

MARC NEWS RELEASE

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MARC receives Walmart Foundation workforce grant Funds will support workforce development initiatives in the Kansas City region

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) was awarded a two-year, \$500,000 *America Works Initiative* grant from the Walmart Foundation to sustain the impact of OneKC WIRED, a regional workforce development initiative. The Kansas City region was one of seven regions chosen to receive the award.

The America Works initiative provides funds to established regional partnerships capable of implementing accelerated strategies that connect unemployed individuals to long-term, family-sustaining employment. Through the work of OneKC WIRED over the past four years, a regional network of public workforce agencies and private industry partners is now in place to implement the key objectives identified in the grant:

- **Sustain**, and expand upon, the successes and accomplishments of the OneKC WIRED initiative.
- **Develop** a workforce data network to provide regional partners with updated, accurate and consistent information necessary to inform and improve the delivery of services for unemployed job seekers.
- **Engage** employers within the region to assess specific workforce needs to help partners make more proactive and informed program design decisions.
- **Support** the needs of existing sector partnerships developed through OneKC WIRED.
- **Identify** emerging sectors that could benefit from collaborating within a coordinated regional workforce development system of strategic partners.

“Like many other issues which face our region, the challenges of developing a highly- skilled, globally competitive workforce transcend state and county lines,” said Marlene Nagel, MARC’s director of community development. “The Walmart Foundation recognizes the value of a coordinated regional effort. Thanks to the work of OneKC WIRED and its partners, the Kansas City region is positioned to invest these new funds to benefit our workforce and the region’s economy.”

[The Walmart Foundation’s grant announcement is available here: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/walmart-foundation-donates-34-million-to-help-americans-get-back-to-work-89988242.html>]

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ABOUT OneKC WIRED

The Kansas City region was among 13 chosen to receive a \$15 million WIRED (Workforce Innovation in

Regional Economic Development) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor in 2006. OneKC WIRED has created dynamic partnerships to support significant economic and workforce development changes. OneKC WIRED's innovative approaches to workforce development have resulted in diverse, highly skilled, educated workers who improve the global competitiveness of the Kansas City region. www.OneKCWired.com

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