

Discover how WorkBay®, a technology firm founded by CEO Mary Hayes and COO Alice Hayes, is making a difference in career navigation both regionally and nationally. WorkBay integrates the skills-first approach of the workforce ecosystem, and their innovations in this area are revolutionizing career exploration and navigation. During a recent *Work Ready Communities Live* event, Mary and Alice shared insights about the latest pilots with ACT® and how WorkBay is integrating WorkKeys benchmarks into user-friendly platforms in regions and targeted initiatives across the U.S. WorkBay successfully tackled the technological challenges of serving returning citizens with pre-release activities. By combining high-tech solutions with a personal touch, WorkBay provides career navigation and support for returning citizens.



the answer is yes. We'll figure it out.

Jasen Jones: Career Navigation technology keeps getting better with time. Discover how WorkBay is making a difference regionally and nationwide as Mary and Alice from WorkBay join us on Episode 39.

workday as a system of support to the people who were connecting up people without jobs and jobs without people.

Jasen: Mary, wh ŠH Š2μ : ÿμ Ī à 2ò ŠoZ: §Š/Š!PöPHμ: P2 öP:Hμ μ2: i Pö® ĪP

Mary: There's a backend dashboard that lets people see the data of what young people are looking at from education to employment, how adult job seekers are getting the education that they need. The workforce boards, educators, could see the placement data, longitude, for those who had graduated. And employers could see who has what skills. It's kind of like Netflix®

will be demonstrating this in New York in September. And we are also participating in the U.S. Chamber Foundation as twelve companies that are working on using artificial intelligence to better take in unstructured data, someone's personal narrative, and turn it into a structured learner employability record. And in that, Jasen has advised us, and we are really keen, to continue working with ACT WorkKeys to do better and better, giving people those badges, those skills, those understandings that are going to help them navigate their community economy.

Jasen:

Mary: Because we are really focused on that goal of those who are underemployed, or are not participating in the labor market. We actually started working in corrections around 2015, 2016. We were part of the Barbara Bush Foundation and Dollar General® X Prize for Adult Literacy and started volunteering inside Shelby (County) Corrections. I was living in Memphis at the time and were surprised to find out that there were 18 hundred people in Shelby Corrections. On that, there were over 200 who had actually served their time, but had been sentenced to time, plus job readiness training. The job readiness training was not able to be delivered. And so that was creating a barrier to release. So, they also didn't have Internet access at that time.

So, we took our entire platform and rebuilt it so could work inside a backpack. I was just going in with a backpack and tablets running that program. That was noticed by the US Department of Labor, luckily, and we then were introduced to a number of other folks. And so now, when there are correctional tablet or I.T providers in the prisons, they have WorkBay on there and that's paid for in different ways, but essentially it's always free for the actual incarcerated person. They can use geolocation of where they are incarcerated, or the geolocation of where they plan to return, meaning they plan to return to, and they can see what jobs are available.

It's an interactive Internet model. So, if they're using the backpack, the backpack goes into the classroom and it comes back out to the warden or **P : H 2 P S Office, Z** then it can phone home. It uploads all the explorers, downloads all the jobs, and is refreshed to go back into the non-Internet environment again. Other correctional technology systems have a firewalled special situation for doing that kind of internet connection. WorkKeys in corrections is all different ways. And so, in some cases, the person, or the administrator has to put in their WorkKeys ID number.

Jasen: Right.

Mary: In other cases, if we are given a list, we can import it.

Jasen: Mary, what advice would you give employers on this approach and why it works ?

Mary: You know, a key part of making that algorithm work is that the employers have identified the WorkKeys skills that aligned to the job occupation. Well, some of those, especially if we go

We did another thing in Memphis where an employer that would not hire was looking for 700 people, but they would not hire anybody who had a background. But by having a conversation with the employer, by saying, well, is that exactly as you said there, there are some folks that maybe deserve a second chance. And so, by creating a portfolio for the worker that identified their skills, experience, interest, it jumped over that background check, and they hired for competency and motivation, instead of just refusing for background.

One more. In Maury County, Tennessee, they have a really great program there. And I know of someone who got a \$70,000 a year job, from incarceration, through day release to laser cutting, to a \$70,000 a year job.