

## Guiding Caregivers to Success

In the summer of 2023, Home and Community Living Administration's Workforce Development Team hired three Workforce Navigators to help address the caregiving workforce shortage in Washington state. Naomi Spector, Yan Heng, and Julie Gardner helped further define these positions as they learned what kinds of supports are needed for prospective caregivers to better navigate the caregiving training, certification, and employment landscape. Each Navigator takes a personalized approach to supporting every person who reaches out by helping determine their preferred work setting, understanding the required training for employment, and finding solutions to barriers they are having to becoming a paid caregiver.

Along with the team's Outreach Coordinator, the Workforce Navigators have attended more than 150 career fairs, presentations or other community outreach events, and they have individually assisted over 3,000

prospective caregivers. The Workforce Navigators have tracked more than 400 individuals who have been hired as caregivers, in various care settings, with their support. These positions have proven to have an impact on each person they support through their journey to a career in caregiving, to the caregiving workforce, and ultimately to the clients who are able to remain in their preferred home and community settings because they have a caregiver to meet their needs.

Referrals to the Workforce Navigators continue to grow due to word-of-mouth and marketing efforts that guide people to the Caregiver Careers Washington website. This website is in the process of becoming increasingly helpful and accessible to those wanting information about becoming a caregiver and receiving ongoing support in a caregiving career.

The Workforce Navigators are part of a multi-pronged approach that the Workforce Development Team takes to help recruit and retain caregivers. This team is focused on helping to advance the perceived value of caregivers and is making conscious efforts to elevate the caregiving experience with the ultimate goal of having a robust, respected, and happy caregiving workforce that is able to meet the growing demands of people who are aging or have a disability and need support.

### BY THE NUMBERS

**150+**

Events Attended

**3K+**Prospective  
Caregivers Assisted**400+**Hired Caregivers  
Supported

# Using Data for Caregiver Recruitment

**TGFD – Thank goodness for data!** There's so much information out there, and we're always searching for more to help us target our efforts around caregiver recruitment and retention. The Workforce Development Team uses data to decide where to go, why we go, when to go, and the best way to reach people.

## Identifying Job Seekers

We have data that tells us where in Washington our clients live, but this doesn't give us the full picture. Every month, the Employment Security Department provides updates on snapshot of unemployment rates in each county. They also report [WARN notices](#) (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification) and this information lets us know if there have been layoffs or closures from employers that employ 100 people or more. This information is used to identify areas where there

might be a large pool of job seekers, right now.

Data and collaboration with the DSHS' Community Service Division helps us connect with people who might be seeking employment and training opportunities to inform them about careers in caregiving.

## Communicating with Job Seekers

Once we identify where job seekers are, the next challenge is reaching them. Virtual events are popular, but sometimes in-person outreach is the best option. The [Broadband Dashboard 2](#) helps us figure out where internet access is limited, so we know when online events may not be the best choice.

These are just two examples of how we use data tools to help us fulfill our mission to grow the caregiver workforce to help meet the needs of older people and people with disabilities in Washington state who need caregiving support.



## Building Bridges at Thrive International



Photo Credit: globalneighborhoodthrift

On March 26th, Thrive International in Spokane became a hub for connection and learning as 26 potential caregivers gathered to explore opportunities. Three agencies attended, along with interpreters representing eight languages: Dari, Farsi, Spanish, Ukrainian, Russian, Arabic, Bengali, and Hindi. The event showcased the power of inclusivity in workforce development.

Julie Gardner's presentation on caregiving provided valuable insight into the profession, highlighting how compassionate individuals can turn their desire to help others into meaningful careers.

This event highlights the strength of community where language and cultural differences became pathways to connections. As Thrive International continues to foster these connections, we look forward to seeing new caregivers emerge, ready to make an impact in their communities.



