

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Wyoming Annual Narrative Report Program Year 2021



The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS), in collaboration with its partners, is proud to present the Program Year 2021 Annual Report. This narrative is a collaborative effort among the six core programs (Title I-Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Title II-Adult Education (AE), Title III-Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV- Vocational Rehabilitation). Collaboration, communication, and maximizing resources through these partnerships all employ the successes of the WIOA program in Wyoming.

Identify each waiver that the state has had in place for at least one program year and provide information regarding the state’s progress toward achieving the goals and performance outcomes in ETA’s letter of approval for the waiver (sec 189(i)(3)(C)(ii)) and outlined in the state’s waiver request (when applicable). Discuss how activities carried out under each approved waiver have directly or indirectly affected state and local area performance outcomes. To the extent possible, provide quantitative information.

Wyoming currently does not have any active WIOA Waivers.

Per Department of Labor (DOL’s) website there are no current [WIOA Waivers](#) for Wyoming

These are the last two waivers that were in [place](#).

Identify the two approaches the state has chosen for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator pilot. If the state is piloting a state-established measure of Effectiveness in Serving Employers or has any other metrics to assess employer engagement, describe the measure or metric as well.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC) elected Employer Penetration and Retention with the same Employer for the 2nd & 4th quarters after exit as Wyoming’s focus for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance pilot indicators. Wyoming continues to focus on business engagement and outreach to educate, develop, and maintain business relationships. Continued coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation Employment First Coordinator to educate and facilitate services to businesses interested in hiring individuals with disabilities. During PY 2021, the labor force participation rate was relative to other years, given the effects on the labor force due to the pandemic and “Great Resignation.” The main focus has been on recruitment and retention strategies. Coordination with the Vocational Rehabilitation Employment First Coordinator to identify businesses interested in hiring individuals with disabilities and continues to be a resource to connect businesses with a “hidden” workforce. Wyoming currently does not have any state-established measures.

Table 4.1: Wyoming Labor Force and Unemployment Rate, 2012-2021

Year	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force Participation Rate
2012	303,748	287,110	16,638	5.5	68.4
2013	302,201	287,792	14,409	4.8	67.4
2014	302,865	289,694	13,171	4.3	67.3
2015	301,608	288,894	12,714	4.2	66.8
2016	300,546	284,439	16,107	5.4	66.6
2017	293,802	281,164	12,638	4.3	65.9
2018	292,781	280,909	11,872	4.1	65.7
2019	294,380	283,377	11,003	3.7	65.8
2020	293,722	276,739	16,983	5.8	65.3
2021	290,404	277,372	13,032	4.5	64.1

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics.
Prepared by C. Cowan, Research & Planning, WY DWS, 3/30/22.

Current or planned evaluation and related research projects, including methodologies, used.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council has conducted two strategic planning sessions to identify measurable areas for evaluations, and DWS is exploring an internal position to take on the evaluation process in 2023. DWS had a significant staff transition in the program year but is looking to improve the evaluation process as it moves forward.

Efforts to coordinate the development of such projects with WIOA core programs, other state agencies, and local boards

Department of Family Services Partnership

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and the Department of Family Services (DFS) continue to work together to provide a holistic approach to serving individuals with the long-term goal of self-sustainable employment. The Wyoming workforce centers provide universal access to all job seekers through “basic career services,” and emphasize providing targeted services to “individuals with barriers to employment,” which includes low-income individuals. Low-income individuals, including individuals participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), are given priority of service when it comes to receiving higher-intensity services like “individualized career services” or training from the WIOA Adult program.

Due to the WIOA Title I Adults focus on low-income individuals, DWS and DFS have monthly meetings to discuss strategies and approaches to providing streamlined services and increase co-enrollments. During the program year, additional training was provided to both agencies and this will continue on an annual basis. The training topics included:

- WIOA Title I eligibility requirements, and services provided
- Coaching for Success
- Case management with the team approach
- Funding streams and how to braid funds between TANF and WIOA programs
- Colors Personality Assessments and how are personality impacts our relationships
- Bridges Out of Poverty
- Communication - Unconscious Basis and Managing Emotions

DFS and DWS partner together to create self-sufficient, responsible, and successful individuals through the Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities (POWER) program. Using DFS federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds, POWER allows Wyoming parents with barriers to employment to earn cash assistance through an employment-focused, pay-after-performance TANF work program administered by DWS. The individuals who enroll in POWER also meet the eligibility requirements of WIOA. As a result, program efforts were directed to cross-training workforce specialists and POWER case managers over the past year to increase co-enrollment efforts.

The Wyoming Child Support Program (CSP), in partnership with DWS, established the Work Initiative Network (WIN) program to improve earning outcomes for Non-Custodial Parents (NCPs). The program used coaching and a case management approach that increases the participants’ capacity to move toward permanent unsubsidized employment so they can make reliable child support payments, which improves the financial well-being of both custodial and noncustodial parents and their children. Because WIN participants also meet the eligibility requirements of the WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker program, DWS partners with the case managers to ensure that eligible participants are co-enrolled in WIOA and that funds

can be leveraged to provide additional services.

The Dads Making a Difference (DADs) program is a DWS initiative in partnership with DFS that uses TANF, SNAP, Education and Training (E&T), and private funding. The nationally-recognized DADs program was developed in 2007 as a training-to-work program for low-income custodial and non-custodial fathers in Wyoming who experience multiple barriers to self-sufficiency. The DADs program provides services necessary for fathers to actively improve the quality of their lives and the lives of their children and families. All DADs program participants are co-enrolled in WIOA to leverage services and funding.

During the Program Year 2021, we served the following:

- POWER - 205 participants
- WIN - 0 participants (pilot program)
- DADs - 10 participants

Adult Education (AE) Expansion

Through a coordinated review and evaluation of programmatic data for Adult Education and the Wyoming Workforce Centers, it was determined that there existed a great opportunity to co-enroll increasing numbers of youth. Throughout the State large numbers of out-of-school youth, aged 16-24 were enrolling in Adult Education programs; yet these participants were not taking advantage of the services which could be provided by Title I: Youth and/or Title III: Wagner Peyser. As a result, a new joint program was launched in FY 21/22 between the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and some of the Adult Education centers in Wyoming. This program targeted out-of-school youth and required that the students be co-enrolled so that effective services could be delivered by both Title I and Title II. The program was expanded in FY 22/23 to include all Adult Education centers in Wyoming.

It is the intent of both the Adult Education program and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services to replicate the aforementioned ‘youth’ program to adults who are aged 25 or older.

The Adult Education program in Wyoming has also identified a conceptual weakness in developing programming for Integrated Education and Training programs (IET). Through discussions with local providers and through evaluations of the types of courses offered by the local adult education centers, the State office for Adult Education determined that there existed a great need for training on how to develop IET’s for frontier states as well as a need to find funding to supplement the training component of the IET. To address the professional development need all local programs in the state were required to complete the federally supported IET Training Boot camp which was held in FY 21/22. The State Adult Education Office then required that each local provider begin to develop an IET program in conjunction with the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. Unfortunately, as of the time of this report, this collaboration has not occurred due primarily to a lack of understanding of what IET’s are and how collaborative efforts can help participants meet individual goals. We are currently working on ideas to cross-train our respective departments. The secondary challenge associated with IET development in Wyoming stems from this state being a minimally funded state for AE. Because efforts to implement the ‘Ability to Benefit’ clause in the state have not been successful, the State Office for Adult Education is currently seeking American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help fund the training component of these IET’s. We hope to implement this new program of study as soon as possible.

