Workforce Development Board of Sullivan Inc.
Director's Report
December 9, 2025

❖ Workforce updates:

✓ The reauthorization of the federal Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA), which expired in 2020, remains stalled. The bipartisan *A Stronger Workforce for America Act* which included a number of reforms and had traction, failed to pass in 2024. Discussions have continued into 2025, but there are key disagreements on program flexibility and funding that continue to block progress.

✓ The draft Workforce Development Regional plan was submitted by the due date of September 5, 2025. This plan is focused on key highlights across all counties in the region based on each Local Workforce Development plan. There was a request for some additional information. We are waiting on final approval.

✓ A resolution will be presented to the County Legislature in January for the renewal of the contract with SUNY Sullivan for the development and provision of short-term occupational training. Request was made for $100,000. Final approval of the County budget will be made later in December.

✓ The NYSCION (NY Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network) program in partnership with the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce hosted the 2025 Workforce Summit on October 15 at the Kartrite Resort. There were 60 employers who learned about inclusive hiring and ability awareness from a service recipient, service providers and employers. A presentation was made by NYS Office of Mental Health. Attendees received a 2026 Chamber membership discount card.

✓ The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) class will be ending November 21. The course is being offered through SUNY Sullivan. There is a glitch with testing that the college is working through so the hiring event scheduled for December 2 will be postponed.

There is a wait list and the next class is scheduled for April 2026. The Center for Workforce Development (CWD) will begin recruitment in December. This is being funded through the County and WIOA.

- ✓ The CWD is working with SUNY Sullivan and BOCES on a Construction trades program for March 2026. The program will be housed at BOCES and taught by SUNY Sullivan. The CWD will be responsible for recruitment, support services, job placement and follow up services with the new workers that will increase retention and successful outcomes. This is being funded by the County and WIOA.

- ❖ Additional Information:
  - ✓ Consulting firm Kittelson and Associates have begun work to update the County's Coordinated Transportation Plan. Draft Plan is being presented to the County Legislature at the Planning and Community Resources Committee on December 4 with a resolution for approval being submitted for the Executive Committee on December 18.

Move Sullivan 2025 7 Fixed Routes	**Average Daily Ridership**	**Monthly Ridership**	**Monthly Paratransit**
1st Quarter Totals	**519**	**31,140**	**809**
2nd Quarter Totals	**581**	**37,210**	**982**
3rd Quarter Totals	**638**	**40,831**	**1,105**
4th Quarter Totals			
Yearly Totals			

- ✓ Warming Centers are now open for the season. Locations are:
  United Methodist Church, 170 Main St., Liberty
  St. John's Episcopal Church, 15 St. John St., Monticello
  Both locations are open from 8:00PM until 8:00AM every night through mid-April 2026.

- ✓ There has been a significant increase in families and individuals looking for food assistance. The County approved $40,000 in funding for the Community Assistance Center (CAC) to support the efforts of the CAC, Single Bite, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and other organizations who deliver food to people's homes.

  The CAC continues to hold three food distributions per month for local pantries. The food is provided by the Hudson Valley Food Bank.

2025 Unemployment Rate Comparison

Month	2025 Sullivan County	2024 Sullivan County	2025 Hudson Valley	2025 New York State	2025 United States
January	4.1%	4.2%	3.6%	4.6%	4.4%
February	4.5%	4.6%	3.9%	4.3%	4.5%
March	3.9%	4.0%	3.5%	4.1%	4.2%
April	2.9%	3.4%	2.7%	3.7%	3.9%
May	2.8%	3.2%	2.8%	3.5%	4.0%
June	2.9%	3.3%	3.0%	3.8%	4.4%
July	3.4%	3.6%	3.5%	4.6%	4.6%
August	3.7%	3.5%	3.8%	4.7%	4.5%
September					
October					
November					
December					
Yearly Average					

Labor Market Data for August 2025

✓ Sullivan County's total nonfarm jobs increased 1.5% (500) and private sector jobs increased 1.9% (500) for August 2025.

Please note: The net month (July 2025 – August 2025) showed a decrease in nonfarm jobs of -0.3% (-100) and a decrease of -0.4% (-100) in private sector jobs.

✓ For Sullivan County the job gains were:

- Private Educational and Health Services at 6.0% (500)
- Professional and Business Services at 9.1% (200)
- Other Services at 7.1% (100)
- Manufacturing at 4.8% (100)

For Sullivan County the sectors that showed no job growth were:

- Information
- Financial Activities
- Government

For Sullivan County the sectors that showed job losses were:

- Leisure & Hospitality at -3.8% (-200)
- Mining, Logging and Construction at -6.7% (-100)
- Trade, Transportation and Utilities at -2.0% (-100)

NYS showed an increase of 1.5% (143,200) in total nonfarm jobs and 1.4% (117,900) in private sector jobs.