CaregiverCareersWA.com



## Empathy in Action: Navigators Guiding with Experience

Our Long Term Workforce Navigators do more than provide career guidance, they lead with heart, drawing from their own journeys to connect with and support others. This was especially true for Workforce Navigator Yan Heng, who recently shared her personal immigrant story with the Washington Immigrant Network. As a first-generation Cambodian immigrant, Yan's story resonated deeply, inspiring others and reinforcing the importance of diverse perspectives in caregiving and workforce development.

Through her openness, Yan received heartfelt appreciation and strengthened connections within immigrant communities, generating valuable referrals and expanding outreach efforts. Her experience is a testament to how shared understanding and lived experiences create a more compassionate and effective approach to supporting job seekers.

Dear Yan,

*I wanted to take a moment to sincerely thank you for sharing your heartfelt immigrant story with us. Your journey, resilience, and achievements are incredibly inspiring, and your words have made a profound impact on all of us.*

*It takes courage to share such personal experiences, and your story has not only enriched our understanding but also reminded us of the strength and determination within the human spirit. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to learn from you and to celebrate your contributions.*

*Thank you again for your generosity and openness. We are honored to have had the chance to hear from you and look forward to staying connected.*

## Workforce Navigators

Have questions about becoming a caregiver? Get support on your journey to becoming a caregiver. Discover caregiving resources, upcoming events, benefits, and job openings.



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# Healthcare Employers: Sentinel Network Needs Your Input

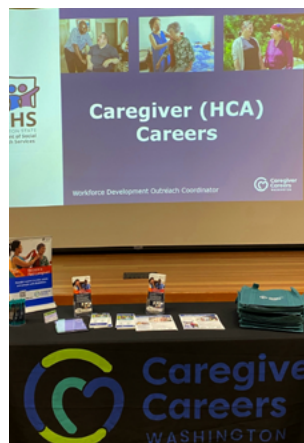
Washington's annual data collection effort targeting employers' health workforce needs is now open. The [Health Workforce Sentinel Network](#) seeks to understand employer challenges related to recruitment, retention and other needs. All types of healthcare facilities, both traditional and non-traditional, are encouraged to participate. The results help lawmakers and planners make better decisions to support a strong healthcare system in Washington. [Participate in the Sentinel Network](#) today. The Sentinel Network is an initiative of Washington's Health Workforce Council, conducted collaboratively by the Workforce Board and the University of Washington's Center for Health Workforce Studies.

**TAKE SURVEY**

## Ellensburg Event Creates Lasting Impact

The April 3 event at Hal Homes Community Center in Ellensburg was a great success, bringing valuable insights and resources to the community.

Attendees engaged in meaningful discussions about caregiving careers, and many left feeling empowered to take the next steps toward their caregiving journey. Our outreach continues to make an impact, and we look forward to more opportunities to connect and support future caregivers.



## Connect with Us

Have an event, need a presentation, or inquires about Caregiver Careers? Reach out to learn more!



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## Resources

[DSHS Long-Term Care Services & Information](#)

[Fundamentals of Caregiving PDFs](#)

[Long-Term Care Worker Orientation Training PDFs](#)

[Long-Term Care Worker Safety Training PDFs](#)

[Residential Care Online Incident Reporting](#)

[Report Concerns Involving Vulnerable Adults](#)

[Alzheimer's Association](#)

[DSHS Family Caregiver Handbook PDF](#)

[Family Caregiver Alliance](#)

[Heart.org](#)

[CareLearn Washington](#)

[Caregiver Support Groups](#)

[Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging](#)

[National Assoc. of Area Agencies on Aging](#)

[Washington State Community Living Connections](#)

[Administration for Community Living: Older Americans Act](#)

[Dementia Roadmap – Guide for Families and Caregivers](#)

**WA Warm Line: 877-500-WARM (9276)**

Peer support help line for people living with emotional and mental health challenges.

Please email [caregivercareerswa@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:caregivercareerswa@dshs.wa.gov) for questions or comments.

