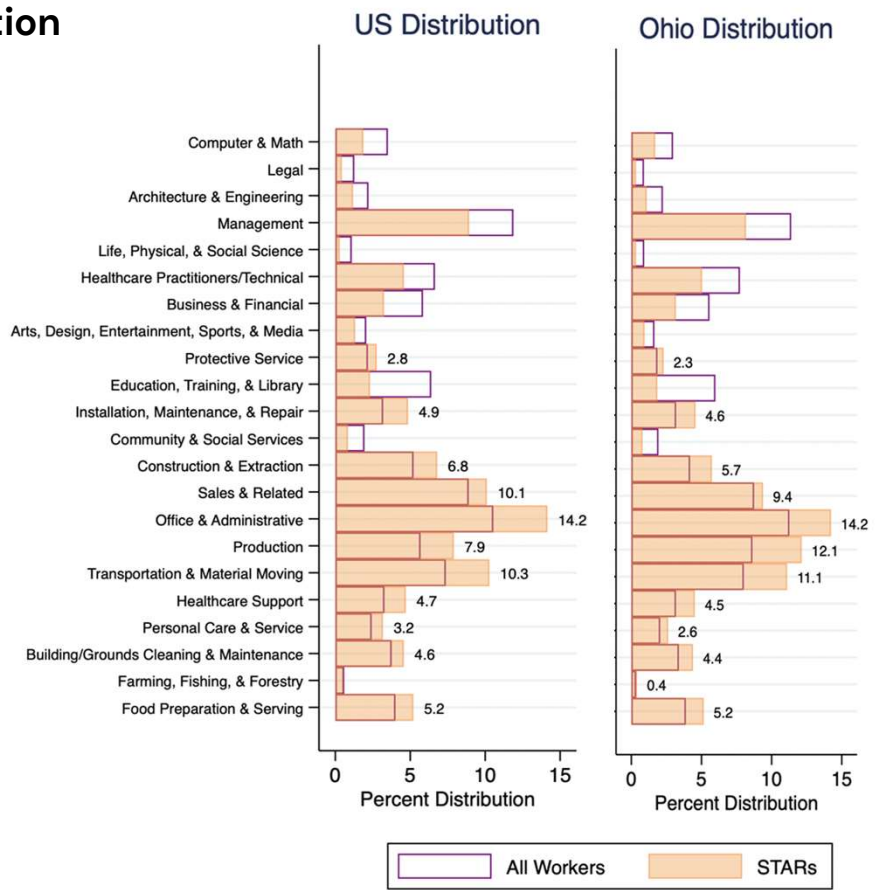


## Workers in Ohio are more likely to be working in Production Occupations

Similar to the nation, STARs are over-concentrated (where the orange bar surpasses the purple bar) in lower-wage occupations (occupations at the bottom of the graph)

Compared to the nation, STARs in Ohio are more likely to be working in Production occupations, particularly iron and steel and motor vehicle manufacturing.

- 12% of STARs in Ohio work in Production jobs, compared to a rate of only 8% nationally.



Source: Opportunity@Work analysis of the 2019 1-year American Community Survey, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.

Sorted in descending order by national median wage.

# How We Work: Ground Game

[https://youtu.be/k\\_3N1v6ujZ4](https://youtu.be/k_3N1v6ujZ4)

