

# Post-COVID-19 Women's Return to Work Economic Development Plan



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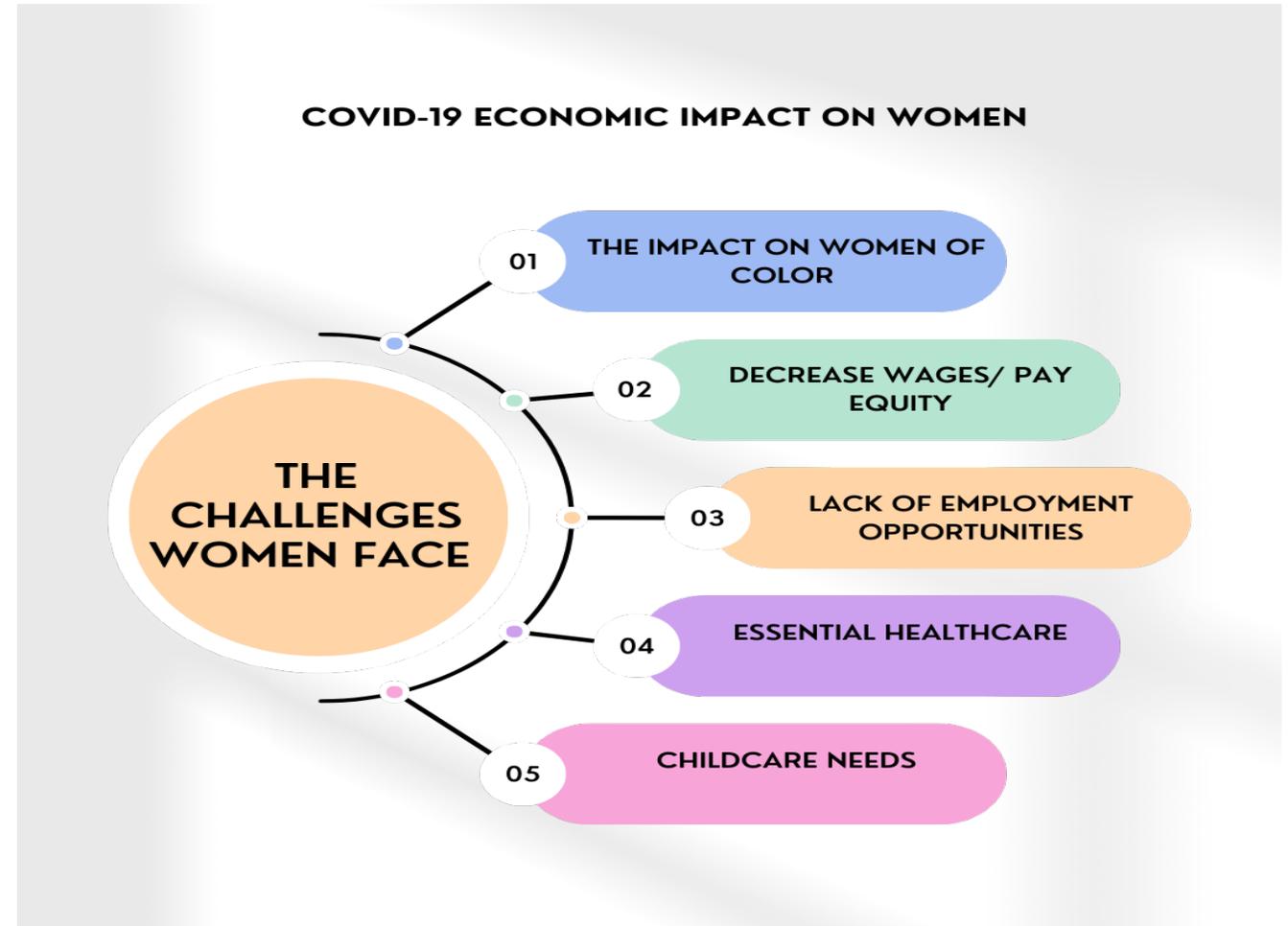
Prepared for the Council on Women and Girls

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# Overview and Challenge

- Women have seen their wages decrease, employment opportunities shrink and access to essential services like healthcare become limited or non-existent.
- As we look towards rebuilding economies post-pandemic, we must focus on developing a comprehensive set of economic solutions for women that ensure their long-term financial security and stability.