NYS saw the largest jobs gains were found in:

- Private Educational and Health Services at 5.2% (119,100)
- Government at 1.7% (25,300)
- Leisure & Hospitality at 2.2% (21,400)
- Information at 2.7% (7,500)
- Other Services at 0.9% (3,500)

NYS saw job losses in:

- Mining, Logging and Construction at -2.9% (-12,100)
- Professional and Business Services at -0.5% (-7,700)
- Financial Activities at -1.0% (-7,500)
- Manufacturing at -1.1% (-4,700)
- Trade, Transportation and Utilities at -0.1% (-1,600)

✓ Within the region, Rockland County private employment sector grew the fastest, up 2.9 percent. The second fastest growth was recorded in Sullivan County (+1.9 percent), followed by Putnam County (+1.7 percent), Kingston MSA* (+1.3 percent), Westchester County (+1.2 percent), and the Kiryas Joel-Poughkeepsie-Newburgh MSA* (+0.8 percent).

*MSA stands for Metropolitan Statistical Area. A Metropolitan Statistical Area is defined as a region that includes a central city and surrounding communities that are linked by social and economic factors. This classification is used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLAS) to analyze labor market conditions within specific geographic areas.

✓ The Hudson Valley region showed an increase of 1.8% (17,700) in total nonfarm jobs and an increase of 1.4% (11,300) in private sector jobs.

The largest job gains were found in:

- Government at 4.9% (6,400)
- Private Educational and Health Services at 3.4% (7,500)
- Leisure & Hospitality at 1.8% (1,900)
- Professional and Business Services at 0.3% (400)
- Other Services at 1.8% (800)
- Financial Activities at 1.3% (600)
- Trade, Transportation and Utilities at 0.5% (800)
- Manufacturing at 0.7% (300)

The Region's job losses were in:

- Information at -6.1% (-800)
- Mining, Logging and Construction at -0.3% (-200)

- ✓ Sullivan County's unemployment rate was 3.7% for August 2025, an increase from 3.5% in August 2024.

  August 2025 had 38,300 people in the labor force (36,900 employed & 1,400 unemployed). The number of employed individuals decreased by -0.5% (-200) and the number of unemployed individuals remained flat at 1,400. Overall, there was a decrease of -0.5% (-200) in the labor force compared to August 2024.

  The total labor force decreased by -0.3% (-100) July 2025 to August 2025. The number of employed workers decreased by -0.5 (-200) and the number of unemployed increased by 7.7% (100).

- ✓ The Hudson Valley's unemployment rate was 3.8% for August 2025, a slight increase from 3.7% in August 2024.

- ✓ NYS's unemployment rate was 4.7% in August 2025, a decrease from 4.8% in August 2024.

- ✓ The August 2025 unemployment rates across the 62 NYS counties ranged from a low of 3.1% for Essex and Saratoga Counties to a high of 7.8% for Bronx County. Sullivan County with a 3.7% rate ranked 17th in the State along with Chenango, Dutchess, Lewis, Nassau and Westchester Counties.

- ✓ Hudson Valley unemployment rankings for August 2025:
  # 3 Putnam County at 3.3%
  #13 Rockland County at 3.6%
  #17 Westchester County at 3.7%
  #17 Sullivan County at 3.7%
  #17 Dutchess County at 3.7%
  #35 Ulster County at 4.0%
  #44 Orange County at 4.3%

The Associated Press November 21, 2025:

U.S. employers added a surprisingly solid 119,000 jobs in September, the government said, issuing a key economic report that had been delayed for seven weeks by the federal government shutdown.

The unemployment rate rose to 4.4% in September, highest since October 2021 and up from 4.3% in August, the Labor Department said Thursday. The unemployment rate rose partly because 470,000 people entered the labor market — either working or looking for work — in September and not all of them found jobs right away.

The increase in payrolls was more than double the 50,000 economists had forecast. But Labor Department revisions showed that the economy lost 4,000 jobs in August instead of gaining 22,000 as originally reported. Altogether, revisions shaved 33,000 jobs off July and August payrolls.

Healthcare and social assistance firms added more than 57,000 jobs in September, construction companies 19,000 and retailers almost 14,000. But factories shed 6,000 jobs and the federal government lost 3,000.