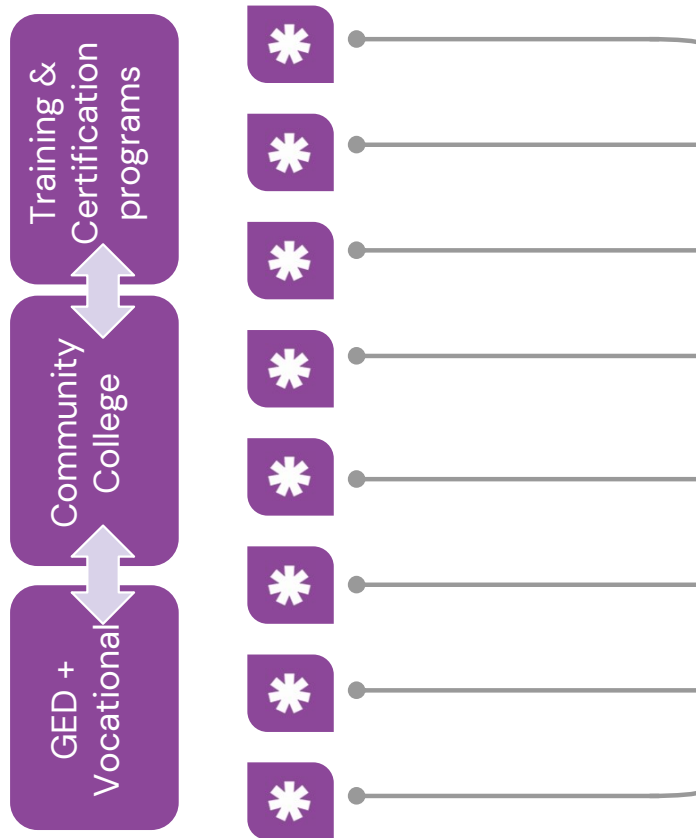


**stellarworx**<sup>\*</sup>  
STARs Talent Marketplace

# Stellarworx Marketplace: Enabling STARs Pathways to Quality Jobs

## STARs and providers supporting STARs

(eg, nonprofit training providers, online certification programs/bootcamps community colleges, onramps)



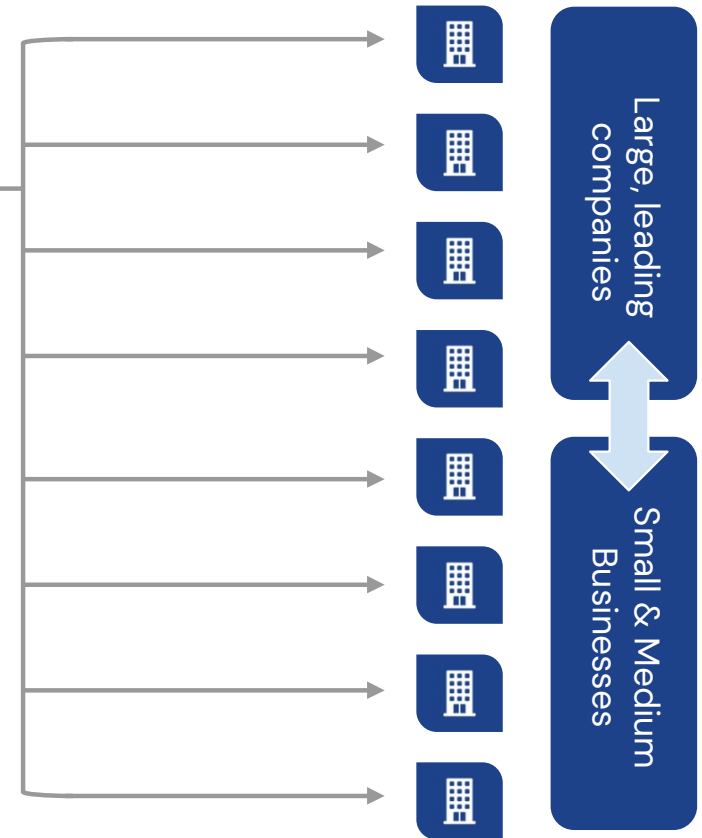
**For companies:** One-stop shop for sources of STARs

**For STARs & providers:** One-stop shop for jobs tagged for STARs

**For regional workforce leaders:** Central source for STARs supply, demand and job placement data

## Employers seeking STARs talent

(for middle-wage, career pathway jobs that pay at least \$20/hour)



