

# GOAL 4

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## Recognize and Address Regional Needs in Collaboration with Our Community

### STRATEGIES

- Create a Community Ambassador Group to Oversee a Comprehensive and Coordinated Effort to Review and Identify Regional Needs
- Implement Data Collection Processes to Assess University Responses to Regional Needs
- Systematically Address Prioritized Regional Needs that have been Identified by the Community Ambassador Group

# IDENTIFY REGIONAL NEEDS

## PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

The President's Community Ambassadors was established by President Lynnette Zelezny to serve as the vehicle for connecting with the broader regional community. Twenty community leaders representing a broad cross-section of industry and social services throughout the county are invited to participate in convenings hosted by the Office of the President each semester. The convenings are an opportunity to share information about CSUB while also learning about regional efforts and exchanging ideas to more strategically advance regional needs.

These convenings have led to initiatives related to expanding teacher residency and mental health programs in the College of Social Sciences and Education, the development of a Doctor of Nurse Practitioner program and the expansion of the engineering program in the College of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering.

President Harper has continued the Community Ambassador convenings and is currently collaborating on a virtual internship program to support students, as well as small-to-midsize regional firms.

### PCA Members 2023-24

**Bryan Burrow**, Intrepid Business Resources, LLC

**Jason Wells**, Adventist Health

**Edward R. Paine**, Cal IV Prep

**Emily Duran**, Kern Health Systems

**Isaac Sandifer**, African-American Network of Kern County

**Jay Tamsi**, Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

**Jessica Grimes**, Kern Community College District

**John G. Mendiburu**, Kern County Superintendent of Schools

**Ken Beurmann**, TERRIO Physical Therapy & Fitness, Inc.

**Ken Keller**, Dignity Health, Bakersfield Memorial Hospital

**Lauren Skidmore**, Bethany Services, Inc.

**Octavio Escobedo**, Tejon Indian Tribe

**Rev. Dr. Oscar J. Anthony**, St. Peter Restoration

**Rick Stevens**, Stevens Transportation Inc.

**Sandra Hernandez**, Tejon Indian Tribe

**Scott Andrews**, City of Bakersfield

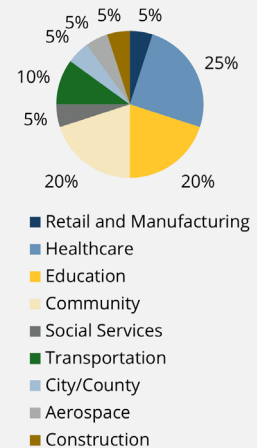
**Scott Thygerson**, Kern Medica Center

**Tim Reid**, Mojave Air and Space Port

**Tomeka Moenay & Mr. Eugene Frye**, Frye Plumbing Inc.

**Troy Hightower**, TDH Associates International

Industry Sector of PCA Members



# ASSESS RESPONSES TO REGIONAL NEEDS

In the spirit of community collaboration to address regional needs and through the relationships developed within the Community Ambassadors program, CSUB has championed both the Kern Education Pledge and A Better Bakersfield and Boundless Kern initiatives from the outset.

## KERN EDUCATION PLEDGE

The Kern Education Pledge brings together the Kern County Superintendent of Schools, every one of Kern's 46 K-12 school districts, each Kern County community college and CSUB to improve regional educational outcomes. The Kern Education Pledge also offers a unique data warehousing solution through the Kern Integrated Data System (KIDS) that provides education partners with access to real-time data across the K-16 landscape. Using KIDS, Kern's education partners can make data-driven decisions to impact individual students and schools, as well as entire districts and communities.



## BETTER BAKERSFIELD AND BOUNDLESS KERN (B3K)

A Better Bakersfield and Boundless Kern (B3K) is a uniquely inclusive regional economic development initiative established in 2020. Through a comprehensive market assessment, B3K has identified a significant need for quality job creation within the region, suggesting that nearly 100,000 quality jobs will need to be created or improved by 2030 to ensure economic prosperity for Kern families. Additionally, the report identified a menu of traded sectors to pursue to optimize the region's resources and strengths. Through B3K's work, CSUB has developed a deep network of relationships with industry partners, regional intermediaries, municipal partners and community organizations.

## B3K DASHBOARD

In spring 2021, Valley Strong Credit Union pledged \$1 million to CSUB to establish an endowment for a rotating fellowship for research projects related to the economic growth and prosperity of the Kern County Region. The Valley Strong Research Fellowship is intended to directly support B3K progress. This support led to the development of the B3K Dashboard of economic indicators for the Kern County region that measures long-term progress in achieving increased regional growth, prosperity and inclusive access.