Average hourly wages rose just 0.2% from August and 3.8% from a year earlier, edging closer to the 3.5% year-over-year increase that the Federal Reserve's inflation fighters like to see.

During the 43-day U.S. government shutdown, investors, businesses, policymakers and the Federal Reserve were groping in the dark for clues about the health of the American job market because federal workers had been furloughed and couldn't collect the data.

The report comes at a time of considerable uncertainty about the economy. The job market has been strained by the lingering effects of high interest rates and uncertainty around Trump's erratic campaign to slap taxes on imports from almost every country on earth. But economic growth at midyear was resilient.

Indeed's 2026 UD Jobs and Hiring Trends Report: How to Find Stability in Uncertainty, November 20,2025

Key Takeaways:

- *A series of new economic forecasts from Indeed Hiring Lab suggest that in 2026, job openings are poised to stabilize, but may not grow much; unemployment is likely to rise, but not alarmingly so; and GDP growth looks to remain positive, but somewhat anemic.*
- *Sustaining current GDP growth in 2026 may depend on the ability of high-income households to continue to spend at elevated levels.*

- *If immigration policy continues on its current path, we can expect labor supply to remain tight in a variety of fields, including construction, hospitality, engineering, and medicine.*
- *If hiring remains strong in healthcare, and job creation continues in line with rates observed in recent years, job openings could remain relatively high and unemployment could remain low, especially if conditions improve in other sectors.*
- *If the mismatch in skills and experience between the jobs that are available and the workers that are available to fill them persists, hiring is likely to remain stagnant, and unemployment duration is likely to remain long.*
- *Federal worker layoffs and funding cuts have yet to meaningfully move the unemployment rate or GDP, but the recent weakening of the labor market and rising "low-hire" environment suggest that pressures are growing.*
- *Regional dynamics matter: In 2026, where you live and what you do will matter for your professional prospects at least as much as movements in top-line national trends.*

Conclusion:

The labor market in 2026 is likely to feel different, but not unrecognizable. Across our consensus, upside and downside scenarios, unemployment, job openings, and GDP growth all remain within sight of where they are today — not too hot, not too cold, simply stable. The most probable outcome is not a dramatic break from current conditions, but an extension of today's "low-hire, low-fire" environment in which both employers and job seekers face a slower, more selective market. The range of plausible outcomes is real, but so is the message from the data: big swings are unlikely.

But small changes in the aggregate can often feel like big changes around the margins. Demand has cooled from a year ago in nearly every professional sector, but the pullback has been uneven. Opportunities remain relatively plentiful in fields including civil engineering and healthcare, and in many small and mid-size MSAs, particularly in the Sunbelt and Mountain West. But job seekers in media, scientific R&D, and other harder-hit professional fields, and those in large coastal MSAs with slower population growth and more exposure to tech and professional services, are likely to face tougher conditions. In 2026, where you live and what you do will matter for your professional prospects at least as much as movements in top-line national trends.

The broader macroeconomic backdrop will also be defined by cross-currents. Consumer spending has so far kept GDP growth on solid ground, but it has increasingly been powered by higher-income households. Wage growth has cooled and inflation has eroded purchasing power for many lower- and middle-income workers. The full details and impacts of new tariff policies, immigration restrictions, and changes to federal spending are likely to remain uncertain for *some time, and that uncertainty itself sits in the background of all our scenarios. Each of these forces has the potential to nudge the economy and labor market toward the upper or lower end of our forecast ranges, or, in the case of a particularly severe shock or beneficial breakthrough, beyond them.*

For employers, this environment underscores the importance of being both disciplined and opportunistic. In tighter local or occupational labor markets, maintaining a competitive edge on pay, flexibility, and career development will remain critical to attracting and retaining talent. In areas or sectors where more candidates are chasing fewer jobs, employers may find an opportunity to raise the bar on hiring, invest in training, and rethink role design to better match evolving skills and business needs. For job seekers, a slower but still growing economy means that patience and persistence will be essential, as will a willingness to adjust search strategies — including where they look, which roles they consider, and which skills they choose to build.

This is a moment when timely, granular data matters more than ever. Official statistics will continue to provide an essential snapshot of where the economy is and has been. But in an era of heightened uncertainty and occasional data gaps, near real-time labor market information can help fill in the picture of where conditions may be headed. Indeed's Job Postings Index, wage data, and local labor market indicators can give employers, job seekers, and policymakers a clearer view through the fog. We will continue to monitor these trends, refine our scenarios, and share new insights as the year unfolds.