



**TN**

Department of  
**Labor & Workforce  
Development**

# Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Program Year 2022 Annual Report

Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Annual Narrative Report | December 2023



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STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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Bill Lee  
GOVERNOR

Deniece Thomas  
COMMISSIONER

December 1, 2023

The Honorable Bill Lee  
State Capitol, First Floor  
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee:

The Tennessee State Workforce Development Board is pleased to present you with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Report for program year 2022-23. The State Workforce Development Board and the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development, are excited to celebrate another remarkable year of bridging the gap between Tennesseans and promising job opportunities, while simultaneously empowering employers with a skilled workforce.

Our work is grounded by federal support and augmented through state and local initiatives to best meet the needs of all our customers and stakeholders. This annual report of activities funded through WIOA offers an in-depth look at the current demand for and supply of talent in the state. Through these pages you will discover the depths of partnerships and the details of how public dollars are being used in communities across the state, yielding a positive economic impact through higher incomes of American Job Center customers and cost savings to employers who utilize services.

Although this report features many of the accomplishments of the various partners, it only scratches the surface of the efforts made by all involved in getting Tennesseans in the workforce. The State Workforce Development Board is grateful for our partnerships, and we look forward to continued collaboration with businesses, government, and education providers to support the communities and citizens of Tennessee.

Sincerely,

Tim Berry  
Chairman, Tennessee State Workforce Development Board

Deniece Thomas  
Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development

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# Executive Summary

The Tennessee Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan embodies the core of the state's vision to establish the nation's premier workforce system. In a broader context, Tennessee's public workforce system comprises three primary state workforce agencies: Labor and Workforce Development, Human Services, and Education. However, the Departments of Economic and Community Development and Corrections played pivotal roles in shaping and coordinating both strategic and operational components.

Our commitment involves harnessing the existing resources in each local workforce development area to attract new businesses and support the expansion of existing ones, ensuring their competitiveness. The comprehensive services we deliver statewide have enabled Tennesseans to overcome various barriers to employment successfully. By extending services to both employers and citizens, we are laying the groundwork for a more promising and prosperous future for all residents of Tennessee.

Throughout Program Year 2022, the work of Tennessee's workforce system focused on five key elements:

1. Increase access to education, training, and employment- particularly for people with significant barriers to employment.
2. Create a comprehensive, high-quality workforce development system by aligning workforce investment, education, and economic development.
3. Improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts.
4. Promote improvement in the structure and delivery of services.
5. Increase living wages, meet employer needs, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of Tennessee.

This report is an assessment of performance outcomes for workforce investment activities involving performance accountability indicators applied to adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Additionally, this report narrative describes progress toward meeting Tennessee's strategic vision and goals to ensure a skilled workforce. Our collaboration with our partners in Human Services, Education, Economic and Community Development, Corrections, and other stakeholders with shared interests provides us with opportunities to leverage partner funds for services not funded under the WIOA to build a skilled and educated workforce.

Tennessee recognizes the need to continually find innovative ways of approaching our ever-changing technology, workforce, and business needs. Our American Job Center partners continue providing excellent services while establishing new and innovative ways to advance the mission for Tennessee to become the premier workforce system in the nation.

# State Workforce Development Board

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) serves as the administrative entity for all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds awarded to Tennessee from the US Department of Labor (USDOL). USDOL Region 3, located in Atlanta, Georgia, provides federal oversight and technical assistance to TDLWD on all programmatic and fiscal matters.

Multiple federal agencies have oversight of programs contained in the TN public workforce system including USDOL, the US Department of Education, the US Department of Agriculture, and the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Governor Bill Lee's Executive Order 69 designated the reconstitution of the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) per Section 101 of WIOA. A State Board was appointed by the Governor according to WIOA. The State Board and Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development are responsible for guiding the establishment of a statewide, seamless one-stop delivery system, called the American Job Center system (Workforce System).

The SWDB has four committees, including an Executive Committee composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and committee chairs. The Executive Committee shall have supervision of the affairs of the Board between its business meetings and conduct necessary business to ensure compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (P.L. 113—128) as may be amended from time to time, and applicable State and Federal regulations. The Executive Committee may make recommendations to the Board and perform such other duties as are specified in the bylaws. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the order of the Board, and none of its acts shall conflict with these bylaws or policies of the Board.

There are three standing committees of the Board, for which the Board Chair appoints a Chair. These individuals are joined by a Vice-Chair, Staff Liaison, and other Board members with the opportunity to develop ad-hoc committees to include additional partners from higher education, HUD, Community Service Block, Mental Health, and community/faith-based organizations. The committees shall convene at least four times per year in advance of the full Board meetings and as needed upon the advisement of the Board Chair.

## **Oversight Committee- the Oversight Committee has the following responsibilities:**

- Advise the Governor on program and policy changes under WIOA;
- Lead the development, maintenance and modification of State, regional and local plans
- Serve as an advisor to review statewide program alignment
- Review and make recommendations on funding allocations
- Lead review of statewide Workforce System

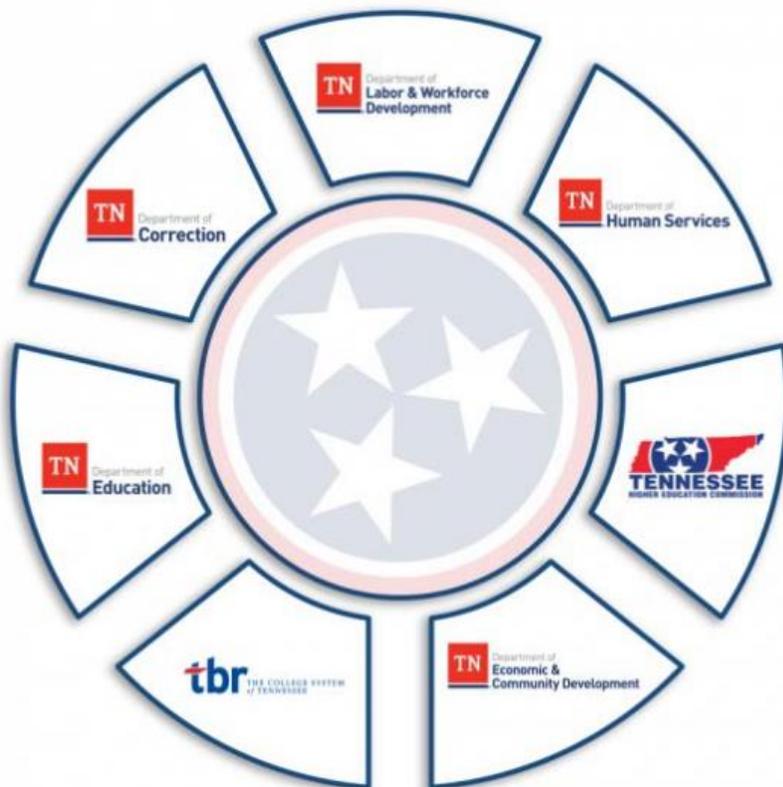
**Operations Committee - the Operations Committee has the following responsibilities:**

- Oversee the continuous improvement of WIOA programs and activities
- Be the lead monitor of State performance/accountability
- Be the lead coordinator of policies and provision of WIOA services
- Review and make recommendations for performance reporting, including Labor Market Information

**Innovation Committee- the Innovation Committee has the following responsibilities:**

- Identify and share Workforce System best practices
- Develop strategies for technology alignment and integration
- Be the lead reviewer of service-model strategies in WIOA programs
- Oversee all WIOA Youth program initiatives

## Strategic Vision for Tennessee’s Workforce System



### ***Strategic Vision***

Execution of a comprehensive and cohesive workforce development strategy must account for the inherent interdependency through a formalized strategy of shared projects, shared processes, and shared metrics under centralized leadership and/or consolidation of functions. As a result, the Tennessee Workforce Development System (TNWDS) Steering Team has been formed. The team consists of members from TBR, THEC, TNECD, TDOC, DHS, & DOE and is led by TLWD.

Guided by the directives of the State Workforce Board, as articulated in their recommendations to Governor Bill Lee, the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development has been tasked with formulating a comprehensive State plan. This plan aims to seamlessly unify the

service delivery of all programs, with the overarching objective of enhancing positive outcomes for the residents of Tennessee who engage with our programs. The central focus of this initiative is to optimize co-enrollment opportunities, establish novel intake and referral processes across programs, and create a reporting system that facilitates more thorough analysis of performance and outcomes.

Aligned with the strategy of fostering tighter integration among programs, the State has initiated a Key Performance Indicator initiative. This initiative furnishes performance and planning resources to the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) across all major programs. The ongoing progress has empowered LWDA to visualize opportunities for enhancing the performance of all programs and conceptualize strategies to maximize co-enrollment.

Operating within the framework delineated for the TNWDS, the primary objective is to activate various programs in a more intentional and integrated manner. This approach is designed to align with the state's vision of implementing a multi-agency strategy that better serves the residents of Tennessee. Consequently, the integration of all workforce programs into the TNWDS supports the State Workforce Board's vision to boost participation and performance in a more cohesive manner.

The evolving progress underscores the efficacy of a multi-agency strategy coupled with an emphasis on streamlined program integration. The Re-Employment strategy for TNWDS has provided a platform for Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV programs to collaboratively develop new procedures, incorporating resources from higher education and other public programs.

The ultimate vision is to enhance the performance of each program individually by collectively augmenting service capacity through an integrated approach. The execution of department-wide strategic initiatives and goals outlined in this section supports integrated service delivery for both job seekers and employers, in line with the overarching vision.

#### **TDLWD STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2022-23:**

- 1) Increase Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR).
- 2) Implementation of a new unemployment insurance system that demonstrates measurable progress in the first year.
- 3) Create alternative pathway models for HISET (High School Equivalency Test).
- 4) Continue to expand the hybrid support model of unemployment insurance in all 21 comprehensive American Job Centers across the state.
- 5) Continue to evaluate and strengthen the use of evidence in the department budgeting process for programs to promote the best outcomes for program participants.
- 6) Continue to fully operationalize AWS across the department to promote sustained productivity, efficiency, and flexibility for all employees.

- 7) Solicit employee feedback by developing a department-wide engagement survey to gain employee insight and address opportunities that increase engagement and impact employee experience.
- 8) Continue to work with Rural Enterprise Management (REM) program representatives to drive prosperity across rural areas of Tennessee.

## ***Drive to 55***

The Drive to 55 Alliance is more than a higher education initiative; it embodies a broader mission encompassing workforce and economic development. Its aim is not only to decrease unemployment but also to enhance the quality of life for residents of Tennessee. The Alliance is dedicated to fostering increased awareness, ownership, and support from the private sector for the comprehensive, long-term measures required in areas such as college entry and completion, adult education and training, and addressing and bridging skills gaps. The overarching objective of the Alliance is to ensure that, by the year 2025, 55 percent of Tennesseans attain a college degree or certificate, thereby preparing both our workforce and the state for the challenges and opportunities of the future. This initiative includes two primary programs:

1. *Tennessee Promise* is a scholarship program to help more Tennessee high school graduates attend college. The program offers high school graduates two years of community or technical college tuition-free. Volunteer mentors are critical to the program's success. TnAchieves is the Tennessee Promise mentorship organization that recruits and supports mentors for students across the state. Tennessee Promise participants must complete and submit eight (8) hours of community service per term enrolled, as well as maintain satisfactory academic progress (2.0 GPA) at their respective institution. TDLWD supports this initiative by providing volunteer mentors.
2. *Tennessee ReConnect* targets adults who do not already have an associate or bachelor's degree by enabling them to attend community college or technical college tuition-free. TDLWD supports this initiative by training staff to become Tennessee ReConnect Ambassadors.

## ***Sector Strategies & Career Pathways***

K-12: Building upon the state's strong commitment to ensure Tennessee is future workforce ready, Governor Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly made an historic investment of \$500 million to bring Innovative School Models to every public high school and middle school in the state. By expanding Tennessee's Innovative School Models aimed at building readiness and preparing students for success after high school, more students will have opportunities to participate in innovative local programs aligned to Tennessee's highest-demand skills and careers. The future of innovative programs to boost student and workforce readiness in Tennessee is brighter than ever. Through reimagining the high school experience; becoming

more strategic about engaging younger students in career exploration; expanding access to courses; improving how data is collected and used; and being even more intentional in how we listen to—and learn from—Tennesseans, we will continue to keep our state’s workforce strong for years to come.

**Vocational Education:** The State of Tennessee is investing \$1 billion in Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs). TCATs serve as an important economic development arm of the state, providing students with opportunities to quickly develop skills, receive a credential, and enter the workforce. This investment would expand and improve upon the existing 16 TCATs, replace seven outdated facilities, and build six new TCATs across Tennessee. With incoming developments like Ford’s new Blue Oval City project in West Tennessee, this historic proposal will provide more students with opportunities to develop in-demand, valuable skills in the workforce.

### ***Youth Employment***

The State of Tennessee has invested \$15 million to expand the summer youth program for work experience. This recurring funding allows youth ages 14-24 to earn up to \$3,200 over an eight-week period. With this additional investment those who qualify can enroll in this program at any point in the year. This will allow a youth to receive valuable first-hand work experience and educational learning. This is a great opportunity for youth to explore potential career paths and/or receive on-the-job training to help prepare them for the workforce. It is also a way to expand opportunities to teens and young adults who otherwise might struggle to find employment. With the additional investment by the State TDLWD will be able to serve an additional 2,500 youth, which does not include those who will still be served through the WIOA Title 1 Youth program.

### ***Jail Tablet Project***

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) is spearheading a unique statewide program aimed at curbing recidivism, educating inmates, and creating a new pipeline of qualified workers for employers. The Jail Tablet Project has provided funding for specially designed tablets to be placed in each of the state’s county jails. The tablets have a concentrated focus on allowing inmates to complete the required adult education coursework in preparation for the HiSET high school equivalency exam, while also making courses for career training, resume building, job search support, mental health services, and substance abuse wellness and general life skills available. TDLWD currently has 5,996 tablets in 64 county jail facilities in Tennessee. The Jail Tablet Project will eventually have nearly 8,100 tablets across the state.

# Implementation of the Workforce Development System

## ***Tennessee's American Job Centers***

The AJC Team continues to focus on outreach efforts to enhance the relationships with employers and community partners for increased placements. The outreach efforts have increased in the high schools by identifying the Career & Technical Directors in each area for collaborative career exploration events. The Team continues to increase their efforts for more success stories. They are developing strategies to improve workshop attendance through partnerships with Goodwill, shelters, and housing authorities. The Team is working to increase Wagner-Peyser enrollments by giving more one on one services for better placement opportunities.

The American Job Centers fulfill two primary missions: assisting employers in locating and training a highly skilled labor force specific to their operational needs and assisting job-seekers in obtaining high-demand skills and job search tools that will lead them to long-term employment with family sustaining wages.

As the backbone of the local workforce system, American Job Centers are a critical component in building a skilled and educated workforce for all Tennesseans.

During Program Year 2022, Tennessee operated 22 comprehensive centers, 36 affiliate centers, 40 specialized centers, 118 access points and 5 Mobile American job centers (MAJC).

## ***Mobile American Job Centers***

The mission of the MAJC is to provide employment resources and one-on-one assistance to all people across the state of Tennessee, especially those in rural areas who do not have access to our brick-and-mortar locations. Clients with barriers to employment are frequently unemployed, underemployed, skills-deficient, and/or have a lack of transportation, among other barriers.

The lack of access to staff-assisted services is and will continue to be an issue as smaller affiliate AJCs close across the state. For those who lack computer skills, access to employment services is vital. The Mobile AJCs across the state will provide a solution to these issues by bringing workforce services to the public. They are manned by Wagner-Peyser staff, as well as staff from partner programs, and can aid those who need it most. Any service that is provided in brick-and-mortar is also provided on the Mobile AJC. MAJC staff reaches out to common organizations found in every community to provide employment services. These entities include:

- Homeless Shelters
- Housing Projects
- Prisons
- Faith-Based Organizations
- DHS Offices
- YWCAs and YMCAs
- Local Food Banks
- Senior Citizens Facilities

## EMPLOYER RESOURCES



The Mobile American Job Centers are an effective resource for employers who are looking for new employees or who are planning to open a new facility. The Mobile American Job Centers are great for recruitment at career and job fairs. The MAJC can be set up remotely and provide access to job seekers who may need assistance with an online application, updating their resume, or interview tips, as well as serve as a source of qualified candidates for positions that need to be filled by the company.

The Mobile American Job Centers provide services that will assist employers and employees in the event of a business closure or layoff. Tennesseans can file for their unemployment benefits online using the technology available at the Mobile American Job Centers.

## DISASTER RELIEF



The MAJCs have been used for disaster relief in the past, both in the state of Tennessee and some surrounding states. Examples of this include wildfires in East Tennessee, tornadoes in Middle Tennessee, flooding in West Tennessee, and hurricane assistance that Tennessee provided to South Carolina.

## MAJC OUTREACH STRATEGY

The Mobile American Job Center outreach strategy is to advance workforce development in all 95 counties by:

- Meetings with local Chambers of Commerce to inform local businesses of MAJC resources.
- Allow them to tour the MAJC to increase awareness of the benefits the mobile units provide.
- Build partnerships between educational institutions and sponsoring organizations to open new pathways for growth and success and pave a better road to the future for students.
- Reach out to Community Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers to provide job services to those with disabilities, as well as providing these services to people with disabilities in the general population.
- Provide a variety of services to veterans by visiting VA hospitals to assist veterans with their workforce-related needs.
- The MAJC also plans to serve the senior citizen population by visiting retirement facilities, senior community centers, and assisted living facilities. The MAJC can assist senior citizens in finding jobs that are appropriate for their capabilities, as well as refer them to other services that might be needed.

## **BEST PRACTICES**

During the past year, the MAJCs have strived to serve the state of Tennessee by working events to assist both public and private sectors, giving tours and talk about the services that are offered. Some examples are listed below:

Re-entry events: The MAJCs assist those who are 30 days from release of incarceration, as well as those who are on probation / parole in learning how to create a resume, job search and interview for a position, as well as teaching them soft skills. This is crucial information for those who are justice-involved when finding their way back into society.

TAA Open House: The MAJCs have partnered with the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program staff on multiple occasions. They have held an Open House in various regions of the state and primarily in rural areas to raise awareness and provide services for those workers who have been impacted by foreign trade and are covered under USDOL certified trade petitions.

High Schools, Colleges, Universities, TCATs: The MAJCs have an ongoing relationship with the educational population to assist high school seniors who are not college-bound, as well as seniors in higher education who are about to enter the workforce.

Non-Profits: The MAJCs serve non-profits on a regular basis. A recent MAJC event was at a church where the members are immigrants from 16 different countries. Several had multiple degrees, worked as doctors, nurses, attorneys, etc. However, their credentials are not valid in the US. They are working low-pay blue-collar jobs to get by and cannot support their families. The MAJC used an interpreter to present a workshop on how to job search in the US and

assisted them in searching for jobs online. This will be a series of events with additional workshops, etc.

Opportunity: We have the honor of being invited to present at the Regional Convening of USDOL in November of 2023. The MAJC Assistant Director will present on the MAJC and Best Practices on Serving Rural Communities throughout Tennessee.

### ***Virtual American Job Center***

The Virtual American Job Center (VAJC) provides a digital experience for Tennesseans to learn about services offered through the Department of Labor and partner agencies. The goal of the VAJC is to enable a self-service model that will improve the service exploration experience.

Through the new VAJC website, Tennesseans will be able to discover services and programs available through their local brick-and-mortar AJC, understand what they may be eligible for based on personal information provided, and get connected with their local AJC by scheduling an appointment online. A key feature included is the eligibility wizard which will help users understand what services they qualify for based on their demographic information. This feature is an example of the self-service model empowering users to explore service available independently and expediting the enrollment and intake process for case managers.

The vision of the Virtual American Job Center is to develop a dynamic and adaptable system designed to foster cooperation between internal and external partner programs. In so doing, it will live up to the expectations of our clients by providing consistent high-quality customer service. By providing easily digestible and accessible information, the VAJC will positively impact the state especially in distressed and rural communities, and to individuals who lack physical access to an American Job Center. The VAJC has been in operation since December 2020. For PY22 the VAJC had 12,102 unique visitors to the virtual site. Of those 4,830 completed the assessment wizard and 3,364 of the 4,830 scheduled follow-up appointments with their local American Job Center for additional services. By utilizing the VAJC customers can see what services they may qualify for and have their information submitted along with their appointment request in just under 5 and half minutes. This tool saves them time and quickly connects them with a staff member who can further assist them with their needs.