# Disparate Impact

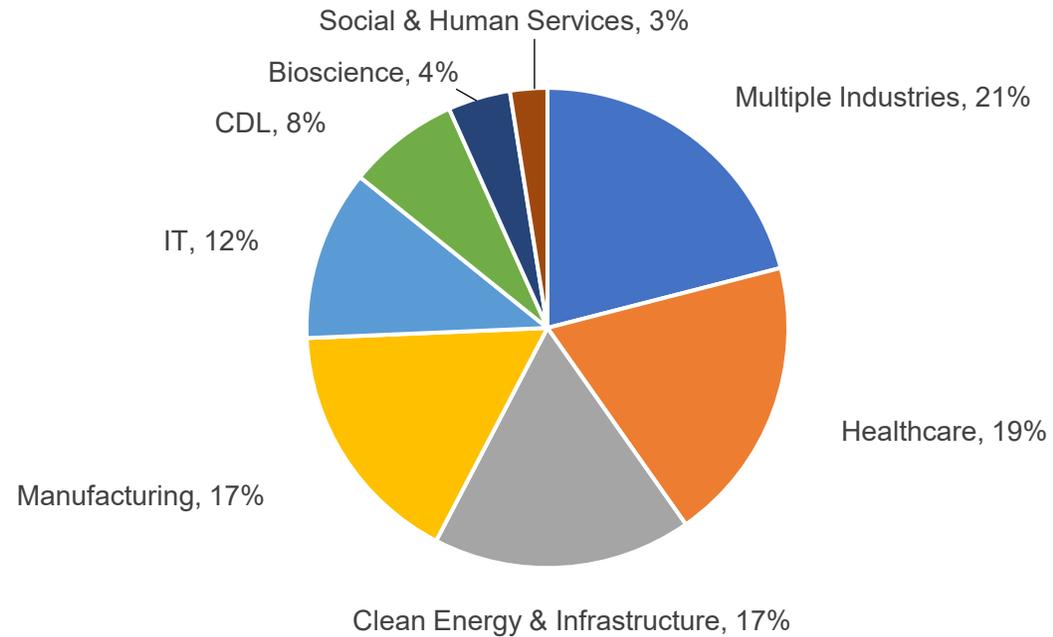
- According to the US Chamber of Commerce, women's labor force participation is one full percentage point lower than it was pre-pandemic, resulting in about **one million women** missing from the labor force.
- The women's labor force participation rate, defined as the percentage of the population that is either working or actively looking for work, was **58% in September 2022**. For comparison, women's pre-pandemic labor force participation rate was **59.3%**.
- In Connecticut, **92% of private childcare businesses are female-owned** and during the pandemic, **three in every four** private childcare businesses closed. This impacts not only the women who work at these businesses but also the women and families that send their children there. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, 44% of Connecticut residents lived in a childcare desert, defined as a census tract with more than 50 children under age five with either no childcare providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed childcare slots.
- In Connecticut, **43%** of continued claims and **36%** of initial unemployment claims filed by women during the pandemic were by **women of color**, despite women of color comprising a **smaller share** of the workforce than white women.

Sources: US Chamber of Commerce, 2022. Accessed [here](#). Ibid  
Connecticut Data Collective, 2021. Accessed [here](#).



**A \$70M investment** using state ARPA funds to train 6,000 unemployed and underemployed job seekers over three years for in-demand jobs. The goal is to train 6,000 individuals and connect them to employment at the completion of training

## Percentage of Funds Allocated by Industry





**Havenly:** \$1.87 million investment in a 6-month paid job training program to create opportunities for refugee and immigrant women the Greater New Haven area to find stable, quality employment.