Throughout FY 20/21, AE worked closely with DWS to expand collaboration between the core partners. This collaborative effort saw bi-weekly meetings between the State One-Stop Deputy Administrator and

the State AE director to plan expansion efforts. One of the initial processes completed was cross-training all AE local directors and DWS center managers and WIOA Youth case managers so that each partner understands the offered services. Cross-training was one of Wyoming's key goals for the fiscal year; new employees, center managers, and directors need to be trained so that effective WIOA core partnerships could be established to provide enrolled participants with opportunities to advance (or gain) employment and education, or to obtain the training services that they may need. This training was followed by the launch of quarterly 'Meet & Greets,' where DWS center managers and AE program directors made joint presentations on regional collaborative efforts.

The year also saw an expansion of integrated 'Youth' programming, where AE and DWS worked hand in hand to co-enroll qualified youth in a standardized State incentive program for high school equivalency completions. By the end of the fiscal year, this was expanded to a Request for Proposal (RFP) process in multiple areas of Wyoming.

AE and DWS also worked collaboratively with several Next Generation Sector Partnerships to develop integrated programming aimed at promoting/advancing regional economic efforts. One example was a year-long Project Management Team training program for qualified youth. The overall program goal was to provide career and training services designed to meet the needs of local employers involved with the Next Generation Sector Partnerships in the Tri-county area of Goshen, Platte, and Niobrara counties. Participants were tasked with developing a 'mixer' whereby county health professionals could meet and greet colleagues throughout the three counties. Student interns for this project learned financial management skills, digital literacy, event planning, employability skills, and academic skills needed for success. Interns were paid through DWS Work Experience funds for the time they were involved with this project. Before the year's end, a very successful 'mixer' was held and was attended by many tri-county health professionals.

Collaborative efforts also provided joint presentations by DWS, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and AE at new student orientations, the facilitation of 'shared space' at the community colleges, and employment placements for qualified participants. The primary goals of these joint presentations were to find ways to increase co-enrollments for qualified participants and to help facilitate the 'Referral' processes in place by the core partners.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

During this program year, the Administrator of DVR and the One-Stop Deputy Administrator have begun meeting monthly to discuss the ongoing collaboration efforts. The upcoming plan is to begin providing cross-training opportunities for all staff, including a brief training session during all onboarding.

During the pandemic, many Workforce Centers, also known as One-Stop Centers and American Job Centers, provided paid work experiences to DVR clients, opening the door to training and providing clients with additional job skills. This process has continued and is now being offered throughout the state.

General Rehabilitation services are delivered through 16 field offices staffed by 28 VR counselors and 17 assistants. Area managers manage these offices in four service regions. Evaluation of rehabilitation needs, rehabilitation counseling and guidance, referral services, assistive technology, and job development are core services available to clients. In PPY 2021, DVR served 4,326 Wyoming citizens with disabilities and

received services ranging from vocational rehabilitation evaluation and eligibility determination to medical treatment, counseling, training, and job placement; 471 persons were successfully rehabilitated by DVR. Eighty percent (80%) of the individuals served were significantly disabled. Eighty-eight percent (84%) of the individuals who were successfully rehabilitated (returned to work) were significantly disabled. The annual savings to taxpayers, as a result of reduced Social Security or TANF payments to rehabilitated individuals, is estimated to be \$12,498.

During PPY 2021, DVR engaged in numerous collaborative efforts with other state agencies and the University of Wyoming to increase services to youth and students. A few highlights from PPY 2021 include WY DVR and the University of Wyoming Innovation Workshop began to collaborate and build a statewide and united network of mini-maker spaces. The partnership established five new maker spaces across Wyoming. The goal of the mini-maker space extensions throughout the state is to provide a greater diversity of makers with access to training using technologies found throughout an increasing number of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEAM) industries. Particular emphasis on content developed for MAP focuses on providing accessible learning and growth opportunities for youth ages 14-21 with physical and mental disabilities or who encounter other roadblocks to employment. The Innovation Workshop brand and the unique content provided by MAP serve as significant opportunities to provide skill-based training, bridge divides, engage broader communities, and forge collaborative partnerships.

The Division Collaborated with community Colleges to provide Summer camps to students and youth with disabilities. In addition, WY DVR has entered into an interagency agreement with the Wyoming Department of Education Deaf and Hard of Hearing Outreach, as well as Vision Outreach Services fall of 2021. The focus of the contracts is for each agency to provide transition outreach and education services. They aim to connect with all 48 school districts and disseminate information about DVR PreETS services to students, parents, and educators with vision or hearing disabilities. The agreement aims to increase the number of PreETS students who participate and access services. The Division also engaged in a plethora of other transition workshops and activities across the state to provide diverse services and experiences to youth with disabilities.

Wyoming applied and was selected to participate in the Rural Youth Apprenticeship Development Project (RYAD). RYAD is a project of ExploreVR at the Institute for Community Inclusion UMASS Boston. The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research funded this project.

The Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), pursuant to Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), is designed to provide universal telephone service for all Americans, including people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and/or speech-impaired. Wyoming law provides authorization for the Telecommunications Relay Service and an Equipment Distribution Program funded by a telephone line surcharge. Between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021 (SFY 2021), Wyoming Relay processed 8,035 traditional relay calls, 9,282 captioned telephone calls, and 56 relay conference captioning events, which amounted to 10,725 session minutes of traditional relay service, 27,531 session minutes of captioned telephone service, and 4,140 session minutes of relay conference captioning.

The Federal Communications Commission has strict rules regarding users' confidentiality and call content. Therefore, data is collected on the number of unique phone numbers that call into Wyoming Relay each month. The area code (307) and the first three digits of the phone number allow us to see the communities in Wyoming (73 for SFY 2021) and across the nation where the calls originate. For SFY 2021, there was an average of 242 unique telephone numbers used to place traditional relay calls each month and an average of 28 unique telephone numbers used to identify captioned telephone calls each month.

The Wyoming Relay equipment distribution program served 36 individuals in SFY 2021. Of those individuals, 26 pieces of equipment were permanently distributed to 21 individuals. The total cost for the equipment distributed was \$9,432.76. Total expenditures for the Wyoming Relay program for SFY 2021 were \$522,338.31.

Independent Living

Wyoming is served by two Centers for Independent Living (CILs): 1) Wyoming Independent Living, Inc. (WIL) in Casper, Wyoming, and 2) Wyoming Services for Independent Living (WSIL) in Lander, Wyoming. These CIL programs provide services to persons with significant disabilities, including maintaining employment. Western Wyoming is served by Wyoming Services for Independent Living (WSIL), and Eastern Wyoming is served by Wyoming Independent Living (WIL). The two CILs served 739 consumers from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. The CILs also participated in 1,418 outreach activities during this period.