### ***Overview of Customer Service Satisfaction in Tennessee***

The State of Tennessee uses a customer relationship management tool (CRM) called Zendesk to capture any requests for the department and streamlines that work in one system where staff are then assigned to work specific tickets. The Zendesk system takes tickets, phone calls, emails, and chat messages to creates one profile for each customer. That profile then tracks any additional request or updates from the customer. This creates efficiencies for the department and avoids staff from working on the same request from a customer. An

additional feature within Zendesk is its ability to track and report customer satisfaction for each unit.

Zendesk provides customizable options for receiving feedback regarding customer satisfaction when customers contact us through our communication channels of ticket, email, telephone, and live chat. When a customer contacts through the Zendesk system, a customer service ticket is created and time-stamped each time the ticket is updated by the customer and agent. When our staff resolve the customer's request and the ticket has been changed from an open ticket to a solved ticket, a follow up email is sent to request the customer's feedback. This satisfaction survey email can be customized to be sent to the customer immediately or after a set amount of calendar or business hours.

The customer satisfaction email asks the customer "How would you rate the support you received?" and the customer has the option to click "Good, I'm satisfied" or "Bad, I'm unsatisfied." Below these two options is a text field to add optional comments about the customer support received. These satisfaction ratings, customer comments, and rating reasons are aggregated by the Zendesk Explore reporting feature. We then can access the data to create daily or weekly reports that are sent to our Executive leadership and managers of different teams for review. These reports provide a snapshot of the percentage of tickets that are rated good or bad by our customers. The reports also include a list of customer comments that have valuable information about their interaction with our staff and the level of customer service they received. These reports allow us to provide real time data from the organizational level all the way down to a particular unit or customer which helps manage programs.

Each local board also has a process in place that to establish a customer feedback and satisfaction survey to evaluate the effectiveness of services received at each American Job Center. Customers may complete a paper survey or scan a QR code to be taken to an online survey. Once surveys are thoroughly examined and specific opportunities for improvements are identified, solutions are developed and implemented.

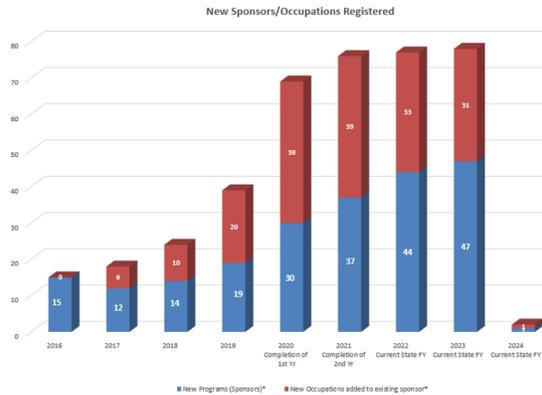
## Workforce Development Programs

### ***Adult and Dislocated Workers***

The Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs continue to serve job-seekers throughout the State of Tennessee by providing individualized training services to eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers. Over 6,000 participants were served last program year with services that include paid work experience, career training and upskilling, career guidance and planning, and supportive services. All nine local areas continue to do an excellent job with meeting Federal Performance Indicators and KPIs, and we will continue to work with local areas to make sure Title I funding is spent efficiently and effectively.

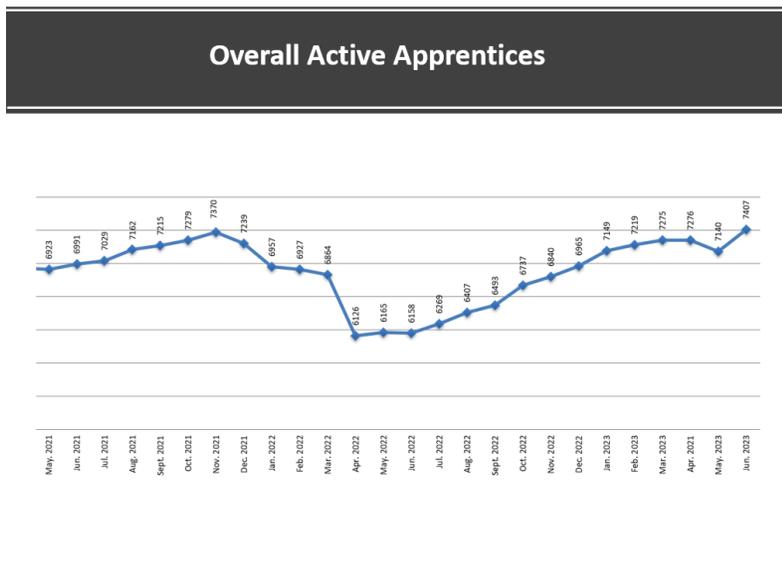
# Apprenticeship TN

## New Sponsors, Programs Added to Existing Sponsors.



Tennessee’s Office of Apprenticeship is persistent in its efforts to expand Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) to employers throughout the State. One of 28 states and territories to have received approval to operate as a State Apprenticeship Agency, Apprenticeship TN continues to break barriers and build stronger partnerships with community agencies, workforce development partners, and employers in each of the State's three Grand Divisions. The

Apprenticeship TN team utilizes its partnership with the nine Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to connect employers with new or expanding RAP programs in their regions with WIOA services and other funding options to support the success of their programs.



Apprenticeship TN operated this year with funding from two federal grants as well as legislated State funding for FY 23. Tennessee also applied for and was awarded the State Apprenticeship Expansion Basic Formula Funding grant for FY24.

Apprenticeship TN continues to pursue excellence by building new apprenticeship programs for traditional and non-traditional occupations,

including forty-seven new programs during FY23. Participants are gaining access to earn-and-learn models across industry sectors including, but not limited to, Early Childhood Educator, Electrician, Certified Nursing Assistant, Dental Assistant, Tool and Die Maker, Commercial Drone Pilot, Project Manager, Construction Laborer, Help Desk Support Technician, Power Lineworker, and Mechatronics Technician. The number of registered occupational programs within existing sponsors continues to rise, as well, offering additional opportunities for individuals to enter apprenticeship training. From July 2022 to June 2023, thirty-one new occupational programs were added to existing sponsors. There were 920 participants served through the ASE grant,

which ended in June 2023. Through June 2023, Tennessee had 7,407 active participants, with 1,016 having completed a Registered Apprenticeship program during the year.

### ***Eligible Training Providers***

The statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) plays an important role in Tennessee's workforce system. The ETPL is made up of certified training providers and programs that have completed a rigorous review process by their respective Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB). Through the review process LWDBs ensure providers and programs demonstrate favorable learning outcomes as well as responsiveness to area labor market demands. LWDBs then submit all required information to TDLWD which compiles a single list of providers, including Registered Apprenticeship Programs. The ETPL is accessible through the VOS system.

Students, using WIOA funds through an Individual Training Account (ITA), select from approved training programs listed on the ETPL. This carefully crafted list helps WIOA-funded students attain their educational goals and shape their occupational aspirations.

The number of providers has grown to 227, including Registered Apprenticeships sponsors on the ETPL. The list includes:

- 85 - Private Schools
- 26 - TCATS
- 14 - Four Year Public Institutions
- 18 - Community Colleges
- 81 - Registered Apprenticeships
- 3 - Community-Based Organizations

All providers except Registered Apprenticeships are required to submit yearly performance participant reports to TDLWD. The report contains individual-level data for all participants in programs offered by ETPs. This report is combined to submit the yearly ETPL Federal reporting. Beginning with Program Year 2020, reporting requirements expanded to include program completion rates for all students (both WIOA and non-WIOA). This data is being used to construct a baseline of program performance which WIOA participants can access. With program performance rates at their fingertips program participants will enjoy a higher level of informed consumer choice.

### ***Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program***

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), or "Veterans Program" consists of 33 staff. The JVSG staff is comprised of three distinct positions within JVSG:

1. Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER)
2. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP)
3. Consolidated DVOP | LVER

LVER's advocate for veterans to gain employment and training opportunities with business, industry, and community-based organizations by participating in job fairs, coordinate with apprenticeship programs, business organizations, unions in promoting and advocating the benefits of training programs for veterans. As an integral part of the State's Labor Exchange System, LVER's also are tasked with conducting outreach activities to employers to promote veterans as jobseekers who have highly marketable skills and experience. The benefits of hiring a veteran are both programmatic—including WOTCs—and intangible including being a team player; ability to follow directions; and meticulous attention to detail.

DVOPs provide individualized career services to a targeted population of veterans and eligible persons who have been identified as having significant barriers to employment (SBE), and who are economically or educationally disadvantaged to compete in today's labor market. DVOPs can assist veterans/eligible persons overcome barriers to employment, coordinate community resources, and gain access to education and job training opportunities that will give you a competitive advantage.

The Consolidated Position is a hybrid position that performs the services of the LVER and DVOP. Members of these positions are located across the State of Tennessee, and mostly in rural areas without a high number of eligible veterans. These staff members provided services to over 794 Veterans along with WP, other eligible persons, and transitioning service members. The JVSG achieved a 59.3% Employment Rate 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after Exit for veterans, and median earnings of \$8,327.

### ***Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers and H2A-B***

The H2A program under Foreign Labor Certification has increased substantially compared to the previous year. Number of referrals 188, number of positions requested 6,648, number of inspections completed 1,085, amount of sleep (bedrooms) units inspected 3,839 and the total capacity of approved H2A visa's 14,160. Moreover, we have seen an increase with new employers using the H2A visa program versus last year. Additionally, the FLC team, in conjunction with the state advertisement department has put together a YouTube video advertising the H2A program but also telling an employer's personal success story in using the program. Furthermore, we have increased the states outreach efforts to Migrant and Seasonal Farmwork communities utilizing electronic means. Currently, we are working with the State Monitor Advocates Federal Project Officer to ensure that the FLC and SMA programs comply with federal regulations. In doing so, 4 new positions have been created and posted. Those consist of, three outreach workers strategically placed in American Jobs Centers with the highest MSFW populations according to VOS, as well as a State Monitor Advocate position.

### ***National Dislocated Workers Grant***

National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) are temporary federal grants designed to assist disaster-affected individuals with employment and training services, supportive services, paid

work experience, and disaster relief employment. Over the past year the State had two Disaster Recovery NDWGs, and we are in the process of beginning a third grant, the QUEST NDWG, this year.

The larger of the two grants was the COVID-19 Disaster Recovery NDWG, a statewide grant that expended around \$12 million since 2020 and assisted over 1,500 participants in all nine local workforce areas. These funds provided a lifeline to both job-seekers and employers during the worst of the pandemic by filling crucial holes in the workforce through temporary employment and on-the-job training, and then as the pandemic evolved the funding helped participants with training and supportive services, and paid work experiences in a variety of in-demand industries including transportation, health care, advanced manufacturing and logistics, among others.

The second NDWG assisted individuals in the Northern Middle area affected by the catastrophic Waverly flooding of August 2021. This grant provided over \$500,000 in funds to serve over 30 participants by meeting crucial disaster-response needs in the area – including humanitarian aid, cleanup services, and assistance for the local school systems who were devastated by floods.

While both grants have ended, Tennessee was recently awarded \$5 million as part of the nationwide QUEST NDWG. This grant is designed to assist individuals in five local workforce areas who were affected by the uneven economic recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic, including justice involved individuals, long-term unemployed individuals, those affected by the opioid epidemic, and other eligible individuals. This three-year grant will allow for long-term partnerships with employers and community partners throughout the state, to the benefit of job-seekers who need it the most.

We will continue to seek out additional NDWG grants if they come available, as a means of finding new and innovative ways to continue to serve employers and job seekers in today's ever-changing economy.

### ***Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment***

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is designed to serve individuals who have been determined most likely to exhaust their unemployment benefits. The goal of the program is to connect these individuals to services in the AJCs that will help with their reemployment as well as determine their eligibility to receive unemployment benefits. Along with serving those most likely to exhaust their unemployment benefits, each state is required to serve transitioning veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service Members.

RESEA serves individuals across all 95 Tennessee counties and is currently operating in 45 American Job Centers (AJCs). During the initial orientation, the participants receive a program description, an eligibility review for unemployment benefits, an assessment of needs and

barriers, and an Employment Development Plan (EDP). Each participant is required to participate in this orientation and a follow up session two weeks after the orientation to maintain their unemployment benefits. The orientation is automatically scheduled when selected and the subsequent visit is scheduled by the RESEA coordinator in the AJC. These meetings are held virtually unless the claimant prefers an in-person meeting.

Participants of RESEA are selected based on a statistical model that determines those most likely to exhaust their benefits. This selection process happens through a batch process that runs every Wednesday night. Once selected, the unemployment claimant receives a letter with an orientation date and location that is 10-15 days from the date the selection process is run. The five criteria that determine selection, in order of significance, are:

1. Wage Replacement
2. Duration of Tenure in Months of the Previous Job
3. Number of Base Period Employers
4. The Length of Time Between Employment and Filing a Claim
5. Availability of a Vehicle to Drive to a New Job

The meetings continue to be held virtually. The notice of requirement to report has been changed to indicate that these scheduled meetings will be held by phone or on Microsoft Teams. The claimant can request an in-person meeting.

In PY 2022, in 45 Career Centers across the state, 11,629 unemployment claimants were selected for participation in the RESEA program. Of those selected, 10,344 participated in their orientation. Of those who participated in their orientation, 7462 participated in their follow-up RESEA sessions. There are 2007 individuals who found employment while participating in the program or shortly after completion. The RESEA program continues to evolve, and some of our accomplishments are:

- Data collection for the required evaluation of RESEA will begin in the near future
- Customer service surveys to be taken by customers after the initial RESEA is completed and also 30 days after the completion of the program have resumed. We are getting positive responses to these surveys and will use the responses to further refine the program.

## **Re-entry**

The Office of Reentry is now known as the Tennessee Office of Reentry (TOOR). Since July 2021, the TOOR has worked to create strategies, trainings and programs that exist to help justice involved persons overcome barriers



to employment to achieve successful reentry and reduced recidivism for Tennesseans. Since its inception, the TOOR has been able to use data driven methods, digital efficiency, and mission driven partnerships to build a statewide ecosystem that works to make a better Tennessee.

In FY23, TOOR updated its goals to:

- Advance efforts to assist Justice Involved Individuals (JII's) overcome barriers to employment.
- Improve the data tracking involving JII's.
- Increase awareness of the value that JIIs bring to the workforce.



During FY23, TOOR utilized its Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) to partner with all nine Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). These listening tours allowed TOOR to understand employers' needs as it relates to developing the workforce by tapping into the underutilized pipeline of JII's. TOOR initiated the Customer Focused Government rural reentry county jail program. TOOR invested \$300,000.00 in ten county jails to upskill soon to be released persons in county

jails, based on local industry needs. In addition, TOOR scheduled and hosted reentry simulations with the LWDA's across the state. The same training is available to other reentry related stakeholders, upon request. Reentry Simulations bring together local stakeholders to share a collective simulated reentry experience from the view of a justice involved individual (JII) and allows participants to reflect on how their organizations can help address reentry. A Reentry Simulation is meant to bring to the forefront the reality of what the reentry process can look like for JIIs and begin to explore collaborative opportunities to mitigate barriers to employment and reduce recidivism.

TOOR trained and provided AJC staff with a Reentry Report template. This reporting tool allows AJC the ability to track and report on their reentry related efforts and challenges faced at the local level. From the report, TOOR can determine best practices and areas to provide technical assistance.

Some other accomplishments of TOOR in FY23 were:

- TOOR partnered with the University of Memphis, Tennessee State University, and the University of Tennessee to market the statewide "It's Okay," public facing reentry

campaign to increase awareness of and normalize justice involved individuals in the workplace.

- TOOR facilitated new enrollments of 7,120 self-identified justice involved individuals in JOBS4TN, achieving 360% of its primary KPI.
- TOOR was able to leverage its partnership with the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) to create reentry-related documents to assist frontline AJC staff. These documents included a paired Interview Guide and Checklist, and a Pre-release Reentry Checklist for use with JII's before release. TOOR also created and maintains a Reentry Resource List of statewide relevant resources that assists with addressing commonly faced reentry barriers.
- TOOR hosted a national webinar in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration regarding topics that included apprenticeship, expungements, WOTC, federal bonding, and Mental Health / Substance Abuse with employers from across the state.
- TOOR created an "Expungement Clinic Guide" to help facilitate local areas with hosting their own expungement clinics.
- TOOR adopted utilization of Zendesk and SharePoint platforms to assist with connecting both internal and external requests for assistance and resources, and helping spread resources and tools to help state staff better assist and connect in their reentry efforts.
- TOOR created the "Second Chances" brochure and had it printed in three different languages, based on the demographics of the state's incarcerated populations. These brochures inform those either close to release or recently released about TOOR itself and their local American Job Center services. They were distributed to every carceral facility in the state.
- TOOR continued informative trainings on a combination of reentry topics, and/or the American Job Center with both internal and external agencies, including RESEA and SNAP staff, local Jail staff, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and the Tennessee Department of Health.
- TOOR created and now markets the "Second Chances Work" media campaign and accompanying Employer Guide focused to inform employers on the benefits of Second Chance Hiring and providing resources and next steps regarding implementation. [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/workforce/documents/reentry/Employer\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/workforce/documents/reentry/Employer_Guide.pdf)
- TOOR also started producing and hosting monthly podcast sessions, entitled, "Talking Second Chances." This podcast explores how Tennessee is reimagining its workforce by helping justice involved individuals prepare to successfully reenter communities across the state. <https://www.tn.gov/workforce/reentrytn/podcast.html>

## ***Senior Community Service Employment Program***

Unfortunately, due to COVID the SCSEP program had taken numerous losses in participation but also the loss of host agencies. Therefore, throughout the last year we have focused heavily on increasing enrollments, through the increase of “boot on the ground outreach”. Best practices have been implemented with all sub-grantees to allocate a certain number of outreaching hours weekly. Because of this the SCSEP program has seen a substantial increase in enrollments. In addition to outreaching, we have focused on beginning exit strategies with those participants who sub-grantee coordinator deem job ready, to place them into unsubsidized employment, which is the main goal. Currently, we have a total of 67 enrolled participants, of which, 20 was enrolled last quarter. Our goal is to have 132 enrolled participants by years end.

## ***SNAP – Employment and Training***

Tennessee Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (TN SNAP E&T) is a voluntary program that helps eligible participants achieve their vocational goals and increase self-sufficiency through funded education, skills training, and supportive services. TN SNAP E&T’s goal is to provide participants with the opportunity to acquire skills, training, work experience, and/or an industry-recognized credential that provides a direct link to a successful career to achieve long term self-sufficiency.

TN SNAP E&T services are a combined effort between the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS), Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD), and community partners across the state. TDHS and TDLWD collaboratively administer SNAP E&T in all 95 TN counties.

During the recent program year, SNAP E&T was able to achieve the following:

- Increase of participation rate by 11%
- Number of Justice involved individuals served through SNAP E&T increased from 620 during the previous program year to 762 for a 52% increase.
- Increased Job Retention supports to SNAP E&T individuals who gained employment by providing transportation assistance until the first paycheck and any required uniforms or equipment from 139 previous program year to 211 for a 23% increase.
- Developed Rural County service delivery plan to increase program awareness and ensure all 95 counties have access to in person assistance.
- Five new contracted Third-Party Partners were added to bring a total of 24 which made us the second leading state in the Federal Southeast Region. Contracted Third Party Partners providing services that align with the E&T vision, can receive a 45 % reimbursement of non-Federal dollars on allowable and approved costs. Program

evaluation led us to streamline the administration structure to ensure focus is on quality of service over quantity alone.

- Refined internal standard operating procedures and developed monitoring tools to ensure quality and integrity of service delivery. Statewide staff training was provided.

## **Youth**

Tennessee has been strengthening partnerships with several State agencies and community partners to identify Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities and Work Experience opportunities for Youth to support the State's goal of creating a seamless path from high school, post-secondary education, or training, into the workforce. To support work experience for all youth, TNDLWD released a statewide funding initiative from Governor Lee of 15 million dollars. The Summer Youth and Work Experience grant was able to fund 9 Local Workforce Boards as well as 4 non-local workforce boards. The programs' goal at minimum is to help 2537 youth get work experience. Youth's Key Performance Indicator (KPI) was noted as a best practice.

