

Partner4Work announces Wisconsin state department workforce leader as new Chief Executive Officer

Robert L. Cherry Jr. to lead the workforce development board for Pittsburgh/Allegheny County

PITTSBURGH, PA, UNITED STATES, July 1, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Robert L. Cherry Jr., Deputy Secretary of the [Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development](#) (DWD), has been named Chief Executive Officer of [Partner4Work](#) (P4W). He assumes the role on July 26, 2021.

"With his deep knowledge of workforce development priorities, commitment to greater system alignment, and experience in leading strategic

business engagement, Mr. Cherry is the workforce development professional to lead Partner4Work during this critical time," said David J. Malone, Partner4Work board chair and chairman and CEO of Gateway Financial Group. "Additionally, Robert's policy and urban planning skills will help strengthen Partner4Work's industry partnerships, job seeker initiatives, and strategic alliances with community organizations. We believe his impressive leadership experience will elevate P4W's long-term organizational strategies and reaffirm P4W as the go-to organization for workforce development in the region and beyond. "

The Partner4Work CEO Search Committee and Executive Committee named Mr. Cherry to the role following a national search that began in spring 2021 when former CEO Earl Buford stepped down to become the president of [CAEL](#). Since Mr. Buford's departure and throughout the search, tenured P4W Board member Debra L. Caplan led the organization as Interim CEO.

"Mr. Cherry has proven to be an influential figure in the world of workforce development and a true leader when it comes to evoking positive change in the lives of employers, workers, job seekers, and youth," Ms. Caplan said. "We excitedly look forward to seeing his exceptional skillset



Robert L. Cherry Jr to lead Partner4Work, the workforce development board for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

translate into meaningful impact here in our region and throughout the organization.”

A champion for businesses and job seekers, implementation of programs, policy initiatives, and community engagement, Mr. Cherry’s resume boasts more than 10 years of workforce development leadership experience which (in addition to DWD) includes senior roles at Employ Milwaukee, Community Advocates Public Policy Institute, and the Center for Urban Population Health. During his time at Employ Milwaukee, Mr. Cherry led the development and implementation of the Career Plus program that consisted of year-round combined workforce training, subsidized improvement, and social-emotional development delivered to City of Milwaukee citizens ages 15-24.

Since April 2020, Mr. Cherry has managed six bureaus that include the Division of Administration, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Unemployment Insurance, Division of Employment and Training, Division of Equal Rights, and Division of Workers Compensation as the Appointed Deputy Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD). During the last 15 months, Mr. Cherry led 2,500 employees and partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, Wisconsin Department of Disabled American Veterans, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and the Veterans Chamber of Commerce for a Vets Ready initiative, an employer recognition program highlighting employers committed to the veteran workforce. In addition, under Mr. Cherry’s guidance and expertise, in 2020 he also spearheaded a complex program that provided additional unemployment insurance dollars into the hands of out-of-work Wisconsinites.

Mr. Cherry received a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He is an elected Board Trustee of the Village of Brown Deer and is responsible for developing and approving its mission, strategic goals and establishing policies related to programs and services.

“Joining a workforce development agency with such an already strong and robust reputation and trajectory could not be more exciting,” Mr. Cherry said. “I am eager to expand Partner4Work’s footprint across the region, build valuable, new relationships with employers, and implement strategies with partners to make Pittsburgh a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable place to live and work. With my experience, passion, and dedication, I firmly believe that together with Partner4Work’s committed partners, board and providers, we will be able to achieve high-level results that impact the lives of individuals and families for the foreseeable future.”

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