Independent Living for Older Individuals Who are Blind

The Independent Living for Older Individuals Who are Blind program provides services for individuals 55 years old or older and whose vision loss makes employment difficult, but for whom independent living goals are feasible. Vocational Rehabilitation has an Interagency Agreement with the Wyoming Department of Education – Vision Outreach Services (WDE-VOS) for WDE-VOS to provide services. The program served 278 clients from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Serves those DVR clients who are interested or involved in self-employment. Self-employment includes various businesses, from home-based micro-enterprises to retail shops and other more significant ventures. BEP can provide technical and financial assistance, such as helping a client start a new business that may be home-based or acquire an existing one. Occasionally, assistance in modifying a business for its owner is necessary when needed to accommodate the client's disability. In PPY 2021, BEP served 54 clients and approved 17 new business start-ups.

During PPY 2021, DVR continued its collaboration with the Employment and Training Division, the Unemployment Division, the Business training unit, the worker's compensation, and the social security disability determination division. The administrators and managers of each of these units would frequently meet with the VR Administrator and VR management team to develop and discuss training for staff and collaborative efforts to serve clients and community partners.

Most of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) offices are co-located with local Workforce Centers, allowing individuals to work with both programs easily. Both programs are thus committed to increasing collaboration to assist individuals. These efforts include 1) Cross-training and knowledge-sharing opportunities; 2) Exploring more co-enrollment; and 3) Joint meetings with clients when they are working with both divisions.

Department of Corrections (DOC)

The Department of Workforce Services was recently awarded the Pathway Home 3 grant. This grant opportunity provides justice-involved individuals and incarcerated adults with critical skill-building and

supportive services prior to, and after, release so that they can successfully re-enter their communities and the labor force. The Pathway Home 3 grant is job-driven and builds connections to local employers that will enable returning citizens to secure employment, while advancing equity for individuals facing significant barriers to labor market reentry, including incarcerated women.

Through this grant, DWS and DOC will teach returning citizens foundational skills, such as job readiness, employability, digital literacy, and job search strategies, in addition to providing occupational training leading to industry-recognized credentials and can provide access to employment and reduce the likelihood of recidivism. Both agencies will work in collaboration to serve 400 participants over the length of the grant, which is a three-year time period.

DWS was already providing services to ex-offenders through the Career Compass program; however, the Pathway Home 3 grant will allow DWS to expand these services to all five correctional facilities. This grant will, but is not limited to:

- Increase the collaboration with case management strategies between DWS and DOC to assist individuals to gain self-sustaining employment.
- Increase technology and software programs to provide information (education, career services, career exploration, and training) to the incarcerated individuals via a secured internet connection prior to their release.
- Streamline industry-needed training to participants prior to release.
- Provide a virtual job fair platform to be used with participants during the pre-release period.
- Increase employment opportunities for participants post-release in critical industry sectors facing increased demands, workforce gaps, or supply chain challenges.

DWS is committed to using the additional funding to support continued comprehensive services for justice involving individuals pre-and post-release.

Job Corps

The referral process and outreach to Job Corps programs reconvened to post-pandemic efforts. The Admissions Counselor has been focusing on outreach to regain the momentum disrupted by the pandemic. Youth Workforce Specialists work closely with Job Corps and provide referrals for those out-of-school youth that may be interested in the program. Job Corps collaborates efforts with the Business Outreach team to participate in job fairs and resource events.

The Riverton Workforce Center provides the “Introduction to the Workforce Center Services” sessions to all new Job Corps participants at the Wind River Job Corps Center. This includes an introduction to the “basic career services” provided. The Workforce Specialists also provide information about the WIOA Title I program. These monthly sessions have led to additional co-enrollments.

Unemployment Insurance (UI)

The Wyoming Workforce Centers have always had a strong relationship with the Unemployment Insurance team and provide employment services and UI Profiling to many individuals. During PY21, the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services applied and was granted the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) grant. The agency is currently developing the policies and procedures for these services.

During this program year, the Administrator of Unemployment Insurance (UI) and the One-Stop Deputy Administrator have begun meeting monthly to discuss the ongoing collaboration efforts. The upcoming plan is to begin providing cross-training opportunities for all staff, including a brief training session during all onboarding.

Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)

During PY 2021, DWS connected with staff to provide informational training on the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) program during the regional and all staff virtual meetings. SCSEP continues to work closely with the WIOA Workforce Specialist to explore co-enrollments.

A list of completed evaluations and related reports and links to where they were made accessible to the public electronically.

The Research and Planning Division of DWS provides

- A monthly *Trends* publication available to the public at <https://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/trends.htm>.
- 2022 Wyoming Workforce Annual Report https://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/annual-report/2022/2022_Annual_Report.pdf.
- A series of Labor Market Information webinar videos <https://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/presentations.htm>.
- Commuting patterns <https://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/commute.htm>.
- Current employment statistics <https://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/CES/TOC.HTM>.

State efforts to provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits for Federal evaluations.

All data, survey responses, and other information related to these projects are and will be available for Federal evaluations.

Any continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated.

The One-Stop System in Wyoming continued to seek innovatively and cost-effective procedures and delivery of services throughout PY21. Wyoming utilized One-Stop Center certifications, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) committee meetings, WorkforceGPS webinars, and discussions with other states when evaluating best practices. During PY21, DWS continues to be in the process of implementing the following:

- Continued to establish an electronic tracking system for all walk-in clients; the State of Wyoming purchased iPads and stands for the front counters in all Workforce Centers. The sign-in data collection will be the same for all Workforce Centers. This data will inform the decision-making processes needed to strengthen the services delivered.
- Wyoming will provide more training opportunities to all Workforce Center staff. We are in the process of publishing a training calendar to include an "all staff" training conference.
- Through completing the One-Stop certifications, more educational materials are shared with all staff on the WIOA programs and required partnerships.
- The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Team attended the annual NASWA conference virtually.
- All Workforce Specialists completed a training designed for TANF and a 14-module program on case management. This case management training has been added to the onboarding process for all new Workforce Specialists.

- DWS continues to conduct regional and all-staff Virtual Meetings with all One-Stop staff. These meetings have provided the platform for general information sharing and cross-training opportunities.
- Over the last year, we had presentations from AE, DVR, UI, and our Programs team. Additional training topics included: Bridges Out of Poverty, Coaching for Success, and a series on communication.
- The Wyoming Workforce Centers implemented an Employee of the Month program to help with staff retention. The recognition program is peer-based utilizing DWS core values. The department recognizes the importance of staff as a departmental strength and a major resource in achieving departmental objectives. The employee recognition program is intended to acknowledge the superior contribution and achievement of staff in meeting the department's mission and vision. It is also intended to promote and encourage a positive climate wherein staff members feel appreciated for their service and affirmed in their employment with DWS as a career of choice.
- During this program year, DWS identified a leadership training opportunity for the Workforce Center Managers to attend. All Workforce Center Managers will be attending Brene Brown's Dare to Lead training. The One-Stop Deputy Administrator attended the training during PY21 and implemented some of the techniques which will help all of the Workforce Center Managers to develop the skills it takes to do brave work, have tough conversations and show up with a whole heart.
- In PY20 there was a significant drop in youth enrollment because of the decrease, a workgroup consisting of workforce center staff was created to address youth and develop an outreach plan. Through these efforts in PY21, there has been a significant increase in youth enrollments. The group is working on continuously improving the services DWS provides to youth in Wyoming.