## **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**

Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program in December of 2020, Congress re-authorized the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program through 2025. In early 2016, TDLWD completed the automation of the submission and approval process, replacing paper applications with an online WOTC portal. The portal increases efficiency, facilitating a 24-to-48-hour decision on new tax credit applications. The creation of this portal allowed for the elimination of more than 3 million pieces of paper making enough space for additional conference room. TDLWD has continued to make enhancements, increasing the functionality of the system. During the program year 2022, 62,002 certifications were issued for a potential \$164,093,800.00 in tax credits to employers.

# **Performance and Accountability**

In addition to the core measures of performance The State of Tennessee is also using two metrics to measure effectiveness of serving employers. The first being repeat business customers, which measures how many businesses choose to repeatedly utilize the state's business services team. The second measure being used by the state is the Employer Penetration Rate which measures the number of employers in the state using business services against the total number of employers in the state. Tennessee's Core measures of performance can be seen below.

## PY22 WIOA Core Measures of Performance

PY22 WIOA Core Performance Measures	Targets	Tennessee			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Adult Measures</b>					
Exiters		3,432	3,560	3,798	4,193
Participants Served		7,563	7,717	7,759	7,508
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit	81.5%	81.9%	84.0%	84.9%	84.1%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit	80.2%	80.5%	82.1%	82.6%	83.8%
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit	\$ 6,900	\$ 7,738	\$ 7,809	\$ 8,027	\$ 7,982
Credential Attainment w/in 4 Quarters after exit	69.0%	71.1%	71.5%	70.8%	70.7%
Measurable Skills Gains	62.0%	64.4%	65.3%	66.9%	71.0%
<b>Dislocated Worker</b>					
Exiters		1,078	1,055	1,047	1,030
Participants Served		2,112	2,057	2,010	1,917
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit	81.0%	84.4%	84.7%	86.6%	85.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit	81.0%	83.2%	83.7%	84.2%	83.7%
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit	\$ 7,900	\$ 8,749	\$ 8,769	\$ 8,649	\$ 8,535
Credential Attainment w/in 4 Quarters after exit	70.6%	68.4%	68.5%	67.3%	68.4%
Measurable Skills Gains	61.2%	67.9%	67.4%	68.5%	73.2%
<b>Youth</b>					
Exiters		1,945	1,923	1,922	1,992
Participants Served		4,140	4,147	4,198	4,139
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit	77.2%	82.2%	82.1%	82.8%	82.6%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit	76.5%	79.1%	81.4%	81.5%	81.6%
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit	\$ 3,720	\$ 5,170	\$ 5,215	\$ 5,447	\$ 5,548
Credential Attainment w/in 4 Quarters after exit	59.8%	66.9%	64.2%	62.2%	63.2%
Measurable Skills Gains	54.2%	56.0%	53.6%	51.8%	57.7%
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>					
Exiters		18,170	19,873	21,427	24,477
Participants Served		22,511	23,823	27,201	30,065
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit	59.0%	61.9%	65.4%	68.3%	69.7%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit	64.2%	62.8%	63.4%	64.5%	65.8%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit	\$ 5,435	\$ 6,114	\$ 6,341	\$ 6,797	\$ 6,997

### Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicators (KPIs) quantify Tennessee's progress toward the core objectives of WIOA, listed below. Tennessee's seeks to become "the best public workforce system in the nation." The scope of KPIs is revised annually to best align with these objectives. Target progression is reviewed quarterly by the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB).

## **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Objectives**

1. Increase access to education, training, and employment- particularly for people with significant barriers to employment.
2. Create a comprehensive, high-quality workforce development system by aligning workforce investment, education, and economic development.
3. Improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts.
4. Promote improvement in the structure and delivery of services.
5. Increase family-sustaining wages, meet employer need, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of Tennessee.

## **PY22 Scope and Measure**

The sixteen (16) Tennessee SWDB's KPIs and one (1) pilot KPI for the year of July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023, were as follows:

- **Apprenticeship** – New Teacher Apprentices
- **Justice-Involved Individuals** – New Enrollment
- **Wagner-Peyser** – New Enrollment
- **National Dislocated Worker (Waverly)** – New Enrollment
- **National Dislocated Worker (COVID-19)** – New Enrollment
- **SNAP Employment and Training** – Participants receiving Job Search Training Services
- **Senior Employment** – Exits into Un-subsidized Employment
- **Youth (In-School Youth)** – New Enrollment
- **Adult, Dislocated Worker and Incumbent Worker** – New Enrollment
- **Youth** – New Enrollment
- **Jobs for Veterans** – New Enrollment
- **Reemployment Services** – Co-enrollment
- **SNAP Employment and Training** – Co-enrollment with Adult Education
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance** – Co-enrollment with Title I Dislocated Worker
- **Senior Employment** – New Enrollment
- **SNAP Employment and Training** – Participants receiving Job Retention Services
- **\*PILOT\* Apprenticeship** – Completers

Program	Performance Measure	Target	Actual	% of Goal	Achievement
Apprenticeship	New Teacher Apprentices	40	438	1095.0%	5
Justice-Involved Individuals	New Enrollment	1,828	7,120	389.5%	5
Wagner-Peyser	New Enrollment	14,679	27,820	189.5%	5
National Dislocated Worker- Waverly	New Enrollment	6	11	183.3%	5
National Dislocated Worker- COVID-19	New Enrollment	543	935	172.2%	5
SNAP Employment & Training	Participants receiving Job Search Training Services	64	109	170.3%	5
Senior Employment	Exits into Un-subsidized Employment	8	12	150.0%	5
Youth- In-School Youth	New Enrollment	600	813	135.5%	5
Adult, Dislocated Worker and Incumbent Worker	New Enrollment	4,890	6,127	125.3%	5
Youth	New Enrollment	1,939	2,313	119.3%	5
Jobs for Veterans	New Enrollment	440	517	117.5%	5
Reemployment Services	Co-enrollment	196	215	109.7%	4
SNAP Employment & Training	Co-enrollment with Adult Education	61	58	95.1%	4
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Co-enrollment with Title I Dislocated Worker	90%	59.4%	66.0%	2
Senior Employment	New Enrollment	49	23	46.9%	1
SNAP Employment & Training	Participants receiving Job Retention Services	133	57	42.9%	1

Tennessee's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)- Pilots

Program	Performance Measure	Target	Actual	% of Goal	Achievement
Apprenticeship	Completers	250	188	75.2%	Pilot

PY22 Key Performance Indicator Achievement Thresholds		Adult Education	
Best Practice	110%+	105%+	5
Target Achieved	91 to 110%	86 to 104%	4
Approaching Target	71 to 90%	66 to 85%	3
Needs Improvement	51 to 70%	46 to 65%	2
Needs Significant Improvement	21 to 50%	26 to 45%	1
Unacceptable	0 to 20%	0 to 25%	0

For policy information, please see the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Workforce Services' current **Key Performance Indicator Policy**: <https://adobe.ly/3UpBxDO>

## Policy and Waivers

### Common Exit Policy

The state maintains a [common exit policy](#) for Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Trade and Title III Wagner-Peyser. The policy is reflected in and managed by the virtual one stop website.

### Waivers

In program year 2022 Tennessee had two WIOA waivers that were approved. The following identifies each waiver and the waiver's intentions to affect performance outcomes:

1. **Waiver associated with the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth.** - effective July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

The approval of this waiver permits LWDBs the opportunity to determine how best to meet the educational and training needs of youth with other barriers regardless of school status, and specific to the population, geographical location, and economic and employment conditions within each LWDA. Additionally, increasing outreach to ISY while

maintaining a focus on serving OSY will help develop a larger pool of young people qualified and prepared to meet the current and future needs of employers in their workforce areas and throughout Tennessee. This waiver allowed local areas to consider their demographic needs and provide direct resources to in-school youth populations determined to have the highest need; in turn creating a stronger workforce pipeline. For several of the areas, ISY enrollment has increased more than 100%.

2. **Waiver to allow WIOA Individual Training Accounts for in-school-youth** - effective July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024.

The Youth program received a 50/50 waiver from the Department of Labor to be able to serve Out of School Youth and In-school Youth at the same percentage. Without this waiver the Youth program would have to serve 75% Out of school Youth and 25% in School Youth.

# Appendix 1: Data Validation

The department conducts annual Data Element Validation (DEV) in accordance with requirements outlined in the WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter 23-19. DEV is a regular data integrity review of program data for errors, missing data, out-of-range variances in values reported, and other anomalies. DEV requires documentation that missing and erroneous data identified during the review process have been corrected. An additional requirement is a documentation processes for maintaining records per the Federal records retention policy on results, which may include copies of worksheets on data elements or records reviewed, frozen quarterly wage records for wage record matching used for reporting outcomes, trends in common data accuracy issues, error rates, and corrective action efforts made after data validation reviews. DOL recommends regular assessments of the effectiveness of the data validation process (at least annually) and revisions to that policy and process as needed.

## **PY21 DEV Findings**

**Adult** – All Adult data elements were maintained below 5% for the State. Element 100 was at 1.11% for TN. This element creates the Unique Identifier for the participant using proper identification. While under the 5% state goal, it is a priority to collect and record the proper documentation so that SSN's can be verified. Elements such as 1600 and 1614 capture employment after exit data and industry code of employment after exit data, and these elements had frequent failures in the validation process. These post exit elements are primarily pulling data from the state's SWIS Wage records that are linked to the participant's SSN. Proper follow up management should result in matching post exit employment and industry data. Elements 1002, 1007, and 1201 capture self-service and reportable only data. We will further investigate to see where these errors may be coming from.

**Dislocated Worker** – All Dislocated Worker data elements were maintained below 5% for the State. However, there are issues across various elements. Element 410 "Date of Actual Dislocation" was the most concerning issue for DW, as it was a prevalent issue for each area. Uploaded documents verified dislocation but often did not match the date that was entered. Elements 1302 and 1308 are the dates of entering and ending training, these issues were mostly due to missing documentation or data that was entered incorrectly. Element 1810 "Date of Most Recent Measurable Skill Gains: Skills Progression" and 1811 "Date Enrolled During Program Participation in an Education or Training Program Leading to a Recognized Postsecondary Credential or Employment" saw issues that were corrected for the most part by uploading the proper documentation or correcting the date according to the documentation.

**Youth** – All Youth data elements were maintained below 5% for the State. The Youth program contained a wider range of element issues than the other programs. Element 100, which creates the SID based on proper identification, contained some errors. Solving these issues

would solve issues with other data elements such as element 200 "Date of Birth". Elements 900 and 901 are program entry and exit, and these are primarily entered in incorrectly due to the extra steps to becoming a youth participant as well as documentation upload and follow up during the exit process. Element 1300 "Received Training" and 1302 "Date Entered Training" had issues due to lack of documentation and a lack of proper case notes. Elements 1810, 1811, 1813 look at the dates of obtaining MSG and Credential and date of training leading to a Credential. These three elements require more proper documentation and proper case notes.

**Wagner-Peyser** - All Wagner-Peyser data elements were maintained below 5% for the State. Element 1002 experienced errors, and as mentioned before, we will further investigate to see where these errors may be coming from. The other elements that experienced failures were the elements 1600 through 1605. As mentioned before, these post exit employment elements will rely on obtaining proper SSNs and proper participant follow up.

# Appendix 2: Current or Planned Evaluations

## **RESEA**

TDLWD is working with The Policy & Research Group (PRG), an experienced independent evaluator, to conduct its RESEA evaluation. The aim of this study is to determine whether offering the RESEA program to UI claimants improves their employment and earnings outcomes and reduces the number of weeks they receive UI benefits. Though RESEA is a workforce program targeted to claimants who are identified as most likely to exhaust their benefits and are most in need of assistance with reemployment, the study proposed selects claimants randomly.

### **Impact Study Design**

The impact study is an individual-level RCT. Both the units of assignment and analysis are the individual participant. Eligible RESEA participants will be randomly assigned to the treatment or control condition at a ratio that is approximately 3:1 (treatment to control). This ratio was ultimately the decision of TDLWD staff in order to provide services to as many RESEA claimants as possible while still creating a control group. Outcomes for treatment group members who are offered the defined intervention (RESEA) will be compared with those of a control group who are subject to standard UI requirements (i.e., business-as-usual).

### **Intent-To-Treat Framework**

We propose an intent-to-treat (ITT) study design. An ITT framework includes all participants enrolled in the impact study, within the treatment condition they were randomly assigned to, regardless of the dosage or exposure to program components. Although this approach can seem obtuse because it fails to account for the variation in participants' actual exposure, researchers adopt it because it provides the most unbiased estimate of program impact. An ITT estimate minimizes the potentially biased post-enrollment self-selection that motivates some people to engage more and others to engage less with the intervention. This estimate also has the added advantage of providing a more realistic estimate of the predicted impact of the program because it factors in the variation of exposure into the estimate, rather than controlling for it statistically.

### **Primary Research Question**

The impact study will assess the following pre-specified primary research questions. These research questions formalize the aim of the impact study, which is to test the impact of Tennessee's RESEA program on the DOL-required outcomes.

#### **PRIMARY RQ 1: UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION DURATION**

What is the impact of the requirement to complete RESEA reemployment services (treatment) relative to standard UI benefit requirements (control) on claimants' unemployment compensation duration?

### **PRIMARY RQ 2: EMPLOYMENT**

What is the impact of the requirement to complete RESEA reemployment services (treatment) relative to standard UI benefit requirements (control) on claimants' employment status?

### **PRIMARY RQ 3: EARNINGS**

What is the impact of the requirement to complete RESEA reemployment services (treatment) relative to standard UI benefit requirements (control) on claimants' earnings?

### **COMPONENT-LEVEL RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

TDLWD RESEA staff have identified several component-level research questions that they may like to investigate: (1) What effect does the length of time between a claimant's monetary determination and their selection for RESEA have on employment, earnings, and duration of UI benefits?; and (2) How effective is the profiling score at reducing UI receipt duration and improving employment and earnings outcomes? PRG will formalize component-level research questions, their proposed designs, data requirements and procedures, operational definitions, and analytic methods necessary to answer them in a future EDR.

## ***KPMG***

The program evaluation project involves an extensive review of TN's workforce ecosystem, including the quality of business service delivery and the customer experience. This comprehensive evaluation will produce recommendations that integrate leading practices at the local, state, and national levels to support the needs of job seekers and businesses.

### **Core Objectives**

1. Understand TN's future outlook for job opportunities and economic growth.
2. Leverage data insights to address skill gaps and workforce needs for target populations.
3. Identify strategies and leading practices to mitigate service gaps.
4. Enhance the overall customer experience.

### **Stakeholders**

- Workforce Boards
- American Job Centers
- Adult Education Providers
- Public Officials
- Employers

## Key Outputs

1. Evaluation Design Report to capture the customer experience.
2. Business evaluations to assess service delivery for priority populations.
3. Literature review to document leading practices and strategies for successful “Work and Learn” models.
4. Communications Strategy and Outreach plan to shape the engagement approach and proposed messaging for key audiences.

## Business Engagement

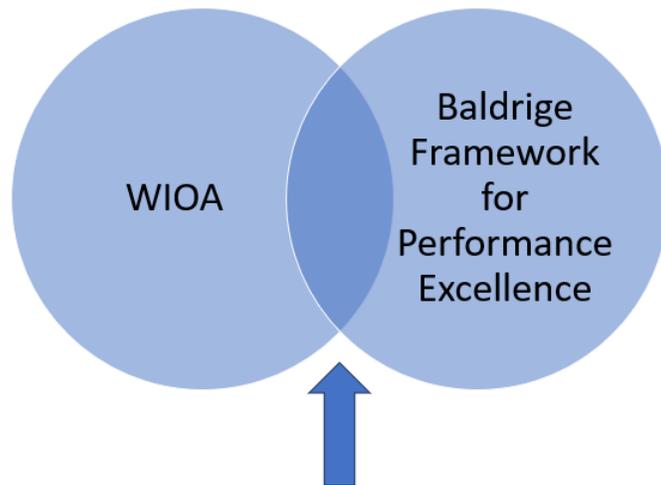
The purpose of the study was to assess TN employers' awareness levels of each employer-facing service that TDLWD provides and what employers' pain points were with the dept, and collect any suggestions or recommendations they had for improvement. This was done through a survey that included Likert scales, short- and long-answer questions.

After the info was collected, it was synthesized it into a report for executive leadership, which was then distributed down throughout the agency, and it's being used in conjunction with the Business Engagement Plan/Strategy that is being developed to inform certain operational decisions, such as communication strategies and training strategies for TDLWD staff.

## UTCIS

### Board Excellence Certification Program Description

The Board Excellence Certification Program (the Program) is an integrated system of assessment, feedback, and professional development. It is designed to foster and sustain high performing workforce development boards and facilitate effectiveness and innovation in meeting their obligations and leading into the future. Boards that achieve Board Excellence Certification serve as role models of improvement, innovation, and excellence for the rest of the workforce organization.



Board Excellence Certification Program for Workforce Development Boards

## What is the benefit of the Board Excellence Certification Program?

Achieving Board Excellence Certification acknowledges reliable approaches that lead to many areas of value:

- Creates systematic processes & identifies essential skills.
- Demonstrates credibility & commitment to excellence.
- Ensures legal responsibilities of the boards are integrated into board operations.
- Promotes accountability.
- Recognizes competence and expertise.
- Prepares board for possible new grant funding opportunities.

## What is the Board Excellence Certification Program?

The Program foundation is a set of Elements of Certification that serve as the body of knowledge based on the Baldrige Framework for Excellence criteria and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (P.L. 113-128). The Elements of Certification address board operations and responsibilities in these key areas:

- Board structure, roles, relationships\*
- Board and board member responsibilities\*
- Governance system\*\*
- Strategic Insight\*\*
- Performance Management\*\*
- Customer & Partner Engagement\*\*

*\*Source: Board bylaws, charter, WIOA requirements*

*\*\*Source: Baldrige Framework for Performance Excellence*

The Elements of Certification serve as the body of knowledge for high performing boards. For each element, there are Standards. These Standards are specific to each Element of Certification and identify actions critical to achievement of certification elements. They serve as the basis for the assessment of board performance.

For each Standard, there are incremental Levels of Competence to be demonstrated. These Levels of Competence range from having a process in place, following the process consistently, evaluation the process for effectiveness, to demonstrating the process is effective via measurable results. The Levels of Competence serve as the basis for feedback to the Board that identifies areas of strength, and opportunities for improvement and professional development.

A designation of overall Level of Achievement is determined, taking into account all elements, standards, and levels of competence. There are three Levels of Achievement:

**Compliant:** Practices are in place, accessible, and known by those responsible for their execution.

**Competent:** Practices are systematic and consistently followed. Practices are often reviewed, and some indicators or measures are identified.

**Role Model:** Practices are evaluated for effectiveness. Practices are determined to be effective.

#### How does the Board Excellence Certification Program work?

1. Certification examiners review information supplied by board and WSD that demonstrates competence based on Standards.
2. Certification examiners prepare the Certification Assessment Report, including proposed levels of achievement for each Element.
3. Certification review team recommends Certification Level and approves assessment report.
4. The board celebrates Certification Level, analyzes reports, and identifies priorities for improvement.