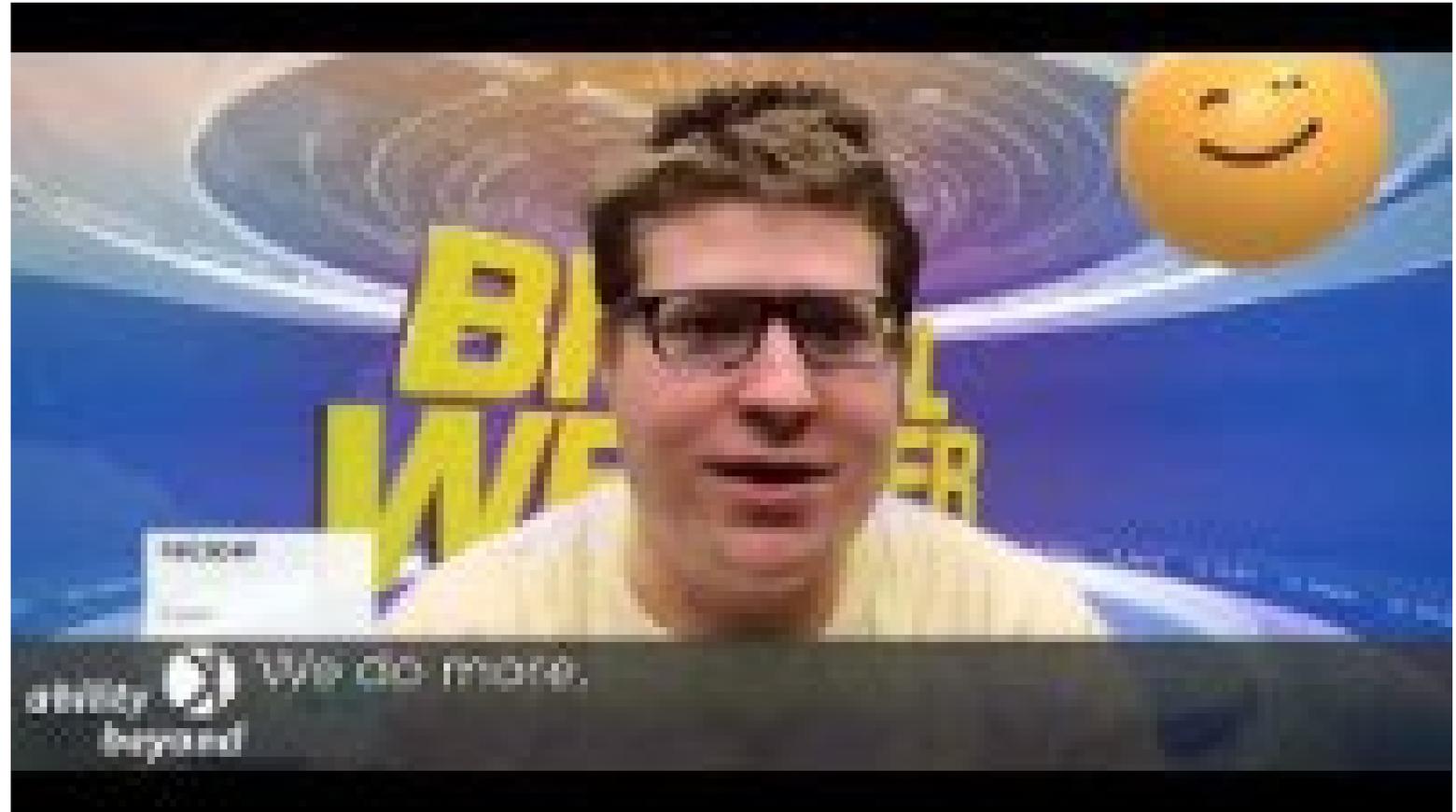
**Intersectionality:** Women, Immigrants, Refugees





**Ability Beyond:** \$1.84 million investment to provide individuals with disabilities opportunities to obtain pre-requisites and certifications prior to enrolling in training programs run by the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

