

## **Announcing Plans for First Annual Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Conference**

**The Kansas Department of Commerce, KANSASWORKS, Kansas Department for Children and Families, and the Kansas Board of Regents are currently planning the first annual Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Conference in Kansas. This conference will aim to enhance and improve workforce development solutions in the state. The conference is scheduled for October 8-9, 2018 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Wichita.**

**This engaging and interactive conference will afford an opportunity for employers, educators, economic development professionals, and community leaders to come together with state and local officials to discuss the unique challenges of meeting the growing workforce needs in the state.**

**The keynote speaker for the 2018 conference will be Dr. Michael Wooten, Acting Assistant Secretary & Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Colleges with the U.S. Department of Education – Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. Dr. Wooten provides leadership, direction and management for over \$2 billion in initiatives supporting career and technical education, adult education, correctional and re-entry education and community colleges.**

**The conference will be organized into four unique tracks:**

- Developing the Future Workforce**
- Developing a Talent Pipeline**
- Engaging Business Resources**
- Enhancing Career Pathways**

**Session topics including Recruiting and Retaining Talent, Future Workforce Skills, The Gig Economy, Generations in the Workplace, and many more.**

**“Our Kansas economy is very diverse and ever-evolving, requiring our state and education leaders to consider how best to develop a workforce with the skills required by employers,” said Mike Beene, Director of Employment Services at the Kansas Department of Commerce. “The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Conference will not only be a great opportunity to hear from national and state thought-leaders on how workforce needs are being addressed across the country and state, but also participate in a constructive dialogue**

**among Kansans on how to successfully overcome talent recruitment and development challenges.”**

**The cost to register for the two-day conference is \$100 and can be completed online at [KansasCommerce.gov](https://www.kansascommerce.gov). The website will also include the full conference schedule, speaker biographies and hotel information as they become available.**