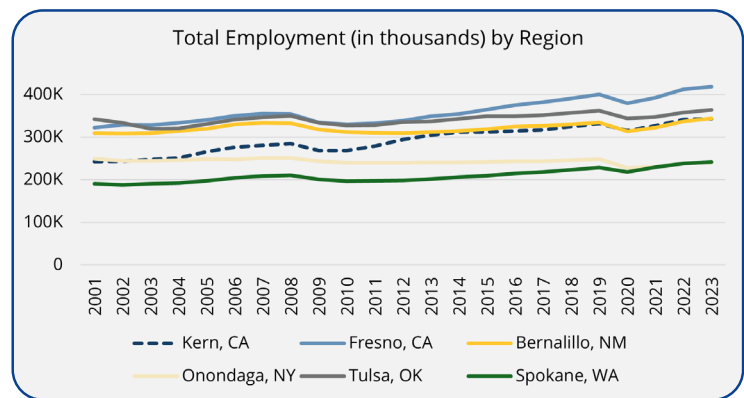


## B3K DASHBOARD METRICS

A Better Bakersfield and Boundless Kern (B3K Prosperity) is strategically focused on increasing the number of quality jobs in the Kern region so that the number of struggling families can be reduced. The overarching goal is to generate 100,000 more good and promising jobs in the Bakersfield-Kern region by 2030, halving the number of children in struggling families. This dashboard will tell the story of inclusive growth in the Bakersfield-Kern region over time and help inform local leaders and stakeholders so that policies and investments that advance deep prosperity can be pursued.

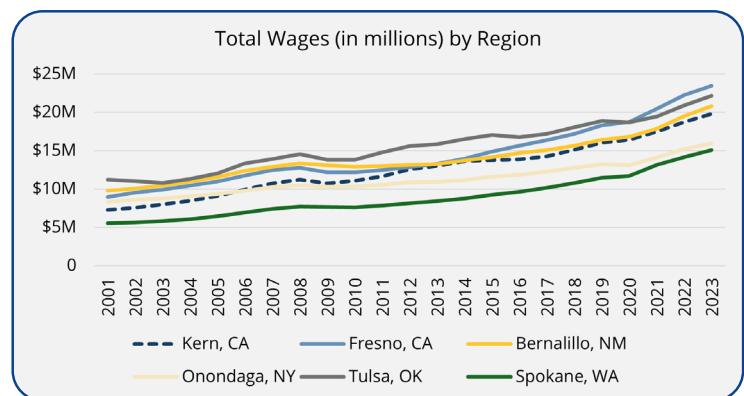
### Job Growth

Job creation is one of the most direct measures of a region's economic vitality. Comparing the Bakersfield-Kern region's job growth over the past decade to our peer metropolitan regions demonstrates that, while jobs have increased, very little regional job growth can be attributed to our regional economic competitiveness versus baseline growth.



### Wages

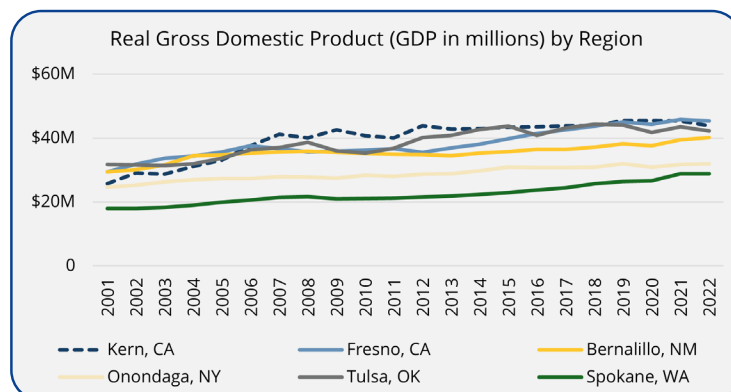
Deep prosperity means enabling families and workers from all backgrounds to achieve self-sufficiency and pursue upward mobility. Wages are one of the most important measures to assess this. In 2021, B3K Prosperity established a target wage of \$21.80 per hour, or \$45,344 per year, for a "Good Job." With full-time employment and employer-sponsored benefits, a worker earning \$21.80 will be able to not only meet their basic needs but also begin saving for the economic future and ascending the economic ladder.