# Appendix 3: Key Performance Indicators

Actuals	Tennessee	Northwest	Greater Memphis	Southwest	Northern Middle	Upper Cumberland	Southern Middle	Northeast	East	Southeast	Grand West	Grand Middle	Grand East
<b>Key Performance Indicators - July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023</b>													
<b>Adult, Dislocated Worker and Incumbent Worker- New Enrollment</b>													
PY22	6,127	577	1,687	307	1,116	461	243	228	1,054	454	2,571	1,820	1,736
PY22 Q1	1,682	75	662	101	315	58	83	71	230	87	838	456	388
PY22 Q2	1,287	51	574	25	190	86	40	37	202	82	650	316	321
PY22 Q3	1,578	254	333	68	271	84	69	65	306	128	655	424	499
PY22 Q4	1,580	197	118	113	340	233	51	55	316	157	428	624	528
<b>Apprenticeship- New Teacher Apprentices</b>													
PY22	438				438							438	
PY22 Q1	63				63							63	
PY22 Q2	0				0							0	
PY22 Q3	136				136							136	
PY22 Q4	239				239							239	
<b>Jobs for Veterans- New Enrollment</b>													
PY22	517	55	112	44	163	16	6	32	69	20	211	185	121
PY22 Q1	160	29	29	15	53	5	1	8	13	7	73	59	28
PY22 Q2	83	7	25	8	20	1	1	10	11	0	40	22	21
PY22 Q3	122	9	28	14	44	5	2	7	8	5	51	51	20
PY22 Q4	152	10	30	7	46	5	2	7	37	8	47	53	52
<b>Justice-Involved Individuals- New Enrollment</b>													
PY22	7,120	146	679	235	1,711	641	313	782	998	760	1,272	2,680	2,543
PY22 Q1	1,720	51	229	90	418	159	48	205	299	151	394	626	655
PY22 Q2	1,609	36	172	59	396	164	42	142	200	252	359	604	595
PY22 Q3	1,982	28	143	47	524	171	108	269	332	224	298	807	827
PY22 Q4	1,809	31	135	39	373	147	115	166	167	133	221	643	466
<b>National Dislocated Worker- COVID-19- New Enrollment</b>													
PY22	935	98		47	303	141	101	81		121	153	545	237
PY22 Q1	60	22		4	16	4	6	1		1	27	26	7
PY22 Q2	259	23		10	90	48	22	26		27	38	160	61
PY22 Q3	455	31		11	189	50	54	39		62	44	293	118
PY22 Q4	161	22		22	8	39	19	15		31	44	66	51
<b>National Dislocated Worker- Waverly- New Enrollment</b>													
PY22	11				11							11	
PY22 Q1	5				5							5	
PY22 Q2	4				4							4	
PY22 Q3	0				0							0	
PY22 Q4	2				2							2	

Actuals	Tennessee	Northwest	Greater Memphis	Southwest	Northern Middle	Upper Cumberland	Southern Middle	Northwest	East	Southeast	Grand West	Grand Middle	Grand East
<b>Key Performance Indicators - July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023</b>													
<b>Reemployment Services- Co-enrollment</b>													
PY22	215	2	29	4	49	5	37	3	83	3	35	91	89
PY22 Q1	47	2	10	2	9	0	10	0	13	1	14	19	14
PY22 Q2	53	0	7	1	15	1	8	0	21	0	8	24	21
PY22 Q3	67	0	9	0	20	2	9	2	24	1	9	31	27
PY22 Q4	48	0	3	1	5	2	10	1	25	1	4	17	27

Actuals	Tennessee	Workforce Mid-South	Workforce Innovations	TNCSA	The Career Team	First TN HRA	ETSU
<b>Senior Employment - New Enrollment</b>							
PY22	23	4	2	10	1	2	4
PY22 Q1	4	1	0	2	0	1	0
PY22 Q2	6	0	1	2	1	0	2
PY22 Q3	7	1	1	4	0	0	1
PY22 Q4	6	2	0	2	0	1	1

Actuals	Tennessee	Workforce Mid-South	Workforce Innovations	TNCSA	The Career Team	First TN HRA	ETSU
<b>Senior Employment - Exits into Un-subsidized Employment</b>							
PY22	12	5	0	5	2	1	0
PY22 Q1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
PY22 Q2	3	1	0	1	1	1	0
PY22 Q3	4	3	0	1	0	0	0
PY22 Q4	4	1	0	2	1	0	0

Actuals	Tennessee	Northwest	Greater Memphis	Southwest	Northern Middle	Upper Cumberland	Southern Middle	Northwest	East	Southeast	Grand West	Grand Middle	Grand East
<b>SNAP Employment and Training- Co-enrollment with Adult Education</b>													
PY22	58	0	1	4	2	14	2	3	15	17	5	18	35
PY22 Q1	16	0	0	2	1	6	1	0	4	2	2	8	6
PY22 Q2	14	0	1	1	0	3	0	0	4	5	2	3	9
PY22 Q3	13	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	2	6	1	4	8
PY22 Q4	15	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	5	4	0	3	12

Actuals	Tennessee	Northwest	Greater Memphis	Southwest	Northern Middle	Upper Cumberland	Southern Middle	Northeast	East	Southeast	Grand West	Grand Middle	Grand East
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**Key Performance Indicators - July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023**

**SNAP Employment and Training- Participants receiving Job Search Training Services**

	PY22	109	0	6	34	23	14	4	12	14	2	40	41	28
PY22 Q1	27	0	3	10	4	2	1	3	3	1	13	7	7	
PY22 Q2	26	0	3	9	4	2	1	3	3	1	12	7	7	
PY22 Q3	23	0	0	8	6	3	1	1	4	0	8	10	5	
PY22 Q4	33	0	0	7	9	7	1	5	4	0	7	17	9	

**Trade Adjustment Assistance- Co-enrollment with Title I Dislocated Worker**

	PY22	59.4%	20.0%	66.7%	100.0%	96.0%	66.7%	0.0%	73.7%	40.0%	61.5%	37.5%	63.4%	59.6%
PY22 Q1	65.2%	20.0%	33.3%	100.0%	100.0%	33.3%	8.3%	78.9%	50.0%	84.6%	25.0%	64.9%	72.7%	
PY22 Q2	75.0%	20.0%	66.7%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	14.3%	78.9%	60.0%	84.6%	37.5%	82.4%	76.2%	
PY22 Q3	73.1%	25.0%	33.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	77.8%	66.7%	83.3%	28.6%	78.1%	76.9%	
PY22 Q4	59.4%	20.0%	66.7%	100.0%	96.0%	66.7%	0.0%	73.7%	40.0%	61.5%	37.5%	63.4%	59.6%	

\*Beginning 10/1/2021, 90% of those Trade participants eligible to be enrolled within Title I Dislocated Worker need to be co-enrolled

**Wagner-Peyser - New Enrollment**

	PY22	27,820	952	2,793	882	6,560	1,890	2,940	1,525	5,593	3,862	5,025	11,789	11,006
PY22 Q1	6,425	239	813	277	1,436	382	508	323	1,279	1,026	1,381	2,408	2,636	
PY22 Q2	5,331	216	531	176	1,295	365	420	266	1,126	738	1,074	2,121	2,136	
PY22 Q3	8,126	235	698	230	1,889	629	950	476	1,715	1,019	1,299	3,609	3,218	
PY22 Q4	7,938	262	751	199	1,940	514	1,062	460	1,473	1,079	1,271	3,651	3,016	

**Youth - New Enrollment**

	PY22	2,313	96	544	68	687	116	118	75	382	227	708	921	684
PY22 Q1	601	20	229	44	132	19	30	12	64	51	293	181	127	
PY22 Q2	452	23	112	7	150	22	28	15	67	28	142	200	110	
PY22 Q3	519	12	110	6	139	23	27	35	122	45	128	189	202	
PY22 Q4	741	41	93	11	266	52	33	13	129	103	145	351	245	

**In-School Youth- New Enrollment**

	PY22	813	36	229	13	242	27	65	32	126	43	278	334	201
PY22 Q1	189	5	102	4	41	3	11	4	14	5	111	55	23	
PY22 Q2	174	21	28	2	66	7	21	6	18	5	51	94	29	
PY22 Q3	215	7	59	2	53	6	21	16	49	2	68	80	67	
PY22 Q4	235	3	40	5	82	11	12	6	45	31	48	105	82	

**PY22 Pilot- Actuals**

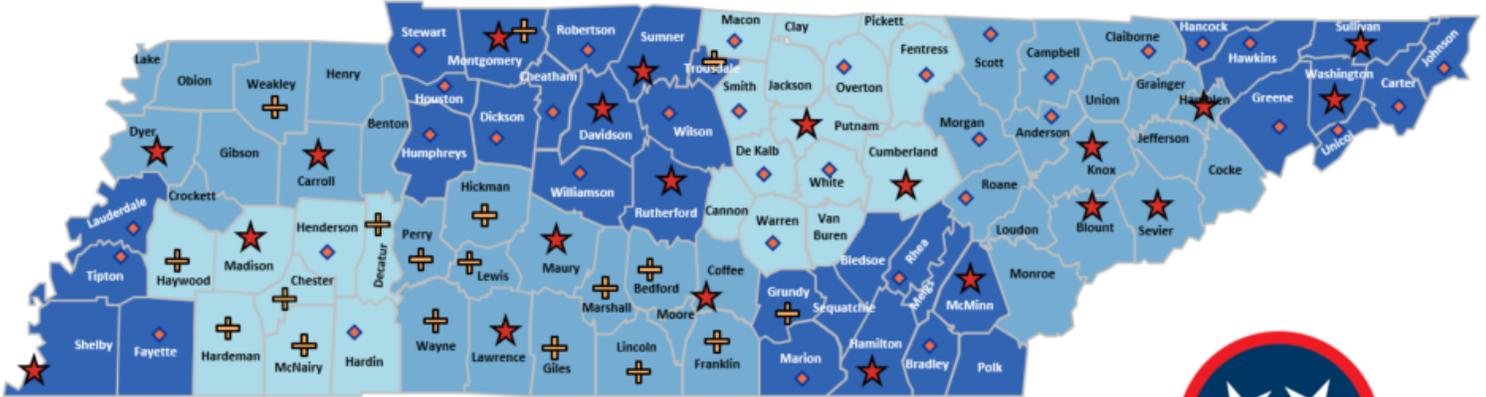
**a) Apprenticeship- Completion**

	PY22	1,077	23	191	15	278	28	2	115	252	166	229	308	533
PY22 Q1	293	4	43	1	84	4	1	40	78	38	48	89	156	
PY22 Q2	120	12	12	4	31	1	0	14	25	21	28	32	60	
PY22 Q3	188	5	35	9	62	13	1	14	27	15	49	76	56	
PY22 Q4	476	2	101	1	101	10	0	47	122	92	104	111	261	

**Key Performance Indicator Achievement Thresholds**

5	Best Practice	110%+
4	Target Achieved	91 to 110%
3	Approaching Target	71 to 90%
2	Needs Improvement	51 to 70%
1	Needs Significant Improvement	21 to 50%
0	Unacceptable	0 to 20%

	Northwest	Northern Middle	Upper Cumberland	East	Northeast
Regional Director	Dr. Sabra Bledsoe	John Alexander	Sean Monday	Janet Wilburn	Brian Decker
Executive Director	Jennifer Bane	Marla Rye	Becky Hull	E L Morton	Lisa Evans
CLEO	John Penn Ridgeway	Bob Rial	Randy Porter	Glenn Jacobs	Richard Venable
Board Chair	Jimmy Williamson	John Zobl	Bob Young	Julie Simpson	Jay Richardson
Fiscal Agent	Workforce Innovations	Workforce Essentials	UC LWDB	ETHRA	First TN Dev. District
Staff to the Board	Workforce Innovations	Workforce Essentials	UC LWDB	ETHRA	First TN Dev. District
OSO	Mid-Cumberland HRA	Mid-Cumberland HRA	Mid-Cumberland HRA	UTCIS	ETSU
Career Service Provider	Dyersburg State CC	EDSI/MAC	Career Team	ETSU	ETSU



Greater Memphis	Southwest	Southern Middle	Southeast
Jackara Jones	Dr. Kayce Beam	Selina Moore	Dr. Jennifer Thacker
Kyla Guyette	Jennifer Bane	Barbara Kizer	Michele Holt
Lee Harris	Mike Creasy	Bill Newman	Weston Wamp
James D Robinson	Ben Ferguson	Mark Short	Carri Smith
Workforce Midsouth	Workforce Innovations, Inc.	South Central TN Dev. Dist	Southeast TN Dev Dist.
Workforce Midsouth	Workforce Innovations, Inc.	South Central TN Dev. Dist	Southeast TN Dev Dist.
Ross Employment Solutions	Mid-Cumberland HRA	In The Door	In The Door
Equus Workforce Solution	Dynamic Workforce Sol.	South Central HRA	EDSI



Legend			
Comprehensive AJC	★	Affiliate AJC	◆
Specialized AJC	⊕		

# Appendix 4: LWDA Narrative

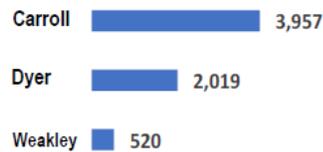


Annual Report  
Program Year (PY) 2022

## American Job Center Services

Throughout program year 2022, the Northwest Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) provided over 12,500 services to nearly 6,500 visitors through the area's two comprehensive American Job Centers (AJCs) in Dyer and Carroll Counties and its Specialized AJC in Weakley County. Job Search / Resource Room services was the number one service provided, accounting for nearly 47% of the services provided. Unemployment Insurance assistance was the second most service provided, accounting for 19% of services, followed by Networking Events at 15%, Title I services at 5.5%, and then Job Search Assistance at 4% of services provided. Of the 164 customer satisfaction surveys completed, 96% indicated they were completely satisfied with the services received.

## Customer Visits



**6,496**  
Visitors to Date PY22

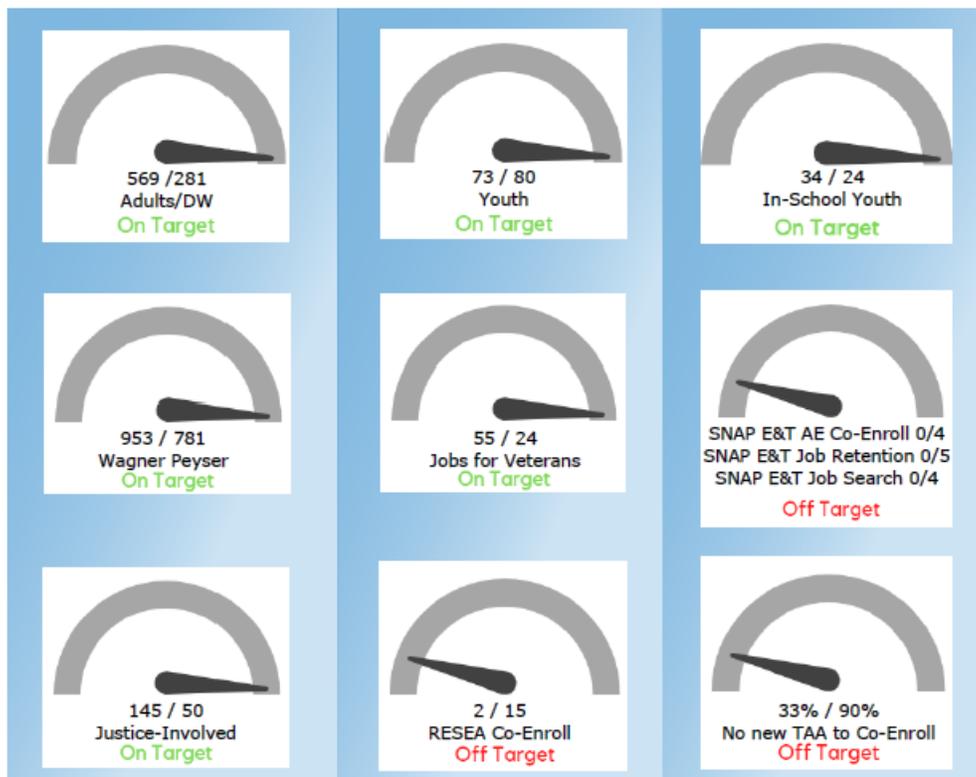


## TOP 5 REASONS FOR VISIT

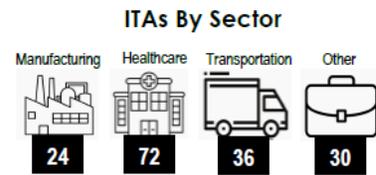
1. Job Search/Resource Room
2. Unemployment
3. Events/Workshops
4. Title I Career Coaching
5. Job Search Assistance

**12,505** Services Provided

To continue to promote services and reach customers after a decrease in nine Certified AJCs to three, the Northwest area enhanced its network of Access Points through the addition of five new partners throughout the year, bringing the total number of Access Points to ten. Efforts to increase the number of Access Points will continue in PY 23. Partner programs also worked together to meet exceed the majority of Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals established by the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB).



Of the new Title I enrollments, 162, or 46%, participated in Occupational Skills Training, with the majority training in one of the area’s top industry sectors. About 52% of new Occupational Skills Training participants enrolled in training through a TN College of Applied Technology (TCAT), followed by 28% at short-term private-training providers such as Truck Driving and Electrical Lineman providers, then Community Colleges at 15%, and Universities at 5%.



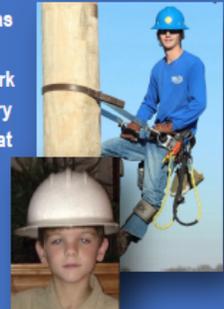
### Individual Training Account (ITA) Assistance Helps Fulfill Childhood Dream

Since Ryan Mills was a child he knew what he wanted to do for a career, demonstrated when he dressed as a lineman for a school Career Day. Working alongside WIOA helped Ryan to achieve his goal.

Ryan started his journey to his dream job when he enrolled with the WIOA program to obtain work experience while attending Lake County High School, where he was placed as a student aide. Every evaluation stated that Ryan excelled in everything he did on his worksite, all while obtaining work skills that he would be able to use in his future career.

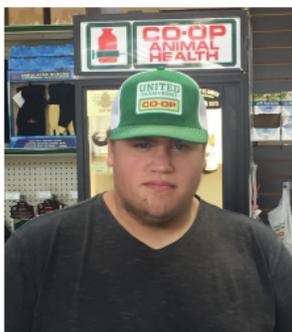
Once Ryan had completed the work experience program and graduated high school, he decided to further his education and attend the North American Lineman Training Center to obtain the training needed to become a lineman. With help from the funding WIOA provided to assist with the cost of his education, Ryan graduated from the lineman school in December 2022. Ryan applied at Dyersburg Electric in January 2023 and was hired on February 16, 2023 as a lineman apprentice.

Ryan stated that without the help of his career advisor, Olivia Capps, and the WIOA program he would not have been able to afford the lineman school, receive the needed training he needed to accomplish his goals, or obtain the work skills needed to succeed in this career. Ryan is very grateful for the WIOA program and is currently employed at Dyersburg Electric where he enjoys working at the job of his dreams.



Additionally, throughout the year, 68 new youth were enrolled in work experience in 42 different worksites – 35 In-School Youth and 33 Out-of-School Youth, plus two youth were enrolled in OJTs. Also this year, nearly \$23,700 in incentives was awarded to youth participants for their achievements during program participation and continued success after exiting the program.

### Co-Enrollment Helps AJC Customer Secure Employment



After dropping out of high school, Joshua Deaton knew he needed to obtain his HiSet. However, he was uncertain where to begin. Joshua’s outlook on his future changed when his brother brought home an American Job Center flyer describing Adult Education classes and incentives for the completion of programs.

“I had experienced loss in my life and came to realize I needed to stop feeling sorry for myself and do what I needed to make a life for myself,” said Joshua.

Joshua’s brother had talked with Career Advisor Connie Wright at the American Job Center-Camden. Connie had sent home the flyer which outlined how young adults up to the age of 24 may be eligible for monetary rewards by meeting their educational and career goals. Joshua said, “I knew this was the step I needed to take. I made a visit to her office and she explained the program regarding incentives for obtaining HiSet, work experience, employment, etc.”

After attending his first Adult Education class, Joshua felt he might be in way over his head. “Joshua Deaton came to class

with very low expectations for himself,” said Adult Education Instructor, Debbie Manor. “He had little self-confidence, but this slowly changed. He was very kind to the other students—wanting to make friends. Joshua became a favorite in class.”

Debbie stated that Joshua worked hard on each subject, and with each test he passed, his confidence grew. Within four months Joshua had completed the HiSet. “Passing the HiSet was an instant boost for this shy but polite young man,” she said. “For the first time he started making plans for his future. Joshua has the potential of doing and being whatever he chooses.”

In addition to earning his HiSet, Joshua also participated in the Youth Work Experience Program. He performed so well at his placement with United Farm & Home Co-op Camden, TN, that they hired him at the completion of the program.

Joshua’s employers, Manager Jack Malone and Assistant Manager Betty Greer, both agreed that Joshua is an asset to their team. They reported that he performs his job well, is excellent with customers, motivated, communicates with others, is always willing to learn, and works well with his co-workers.

Joshua is very appreciative to all for helping him through this journey and feels that he could not have achieved these goals without their support. “My support team was committed to making me feel I was worthy and valuable, and motivated me to achieve my goals.” He feels the advice he learned through this experience is to “believe in yourself.”

## **Business Services**

As the primary customer of the workforce system, the NWTNWB prioritizes services to employers. During PY 22, companies in Northwest TN received wage reimbursements in excess of \$178,550 through On-Job-Training grants to train their own workers. Business Services staff and the American Job Centers developed contracts with 23 companies, placed job orders, and referred eligible job applicants to fill 113 positions. The majority of OJT enrollments, 74%, were made in the Manufacturing sector. Statewide Funding was made available to employers to provide training for their current workforce to improve processes and upgrade skills through Incumbent Worker Training grants. Sixteen employers were awarded nearly \$255,000 to train 281 workers.