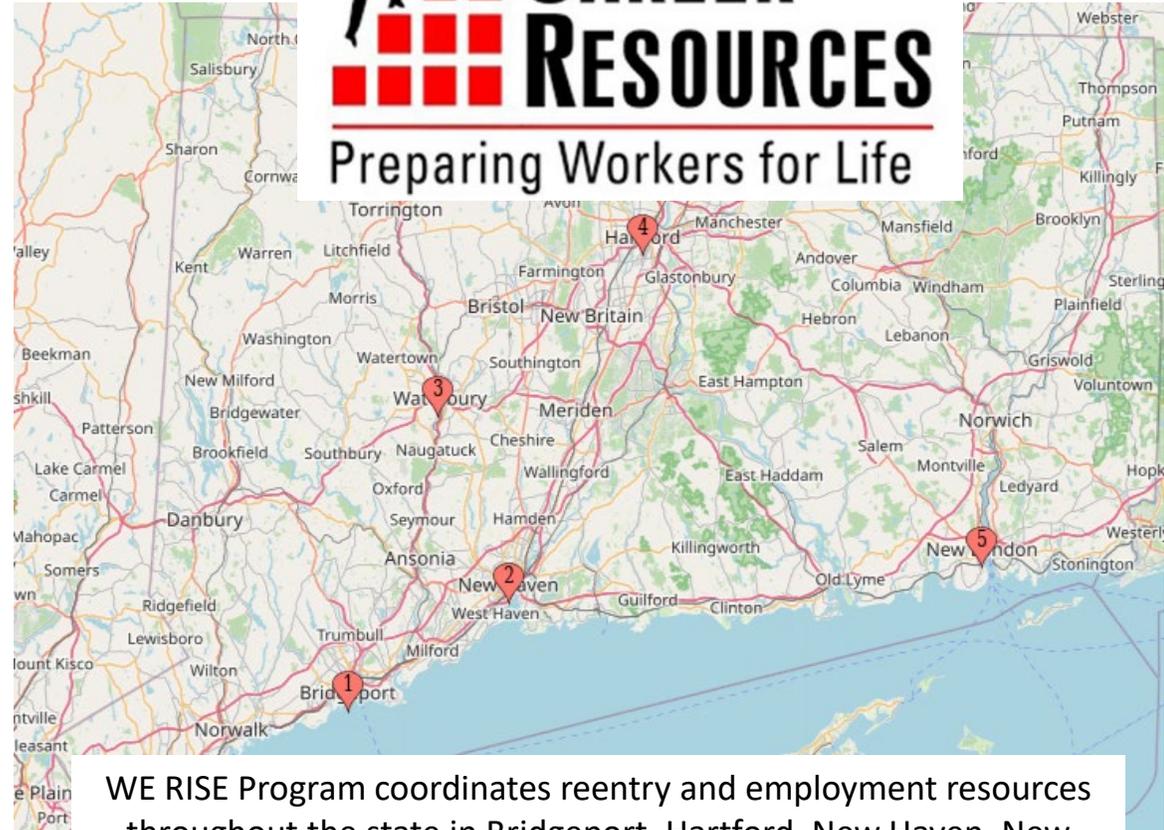
**Intersectionality:** Women, Persons With Disabilities





**Career Resources:** \$5.25 million investment to provide life, employability, and skills training to justice-involved and re-entering women and men for careers in healthcare, technology, construction, and manufacturing.

**Intersectionality:** Women, Justice-Involved and Reentering Citizens



WE RISE Program coordinates reentry and employment resources throughout the state in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London, and Waterbury



**YOU Marketing Campaign** is focused on marketing to women and underserved groups. This is key because existing returnship programs are focused on professionals and not working-class and historically excluded women groups.