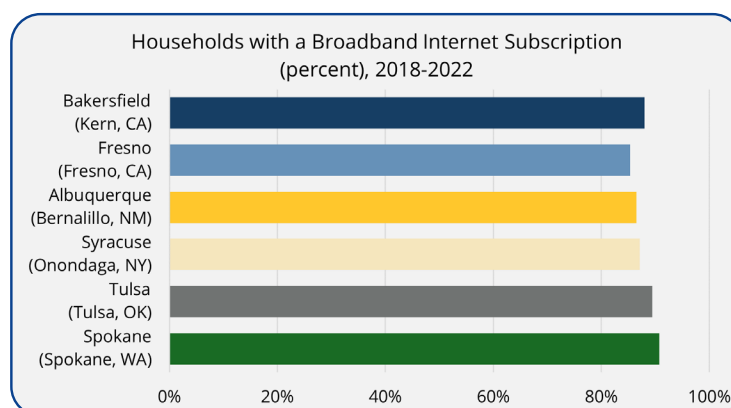
## Employment in Traded Sectors

Traded sectors are the most important driver of regional economic competitiveness. They include businesses that sell their goods or services to customers outside of our region, bringing new money into our regional economy. Traded sector jobs create a multiplier effect that generates between three and five new locally-serving jobs.



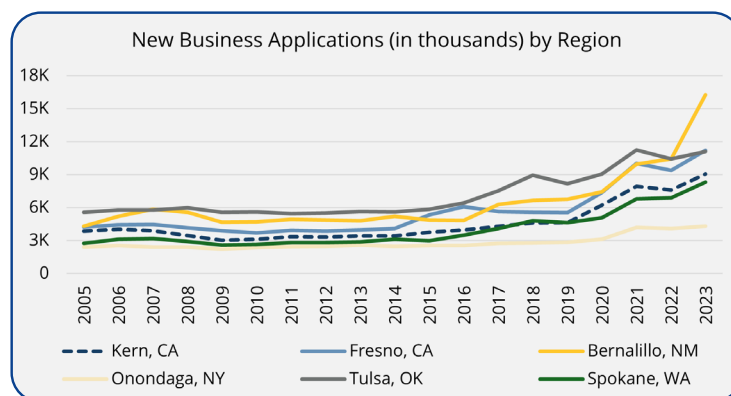
## Access to Broadband

High-speed broadband Internet access is an essential infrastructure requirement for the modern economy, affecting not only workers but also families and students. While gaps in broadband access remain in the Bakersfield-Kern region, this is a vital metric where we perform relatively well compared to some peers and other regions in the nation.



## New Firm Start-Ups

Entrepreneurship is another significant factor that both drives and demonstrates a region's economic dynamism. Our goal is to see a high number of new businesses launch in traded sectors and grow, creating new Good and Promising Jobs in the Bakersfield-Kern region.



Data from pages 48-49 were obtained from the following sources:

- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024). Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Available at <https://www.bls.gov/cew/>
- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2024). Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Thousands of chained 2017 dollars). CAGDP1 County and MSA gross domestic product (GDP). Available at <https://www.bea.gov/data/gdp/gdp-county-metro-and-other-areas>
- U.S. Census Bureau (2024). Households with a broadband internet subscription, percent, 2016-2020 Available at <https://www.census.gov/>

# ADDRESS REGIONAL NEEDS

## KERN REGIONAL K-16 EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

Using the collaborative platform of the Kern Education Pledge, the region received a \$18.1 million grant from the State of California in 2022 to launch the Kern Regional K-16 Education Collaborative and improve student progress from high school to postsecondary education and ultimately into the workforce. The grant funds numerous projects to streamline pathways in three occupational areas including health care, education and engineering/computing. CSUB's projects include a multilingual teacher residency program with the Arvin and Lamont School Districts, the expansion of the Central Valley Pathways into Academic, Teaching and Higher Education (CV PATH) program, and the creation of two new mentoring programs, one in health care and one in engineering, for regional high school programs.



As a result of this important effort, CSUB has announced the expansion of its ABET-accredited engineering program to the CSUB Antelope Valley campus at Antelope Valley College in fall 2025. A memorandum of understanding with Antelope Valley College will drive program development, targeted outreach and facility development to support this much-needed career pathway. Additionally, CSUB signed a memorandum of understanding with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the Livermore Lab Foundation in 2023 to provide clean-energy solutions, decarbonize science, improve energy storage, study critical materials and advanced manufacturing, and increase STEM student and faculty engagement and public outreach programs.



## ENERGY SYMPOSIUMS

The California Energy Research Center (CERC) is involved in a broad spectrum of projects in the region, including those associated with microgrids, battery minerals, biofuels, community education about climate change and energy transition, and CO<sub>2</sub> and hydrogen storage, among many others. Since spring 2022, CERC has hosted an annual symposium to bring together an array of speakers and panelists to address carbon management issues and energy innovations of regional and national importance. Speakers and panelists include experts from academia, the private sector and government.