Describe the state's approach to customer satisfaction, which may include such information used for one-stop center certification, in accordance with 20 CFR 678.800. This description should include: 1) the state's methodologies; 2) the number of individuals/employers who were provided customer satisfaction outreach, the response rate, and efforts made to improve the response rate; 3) the results and whether the results are generalizable to the entire population of customers; 4) a description of any continuous improvement processes for incorporating the customer satisfaction feedback.

1) The state's methodologies

The Workforce Centers employ an online feedback system that collects data in real-time from all individuals and employers who receive services through Wyoming at Work.

2) The number of individuals/employers who were provided customer satisfaction outreach, the response rate, and efforts made to improve the response rate

A total of 194 individuals/employers completed a customer service satisfaction survey in the online job-matching system, Wyoming at Work. This number decreased substantially from the 769 completed surveys at the time of the last report. DWS will review possibilities to make this survey more publicly visible to encourage more feedback from public users.

3) The results and whether the results are generalizable to the entire population of customers

The Wyoming at Work online survey has an overall good result. However, improvement continues to be explored. The survey results indicated that 48.5% visited the site to perform a job search, while 2.6% visited for career planning and occupational research, and 39.7% visited for unemployment filing requirements. The surveys are geared toward both employers and job seekers. 46.9% of respondents agreed that the site was easy to navigate, and 42.3% of the survey respondents indicated their visit to the website

was 'Good' on a scale of 'Poor' to 'Excellent'.

4) A description of any continuous improvement processes for incorporating the customer satisfaction feedback.

The One-Stop System in Wyoming has looked at many ways to implement continuous improvement throughout PY21. We researched and are in the process of implementing the following:

- To establish an electronic tracking system for all walk-in clients, the State of Wyoming purchased iPads and stands for the front counters in all Workforce Centers. The sign-in data collection will be the same for all 18 Workforce Centers. This data will be used to inform the decision-making processes needed to strengthen the services delivered.
- DWS will provide more training opportunities to all Workforce Center staff. We are in the process of publishing a training calendar to include an "all staff" training conference. Through completing the One-Stop certifications, more educational materials are shared with all staff on the WIOA programs and required partnerships.
- The One-Stop team is always working on continuous improvement strategies, finding the best methods to ensure that tasks are completed in the most efficient, effective, and productive ways.

5) Progress made in achieving the state's strategic vision and goals, as described in the state's Unified or Combined State Plan, for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The following outlines the vision, mission, and goals outlined in Wyoming's Unified State Plan:

Vision: Wyoming's Workforce System fosters a vibrant Wyoming economy through collaborative industry-led partnerships that provide diverse and comprehensive services to job seekers and employers.

Mission: Develop a quality and diverse workforce to meet the needs of Wyoming employers.

Goals:

Goal #1: Use an integrated approach to increase the effectiveness of the Workforce Development System

Wyoming Department of Workforce Services is working to build cross-program knowledge for all Workforce Center staff. The use of cross-training has provided a strong foundation for increasing staff's effectiveness in the delivery of services within the Workforce Development System. By having a better understanding of the programs and services available, DWS staff can ensure that there is a unified delivery of services for all populations across all Workforce Center locations. DWS continually works to ensure staff are educated and aware of Veteran services that are available and the specific Veteran staff who can best assist this population. Providing immediate connections to Veteran specific staff for assistance helps ensure an effective delivery of services.

Goal #2: Increase internal and external communication and outreach efforts.

The Department of Workforce Services has identified a need to strengthen our public outreach and

communication. The public-facing website has been redesigned to provide a better platform for initial outreach and communication efforts. The redesign of the public website will provide DWS with an up-to-date platform to publish various announcements and/or updates directly to the public. It will also allow for a more seamless user experience, providing better references when searching for specific information or materials. Coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic, DWS is also increasing our public outreach by hosting additional job fairs and recruitment events throughout the state. The Department of Workforce Services is continually looking for community partners and organizations to work with by utilizing our Workforce Specialist and Business Representative staff to form working connections. The Department of Workforce Services has begun to strengthen internal communication by building up internal policy and procedure as well as utilizing technology solutions, such as virtual meetings and reporting forms, for bridging communication gaps.

Goal #3: Provide customized support and resources to meet the diverse needs of Wyoming employers and job seekers;

Wyoming's management information system (MIS), Wyoming at Work, provides a customized resource for employers and job seekers to meet the needs of job posting, recruitment, skill evaluation, job searching, resume posting, skills training, and a variety of additional services. The MIS, coupled with workforce center staff, provides tailored support to the diverse job seekers and employers within Wyoming. Workforce Specialists are experts in available community services and provide outside referrals and recommendations for additional support and services whenever possible. DWS strives to provide customized support for individuals within the transitioning military personnel and Veteran population by ensuring that Workforce Specialists are up to date on the most relevant training and operating procedures. DWS is also looking to identify further community partnerships to provide veteran-specific services.

Goal #4: Develop and strengthen partnerships to leverage available resources

The Department of Workforce Services will work closely with local areas to strengthen existing working relationships and establish new relationships for greater utilization of resources. DWS is looking to strengthen its partnership with local employers to provide better employer service delivery and to foster increased employer participation. DWS routinely reviews its outreach delivery methods in an effort to develop additional community partnerships and increase the ability to provide referral or collaboration of services.

Goal #5: Use the Career Pathways System to prepare the Wyoming workforce for career opportunities in all industries.

Wyoming workforce centers utilize Career OneStop tools for exploring personalized career pathways across all industries. This tool is routinely used in conjunction with O*Net occupational data to provide individuals a broad view on an industry and adequately prepare individuals for pursuing opportunities within a specified industry. Direct access to these tools is available through the state's MIS, Wyoming at Work, as well as a variety of other Labor Market tools for exploring career pathways.

Progress made in implementing sector strategies and career pathways. The discussion may include: business engagement strategies, work-based learning (including apprenticeship), and work experiences for youth and adults, transitional jobs, and incumbent worker training strategies and policies in the state.

Next Generation Sector Partnerships are partnerships of businesses from the same industry and in a shared labor market region who work with education, workforce development, economic development, and community organizations to address the workforce and other needs of the targeted industry. Community partners face increased pressure to engage the industry more deeply. Secondary and postsecondary educational institutions are called upon to engage with industry and align curriculum and programming in new innovative ways. Workforce boards are called upon to increase partnerships with the industry through sector partnerships. With these partnerships, economic development organizations are experiencing a renewed interest in talent and skills as keys to economic vitality.

Through the Next Generation Sector Partnership initiative, regional employers have identified talent as one of the greatest needs, and training programs have been developed in Wyoming to meet those needs. These include a dual enrollment program between K–12 and post-secondary education and developing and implementing new programs at Wyoming’s community colleges.

The Next Generation Sector Partnerships continue to work on a talent pipeline to establish opportunities for direct access to available employees and services in ways that better suit their needs. The pipeline will provide potential employees access to employers more efficiently and streamline. The focus is on reconvening these partnerships throughout Wyoming in the sectors identified below.