### *Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeships*

The NWTNWB also continued to work on expanding apprenticeship opportunities by increasing awareness of employers to the benefits, assisting employers with developing apprenticeship standards, connecting qualified job seekers to employers, and facilitating access to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other American Job Center partner funds to support apprenticeships. Through grant funding awarded by the Apprenticeship TN Office, 33 apprentices were served, and the \$88,821 award was fully expended.

### **Auston Mealer Celebrates First Graduation for HVAC Journeyman Apprentices**

In April 2023, West Tennessee's first HVAC Journeymen apprentices received their State of Tennessee certificates with Sponsor Auston Mealer Restaurant and Equipment Services (Dyersburg), signifying their 6,000 hours of classroom and on-the-job training. Pictured are members of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board.

Journeymen Greg "Lurch" Nichols, Zac Hampton, Stewart "Stew Baby" Starks, Casey Dowell, William (Heath) "Lil Papi" Brasfield, Geary Brewer, Dustin Rivers, and Corey Mealer have all chosen to continue working for Auston Mealer.



### **Dakota Hassell First Graduate of Tencom's IT Support Technician Apprenticeship Program**

Dakota Hassell, a 2021 Dyer County High School graduate and former participant of the Upward Bound program at Dyersburg State Community College was interested in math, science, and technology, but didn't really have a specific career plan. Dakota enrolled at UT Martin for computer science and coding, but it wasn't until he was placed in a paid internship at Tencom Services in Dyersburg through the Northwest TN Workforce Board / American Job Center's Work Experience program that he realized he wanted to do more IT and hands-on work. As a result, he switched his major to Management of Information Systems with a minor in cyber security.

In January 2022 Dakota was hired at Tencom and participated in an On-the-Job Training (OJT) grant which reimbursed Tencom for 50% of his wages during the specified training period. A graduation ceremony was held



to celebrate Dakota as the first graduate of their IT Support Technician Apprenticeship program. "We look forward to a great future together and to building on this partnership with Apprenticeship Tennessee," said Tencom Founder and CEO, Chris Donaldson.

The Registered Electrical Apprenticeship Preparation (REAP) Program, a ten-week pre-apprenticeship program consisting of two weeks of classroom training to learn the fundamentals of basic electricity and construction applications, followed by eight weeks of paid work experience at Amteck's Dyersburg facility, hosted its fifth class,

consisting of ten students, with seven students completing the two-week classroom training and continuing into paid work experience at Amteck. Through participation in the program students have the opportunity to obtain employment at the Amteck Dyersburg facility upon successful completion. If hired, participants are entered into the Registered Apprenticeship program which prepares them to take the exam to become a Journeyman/Licensed Electrician and earn an estimated \$70,000 annually.

### *Virtually Speaking - Workforce Development Webinar Series*

In March 2021 the Northwest TN Workforce Board (NWTNWB)'s Business Services staff launched a new quarterly webinar series to inform employers about the many resources and services available through the Board and the American Job Centers, as well as other training topics related to workforce development. All webinars are recorded and may be found on our website at <https://nwtjobs.org/employers/virtually-speaking>. This program year, the initiative was expanded to be a regional service offered by the three Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) in West Tennessee. Topics included:

- Betting on Talent: Maximizing Impact of Employee Engagement
- Substance Abuse Awareness: Changing the Narrative of Addiction in the Workplace
- Building Your Workforce through Partnerships in Work-Based Learning
- Addressing the Childcare Challenge: Solutions to Benefit Your Workforce



### **Promising Practices for Talent Pipelines**

#### ***Justice-Involved Individuals (JIIs)***

The NWTNWB, through grant funding provided by the Tennessee Office of Re-entry, served 89 justice-involved individuals, exceeding the proposed goal of 70, and fully expending the \$126,000 awarded. The Board partnered with local Sheriff's Departments and the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services (UTCIS) to offer Manufacturing Skills Bootcamps and OSHA 10 General Industry courses to 85 inmates at five local county jails – Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, and Obion. The training allowed students to gain marketable skills in the Manufacturing space and graduate the program with a Certificate of Completion and an OSHA 10 General Industry Card. Additionally, one JII received financial assistance for truck driver training, and three JIIs participated in OJT with one receiving related supportive services. All three successfully completed their 320 hours of OJT and remained employed with the employer.

### **Excel Boats Offers Second Chance for Success**

Kenneth Jobe was hired in October 2022 by Excel Boats to work as a Welder Helper. At the time of hire, Jobe was incarcerated at the Obion County Correctional Complex and was participating in the Work Release Program.



Excel Boats is a Second Chance employer and is committed to successful reentry for justice involved individuals who are nearing release and equally committed to their future and career. During his on-the-job training, Jobe received training in Mig and Tig welding procedures and assembly required for various boat models. His training and welding equipment were funded through a Reentry Grant sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Office of Reentry and administered locally by the Northwest TN Workforce Board.

Jobe completed 320 hours of on-the-job training. He has continued to gain skills through continued employment and training opportunities. In March 2023, he participated in Incumbent Worker training attending a course on the Foundations of 5S which focused on safety.

"Kenneth Jobe was given a chance to work at Excel Boat Company through the Obion County Sheriff's Department Work Release Program," stated Excel Human Resource Director, Tiffnie Hix. "With the help of OJT, Reentry grant that provided needed work attire and equipment, and training in 5S Essentials funded by IWT, Kenneth has become a valuable employee for Excel. His training and willingness to work has given Kenneth room to advance within the company."

### **Low Income Single Parents**

The Growing Relational and Occupational Wealth in West Tennessee Households (GROWWTH) program is an innovative workforce initiative designed to empower individuals across West TN by eliminating key barriers and moving their families to self-sufficiency and economic mobility. Part of a study funded by the Tennessee Department of Human Services, GROWWTH is serving low income single parents in the 21 counties that make up West Tennessee through a collaboration led by the Center for Regional Economic Enrichment at the University of Memphis, a variety of units within the University, the three local workforce boards (Workforce MidSouth, Southwest Tennessee and Northwest Tennessee), the Greater Memphis Chamber, and a group of community organizations and local businesses. The GROWWTH goal is to serve 2,500 low-income households during the three-year funding period. The resulting outcome will yield a net benefit of an estimated \$850 million over the next 10 years, including a boost to the gross domestic product and a savings of \$330 million from reduced social safety net spending.

The grant funding will allow GROWWTH to work toward its goal of eliminating key barriers to self-sufficiency for low-income wage earners the West Tennessee region through access to needed resources for economic mobility, a holistic approach to improving the personal and professional well-being of families, strengthening the existing system through partner resources, and inspiring families to appreciate the value of growth and lifelong learning. The program begins with the GROWWTH Academy, an accelerated workforce readiness program designed in direct response to the needs of local businesses and the target population. The innovative curriculum of the Academy addresses gaps to readiness for stable employment and employer readiness for offering sustainable career pathways. Businesses throughout the region have committed to hiring Academy graduates. career pathways. Businesses throughout the region have committed to hiring Academy graduates.

### **Dislocated Workers and COVID-19 Relief**

As part of the state of Tennessee’s Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) for COVID-19 Relief extension, the Northwest area was awarded an additional \$438,058 to provide career and training services to an estimated 76 participants during the program year. A total of 108 individuals were enrolled, or 142% of the proposed goal of 76, and the grant was fully expended.

### **Promoting Career Pathways and Developing the Youth Talent Pipeline**

Virtual Career Exploration: TRANSFVR software, a virtual reality-based education and training workforce development platform, helps students and job seekers get on a path to middle skills employment. TRANSFR VR helps educators, workforce development professionals, economic development organizations, and employers provide simulations that allow students and job seekers to explore career pathways including Manufacturing, Automotive, Public Safety, Skilled Trades, Warehousing & Storage, and Hospitality & Tourism. New modules will be added as they become available, including Healthcare in August 2023.

#### **TRANSFR Virtual Reality Headsets**



Healthcare Pathways: Through the Health Resources & Services Administration’s (HRSA) Delta Region Rural Health Workforce Training Program, a partnership between Baptist in Union City and Huntingdon, Dyersburg State Community College (DSCC), Jackson State Community College (JSCC), Priority EMS, and the Northwest TN Workforce Board (NWTNWB) was formed to promote two particular healthcare career opportunities and pathways - EMT/Paramedics and Respiratory Therapists. The three-year grant will provide full tuition assistance to eligible students in the nine Northwest counties, as well as a \$1,000 stipend for students, paid internship

opportunities, and job placement assistance. The NWTNWB’s role in the grant is to promote the pathways and grant opportunities to area high school students through career



exploration events. The events held in PY 22 have contributed to all grant classes being full, and having a waiting list for additional interested applicants.

**MFG DAY**

High Schools Participating	Students Participating	Employers Participating
24	998	26

Manufacturing Pathways: Organized nationally by the Manufacturing Institute, National Manufacturing (MFG) Day is manufacturing’s biggest annual opportunity to inspire the next generation, positively shift perceptions about the industry, and build the foundation for the manufacturing workforce of the future. Each year the Northwest area works with area high schools and employers to celebrate by arranging in-person tours of local manufacturing facilities for area students in order to promote local career opportunities within the manufacturing industry.



**American Job Center Services**

Throughout program year 2022, the Southwest Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) provided over 6,400 services to nearly 5,300 visitors through the area’s one comprehensive, two affiliate, and five specialized American Job Centers (AJCs). Job Search / Resource Room services was the number one service provided, accounting for 9% of the services provided. Events (8%) and Job Fairs (7%) were the next most services provided, followed by Title I services at 6%, then Job Search Assistance at 5.7%, then Adult Education at 3% of services provided. Of the 40 customer satisfaction surveys completed, 100% indicated they were completely satisfied with the services received.

**Customer Visits**



**TOP 5 REASONS FOR VISIT**

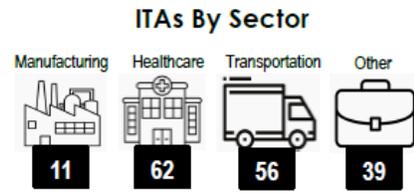
1. Job Search/Computer Room
2. Events/Job Fairs
3. Title I Career Coaching
4. Jobs4TN/Job Search Assistance
5. Adult Education / Hi-Set

**6,431** Services Provided

Partner programs also worked together to meet exceed the majority of Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals established by the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB).



Of the new Title I enrollments, 168, or 56% participated in Occupational Skills Training, with the majority training in one of the area's top industry sectors. About 48% of new Occupational Skills Training participants enrolled in training through a TN College of Applied Technology (TCAT), followed by 35% at short-term private-training providers such as Truck Driving and Electrical Lineman providers, then Universities at 9%, and Community Colleges at 8%.



### 2023 Hardin County High School Graduate on the Road to Success

Nineteen-year-old Roger Hughes is one step closer to realizing his dream of becoming a truck driver. In May, Roger and his mother, Teresa, visited the Decatur County American Job Center office to inquire about the CDL training program at TCAT Parsons. It was then he set a goal to start the CDL class in September.

"He's going to make it," said Lead Career Navigator Judy Seay, who works in the Decatur County AJC. "I try to encourage him as much as I can."

As a student with Dyslexia, Roger has already overcome barriers of navigating school with a learning disability. Roger graduated from Hardin County High School in May. Since the death of his dad in December 2022, Roger and his mother have had additional financial challenges. His dad bought him a new vehicle before he died and Roger had been struggling to pay for it.

In addition to sharing information about the CDL training program, Seay also verified that Roger met the program requirements for the new Summer Youth Employment Program and Work Experience (WEX) Program. "That's when Roger wanted to hug my neck," Seay said. Roger will start earning a paycheck in the Summer Youth Employment Program at the Roach Sawmill and Lumber Company, Inc. in Savannah. He will also receive an opportunity to gain more work experience through WEX before he prepares for his CDL class in September.



Additionally, throughout the year, 24 youth participated in work experience – 10 In-School Youth and 14 Out-of-School Youth, plus one youth was enrolled in OJT. Also this year, \$3,450 in incentives was awarded to youth participants for their achievements during program participation and continued success after exiting the program.



Sixteen-year-old **Lexie Zamora** gained valuable work experience at the Jackson American Job Center this summer. As part of the Youth Work Experience (WEX) program, Lexie answered phones, helped customers at the front desk, and trained to assist with the job fair check-in process.

Lexie says in addition to strengthening her customer service skills, "I learned a lot about jobs and what options are out there." Lexie says she wants to be a labor and delivery nurse or an ultrasound tech. As a junior at Chester County High School, Lexie has the opportunity to continue to gain more work experience in the fall in the Chester County American Job Center office through WEX.

Lexie encourages other eligible youth to apply for the program. "It's a really good program. It gives you a lot of experience. It will help you with future jobs," she said. Plus, "having customer service experience will help you with any job."

The program is designed to give eligible participants ages 16-24 on-the-job training and work experience that will help them in their future career paths.

**Business Services**

As the primary customer of the workforce system, the Southwest TN Workforce Board (SWTNWB) prioritizes services to employers. During PY 22, companies in Southwest TN received wage reimbursements of nearly \$78,000 through On-Job-Training grants to train their own workers. Business Services staff and the American Job Centers developed contracts with five companies, placed job orders, and referred eligible job applicants to fill 50

positions. The majority of OJT enrollments, 76%, were made in the Manufacturing sector, with the other 24% enrolled in the Healthcare sector. Statewide Funding was made available to employers to provide training for their current workforce to improve processes and upgrade skills through Incumbent Worker Training grants. Thirteen employers were awarded nearly \$190,000 to train 130 workers.

*Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeships*

The SWTNWB also continued to work on expanding apprenticeship opportunities by increasing awareness of employers to the benefits, assisting employers with developing apprenticeship standards, connecting qualified job seekers to employers, and facilitating access to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other American Job Center partner funds to support apprenticeships. Through grant funding awarded by the Apprenticeship TN Office, 31 apprentices were served, and the \$70,963 award was fully expended.

**Chemring and TCAT Form Partnership for Apprenticeship Program**

Tennessee College of Applied Technology - Jackson at Whiteville and Chemring Countermeasures USA signed 22 new Registered Apprentices on March 17, 2023. These Registered Apprentices will complete three years of on-the-job learning and classroom training to become Industrial Maintenance Mechanics. They will design and manufacture infrared countermeasures designed to protect air and naval platforms from missile threats. Apprenticeship TN is proud to help Tennesseans build careers through education and employer partnerships.



**Delta Electrical Establishes Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship Program with Apprenticeship TN**



Delta Electrical registered their Electrician Apprenticeship with the US Department of Labor and their newly established Electrician Pre-Apprenticeship Program with the Apprenticeship TN Office in late Spring 2023. Their first Pre-Apprenticeship class began in June with five students attending a 2-week classroom training coupled with approximately 10 weeks of on-the-job learning. Pre-Apprentices studied a wide variety of topics during the Pre-Apprenticeship classroom portion ranging from safety to tools to math and construction drawings. Pre-Apprentices were exposed to the electrical

construction basic concepts before heading out to jobsites for shadowing and work experience. Pre-Apprentices were provided with required work attire such as steel-toe boots and high visibility shirts and graduates earned their starter toolkit.

*Virtually Speaking - Workforce Development Webinar Series*

In March 2021 the Northwest TN Workforce Board launched a new quarterly webinar series to inform employers about the many resources and services available through the Board and the American Job Centers, as well as other training topics related to workforce development. This program year, the initiative was expanded to be a regional service offered by the three Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) in West Tennessee. Topics included:

- Betting on Talent: Maximizing Impact of Employee Engagement
- Substance Abuse Awareness: Changing the Narrative of Addiction in the Workplace
- Building Your Workforce through Partnerships in Work-Based Learning
- Addressing the Childcare Challenge: Solutions to Benefit Your Workforce



## **Promising Practices for Talent Pipelines**

### ***Justice-Involved Individuals (JIIs)***



The SWTNWB, through grant funding provided by the Tennessee Office of Re-entry, served 48 justice-involved individuals, exceeding the proposed goal of 38, and fully expending the \$99,000 awarded. The Board partnered with local Sheriff's Departments and the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services (UTCIS) to offer Manufacturing Skills Bootcamps and OSHA 10 General Industry courses to inmates at the Hardin and Madison County jails. The training allowed students to gain marketable skills in the Manufacturing space and graduate the program with a Certificate of Completion and an OSHA 10 General Industry Card.

Additionally, four JIIs participated in OJT. All four successfully completed their 320 hours of OJT and remained employed with the employer.

### ***Low Income Single Parents***

The Growing Relational and Occupational Wealth in West Tennessee Households (GROWWTH) program is an innovative workforce initiative designed to empower individuals across West TN by eliminating key barriers and moving their families to self-sufficiency and economic mobility. Part of a study funded by the Tennessee Department of Human Services, GROWWTH is serving low income single parents in the 21 counties that make up West Tennessee through a collaboration led by the Center for Regional Economic Enrichment at the University of Memphis, a variety of units within the University, the three local workforce boards (Workforce MidSouth, Southwest Tennessee and Northwest Tennessee), the Greater Memphis Chamber, and a group of community organizations and local businesses. The GROWWTH goal is to serve 2,500 low-income households during the three-year funding period. The resulting outcome will yield a net benefit of an estimated \$850 million over the next 10 years, including a boost to the gross domestic product and a savings of \$330 million from reduced social safety net spending.

The grant funding will allow GROWWTH to work toward its goal of eliminating key barriers to self-sufficiency for low-income wage earners the West Tennessee region through access to needed resources for economic mobility, a holistic approach to improving the personal and professional well-being of families, strengthening the existing system through partner resources, and inspiring families to appreciate the value of growth and lifelong learning. The program begins with the GROWWTH Academy, an accelerated workforce readiness program designed in direct response to the needs of local businesses and the target population. The innovative curriculum of the Academy addresses gaps to readiness for stable employment and employer readiness for offering sustainable career pathways. Businesses throughout the region have committed to hiring Academy graduates. career pathways. Businesses throughout the region have committed to hiring Academy graduates.

### ***Promoting Career Pathways and Developing the Youth Talent Pipeline***

Virtual Career Exploration: TRANSFVR software, a virtual reality-based education and training workforce development platform, helps students and job seekers get on a path to middle skills employment. TRANSFVR helps educators, workforce development professionals, economic development organizations, and employers provide simulations that allow students and job seekers to explore career pathways including Manufacturing, Automotive, Public Safety, Skilled Trades, Warehousing & Storage, and Hospitality & Tourism. New modules will be added as they become available, including Healthcare in August 2023.

Healthcare Pathways: Through the Health Resources & Services Administration's



(HRSA) Delta Region Rural Health Workforce Training Program, a partnership between Jackson State Community College (JSCC), Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, Rural Health Association of Tennessee, and the Southwest and Northwest Tennessee Workforce Boards was formed to support the \$1.2 million grant awarded to JSCC for its Medical Coding program. The grant is supplying training, scholarships, and support to students in West Tennessee. Approximately, 60% of the grant will directly benefit students with the remaining funds covering administrative and program enhancements. Scholarships from the grant funding will cover tuition, program fees, books, certification exam fees, and a stipend for additional educational expenses for upwards of 90 students over the four-year grant.

Manufacturing Pathways: Organized nationally by the Manufacturing Institute, National Manufacturing (MFG) Day is manufacturing’s biggest annual opportunity to inspire the next generation, positively shift perceptions about the industry, and build the foundation for the manufacturing workforce of the future. Each year the Southwest area works with area high schools and employers to celebrate by arranging in-person tours of local manufacturing facilities for area students in order to promote local career opportunities within the manufacturing industry.

