



# BUILDING BUSINESSES AT LIBRARIES

## Providing Opportunity Across Kentucky and the Nation

As technology further shifts the economic landscape, libraries prepare American jobseekers to enter the workforce, to reskill to meet new requirements, and to succeed as business owners.

Public libraries in Kentucky and nearly 17,000 strong across the country: (1) help people secure employment through job search, resume writing, and interview training, (2) provide internet access and digital skills programs that encourage use of emerging technologies and empower entrepreneurship, (3) collaborate with other community stakeholders to identify workforce challenges and build vibrant local economies.

With many communities hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and facing economic challenges, libraries are a critical part of the economic safety net, now more than ever.

### Skills building and job seeking

In Casey County (KY) jobs are scarce, and more than one quarter of people live under the poverty line. Many local businesses have shuttered and finding a job in the community is a challenge. What's more, a significant portion of the county population (more than 25%) does not have a high school diploma, and many do not have the necessary

these challenges. The library provides access to computers and the internet for jobseekers and has partnered with the local Chamber of Commerce and the employment office to offer resume writing and job search classes.

The library also offers weekly technology classes—the only free digital skills classes in the county. In these sessions, community members receive one-on-one aid tailored to their specific technology needs, ranging from email set-up, to job search, to eBook downloads.

### **Bridging the rural resource divide**

In Crittenden County (KY) residents struggle to access the educational opportunities they need to apply for jobs and grow their businesses. To bring these resources to the community the Crittenden County Public Library partnered with the local economic development agency—the Lake Barkley