County	Next Gen Sector Partnership
Campbell/Crook/Weston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Transportation
Sheridan/Johnson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing
Park/Big Horn/Hot Springs/Washakie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare
Natrona/Converse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction & Trades
Goshen/Platte/Niobrara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare
Laramie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction & Trades • Hospitality/Tourism • Manufacturing
Albany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Hospitality & Tourism
Sweetwater/Lincoln/Uinta/Sublette/Carbon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Oil & Gas
Fremont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare
Teton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology • Hospitality & Tourism

One of Wyoming’s Next Generation Sector Partnerships is the High-Altitude Manufacturing Partnership (HAMP) of Albany County. Of the many goals identified by business champions in the partnership, recruitment and retention are top priorities. As part of these efforts, HAMP attended the University of Wyoming’s Engineering and Business Job Fair on September 29, 2021. With a focus on recruitment and retention, HAMP sponsored an event where Mike Henke, a national speaker whose passion for building

strong, presented on recruiting techniques, interviewing, and application skills to optimize results and systems.

HAMP expanded the manufacturing partnership into Laramie County. Through the industry partnerships, manufacturing was identified as an industry that also needed focus in Laramie County. In January 2022, the official kickoff meeting was held at Laramie County Community College in Albany county to discuss the expansion. In April of 2022, HAMP officially expanded into Laramie County for a regional approach, with business champions from Cheyenne and Laramie County leading the committee and initiatives. HAMP is collaborating with Laramie County Community College and the Advanced Materials and Machining Advisory Committee (AMMC) to establish the curriculum for machining coursework for LCCC's Advanced Manufacturing and Material Center, which is anticipated to open in March 2023. The Laramie Workforce Center continues to be a quintessential partner for HAMP and assists in planning events and provides information on programs and services pertinent to the business partnerships.

The Laramie County Construction Next Gen focused on rebuilding partnerships. The partnership focused on moving from focused efforts from Associated General Contractors of Wyoming to the Wyoming Construction Coalition. Through this transition and reorganization, the partnership has the Wyoming Young Contractors Coalition (WYCC) that will serve as our NextGen feet-on-the-ground recruitment effort. With this WYCC development, this sector partnership, a focus this year, has been growing in Laramie County and expanding the concept to Casper. In January, the partnership met with the University of Wyoming construction management department and arranged jobsite tours in Laramie with several of their Seniors in April 2022. One of the key stakeholders was promoted to CTE Coordinator for the Laramie County School District #1(LCSD #1) (this position was created as a direct result of our Laramie County NextGen Partnership), which will allow more expansion with the concept of this project. LCSD #1 hired another champion member of the partnership team in the CTE department, which will strengthen the partnership. The partnership has been able to attend in-person school events to talk with students about the construction trades. From these efforts, we placed 12 graduating high school seniors from the 2021-22 class in various trades around Laramie County. In early summer of 2022, the partnership applied for a grant to market the model to other communities in Wyoming.

Next Gen in Wyoming's Southwest region has been impactful over the last year. These partnerships could not be more evident, than seeing what the Southwest Wyoming Manufacturing Partnership (SWMP), has accomplished. In November of 2021, TerraPower announced Kemmerer, Wyoming as the preferred site for the Natrium™ reactor demonstration project. In a partnership with Rocky Mountain Power, a SWMP member, opportunities exist for economic development and ensure Wyoming customers and communities are best served.

Collaboration with Western Wyoming Community College over several months fostered an announcement in December 2021 of the role out of the Powerline Technology Program to start in the fall of 2022. A one-year certificate in Powerline Technology and an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Powerline Technology will provide students with real-world knowledge and skills to apply for apprentice powerline positions in the electrical powerline field.

In January 2022, Green River High School Career Technology Education (CTE) teachers met with local business leaders to share what they are teaching in their programs. The programs include Automotive, Woodworking, Welding, Business, Sports Medicine, Culinary, and Agriculture classes. SWMP members, including Partners from Industry, Western Wyoming Community College, Healthcare, and Education, listened to the CTE teachers share how their courses prepare students for the workforce.

SWMP members sponsor and attend various events, including job fairs, community meetings, business, and economic development councils. Made up of volunteer experts in their field, they represent a cross-section of industry from around the Sweetwater, Uinta, Lincoln, and Sublette county areas.

Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE)

In 2019, The Department of Workforce Services was awarded the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grant through the Department of Labor (DOL) for \$641,075.32 for a three-year performance period. This federal grant focused on expanding the number of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in Wyoming. It provided a one-time reimbursement to employers to offset costs related to on-the-job learning for each registered apprentice who started after July 1, 2019.

System-level advancements include completing the manual tracking process and procedure to collect participant data accurately; this process was implemented in daily operations. Expansion goals and efforts aligned with Wyoming's educational attainment goals, with economic development strategies integrated with current state efforts, and support rapid apprenticeship program development and enrollment.

ASE program-level accomplishments in the performance period included facilitating collaboration among various workforce talent agencies, including businesses, community colleges/universities, local workforce centers, trade associations, and economic development entities across Wyoming, intending to integrate apprenticeship programs into Wyoming workforce strategies fully. The ASE team provided structure and process for potential registered apprenticeship programs regarding the benefits and supportive services available for apprenticeship programs, including WIOA, Workforce Development Training Fund (WDTF), ASE, and additional services provided by Wyoming Workforce Centers. The ASE team has established support and technical assistance for sponsors in developing apprenticeship programs and registration standards, support and training for mentors of apprentices, and assists with the pipeline development of the recruitment and enrollment of registered apprentices, including those from underrepresented populations.

In the three-year performance period, the ASE team served 131 apprentices and supported 19 registered apprenticeship programs within three industries across the state of Wyoming.

As a result of the pandemic, the Wyoming Workforce Apprenticeship Workgroup was put on hold. However, the ASE team continued to collaborate with the workforce partners during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the statewide growth of apprenticeship programs virtually; current conversations are underway between representatives from the Wyoming Department of Education, the Office of Apprenticeship's State Director, Wyoming Registered Apprenticeship Program sponsors, Wyoming community colleges, and the DWS ASE team to determine a date to begin meetings. The focus will remain on expanding educational opportunities, work-based learning, and related training with crucial attention to registered apprenticeships.

Wyoming seeks career pathways that connect youth in more innovative ways by integrating the technologies that youth are more apt to use in the Career Pathways System, thereby strengthening their

ability to be career and college-ready. Wyoming is also developing more apprenticeship opportunities by launching apprenticeships in non-traditional occupations, and in at least one of Wyoming's correctional facilities.

Wyoming also hosts an annual Safety and Workforce Summit to provide education and networking opportunities for employers that allow employers to directly access economic development, workforce, workforce training programs, and educators.

The Wyoming Innovations Foundation, the privately funded nonprofit entity developed by the Wyoming Workforce Development Council in 2012, continues to assist participants with funding when Federal funding is unavailable to support Wyoming's workforce needs.

If the state has received a small state minimum allotment exception to decreasing the minimum out-of-school youth expenditure requirement, describe how the exception has impacted services provided to both in-school youth and out-of-school youth, including specific strategies for serving each population, as well as how the state and/or local area is ensuring serving out-of-school youth remains a priority.