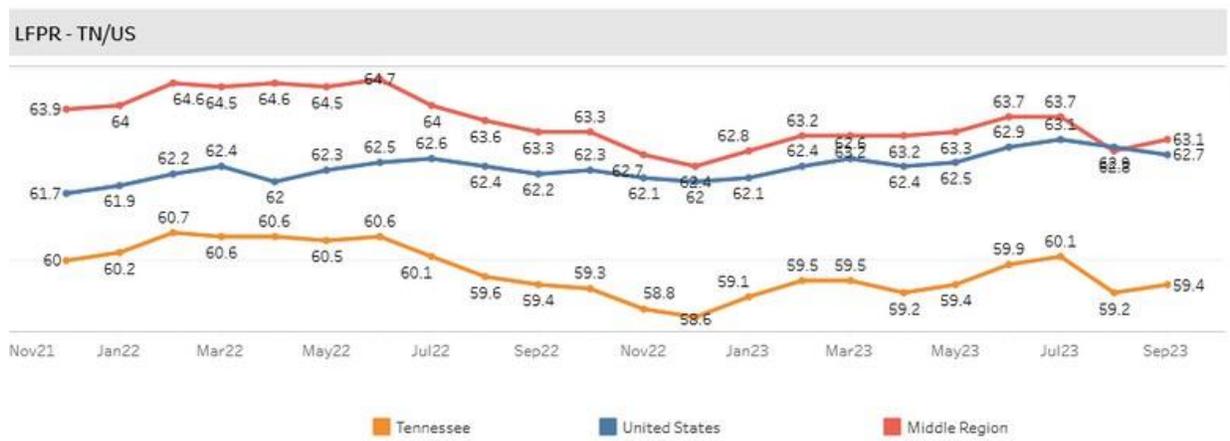




Welcome  
Northern Middle TN  
Workforce Board!

# Northern Middle Workforce Board Annual Report 2022-2023

## Labor Force Participation Rate Northern Middle Area



*The Northern Middle Workforce area's Labor Force Participation Rate continues to outperform the state and national average.*

The Northern Middle Workforce Board was awarded the Summer Youth Employment Program grant to put hundreds of youth ages 14-24 to work in various occupations to gain valuable experience. In the Northern Middle Workforce Area, 328 youth were given employment. That is 61% of all participants in the state of Tennessee.



## ARE YOU 14-24 AND READY TO WORK THIS SUMMER?



The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and American Job Centers are ready to pair you with an amazing work experience this summer!

### EARN WHILE YOU LEARN



Have the potential to earn more than \$3,000 this summer while gaining a ton of experience that can help you level up in your career.

On-the-job paid training, mentorship, and more!

## APPLY NOW TO BE MATCHED WITH A CAREER COACH AND GET STARTED:



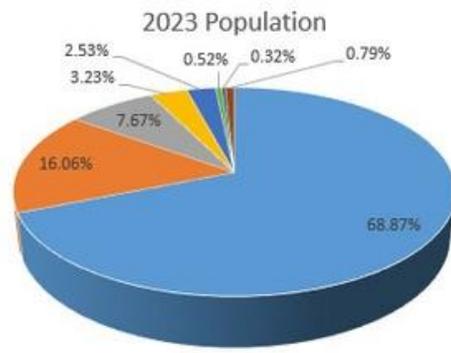
**BUILDING. STRONG. FAMILIES.**

**TN** Department of Labor & Workforce Development

MUST MEET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE. APPLICATION DOESN'T GUARANTEE SELECTION FOR THE PROGRAM.

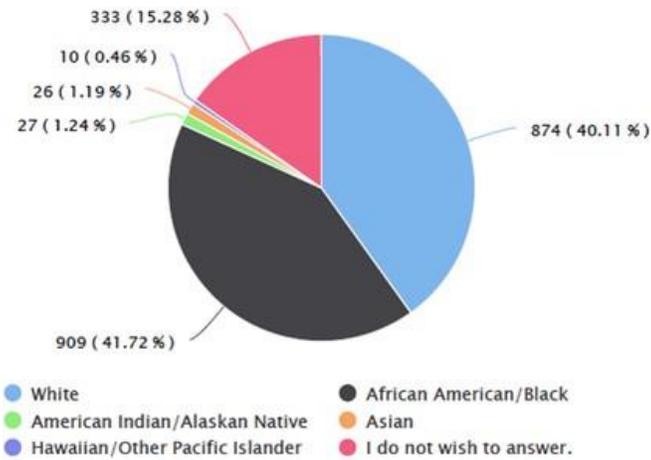


The Northern Middle Workforce Board prides itself on its history of inclusiveness in employment outreach and fosters a culture that embraces innovation and values Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DIEA) to achieve opportunities for all. The demographics of the Board's 13 counties are listed in the chart to the right, which encompasses approximately one-third of the working population of the state of Tennessee. With 16 certified American Job Centers and numerous partnerships, the Board is strengthening its ability to recruit, develop, promote, and retain our region's talent.



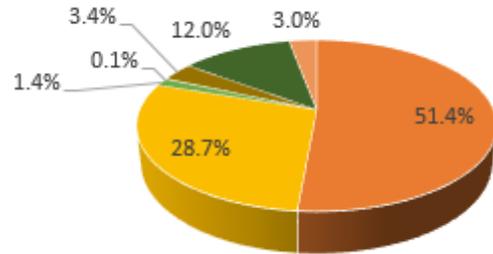
- White, Non-Hispanic (1,510,715)
- Black, Non-Hispanic (352,283)
- White, Hispanic (168,295)
- Asian, Non-Hispanic (70,910)
- Two or more races, Non-Hispanic (55,520)
- Black, Hispanic (11,495)
- Two or More races, Hispanic (7,812)
- Other (17,301)

Enrolled Individuals – By Race



The chart on the left reflects the race of clients enrolled in the 22-23 program year and receiving assistance. The chart below shows the in-demand skills for which participants receive training in sector strategies defined by the board. The information reflects the Board's commitment to assisting the equity-challenged and moving them toward self-sufficiency with training in high-demand occupations.

In-Demand Skills Training



- Logistics & Transportation (434)
- Healthcare (242)
- Advanced Manufacturing (12)
- K-12 Education (1)
- IT & Administration (29)
- Construction Skilled Trades (101)
- Other (25)

The Board's Local and Regional Plan is focusing its efforts and partner resources on developing career pathways in the six in-demand sectors listed in the chart on the right.

*Of the total population in the Northern Middle Area, 31.13% are classified as a minority. Of the individuals served in a program, 44.61% are classified as a minority and 15.28% chose not to answer.*

# Business Services

The cornerstone of the Northern Middle Workforce Board is service to business and industry. The Board has acknowledged this by appropriating funding for incumbent worker training. In addition, the Board has prioritized apprenticeship programs and is proud to be a partner in the first Teacher Apprenticeship Program in the nation with the Clarksville/Montgomery County School System. Over 100 teacher apprentices have been registered with the United States Department of Labor and Apprenticeship TN. Fifteen employers were awarded Incumbent Worker Training Grants totaling \$246,547. Over 450 employees were trained and benefited from the grant. Nine employers received Apprenticeship grants and 114 apprentices began their work and receive training.



## Re-Entry

### Industrial Readiness Training

In an effort to support the talent development pipeline in advanced manufacturing and logistics, the NMWB partnered with Sumner County AJC, Volunteer State Community College, and Sumner County Sheriff's office to coordinate and offer Industrial Readiness Training (IRT) to justice-involved individuals. The interactive course was designed to prepare students for entry-level positions as operators and maintenance technicians in industry and manufacturing. A total of 16 individuals were served, of whom 9 were inmates at the Sumner County jail. Several individuals were placed in On-the-Job Training Contracts with local employers upon completion of training.



*In the 22-23 program year, classes were held at the Sumner County jail. Sixteen individuals were served. Nine were inmates within three months of being released.*

# Focus on Priority Populations

## New Programs Added

### Tennessee Alliance for Economic Mobility (TAEM)



The Tennessee Alliance for Economic Mobility (TAEM), a public-private partnership of 32 partners across seven counties in Middle Tennessee, will demonstrate and evaluate a new way forward for the Tennessee safety net by pairing community-driven wrap-around supports, family-centered coaching, and employment training and pathways with a temporary transitional benefit that mitigates the effects of the benefits cliff and increases Middle Tennessee’s families’ incentive to earn more. Registration for this program kicked off in January of 2023 and is offered in the American Job Centers.

### Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)



The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors. Participants also have access to employment assistance through American Job Centers.

SCSEP participants gain work experience in various community service activities at non-profit and public facilities, including schools, hospitals, day-care centers, and senior centers. The program provides thousands of community service hours to public and non-profit agencies, allowing them to enhance and provide needed services. Over 200 seniors are served in the workforce area through the National Council on Aging.



# Adult Education

*Adult Education's participant numbers (students with 12 hours or more of class time) have increased by 473 over the prior program year serving 3,149. The largest growth was due to the ESL program, which grew from 881*

## Teacher of the Year



Denise Brison, one of our esteemed Adult Education Teachers, was nominated and received the prestigious Teacher of the Year award at the Adult Education Statewide Academy in Chattanooga.

With over two years of experience in adult education, Denise brings a wealth of knowledge to our program. Having taught in both Adult Education and K-12 settings, her diverse background has been instrumental in the success of the Dickson County team.

*Adult Education's Measurable Skill Gains rose from 339 in program year 21-22 to 389 in program year 22-23. A Measurable Skill Gain indicates the student rose at least one educational functioning level.*



## Changing the Future

Dakota (left) is the first child in a family of six to graduate. He started with instructor Dawn Gale two years ago while in the Houston County jail. When he returned to jail, he completed his HiSET. Jeremiah (right) is the first person on his dad's side to graduate. This wouldn't be possible without the support of Sheriff Sugg and jail administrator Sammie Davis. It's great when local sheriffs and administrators support these programs!

*Adult Education's diploma attainment increased from 464 in program year 21-22 to 502 in program year 22-23. IET attainment spiked again from 91 in 2021 to 141 in 2022. These numbers directly reflect the increased number of employees we currently engage.*

# Success Stories



Mike, from Houston County, enrolled in the National Dislocated Worker as a long-term unemployed individual. He completed CDL training at Drive Train and obtained his license in February. He earned gainful employment in March at TEC, earning \$19.50 per hour. He received assistance with training fees, job search, transportation, and work clothes.

Ajani was enrolled in POWER Youth Program at Metro Action Commission and participated in Paid Work Experience. He attended the Information Technology (IT) Academy at John Overton High School and received his High School Diploma.

During his Senior Year, Ajani participated in Paid Work Experience with the Metro Nashville Public School's (MNPS) IT Department and enjoyed his experience with MNPS IT. However, he decided to acquire a skill set in HVAC through Post-Secondary Training. Ajani extended his Paid Work Experience with A-Action Air HVAC Apprenticeship and received his HVAC Certification. He is now a full-time technician with Volunteer Sheet Metal Fabricators Inc. as he continues to advance to a journeyman level through his Apprenticeship with A-Action Air.



Lacy, an unemployed single parent, contacted the Dickson County American Job Center seeking tuition assistance for completing the Administrative Office Technology Program at TCAT Dickson. After receiving tuition assistance and supportive service, she completed the program on April 21, 2022. Lacy now works for United Health Group as a remote Customer Care Representative. She has expressed gratitude for the excellent services and help to achieve her goals.

Brian is a justice-involved client and had been incarcerated briefly during his enrollment with the WIOA program. Upon release, he had an upfront and honest meeting with his case manager. Brian had a new determination to change his life. He was given another chance and seized the opportunity. He graduated from CDL school and was very grateful to everyone who assisted him. He now has the skills to earn a good wage in a demand occupation.



# WIOA Performance

The Northern Middle Workforce Board has been challenged by multiple changes in career service providers over a 5-year period. In fact, for the PY 21 year, Northern Middle fell short of achieving all federal performance measures at 90% or better. The Board missed the Adult Entered Employment Rate, 4th quarter after exit achieving only 82.18% of the goal. However, for PY22, the Board put a focused emphasis on performance accountability and was able to achieve 100% or better on all federal performance measures.

PY22 Annual WIOA Core Performance Measures		Northern Middle		
Adult Measures		Pass/Fail		Fail
		Negotiated	Actual	% of Goal
Exiters			534	
Participants Served			1845	
Employment Rate 2nd Qtr after exit		81.50%	85.8%	105.27%
Employment Rate 4th Qtr after exit		80.20%	87.8%	109.47%
Median Earnings		\$ 6,900	\$7,874	114.11%
Credential Attainment		69.00%	69.4%	100.6%
MSG		62.00%	70.2%	113.2%
Dislocated Worker		Pass/Fail		Pass
		Negotiated	Actual	% of Goal
Exiters			163	
Participants Served			633	
Employment Rate 2nd Qtr. after exit		83.00%	89.20%	107.46%
Employment Rate 4th Qtr. after exit		81.00%	88.60%	109.38%
Median Earnings		\$7,900	\$ 10,481	132.67%
Credential Attainment		65.00%	66.10%	101.69%
Measurable Skills Gains		61.20%	71.00%	116.01%
Youth		Pass/Fail		Pass
		Negotiated	Actual	% of Goal
Exiters			404	
Participants Served			1152	
Employment Rate		77.50%	90.00%	116.12%
Employment Rate		76.50%	85.20%	111.37%
Median Earnings		\$ 3,720	\$6,137	164.97%
Credential Attainment		65.00%	73.50%	113.07%
Measurable Skills Gains		54.20%	63.90%	117.89%

During the 2022-2023 program year, the Northern Middle Workforce Board achieved success by developing partnerships that strategically supported the Board’s goals and objectives. Focusing on priority populations, outreach, and enrollment of marginalized and underserved populations promoted success. Specifically, working with the Urban League of Middle Tennessee, local community-based organizations, and housing authorities allowed us to reach participants where they reside. Operating with fiscal integrity and focused on performance management, the Board achieved all federal performance measures. The final cornerstone of success was the Board’s commitment to serving business and industry by allocating formula funds to support incumbent worker training.

**Southern Middle  
Local Workforce Development Board  
PY22 Annual Narrative**

The mission for the Southern Middle Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board (SMLWDB) is to develop a quality workforce system to meet the needs of area employers and job seekers. As such, the intent of our WIOA program is to strengthen the workforce system through innovation and alignment of services to promote individual and economic growth, meet business and industry needs in our area, and aid our distressed counties to ensure that they recover their full workforce potential.

The Southern Middle Local Workforce Development Board represents thirteen counties within the state of Tennessee. All thirteen counties, including the *At Risk* and *Distressed*, have a presence of an American Job Center (AJC). The AJCs provide high-quality customer services to employers and job seekers.

Through the One-Stop Delivery Model, all AJC staff and area partners work hard to stay in sync to provide job seekers and employers with the resources needed to accomplish their economic goals. Coordination across programs through all AJCs continue to improve to allow participants to receive the same high-quality services in the counties where they live.

The AJCs are committed to serving all job seekers with a focus on participants who have barriers such as high school drop outs, justice-involved, low-income, disabled, homeless or single parents. The AJCs serve these underprivileged populations through programs that include Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Ed, Vocational Rehab, SCSEP, Wagner Peyser, SNAP E&T, RESEA and Re-Entry-focused case management services. Basic Job Search assistance, resume/interview training and employer networking through the Wagner Peyser Program are also services all job seekers can access. The AJCs also have a plethora of partnerships, resources and employers throughout the Southern Middle Tennessee area.

Career Advisors and Specialists across all AJC Programs in the Southern Middle thirteen county-area conduct fervent, coordinated outreach in order to meet customers where they are. Once contact is made, the AJC staff determines what program fits best for each customer and then provides those clients with direct pathways and ongoing guidance to ensure successful program enrollment and quality career development strategies. The AJC's presence in all thirteen counties has been crucial to our success in the area. Availability of these programs, especially in distressed rural counties is critical to strengthening workforce participation across the area. Southern Middle takes pride in its ability to work with partners to establish client- and employer-centered services within a transparent and financially accountable workforce development system.

### Participants Served by County

COUNTY	SERVED IN AJC	TITLE I New Enrollments
BEDFORD	948	25
COFFEE	1946	35
FRANKLIN	81	45
GILES	3047	59
HICKMAN	59	17
LAWRENCE	4756	69
LEWIS	344	23
LINCOLN	676	29
MARSHALL	286	7
MAURY	4962	61
MOORE	5	4
PERRY	20	8
WAYNE	957	39
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18087</b>	<b>421</b>

#### Apprenticeship

The Southern Middle Local Workforce Board serviced 2 companies and 5 clients through apprenticeships within various career pathways. Participants served in positions such as Agricultural Equipment Technician and Insurance Agent.

#### National Dislocated Work Grant

The Southern Middle Local Workforce Board has been very successful with the National Dislocated Workers Grant (NDWG). Throughout the duration of this grant, 103 participants have been served. Collectively, NDWG participants were provided with over \$395,000 in paid work experience wages, over \$32,000 in support services, and over \$202,000 in paid occupational training. Out of the 45 clients who received paid occupational training, 38 have earned an industry recognized skill gains and/or credentials. Within those 103 participants, we were able to provide 34 paid employees to companies in the SMLWIA.

#### RESEA Cares Grant

SMLWDB was awarded a special grant paid for with RESEA Cares funding. From this grant, 891 individuals attended a RESEA orientation, 38 participants were co-enrolled with Title I services and 262 participants found job placement once completed.

### Layoff Aversion Grant

Southern Middle was awarded a Layoff Aversion Incumbent Worker Training Grant. SM utilized the funding through 7 employers that provided 245 workers with multiple trainings. These trainings allow employees to strengthen their skills and accelerate their careers while employers educate and retain valuable workers.

### Reentry Grant

Southern Middle was awarded Reentry grants that were utilized for specialized training for incarcerated individuals. Southern Middle enrolled 55 Justice Involved individuals in paid training programs to improve employment and reduce recidivism rates in those and neighboring counties.

## Southern Middle Success Stories

### 1. Title I Adult

Southern Middle enrolled a single mother of three who spent a significant part of her life working in the fast-food industry. Seeking a better future for herself and her children, she decided to make a career change. Through Title I Adult funding the client completed training at the Dental School of Franklin and is now employed at a dentist's office in Spring Hill, where she is not only making a good wage but also enjoying benefits that provide security for her family.

### 2. Title 1 Dislocated Worker

Southern Middle enrolled an individual with a justice-involved background, who came to pursue his CDL. He received travel assistance and successfully graduated from a truck driving institute. The participant is now employed as a Class A CDL driver making \$25 per hour. He's not only earning a good wage but also enjoying benefits, marking a significant turning point in his life.

### 3. Title I Adult

Southern Middle enrolled an adult applicant who had a challenging time finding employment due to her background. She decided to pursue a Class A CDL and graduated from Occupational Training. Today, she is employed as a dump truck driver, breaking down barriers and creating a new path for herself.

### 4. VR & Wagner Peyser

Southern Middle's VR and Wagner Peyser program enrolled a customer and his spouse who walked into the Columbia job fair on 2/23/2023. Both the customer and the spouse were placed with a local employer at that job fair – the client and his spouse are now making a living wage of \$18.00/ hour (each) with the employer they met with at the job fair, as of 3/6/23.

### 5. National Dislocated Worker Grant

Southern Middle enrolled a participant into the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) program. This participant is a single mother with four children that had just moved into a county in the Southern Middle area. NDWG funds were utilized to employ this participant at a manufacturing company. Once she completed the program the company contacted the Career Service Provider to inform them that this participant had worked out very well and was a good fit for their workforce. They hired her full time.

## 6. DVOP and VR

Southern Middle enrolled a young veteran in his mid-twenties into the Vocational Rehabilitation program and the DVOP program for assistance with post-secondary training and employment. The participant had served with the US Navy as an engineering lab technician on a nuclear submarine along with several other assignments. After his honorable discharge, the veteran moved in with his sister in Tennessee to get a fresh start as a civilian. He was able to get connected with the Department of Veteran's Affairs and obtained a fifty percent disability rating as a result of his service. It was identified through further career exploration, guidance and counseling and collaboration with community partners that Mr. Cacciatore wanted to find employment as a massage therapist. Vocational Rehabilitation was able to support the applicant throughout the process with continued guidance. As a result of the support from VR and the DVOP program, the client was hired by a local spa to 30-40 hours per week; He is earning the hourly rate of \$40 and has the ability to increase or decrease his hours when he chooses. When he is not at work for the local spa he is approved by the VA and his contract with the spa to perform chair massages at the local VA Clinic to build a network of service to support veterans and build a network of clientele who are service connected.



Upper Cumberland Local Workforce Development Board  
Annual Report  
July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Upper Cumberland Local Workforce Development Board (UCLWDB) which serves the 14 counties of the Upper Cumberland experienced another year of celebrations and challenges. Upper Cumberland employers have continued to experience high turnover rates and a workforce with skills gaps. Through a collective effort from the partners of the Workforce Board, American Job Center (AJC), and a new partnership with the Empower Upper Cumberland, UCLWDB was able to produce quality services to employers while meeting the needs of the participants entering the workforce.