**Intersectionality:** Women, Underrepresented Groups

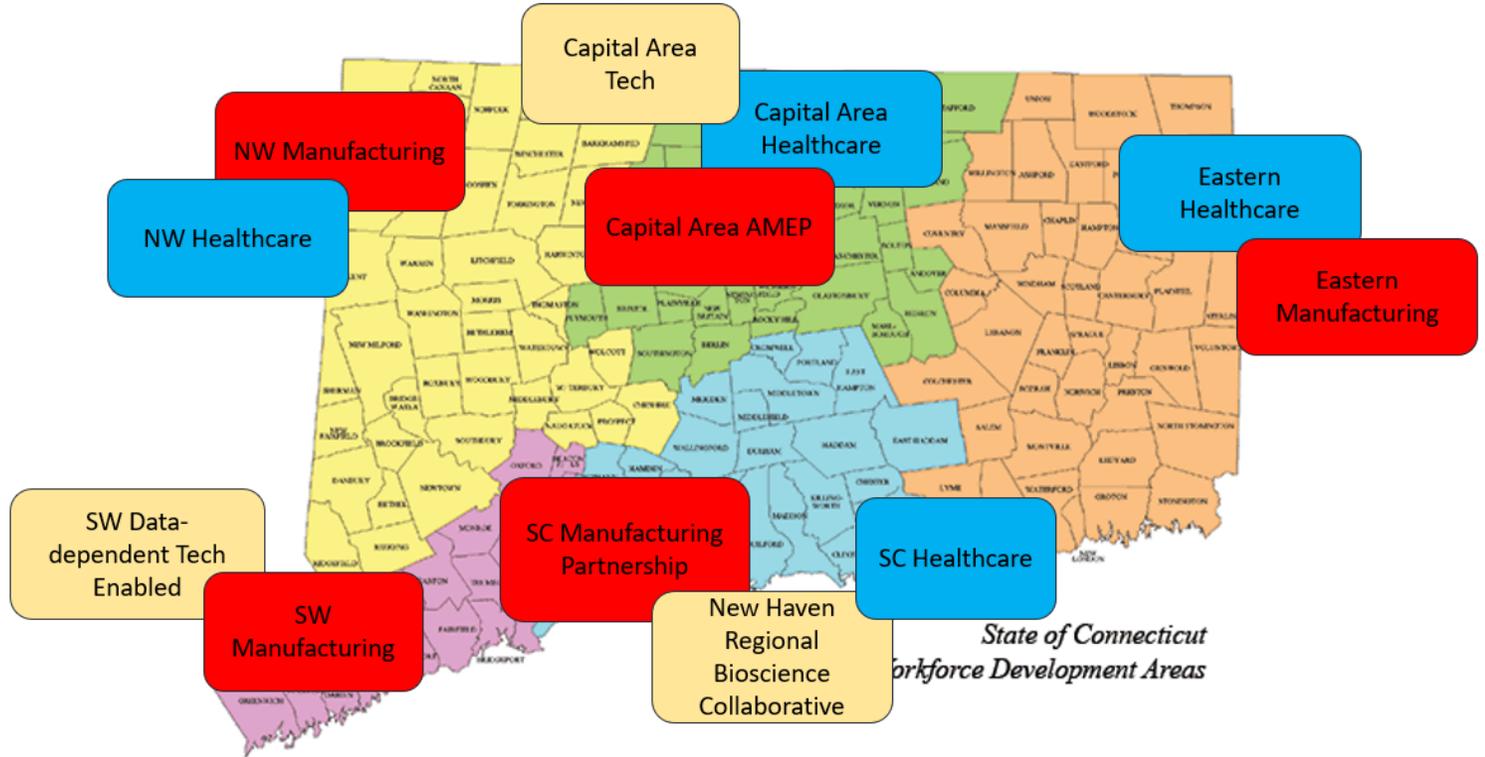


# OWS Signature Project: Good Jobs Challenge + Regional Sector Partnerships



A \$23.9M investment using federal funding from the Economic Development Administration to strengthen collective sector-based initiatives in manufacturing, healthcare, IT, and biosciences

Good Jobs Challenge & CT's Regional Sector Partnerships



# The Path Forward: Programs and Policies

We will collaborate with key stakeholders to develop and scale inclusive return to work programs



MANUFACTURING AND  
TECHNICAL COMMUNITY  
HUB (MATCH)



PAID FAMILY AND  
MEDICAL LEAVE ACT



OEC CARE 4 KIDS AND  
BLUE RIBBON COUNCIL



OWS DEIA COMMITTEE +  
ARES PROJECT

# The Path Forward: Key Considerations

Crucial to successful programs is designing inclusive employer practices and supportive services around women



INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER  
PRACTICES



BENEFITS AND FINANCIAL  
LITERACY COUNSELING

# Our Partners

OWS works with a collective of public and private sector partners to make returnship a possibility



Connecticut Office of  
Early Childhood



Department of Economic and  
Community Development



GOVERNOR'S  
WORKFORCE COUNCIL



OFFICE OF  
WORKFORCE  
STRATEGY  
CONNECTICUT

# Let's Continue the Work Together: Please Reach Out



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