The state's performance accountability system, including:

In Program Year 2021, Wyoming was successful, reaching at least 90% of the negotiated goal on all Program Year 2021 primary indicators of performance except Median Earnings for Adults which was 76.9% of the negotiated goal.

In Program Year 2021, Wyoming served:

- Title I: 182 adults with career services and 125 adults with training services, 67 dislocated workers with career services and 57 dislocated workers with training services, 315 youth aged 14–24 years of age with career services and 48 youth with training services;
- Title III: 3,798 job seekers, including 94 Veterans; and
- 21,912 self-service only individuals.

Any specific state performance measures or goals and progress towards meeting them.

Wyoming has not established state-specific performance measures or goals for WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth, AE, or Wagner-Peyser Programs.

Any performance deficiencies on the primary indicators of performance, which may include descriptions of any factors impacting performance.

Wyoming's deficiency was only in one indicator which was Median Earnings for Adults which was 76.9% of the negotiated goal. This decrease in wages could be a lingering carry over from Covid19. This should even out as the impact of the pandemic continues to normalize. Also, due to the changes in the energy industry, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Research and Planning stated in the 2020 and 2021 annual reports the wages in the NAICS sector 21, Mining, including oil and gas, have declined in the past 2 years. The total wages in Wyoming in millions of dollars for this sector were \$1,933.9 in 2019, \$1,483 in 2020 and \$1,384.5 in 2021. This is a 28.5% reduction in overall wages for this sector in 2 years.

Program Year 2021 Performance Indicator Attainment

Program	Rate	Emp. Q2 after Exit	Emp. Q4 After Exit	Median Earnings	Credential Rate	Measurable Skill Gains
Adult	Neg. Rate	80.0%	75.5%	\$6,900	60.0%	76.7%
Adult	Actual Rate	78.2%	73.9%	\$5,306	64.2%	78.4%
Adult	% of Goal	97.8%	97.9%	76.9%	107.0%	102.3%
Dislocated Worker	Neg. Rate	84.1%	78.0%	\$7,450	57%	78.0%
Dislocated Worker	Actual Rate	82.9%	78.8%	\$11,200	75.4%	77.6%
Dislocated Worker	% of Goal	98.6%	101.0%	150.3%	132.3%	99.4%
Youth	Neg. Rate	65.0%	70.0%	\$2,821	52%	70.3% [@]
Youth	Actual Rate	73.9%	76.1%	\$3,643	63.3%	71.9%
Youth	% of Goal	113.5%	108.7%	129.1%	123.0%	102.2%
Wagner-Peyser	Neg. Rate	64.5%	67.8%	\$5,251	N/A	N/A
Wagner-Peyser	Actual Rate	60.2%	62.6%	\$5,662	N/A	N/A
Wagner-Peyser	% of Goal	93.4%	92.4%	107.8%	N/A	N/A
Adult Education	Neg. Rate	45%	43.5%	\$3,550	46%	48%
Adult Education	Actual Rate	64.46%	60.89%	\$4474.00	65.26%	65.8%
Adult Education	% of Goal	143.25%	140%	126%	144.15%	137.25%
Vocational Rehabilitation	Neg. Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	35%
Vocational Rehabilitation	Actual Rate	N/A	N/A	\$4677	26.4%	48.9%
Vocational Rehabilitation	% of Goal	52.6%	48.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A

The state's common exit policy, including which ETA-funded partner programs are included in the state's common exit policy.

A common exit occurs when a participant who is enrolled in multiple DOL-administered partner programs has not received qualifying participant-level services from any DOL-administered program listed below for at least 90 consecutive calendar days, and no future services are planned (except self-service, information-only activities, or follow-up services).

A participant is only exited when all the criteria for exit are met for the WIOA Titles I and III Core and Trade programs. The WIOA Title I and Title III core programs and the Trade Act are

1. WIOA Title I Adult Program;
2. WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program;
3. WIOA Title I Youth Program;
4. Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program; and
5. Trade Adjustment Act (TAA).

Negotiated performance levels for local areas for titles I and III core programs.

Wyoming is a single-area state and, as a result, does not have local areas. Below are the negotiated performance levels for Wyoming.

Employment Second Quarter After Exit

Program	PY 2021 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level
Adult	80.0	75.6
Dislocated Worker	84.1	82.1
Youth	65.0	70.3
Wagner-Peyser	64.5	63.6

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit

Program	PY 2021 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level
Adult	75.5	70.0
Dislocated Worker	78.0	79.1
Youth	70.0	67.0
Wagner-Peyser	67.8	63.5

Median Earnings Second Quarter After Exit

Program	PY 2021 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level
Adult	\$6,900	\$5,900
Dislocated Worker	\$7,450	\$9,770
Youth	\$2,821	\$3,300
Wagner-Peyser	\$5,251	\$5,550

Credential Attainment Rate

Program	PY 2021 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level
Adult	60.0	67.0
Dislocated Worker	57.0	74.5
Youth	52.0	54.5
Wagner-Peyser	N/A	N/A

Measurable Skill Gains

Program	PY 2021 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level
Adult	76.7	72.2
Dislocated Worker	78.0	80.0
Youth	70.3	67.5
Wagner-Peyser	N/A	N/A

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Measure	PY 2021 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level
Employer Penetration	Baseline	Baseline
Retention with the same Employer 2nd & 4th quarter after exit	Baseline	Baseline

The state's approach to data validation and ensuring data integrity, including a description of the methodology of any validation activities that occurred.

For Titles, I and III (WIOA Adult, DW, Youth, WP), annually or upon special request, reporting and monitoring staff generate a statistical sampling of participant files in the Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner Peyser programs using the PIRL Data Sampling Tool available in Wyoming at Work Administration Module. This tool employs random statistical sampling methods to generate a list of files to be validated. The table below describes the sampling rate:

Sampling Rates

Program	Sample Size
Adult	20%
Youth	20%
Dislocated Worker	20%
Wagner-Peyser	5% sample; 25 random files within the 5% sample pool

Participant sampling is selected statewide from participants within the prescribed Program Year. For the most recent validation year Wyoming included 25 Wagner Peyser files, 80 Adult files, 49 Dislocated Worker files and 91 Youth files. Analytics of the validation results are used to improve data accuracy and performance results.

Wyoming's AE programs use a multi-tiered approach to data validity. Written protocols for data validation follow Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education guidance and contain a description of the processes for identifying and correcting errors of missing data. Monthly, quarterly, and end-of-year provider reports as well as state monitoring reports are geared toward ensuring data validity.

Activities provided by state funds:

Activities provided with the funds reserved by the governor, which can be up to 15% of the state's allotment. In this section of the narrative, states may describe activities undertaken in whole or in part with their Governor's Reserve and how those activities have directly or indirectly impacted performance. Rapid Response activities and layoff aversion, which may include: Data on the number of companies served and the number of individuals served.

Wyoming takes a unique approach by treating all layoffs, no matter the size, as a Rapid Response since Wyoming has few qualifying events. With this strategy, Wyoming's Rapid Response Team contacted eight employers during PY21 affected by closures or layoffs, and approximately 376 affected employees have been reached. Rapid Response packets containing information for affected employees were available in hard copy and digital format. Wyoming continues to include community resources such as 211 and EnrollWyo to provide as many wrap-around services for affected workers as possible.