As the board continues to address the employment needs of our community, the Work 1<sup>st</sup> initiative has proven to be a successful pipeline for placing trained participants from the American Job Center into employment. Over the program year, 5,060 application referrals were sent to employers from the American Job Center to employers, directly connecting job seekers to employers. In addition to the referral, these Work 1<sup>st</sup> participants were given professional career guidance from AJC partners.

### **American Job Center**

The American Job Center (AJC) consists of the Title(s) I-IV partners and the One Stop Operator who focus on providing quality career services. During the program 2022-2023 year, 9,862 services were provided to participants. Of those individuals who came to the AJC, 49% were seeking employment assistance. Even with the ever-changing landscape of participant needs, Title partners remained dedicated to connecting participants and employers.

**Title I – Career Team:** Despite multiple leadership and staff changes, Career Team maintained excellent service to their participants. During the program year 2022, Title I was able to enroll 301 Adults/Dislocated Workers, and 112 Youth. These enrollments received multiple career services with 84% receiving post-secondary training.

The UCLWDB Business Services team and Title I partnered with the Cookeville Regional Medical Center (CRMC) to host a direct-hire event. A first of its kind event for both CRMC and UCLWDB Business Services. Fifty (50) job seekers were interviewed with 25 receiving an on-the-spot job offer. One of Career Team's work experience participants, who was working in the Cookeville AJC at the reception desk, interviewed at the event. For 5 years he had been unsuccessful in his job search due to a physical disability. He was hired! When he got on the elevator to leave the event, he was joined by a CRMC staff member who asked him "Don't you work for the AJC?" He responded with a huge smile "Not anymore!"

# WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

LINKING PEOPLE & BUSINESS

Working with TLD (a Toyota subsidiary) Career Team and UCLWDB supported 24 justice involved individuals in completing CDL training. The participants were co-enrolled in the National Dislocated Worker grant and as an Adult in Title I. Wrap around services such as housing, transportation, supplies, etc. were also provided.



**Title II- Adult Education-** Putnam County School System Adult Education last PY had 174 diplomas and 577 students with 12 hours or more in the program. Also, 60 educational functioning level gains were achieved. The state goal for Measurable Skills Gains is 39%. PCSS Adult Education ended the PY with 42.42%

Workforce Development has several new learning platforms for student success. WIN is a Workforce Readiness platform where PCSS achieved 176% of the set state goal with 79 credentials deeming students' career-ready. A Pilot Platform PCSS achieved 135% of the set state goal for creating career plans. Also, a digital literacy platform where PCSS Adult Education students earned 137 digital literacy certificates. Behind all of these statistics is a team of educators who have a heart to serve people in the Upper Cumberland.

**Title III Wagner- Peyser:** During the 2022-2023 program year, Title III staff enrolled 1,890 participants. Partnering with local community colleges, the program was able to provide a variety of workshops and Job Fairs. The team conducted outreach in the more rural areas to create additional opportunities for counties that do not have comprehensive or affiliate American Job Center sites.



In Clay County, Wagner-Peyser partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to offer resume writing training for community members. Staff traveled to the Chamber on a regular basis to provide these one-on-one services. Wagner-Peyser staff also partnered with high schools to assist with Job and Career Fairs throughout school year.

**Title IV- Vocational Rehab:** The Vocational Rehabilitation team received 132 applications for this program year with 36 successful closures. One event that occurred throughout this performance year was our annual NDEAM (National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month) in October 2022. This event consisted of an informational session for employers as well as a job fair for our customers at the Community TRC in Cookeville. The team also held a 2-week Pre-Ets (Pre-employment transition services) camp for our local high school students.



**Business Service Team:** Through the partnership of UCLWDB Staff to the Board, the American Job Center staff and Empower Upper Cumberland, Workforce Connections (UCLWDB) was able to provide 10,317 services to 659 employers. As part of our continued efforts to communicate the relevance of UCLWDB and the American Job Center, 455 recruitment services were provided to employers with 55 new business recruiting profiles enrolled in the JOBS4TN system.

UCLWDB received \$265,954 in IWT funding creating opportunities for training for 173 employees from 18 different companies in 10 counties. The trainings ranged from advanced customer service practices to lean manufacturing processes. Each employer expressed their gratitude for the funding and stated that having the means to train their staff would create opportunities for growth in their companies.

# WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

LINKING PEOPLE & BUSINESS



The Upper Cumberland Local Workforce Development Board strives to continue to find opportunities to serve our community while continually seeking partnerships to grow workforce pipelines for companies to fill open positions. These efforts will continue into future program years as the Upper Cumberland Workforce needs grow.

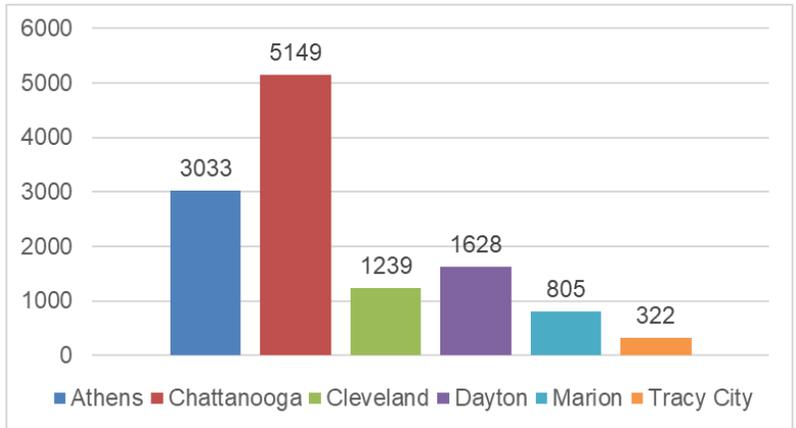


The Southeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area has a total of six (6) American Job Center locations across our ten-county region. There are comprehensive centers in Athens and Chattanooga, affiliate centers in Cleveland, Dayton, and Marion County, and one specialized center in Tracy City.

### Southeast Tennessee AJC Visits

Center traffic has flattened since 2021 and remains lower than pre-pandemic levels. AJC staff ramped up outreach efforts and expanded community-based service delivery to better serve individuals not currently in the labor force.

Between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, our region’s public workforce system provided **148,753** services to **13,881** individuals.



The top reasons individuals access services at our AJCs: access to resource room (45%), unemployment insurance (21%), and staff-assisted job search (13%).

**3,676** new resumes were created in Jobs4TN to support the labor exchange function of our system – connecting employers with openings to job seekers and career changers in our area.

### Southeast Tennessee Business Services

Business Services Team (BST) members provided **12,866** services to **693** area businesses and registered 125 new recruiting employers in the Jobs4TN system. 16,064 job referrals were made to a total of 11,926 Jobs4TN job orders.

<p><b>25</b> New Hires Trained</p> <p><b>5</b> Employers</p> <p><b>\$84,223</b> Invested</p> <p><b>ON-THE-JOB TRAINING</b></p>	<p><b>49</b> Youth/Young Adults</p> <p><b>\$102,1843</b> Invested</p> <p><b>PAID WORK EXPERIENCE</b></p>
<p><b>27</b> 1st + 2nd Year Apprentices</p> <p><b>5</b> Employers</p> <p><b>\$47,360</b> Invested</p> <p><b>APPRENTICESHIP</b></p>	<p><b>258</b> Employees Upskilled</p> <p><b>9</b> Employers</p> <p><b>\$139,305</b> Invested</p> <p><b>INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING</b></p>

Southeast Local Workforce Development Board invested **\$457,954** in work-based learning, meeting the short- and long-term workforce needs of more than 40 businesses in our region.

345 employers participated in job fair events.  
9 employers received a detailed labor market study.  
47 employers were provided targeted recruitment services.  
332 employers received job order assistance.

Our area received Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notifications (**WARN**) from eight businesses in PY 2022, a loss of 1,382 jobs. Rapid Response orientations were delivered to 1,000 impacted workers at six locations. Targeted job fairs were organized for four locations.

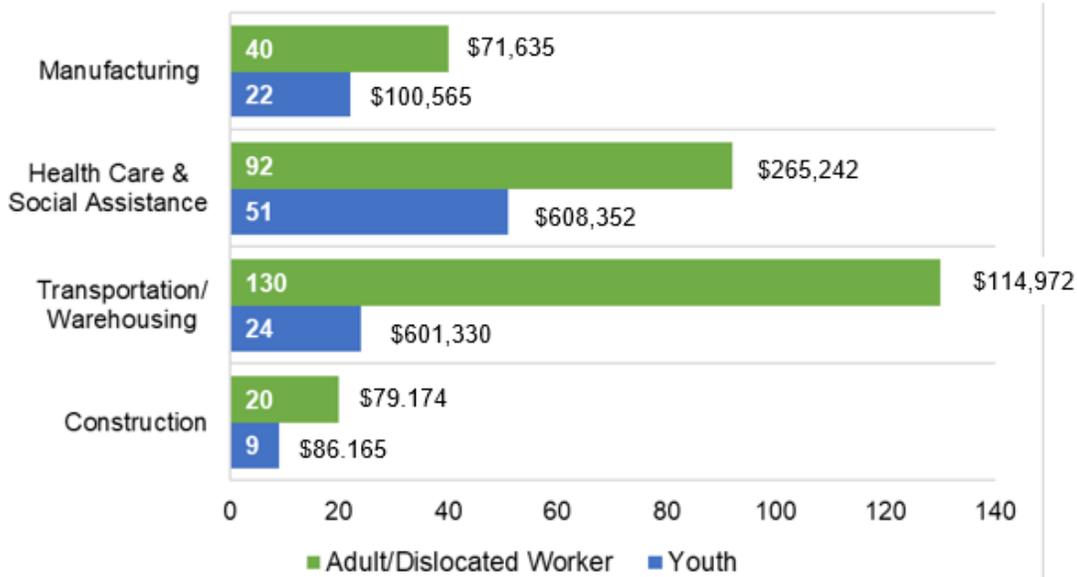


## Southeast Tennessee Participant Training

Adult Education and Title I staff supported 727 people in our AJCs to obtain a credential in PY 22: 461 high school diploma/ equivalency and 266 occupational skills certificates.

**\$1,172,617** was invested through individual training accounts (ITA) to **331** Title-I enrolled participants in PY22 in in-demand sectors in our region.

Transportation/ warehousing and health care & social assistance were the two sectors with the highest enrollments, followed by manufacturing and construction.



## Southeast Tennessee Re-Entry Grants

Southeast Local Workforce Development Board used a **\$140,000** grant to offer skills training to justice-involved individuals in Grundy and Bradley counties. 71 individuals were served, receiving work readiness preparation, career guidance, and hands-on skills training. In partnership with Cleveland State Community College, Bradley County Sheriff’s Office, and City Fields, these funds were used to develop and implement two new training programs in Bradley County: Construction Core and Culinary Arts offered inside Bradley County Detention Center. In Grundy County, Chattanooga State Community College facilitated career guidance and Peak Performance offered manufacturing workforce skills training.



## Southeast Tennessee Success Stories



Mr. Davis was enrolled in the WIOA program in April 2023 and participated in the May HVAC Bootcamp Training Program. He was previously employed at Whirlpool but at the time of enrollment had been unemployed for four months. He was a part of the TN Child Support Employment Parenting Program (TCSEPP), through the University of TN, due to his inability to pay child support. He relied upon factory work until he went through the HVAC Bootcamp and is now able to pursue this trade because of the training he received. He has been exited from TCSEPP as well because he is now employed and able to follow his court orders for child support.

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A veteran came to the Chattanooga AJC looking for employment and housing assistance in July. The veteran is a trained chef who served in the US Army and worked as a contractor serving deployed military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan. The veteran was introduced to the Disabled Veteran Outreach Counselor, who placed him in case management. As a result, the veteran created a functional resume and was referred to the MASH (Mission Accomplished Stable Housing) program for housing assistance. Additionally, the veteran was enrolled in the Southeast Tennessee Veterans Coalition free dental program to address his dental issues. With the help of the Veteran's Employment Representative, the veteran found work with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services at Moccasin Bend in the food service department. Currently, he is working with his case manager from the MASH program to find permanent housing and has started the journey with Revive Dental, of Chattanooga, to address his dental needs.

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In late September, a 19-year-old young lady came to the Chattanooga AJC looking to brighten her future, but she did not know where to start. Her father had recently passed away, she lived with her mother and younger brother, and she was the sole provider for the family, as her mother stayed at home to care for the younger brother. After consulting a career advisor, she narrowed down her field of interest to medical and found the Clinical Medical Assistant program at UT Chattanooga, and because of her extremely low income, WIOA funded it entirely. Her 18-week program starts January 24 and after passing her Certified Clinical Medical Assistant exam, her earnings will skyrocket from just below \$12,000 annually to approximately \$40,000 annually. We look forward to updating you on her progress in the June 2023 LWDA Board meeting.

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Mr. Calvin Zundel was a homeless veteran when he enrolled in WIOA on 06/18/2021. He was living in his truck, and he wanted to gain a Commercial Driver's License. Mr. Zundel was co-enrolled with SNAP E&T and entered his CDL training on 07/26/2021 at Miller-Motte in Chattanooga. Mr. Zundel gained his CDL credential on 08/25/2021 and has been employed ever since. Mr. Zundel reported that he has been driving for TVA Logistics for over one year now and earned \$77,000 in 2022. Mr. Zundel expressed his gratitude to the American Job Center and wanted to share his story to bring hope to those in need.



## **I. Promising Practices:**

### **Justice Involved Training**

Manufacturing Skills training in local jails is well received by inmates, Sheriffs and Jailers. The 10-Day manufacturing Boot Camp provide OSHA-10, Weights and Measures and Career Readiness Certifications for inmates within 6 months of release and return to the workforce. Captive audiences used word of mouth following Day 1 to tell other inmates about the training opportunity. As a result, Campbell (31 total) and Claiborne County (13 total) classes expanded by 20% on Day 2 of the 10-day course. Our flexible instructors were able to catch up new trainees on Day 2 to maximize available funding and training credentials for more inmates that originally forecasted. Sevier County also trained 11 future workers in a productive class.

Our attempts to attract Justice Involved Trainees through Day Reporting Centers proved unfruitful. Transportation and the 10-day commitment were barriers to training. Many Day Reporting Center Clients have large time requirements for Recovery Courts and some have secured part time or full-time employment to satisfy Court payment mandates.

While continuing to develop training options for Day Center clients, LWDA East will expand County jail training, as it proved to be an optimal setting.

### **Co-enrollment with AJC Partners**

This continues to be the strength of our AJC operations. Clear communications and deliberate, regular information exchanges among partners ensure success for clients and AJC staff. Referrals and co-enrollment also optimize every shrinking budgets.

### **Virtual Reality Workforce Pipeline Development**

Year 1 of Tranfr VR Goggle programming proved very beneficial with multiple segments. Our Career Service Providers joined Staff to the Board for tremendous success in Middle School classrooms and High School career days across LWDA East. The team provided over 1000 students with 7-12-minute virtual vignettes in welding, paint booth operations, electrical line work, hotel clerking and surgery. Staff to the Board extended these services within the Anderson County Jail for a well-received orientation for 20 inmates. Based upon experiences there, VR goggles can easily be incorporated into future Justice Involved Training.

### **Staff Training and Development**

University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services is currently the LWDA East One-Stop Operator. Additionally, UT-CIS brings significant staff training capabilities beyond contracted OSO services. These services include economic development training courses which yield state level certifications. LWDA East Staff to the Board have enrolled and are pursuing these certifications. Further, UT-CIS began development for a dedicated Workforce Development Course and accompanying certification in 2022. The potential to invest in front line case workers holds

tremendous potential to grow more efficient, professionally trained, Career Specialists. Dedicated education and training for Workforce developers will most certainly enhance retention, promotion potential and improve for all Tennesseans.

### **Incumbent Worker Training**

These grants remained a staple for Business Services in 2022. LWDA East served 15 employers, 315 individual workers through \$222,781 in state and federal funding.

### **Apprenticeship**

In 2022 LWDA served 8 companies and 164 Apprentices

### **Rapid Response**

In 2022 LWDA East served 4 companies and 453 displaced workers

### **Access Points**

In 2022 LWDA East operated 14 access points within local businesses, non-profits, libraries and other sites designed to extend the reach of AJC services. Outreach continues in the effort to expand further.

## **II. LWDA East Performance:**

Performance remained strong, meeting or exceeding all elements of Q4 PY 22 WIOA Title I WIOA Core Performance Measures in all categories while serving one of every 5 adult, dislocated worker and youth customers (combined totals) throughout Tennessee's Workforce Services delivery network.

## **III. East's Success**

### **Anderson County**

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#### **Title I Out of School Youth and Adult Education Co-enrollment**

Hope Logsdon has just been employed with Apply Logic in Clinton! She was able to get her HiSET with Adult Ed, and she worked Paid Work Experience at the AJC. Hope was enrolled as an OSY without a high school diploma, and now she'll be making 22.60 an hour full time!

#### **JVSG**

A VR&E Veteran obtained long term employment as an Associate Buyer purchasing IT equipment. He is working a fulltime position with a starting salary of over \$60,000.

### **Blount County**

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#### **SNAP E&T and Title I Co-enrollment**

A customer reported he was homeless, staying with friends a few days at a time. He met with Title I on his first AJC visit and enrolled in truck driving school to obtain his CDL. He had previous driving experience. He also enrolled with SNAP E&T. He completed the program, received his A class and CDL license and started work at a

local trucking company fulltime at 40 hours per week earning around \$19 per hour with the potential to earn \$40,000 per year.

#### Vocational Rehabilitation co-enrolled with Adult Education

When David Dowdy applied for Vocational Rehabilitation, within the Tennessee Department of Human Services, he did not have a high school diploma and had no work history. David worked alongside his VR Counselor to develop a plan of services to assist him in reaching his full potential in securing employment. Vocational Rehabilitation assisted David Dowdy with obtaining Vocational Adjustment Training and Good Tech Training provided Goodwill Industries, Co-Enrollment with Adult Education in which David obtained his HiSET; and Employment Services provided by Goodwill Industries. Through Vocational Adjustment training David learned time management, interacting with others of all ages, answering to supervision, production requirements, quality assurance, earning a paycheck, cleaning workstation, soft skills, and providing documentation required if missing a day of training. The training gave David a sense of belonging, engagement, learning, earning, and preparation for employment. After Vocational Adjustment training, David began the Good Tech Core and six-week Good Tech Technical program. The Good Tech training program helped David prepare in active listening, problem solving, critical skills, and basic computer skills. After completion of the Good Tech program, David completed Job Readiness Training. David learned how to put together a resume, prepare for interviews, and soft skills. David then began his job search, and after applying for many jobs and receiving no follow-up, David, his VR Counselor and Community Resource Provider discussed preparing for the HiSET. David was co-enrolled with Adult Education and earned his HiSET credential. After obtaining his HiSET credential, David earned his first job and accepted employment with Goodwill Industries as a Retail Salesperson earning \$10.00 hourly and working 30 hours a week. As a result of his hard work and partnership with VR, David's self-esteem and confidence has improved. He looks forward to going to work every day and is very appreciative of VR.

#### Title I

A customer was referred from Recovery Court seeking employment with a desire to work in the recovery environment to help others. She started working in a rehab center. She reported that she loves her job, has bought a car, and is working on securing better housing.

### **Campbell County**

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#### SNAP E&T and Title I Co-enrollment

Daniel sought assistance with transportation and boots to maintain his new employment. He was a recipient of public assistance who was homeless, living at the local men's shelter, had no transportation, and had a justice involved background at time of enrollment. Title I provided help with transportation and boots required for employment. The company he worked for closed within months of his employment. He decided he wanted a career instead of just a job and inquired about CDL training. He was co-enrolled with SNAP E&T to assist paying for training. He obtained his CDL license, and started a job as an over the road truck driver. He reported he loves his job. He is grateful for the assistance he received from the program and reports that his success would not have been possible without the program.

#### Title I, Adult Education and SNAP E&T Co-enrollment

A customer was enrolled with Adult Education and obtained her HISET Diploma. She was co-enrolled with Title I who provided travel assistance and monthly case management while she attended TCAT's LPN program, and was co-enrolled with SNAP E&T to help with unmet need. She successfully completed the LPN program, will soon take her state license exam, and has several job offers upon receiving her State License. The client received uninterrupted assistance due to co-enrollment between Campbell County Title I, Title II and SNAP E&T. Campbell County Title I, SNAP E&T and Title II worked as a team to help this client on her path to self-sufficiency. The client worked hard to achieve her goal.