# Currently live in California, DC, Maryland, and Virginia with Pilots in Houston and Detroit/SE Michigan

The Stellarworx platform launched in beta 18 months ago

## 120+

Employers



## 90+

Talent  
Developers



## 2,700+

STARs



# STARs like Adriana have valuable skills but face barriers related to the Paper Ceiling



## "Hitting the Ceiling" Adriana

### Personal



40



Retail Team Leader



Houston, TX



she/her/hers

### Background & Family Life

- Born in Fresno, CA in 1982
- Mexican-American
- Currently living with husband and two teenage daughters in Houston, TX
- Husband makes \$50k/year working in construction and holds an associate's degree.
- Huge Texans fan.

### Relevant Employment



#### General Merchandise Team Leader, *Target*

- Earns \$19.13/hourly or about \$39,000 annually.
- Works 40 hours/week with a variable schedule, including nights and weekends. Receives benefits.



#### Product Operations Lead, *Old Navy*

- Earned \$14.01/hourly or about \$29,000 annually.
- Works 40 hours/week with a variable schedule, including nights and weekends. Received benefits.



#### Lead Store Consultant, *FedEx Office*

- Earned \$14.78/hour or about \$30,000 annually.
- Customer service and operations role.

### Skills

Business fundamentals

Leading, developing, coaching talent

Planning and executing department strategy

Frontline supervision to customer service teams

Managing production flow

Customer service skills

### Wants and Motivations

- Wants to spend more time with her family, work fewer hours, and not sacrifice family time on evenings or weekends.
- In looking for a job, wants a work environment where she sees other Latina women in leadership positions.

### Concerns

- Concerned that she can't be competitive without a college degree (feelings of imposter syndrome).



# How We Work: Air Game



## THE PAPER CEILING:

*(noun)*: The invisible barrier that comes at every turn for workers without a bachelor's degree.

See also: no alumni network, biased algorithms, degree screens, stereotypes, and misperceptions.



## Campaign Partners Confirmed to Date (July 14, 2022)

### CHAMPION



### ALLY



### SUPPORTER



# Appendix



# These pathways are often blocked, especially for women and Black STARs

## Black, Hispanic, and Women STARs face steep declines across Promising Pathways



### Demographics of workers by role:

Low Wage Origin Job	Middle Wage Destination Job	High Wage Destination Job
41% Workers w/4-year degree	55% Workers w/4-year degree	35% Workers w/4-year degree
71% STARs	63% STARs	9% STARs
78% Black and Hispanic STARs	59% Black and Hispanic STARs	6% Black and Hispanic STARs
78% Women STARs	56% Women STARs	7% Women STARs

This figure shows a steady decline in the number of STARs as they traverse all promising pathways from low-wage origin jobs to middle wage destination jobs (including Gateway jobs) to high-wage destination jobs. It compares, across types of workers, the number of workers who started their upward transition in a low wage occupation and the percent of transitions that ended in a middle- or high- wage destination job. While 35% workers with a four year degree navigate the pathway to reach a high wage destination, only 9% of STARs do. The declines are even more dramatic for Black, Hispanic, and Women STARs.

Sources: Opportunity@Work. "Navigating with the STARs," (November 2020).

# Opportunity@Work's Solution: Rewire The Labor Market

## Our 2-Pronged Approach

Create the STARs  
Talent Category  
to spark demand

Build & catalyze vital  
infrastructure for STARs  
outcomes at scale



STARs Insights Initiative

STARs Campaign

STARs Narrative &  
Thought Leadership

STARs Policy Project

Stellarworx  
Marketplace Platform

STARs Data Tools

STARs Regional Activation

STARs Studio &  
Innovation Agenda



# Thank You!



Opportunity  
@Work

**STARS**<sup>\*</sup>  
SKILLED THROUGH  
ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

**STARsInsights**<sup>\*</sup>

**stellarworx**<sup>\*</sup>  
STARs Talent Marketplace

**STARsStudio**<sup>\*</sup>