This year, DWS continued to strengthen its rapid response by working to connect to more community partners to participate in these efforts with the inclusion of AE, DVR, UI, 211 services, and Enroll Wyoming in Wyoming's Rapid Response efforts. DWS is currently in the process of updating our rapid response internal documentation and workflow process to have a more consistent response for all areas of the state.

Discussion of strategies for linking Rapid Response recipients to American Job Centers and processes for intake or co-enrollment in the Trade Adjustment Assistance and Dislocated Worker programs.

Staff within the Workforce Centers continue to receive training opportunities and access to resources and tools during outreach for Rapid Response services, including layoff aversion strategies. The Workforce

Centers have recorded previous virtual Rapid Response sessions, making the sessions available to impacted job seekers when access is most convenient for them. Rapid Response resources are provided digitally and hard copy to ensure recipients have access to needed information. Each Rapid Response event is reviewed for possible Trade Adjustment Assistance for co-enrollment when applicable.

Discussion of layoff aversion strategies, including any metrics/outcomes developed and/or tracked by the state with respect to layoff aversion, such as return on investment or measures showing the economic benefits of Rapid Response and layoff aversion.

The Rapid Response program served employers and affected employees where announced business closures and layoffs were occurring and where aversion efforts were unsuccessful. The local Workforce Centers conducted Rapid Responses in coordination with the UI Division, DVR, AE, 211 Services, Enroll Wyoming, and community resources to assist affected employees as requested by employers. UI has implemented the Short Term Compensation (STC) program, which has been incorporated into Rapid Response materials and layoff aversion materials. Wyoming does not experience many formal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notifications (WARN) since it offers Rapid Response services to all employers experiencing layoffs.

Discussion of how Rapid Response and layoff aversion activities are aligned with business engagement, sector strategy, and career pathway efforts, which may include a discussion of any systems, tools, networks or approaches designed to identify companies in distress and strategies to deliver necessary solutions as early as possible, as well as outcomes of the use of such systems or tools.

The One-Stop operator and the Workforce Center managers work directly with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Office. As a result of the pandemic, UI leadership has implemented the Short-Time Compensation (STC) program. DWS incorporates STC into the portfolio of Rapid Response services and the Rapid Response team will follow up with employers at risk of layoffs with information about STC during the initial contact/meeting with the business as an alternative to implementing layoffs. Outreach for the STC program will include secondary or tertiary employers that may be impacted. The Rapid Response team will ensure business services toolkits have information on the STC program. A statewide toolkit will be developed for those areas that may need one.

Wyoming continues to explore a new way of doing business through the Talent Transition Project in collaboration with the Rapid Response Team. Before the pandemic, Next Generation Sector Partnerships across Wyoming had growing talent needs. With the pandemic, many more people have become available who could potentially fill those needs. Partnerships have been asked if they would like to participate in the Talent Transition Project, to receive targeted assistance from Wyoming's Rapid Response System to locate, refer, train, and otherwise support the transition of a new potential workforce into their industries. The goal is to help companies, workers, and communities benefit immediately, but also to demonstrate how Wyoming's state government and local institutions can work with the private sector to advance the economic vitality and diversification of the State's regions. The implementation plan to roll out this new business approach for workforce development is in the beginning stages, and the interest and involvement for this approach promise positive results. DWS is awaiting to see if an application for ARPA funds will be approved to help this project move forward.

Discussion of specific types of services or workshops provided to both companies and affected workers.

Wyoming implements Rapid Response presentation events and job fairs, both in-person and virtual, are the

main modality for providing services to affected companies and workers. Rapid Response activities are carried out by the American Job Centers, as designated by the State of Wyoming, and in conjunction with UI, statewide resources, and local area resources. Presentations are customized to fit the needs of the affected workers and that specific region, which includes looking for transitional career opportunities. UI staff readily attend Rapid Response activities to answer questions and provide more specific help on signing up for UI benefits. The American Job Centers encounter some hesitation from employers on providing information sessions on-site so innovative sessions can be offered through community sites or virtually.

Activities provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service section 7(b) (e.g., services to groups with special needs or extra costs of exemplary models for delivering services).

A combination of post-pandemic factors and economic uncertainty has prompted a shift in the workforce overall. Americans sought to move from large cities and permanently relocate to more sparsely populated areas. The trend is accelerated by technology and a shifting mindset toward working remotely. Wyoming has a slight increase in population but continues to have more employment opportunities and economic growth than the population to fill those needs. Thus one of the programs utilized to reach out is the Wyoming Grown program. This program is key in promoting Wyoming and its opportunities to the new mobile workforce. With its open spaces and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities, Wyoming provides the perfect backdrop to capitalize on this national trend.

The Wyoming Grown Program connects individuals who desire to return to Wyoming with high-paying, in-demand career opportunities. Wyoming Grown recruits skilled professionals back to their home state, seeking individuals who have left Wyoming but who are considering relocating to the State. The Wyoming Grown Program partners with DWS's statewide network of Workforce Specialists to work hand-in-hand with participants to connect them with employment opportunities and businesses throughout Wyoming.

In the past, the Wyoming Grown Program worked closely with the Wyoming Business Council and the Wyoming Office of Tourism to develop and deploy a recruitment strategy and marketing campaign to target the millions of Americans who seek life and work outside of urban areas. Wyoming Grown will continue to work closely with these partners to identify ways to grow and promote program outreach.

Another unique program for Wyoming is the Workforce Development Training Fund (WDTF), a grant program created to assist businesses with funding needs for professional development opportunities to increase employee skill attainment. Grant options include Business Training Grants, Pre-Hire Economic Development Grants, Pre-Obligation Grants, Internship Grants, and Apprenticeship Grants.

Any National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) awarded to or within the state and how those funds are coordinated with state rapid response activities and dislocated worker programs, as well as how the DWGs fit in with state co-enrollment policies and disaster/emergency management activities, as applicable.

In PY 2021, DWS closed out the COVID-19 National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG). The original DWG proposal sought to enroll 16 participants in grant-funded activities for training and employment services and six additional individuals in direct disaster relief employment. Program documents indicate that 31 participants have been enrolled, including five in direct relief efforts, exceeding some of the program goals. The original plan outlined 21 services; 84 services have been provided.

Any technical assistance needs of the state workforce system.

Wyoming continues to work with Wyoming's Federal Project Officer and Teresa Theis, Performance and Reporting Workforce Analyst, on Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment Rates for technical assistance. Wyoming is also interested in case management, to include the braiding of WIOA funds for technical assistance. Wyoming would also like to hear more on promising practices for youth work experiences.

Promising practices, lessons learned, and success stories that focus on serving employers, communities, and individuals with barriers to employment, including information based on the state's evaluation and related research projects. This discussion should cover a broad range of at-risk and priority populations served, including out-of-school youth, low-income adults, dislocated workers, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals with limited language proficiency, individuals with disabilities, veterans, the long-term unemployed, and any other individuals with barriers to employment, or other populations the state may wish to discuss.

Lessons Learned

During the pandemic and the previous program year, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS) learned that we could provide more services through a virtual platform. This has allowed more Wyoming residents, especially those in the rural areas to receive employment services.

DWS also learned through the pandemic, staff could provide all employment services while teleworking. Many workforce centers have implemented a hybrid approach, which allows staff to split their time working in the workforce and in a home office. This approach has helped some with our staff retention, as the agency has stressed the importance of work-life balance and increased the flexibility for staff.

Success Stories

WIOA YOUTH Participant

Erica (a signed release) dropped out of high school due to social issues. She was living with her family, that were often homeless or "couch surfing." Erica's home environment was not stable, negatively impacting her success in attending the HiSet and career exploration classes. Erica moved in with a long-term family friend. The family friend elected to seek guardianship of Erica, which was granted.

Erica began to thrive in the LYFE Youth Program with DWS. She attended her HiSet classes, completed career exploration activities, and learned more about herself. When she was in the program, her guardian unexpectedly passed away. This was difficult for Erica, but she was able to lean in and get the support she needed. Erica had to return home after the passing of her guardian. On a positive note, Erica's biological family agreed to seek assistance and began working on their self-sufficiency goals. Erica earned her HiSEC, obtained a survival job at Taco Bell, and enrolled in the CNA program at LCCC. Erica is focused on pursuing a career goal in health care. Erica remains a WIOA participant.

WIOA YOUTH and Wagner-Peyser Program Co-Enrollment

In Spring 2021, DWS teamed up with an alternative high school in Sheridan to assist youth in the community. The initial focus was on Wagner-Peyser services, including career exploration and development of work readiness skills. Approximately 30 youth were identified as needing career exploration and guidance to determine their long-term career paths. The DWS Business Representatives

identified businesses throughout the community that were willing to provide unpaid work experiences to community youth. The Business Representatives assisted the school with placing the 30 students in work experiences that fit their areas of interest. DWS and the school identified six youth who had significant barriers and needed additional assistance. Those youth were enrolled in the WIOA Youth program for access to additional services.

DWS also began working with an alternative high school in Gillette, starting from the successful Sheridan program model. Approximately 25 youth enrolled in the school's career mentoring class; DWS Workforce Specialists met and discussed different Wagner-Peyser services over five weeks. Students were provided the opportunity to create resumes for their job-shadowing assignments.

WIOA ADULT Participant and DADS (TANF) Program Co-enrollment Michael Smith (pseudonym)

Michael applied for the DADS program with hopes of finding a career to help support himself and his new family. Michael and his fiancée are the proud parents of a little baby boy and both had been struggling to make ends meet since the addition to their family. The Dads Making a Difference is a TANF program that gives job training and other services to fathers who need help supporting their children.

Michael was accepted into the DADS program, and was co-enrolled in the WIOA program and the SNAP E&T program in order to leverage resources and expertise on his journey. All of the programs collaborated with one another. The SNAP E&T program covered the tuition cost at Sage Technical Services where Michael completed the training necessary for him to obtain his CDL Class A. The WIOA program assisted Michael with many career services, some unforeseen support services and some basic life skills opportunities such as parenting and financial literacy classes.

Michael successfully graduated from the DADS program, having already been hired by Mead Lumber as a Class A truck driver at a starting wage of \$18.00 an hour with full benefits. Michael's future aspirations include owning his own semi-truck and a home for his family.

POWER(TANF) and WIOA Dislocated Worker Participant Program Co-enrollment Bob Jones (pseudonym)

Bob was working at Halliburton and was laid off. He came to the WFC to apply for his Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits. Bob lacked computer skills and requested one-on-one assistance with his UI claims. We shared information about the WIOA DW Program and eventually enrolled him in the program. Bob became very interested in a new program at Western Wyoming Community College, Mine Maintenance/Control Room Operator.

Within a few months, Bob started college and just recently graduated. There were many struggles throughout the time Bob was attending school. He exhausted his unemployment insurance and he was not able to work and be successful in school. Therefore, the WIOA case manager made a referral to the POWER program. Both Bob and his wife became POWER participants and were able to utilize this program to meet their family's day-to-day financial needs. Other referrals were made to help with housing, SNAP benefits, and to DVR.

After completion of the Mine Maintenance/Control Room Operator program, Bob was hired by Genesis. He is a full time, permanent employee, and started at \$34.00/hour.

WP Participant

Donna Smith (pseudonym)

Donna was a walk-in client that came into the office to use the resource computers to look for employment. At first, Donna seemed reluctant to visit with the workforce center staff and indicated she could apply for positions independently. Donna returned to the workforce center a few more times and slowly began to open up about her employment needs and barriers.

Donna eventually agreed to work with a case manager and we provided a variety of basic career services to include referrals, one specifically to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The basic career services Donna received were:

- Registration in Wyoming at Work
- Resume/Cover Letter Assistance
- Interview Tips and Tricks
- Mock Interview
- Weekly Job Application Assistance

Donna was very focused on obtaining Clerical (administrative assistant) types of employment. However, she had limited typing/computer skills. The WFC referred Donna to Allison (site within the MIS). She found some MS Office refresher classes that were free, self-paced, and offered online. Donna utilized the resource room and took the classes. She also attended her meeting with DVR and started the application process.

The WFC staff continued meeting with Donna and helped her to apply for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). After a long wait and two interviews, Donna was hired with the DMV and now helps individuals obtain their driver's licenses. Donna remains employed and is earning \$15.00/hour.

Re-entry (Wagner Peyser) Success Story

DWS has launched the Career Compass program pilot program dedicated to working with ex-offenders. The program's goal is to begin working with the ex-offender before their release. During the pilot and ongoing, DWS is collaborating with the Department of Corrections (DOC). The reentry team at the Department of Corrections identifies returning citizens. The focus has been on those within six months of release. In the program, the returning citizens receive education on all the different programs that DWS offers, which includes WIOA. They participate in workshops on basic career services. These workshops are geared toward their needs and address the challenges they may face as an ex-offender. The program is offered virtually, and approximately 50 ex-offenders have completed the pilot program.

Through this collaboration, DWS and DOC have applied for the Pathway Home grant. The relationship with the Department of Corrections has been fostered through this partnership and will further develop the available resources for returning citizens.

Any challenges the state workforce system faces, which may include policy, implementation, or another relevant challenge.

COVID-19 required DWS to look at how services were delivered, something Wyoming must continue to evaluate, implementing ongoing changes to meet the needs of job seekers and employers. DWS continues to explore ways to meet job seekers and employers where they are to best be able to provide services.

Eligible Training Provider reporting requirements continue to be burdensome for the State of Wyoming and its training providers. The reporting requirements may impact the number and types of programs that request inclusion on Wyoming's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), which will impact customer choice. Wyoming's rural nature and size cause natural challenges to having ETPs accessible throughout the state and the stringent reporting requirements continue to challenge DWS' ability to provide sufficient consumer choice.

Adequate funding remains a challenge for the State of Wyoming on an ongoing basis. Due to the rural, spread-out nature of the state it is a challenge to provide services in each community because of insufficient funding. Rising costs and inflation add to the concerns about DWS ability to continue to provide and maintain one-stop centers in each community. Specifically, among other increased expenses, DWS has experienced significant challenges due to rising lease rates for rented spaces for one-stop centers around the state.

Any strategies/policies relating to Pay-for-Performance contracting may include examples.

N/A