#### Title I Out of School Youth

A customer who had successfully obtained her High School Equivalency Diploma through Adult Education in the past, returned to the American Job Center to pursue the LPN program at TCAT. The customer was working part-time at enrollment. She successfully completed her LPN program and passed State license exam. She gained employment as an LPN with a local agency earning \$32/hour and working 40+ hours each week. She enjoys her career in Nursing and is thankful for the assistance from WIOA Title I to reach her training and employment goals.

#### Title I and SNAP E&T Co-enrollment

Customer was referred to Title I by SNAP E&T partner for assistance with training and job search. She was a single parent seeking additional training to secure self-sustaining employment. She attended a local dental assisting program and worked part-time in sales at enrollment. SNAP E&T assisted with travel assistance while she attended training, and Title I provided job search and other assistance as identified. She successfully completed her Dental Assisting program and gained her license as a Registered Dental Assistant from the State with endorsements for Dental Radiology. She gained employment as a Dental Assistant with a local Dental Office initially earning \$15/hour and working up to 35 hours each week which soon increased to \$17.50/hour. Participant was very appreciative of the services both WIOA Title I and SNAP E&T partners were able to provide so she could complete training and obtain self-sustaining employment to support herself and her child.

### **Claiborne County**

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#### Title I Dislocated Worker and RESEA Co-enrollment

Johnny Bolinger, referred by RESEA, enrolled with Title I as a dislocated worker through Work First. Title I provided career planning, job search assistance, and transportation support services. He obtained employment at Aisin Automotive Casting Tennessee as an assembler earning \$18.00 per hour.

#### Title I Dislocated Worker and RESEA Co-enrollment

A customer was laid off from his employer and was receiving unemployment benefits. He participated in the RESEA program and was enrolled in Title I Work first services. He obtained employment earning \$22.00 per hour and utilized support services to assist with travel expenses.

## **Cocke County**

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### Title I In School Youth

A customer was enrolled as an in-school-youth while she was in high school to participate in the work experience program through work-based learning, as well as to monitor her while she was completing her high school diploma. Upon enrollment she had never been employed, and the work-based learning program allowed her to learn skills needed to obtain employment after graduation from high school. She graduated and began part-time employment with a local restaurant earning \$9.00 per hour.

### SNAP E&T and Title I Co-enrollment

A customer graduated from the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant class at Walters State Community College and obtained his NHA license. He became employed as a clinical medical assistant with a local medical facility making \$16.00 an hour. Title I and SNAP E&T both provided financial assistance for customer to complete training.

### SNAP E&T and Title I Co-enrollment

A single mother with several children successfully graduated from TCAT with her IMT Diploma for Maintenance Technician. Her goal was to finish school with a diploma and get back in the work force making self-sufficient wages for her family. She drove over 75 miles a day round trip 5 days a week to attend TCAT in another county. This was a huge barrier for her. SNAP E&T and Title I provided assistance on unmet need and travel. She was hired at an area manufacturer as a maintenance technician making almost \$30 an hour with benefits.

## **Hamblen County**

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### Title I Dislocated Worker and TAA Co-enrollment

A customer enrolled with Title I as a dislocated worker and as a co-enrollment with TAA after he was permanently laid off when his company moved their operations out of the country. He enrolled at Walters State Community and graduated with honors with an Associates of Applied Science in EET Automation Specialization. Prior to graduation he was offered a position with a local manufacturer as an associate engineer. He is earning over \$6 more per hour than the manufacturing position he held prior to his layoff.

### Title I Out of School Youth and Adult Education Co-enrollment

Katherine Garland sought help from the Morristown AJC to obtain her high school equivalency and employment. She enrolled with Title I and co-enrolled with Adult Education. She obtained her high school equivalency, and was hired at a local restaurant. During her time enrolled Katherine located employment, housing, and a vehicle. She reported she loves her job and is very thankful for the help.

### Title I Adult

Colen Brown sought assistance with Collision Repair and Technology training at TCAT-Morristown. He was a low-income married male raising 6 dependent children (only 1 of them was he and his wife's, the other 5 are nieces/nephews). He began training at TCAT-Morristown on 9/6/22, and was projected to complete December 2023, but due to the necessity of needing income he completed on 5/9/23 with a certificate as a non-structural assistant. He obtained employment with Cirrus Aircraft

on 5/22/23 earning \$16.00 per hour. Although he did not complete the full training, he is very proud and appreciative of Title-I assistance and is able to use the training he did complete.

#### SNAP E&T and Title I Co-enrollment

A mother of several children successfully completed an LPN program and started working as an LPN at a local hospital making \$17.00 an hour. This hourly rate is set to increase when she passes the NCLEX exam. Title I helped with unmet need and travel while SNAP E&T assisted with Childcare for one of her several children throughout the semesters.

### **Jefferson County**

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#### SNAP E&T and Title I Co-enrollment

A single mother of several children graduated from Goodwill CNA training and successfully obtained her state CNA license within 2 weeks. She obtained employment as a CNA and started her new fulltime job soon after receiving her CNA license making \$16.00 an hour. Her co-enrollment with Title I assisted with additional financial unmet need including transportation assistance.

#### SNAP E&T and Title I Co-enrollment

A participant graduated the LPN program at TCAT and started a job as an LPN at a local doctor's office in a nearby county making over \$18 an hour, set to increase to \$20 per hour upon receipt of her state license. SNAP E&T supported her with paying for tuition and will assist with new scrubs. Title I assisted her with NCLEX fees, childcare, and travel.

### **Knox County**

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#### Title I Youth

Thomajah is a young single mother with one child. She had previously worked in home health. She completed CNA training and found employment as a CNA, earning \$16 an hour. She is very proud that she passed the HESI exam and plans to start LPN training soon.

#### RESEA

A customer served through the RESEA program in gained employment as a Revenue Cycle Systems Manager making over \$95,000 per year.

#### TAA

A customer served through TAA stated that after he finished his Associates, he was accepted into an internship with Oak Ridge National laboratory. While employed as an intern, he completed his bachelor's degree online and was hired full time as an Occupational Computer Programmer and Data management making over \$60,000 yearly.

#### SNAP E&T

A customer who was a Justice Involved Individual and a Veteran had not worked since release from prison over a year ago. The customer graduated from Heavy Equipment Training and obtained employment full time with an excavating company making \$19 per hour.

#### SNAP E&T

A customer who is a single male, unemployed for almost a year, attended truck driving school and got a job with a local trucking company making \$120.00 per day set to increase to mileage-based pay after the initial employment period.

#### SNAP E&T

A single mom was working PT, attended TCAT Surgical Technology Program and received her board certification. She became employed full time with at a local hospital as a Surgical Technologist making over \$20 per hour.

#### JVSG

An SBE Veteran who was also Justice Involved obtained employment with a local retail store. She had been working one day a week at the store, and the owner moved her to fulltime in order to assist her in resolving remaining legal issues.

#### JVSG

A recently separated SBE Veteran classified as special disabled (VA rating) gained employment as an Engineer.

#### JVSG

A VR&E SBE Veteran began a new fulltime job with a local engineering firm beginning at \$30/hour with full benefits.

### **Morgan County**

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#### Title I Adult

A customer enrolled with Title I to gain training and support service assistance so that she could gain her Registered Nurse License. During training she experienced a few setbacks. She never missed one day of class and was determined she would attend training, gain her license, and support her family. Title I assisted her with tuition, travel and additional supportive services to address immediate needs. She worked part time a local nursing facility while attending training. Upon completion of training, her hourly rate rose to \$21. Upon gaining her license, her pay rose again to \$25 per hour at full time hours. In June of 2023 her rate of pay went to over \$32 per hour when she was promoted to Director of Nursing.

### **Roane County**

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#### Title I Out of School Youth

An Out of School Youth participant completed/exited in June 2023. He is the first college graduate in his family. He worked part-time while attending the Environmental Health Tech program at Roane State Community College to help support his mother. Title I assisted with tuition, travel, and provided support during his job search process. While searching for training-related employment, he used Title I Career Specialist to review his resume and assist with expanding his network for an opportunity at large local employer. He also took advantage of courses offered by the Teamsters (HAZMAT) to enhance his employability. He gained training related employment as a Jr. Industrial Hygiene Tech at a local environmental agency making \$30 an hour.

## **Scott County**

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### Title I Adult and SNAP E&T Co-enrollment

Jessica Pearson contacted AJC-Oneida requesting assistance with the Nurse's Assistant Training at TCAT-Oneida. During her initial orientation, she talked about her goal of becoming a CNA. She was a single parent of 3 small children and wanted a job with more hours and pay to provide for her family. She received her Nurse's Assistant Certificate on 2/20/23 and CNA license on 3/7/23 and obtained full time employment as a CNA on 3/8/23. Without assistance from Title I and SNAP E&T, she would not have been able to make a career change to make a difference for her family. Jessica's hard work and perseverance took her from working as a homemaker, 20 hours per week at \$13.75 per hour to working her dream job as a full time CNA at \$15.52 per hour.

### Title I Adult

A customer contacted AJC-Onieda requesting assistance with the Diesel-Powered Engines program at TCAT Oneida. During his initial orientation he talked about his goal of becoming a Diesel Technician. He was the sole provider of his family and sought better employment. He obtained part-time employment at a local truck service and continued to attend class. He completed the program with a Diesel Technician Diploma and now works full time as a Technician I making \$19/hour with benefits.

### Title I Adult

Stacy Phillips is a Justice Involved individual who was enrolled on 09/01/2022. Stacy was low income and needed training and travel assistance. He had a failure to appear, was incarcerated and released but was dropped from the program due to being incarcerated. Stacy worked with the TCAT staff and was re-enrolled soon after. Stacy received his Certificate in Welding on 03/01/2023 and is employed with a local company. Stacy has stated several times that he appreciates everything that the program has done for him.

## **Sevier County**

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### Title I Out of School Youth

Anthony is a 24-year-old justice-involved male who came into the American Job Center seeking assistance securing employment. He was enrolled in the youth program as an out-of-school youth, began Paid Work Experience with an assignment at Food City – Sevierville as a night stocker. Before beginning his paid work,

assignment Anthony had never been employed. He completed his 500 hours in the middle of May and was hired full-time on 5/17/23 with Food City and is currently earning \$14.00/hour. As of today, Anthony is being considered for an Assistant Manager position at the same store he began at a paid work experience employee.

#### Title I and Adult Education Co-enrollment

Jonathan Stewart came into the American Job Center in Sevierville; he was Justice Involved. He came in for Adult Education Orientation. He passed his HiSET test for his high school equivalency. He enrolled in the Title I Adult Program, started the Collision Repair program, and did so well in the program, they allowed him to test/finish the program and receive his diploma in the Collision Repair Field early. Jonathan obtained employment at a local boat company full-time as a Painter making \$17.48 an hour.

#### Title I Youth

Larry, who had aged out of foster care and was Justice Involved, enrolled in the Title I Youth Program. He started the truck driver training, graduated, and began working full time at an excavating company as a dump truck driver making \$15.00 an hour.

#### Wagner-Peyser

A customer from the Recovery Trail overcame initial barriers with his previous employer and changed directions after attending one of the weekly job fairs at the Sevierville AJC. In the resource room, he applied for a position at a local grocery store and immediately met with the representative to discuss a janitorial/maintenance job opening in Pigeon Forge. He wanted to work locally and preferred to work in maintenance. He appeared to be very happy about this position, interviewed the following day, and is still currently working at the same grocery store.

### **Union County**

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#### Title I Adult

Stacy was an unemployed justice-involved single mother who did not have transportation, and there was no public transportation in her county. She had to beg a ride to come to her enrollment appointment. WIOA Title I was able to provide Stacy with emergency travel assistance so that she could begin working at a local restaurant in Maynardville. She had the promise of a job, a way to get there, but no way to get home in the evenings after her shift ended. She used her emergency travel money to Uber home, costing her \$8 each night. She saved her earnings from work and was able to buy a reliable vehicle so that she does not have to depend on others for transportation. She is considering next steps to pursue training to find better employment for greater self-sufficiency.



## Northeast Tennessee Annual Narrative – PY22

### American Job Center Services

The local area has eight (8) American Job Centers (AJCs). One AJC is in each of the eight (8) most northeastern counties in TN. The Northeast has two (2) comprehensive and six (6) affiliate centers. The comprehensive centers are located in Kingsport (Sullivan County) and Johnson City (Washington County). It has become increasingly difficult to recruit potential participants who would normally visit one of the AJC for services. In the past couple of years, traffic counts in the Northeast AJCs have seen significant declines from pre-pandemic numbers. The comprehensive centers in Northeast saw a steady climb in people returning to the centers; however, some of the affiliate sites that are located in the most rural areas continue to struggle to see walk-in customers and continue to have low traffic counts. The one-stop operator and team leads are working on outreach strategies to all counties in the Northeast area to improve usage of the AJCs.

AJC Elizabethton	330
AJC Erwin	99
AJC Greeneville	572
AJC Johnson City	3,090
AJC Kingsport	2,088
AJC Mountain City	136
AJC Rogersville	204
AJC Sneedville	26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,545</b>

### WIOA Programs

Since assuming both fiscal and board staff responsibilities for the region's Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs and the Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board in 2022, the First Tennessee Development District has been working with partners across the region to build and sustain a workforce development system that promotes economic development, meets employer needs, and is responsive to the changing demands of the labor market.

Center	Carryover Participants	New Enrollments	Total Served
Elizabethton	126	50	176
Erwin	31	6	37
Greeneville	59	24	83
Johnson City	228	333	561
Kingsport	155	90	245
Mountain City	54	36	90
Rogersville	64	29	93
Sneedville	52	14	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>1,351</b>

## **A New Career Service Provider**

In compliance with state and federal law, the FTDD was required to issue requests for proposals for the career service provider, youth services provider, and one-stop operator for the region.

An independent review by a committee of stakeholders from across Northeast Tennessee representing employers, educators, and economic development professionals reviewed RFPs and recommended that a bid by Northeast State Community College be accepted to provide career services for the region. Northeast began staffing up and providing services in July, and the transition continues as they begin fulfilling their mandate. The contracted services include adult, dislocated worker, and youth career services. These services are delivered through American Job Centers (AJC), located in each county.

## **One-Stop Operator**

The request for proposals that secured Northeast State Community College's as the Career Service Provider for the region included a request for one-stop operator services as well.

Since no vendor submitted a proposal for One-Stop services, the FTDD requested and received permission to deliver those services directly. The One-Stop Operator is a vital component of the region's workforce development system and is responsible for the coordination and management of customer flow within the American Job Centers. The primary goal of the Operator is to create a seamless system of partners among workforce development, economic development, business, and community agencies in order to meet the needs of employers and job seekers in the area.

Since July 1, 2023, the FTDD has assumed these duties, and it now working closely with state staff and Northeast State to serve the region through the American Job Centers with a renewed focus on communication and customer service.

## **Business Services**

### **Rapid Response Activity**

#### **ZF Safety:**

- ZF has been attempting to wrap up their operations in the US for some time. They reached out and requested assistance for the employees including job fairs. Rapid Response was held on October 25 and spoke with 70 employees. The AJC Mobile Coach was scheduled for March 10, and March 23<sup>rd</sup> to assist with resumes and applications.

#### **QEP:**

- Rapid Response was held on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. It was decided that an on-site Job Fair would be very helpful to the employees. The on-site Job Fair was very successful, and many employees were offered employment with other companies.

## Chick-Fil-A:

- Chick-fil-a in Elizabethton closed for remodeling and was assisted with the state's partial (temporary) layoff procedure and provided with the instruction manual on how to complete the State's Excel sheet. They were also warmly handed off to TDLWD representative, who accepted and processed the excel sheet.

## Promising Practices

### Justice Involved Programs

The Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development made funding available to the local workforce development boards to provide job skill training for select jail populations. Washington County Detention Center (WCDC) was selected to participate in this pilot program. FTDD staff worked with law enforcement in Washington County to provide the first post-secondary education program to ever be offered at the WCDC. TCAT-Elizabethton became the first TCAT in Tennessee to offer post-secondary education in a detention center.

Twenty-one inmates at the Washington County Detention Center graduated from TCAT Elizabethton's NC3 program on June 28. Inmates earned a total of 315 NC3 certifications. TCAT awarded a scholarship to one student to continue studies after release.



A cohort of female inmates are currently attending a Nail Technology program. The students will complete the program in September and take the licensing exam.

In addition, the First TN Development District's (FTDDs) Caring Workplaces' Peer Navigator provided the Workplace Excellence Series soft skills training

program, in conjunction with the technical training provided by TCAT. The Workplace Excellence Series is made up of 10 flexible modules. Each module covers 1-2 of the 12 most in-demand soft skill competencies identified by businesses.

AJC staff provided employability skills workshops, career interests surveys, resume preparation workshops, and assistance with obtaining documents needed to obtain employment upon release, such as picture IDs, birth certificates, drivers licenses, etc.

All partners learned that students were immensely thankful for the opportunity to learn. Motivation was not an issue and students were appreciative of the time dedicated to helping them. For some, it was the first time they ever completed/earned a credential/certificate related to training. The success seemed to boost confidence and create a foundation that can be built upon once released. The pride that many felt was overwhelming. Other inmates have heard about the classes and have seen the effect that training has had on the previous graduates. Inmates ask everyday if they can take the TCAT classes and we are fortunate to have some additional funding to provide the training to more inmates in the fall and spring. As a result of the courses offered at the jail, 21 other inmates have applied to further their education upon release.

An important lesson learned, and a strength of the program was that jail administration made the decision to house all of the TCAT cohort in the same unit so that they could work together and hold each other accountable. The cohort studied together outside of class and encouraged each other to continue and make progress. This resulted in a high rate of program completion. Only one student in the cohort was removed from the program due to a facility infraction. On the other hand, the female Nail Technology cohort was not housed together and suffered from negative influences of other inmates and exposure to new inmates. The females struggled self-confidence and mental health issues and with drug and alcohol abuse. Jail administration has decided that the next cohorts will be housed together and that inmates will be drug tested before and randomly throughout the program.

Another strength of the program was the relationships of the partners and their eagerness to serve the population. In addition, the relationships that developed between the students and instructors was incredible. The commitment of the instructors and their genuine care for the students contributed to the program's success. TCAT staff stated that the Washington County Detention Center program has been the most rewarding program so far.

For the JIIG grant, the NETLWDB partnered with TDOC's Day Reporting Center (DRC) to provide payments to vendors to provide support services to Justice Involved Individuals. These participants were enrolled in Jobs4TN and referred to the American Job Centers for potential co-enrollment in WIOA Title I services for work experience and training opportunities.

The NETLWDB also partnered with Adult Education and their instructors to provide high school equivalency study and testing to individuals who are currently incarcerated in local jails. Adult Education's Integrated Education and Training (IET) program provided skills upgrades, workplace skills, and occupational skills training to JIIs in local jails. IET programs provide training to JIIs who lack basic skills, relevant occupation skills, and essential workplace skills to attain the competencies and credentials needed for in-demand careers. IET programs combine adult basic skills education and job skills training to offer learners a streamlined opportunity to transition from adult basic education classes to employment and/or post-secondary educational opportunities.

Adult Education's IET program provided the National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER) classes and certification in the Greene County jail. Four inmates completed the NCCER Core and earned certificates.

### Success Stories

Many letters were received from inmates at the WCSO. The following letter is an example of a letter received from Jeremy Carson, who participated in and graduated from the TCAT NC3 program.

Jeremy Carson

I want to give thanks to Sgt. Boggs for giving me a chance and putting me in these classes and believing in me at a time when I didn't fully believe in myself. The classes help me get my mind off of troubles and doubt and put me back on a positive track. It has given me a sense of normal behavior and what I should be doing. I was proud of all that I learned and each certificate as I earned them. I began to feel like I can do this, and even though I am a felon I will be able to use these skills and tools I've learned to obtain employment that I can use to make an honest living at and succeed. It gave me a sense of independence because I know now that I can take care of myself and provide for my needs. The amount of care and help that I have received during this incarceration is amazing. Putting on a cap and gown and receiving a diploma and scholarship made me and my family so proud. It's been so long since I've had these feelings. Everything has been a positive experience in a place that can be full of so much negative. I am truly grateful thank to all involved.

The AJC Kingsport submitted the following Title I success stories:

Amanda graduated from high school and believed she had life figured out. However, life had other plans for her. She found herself raising her two young sons, mostly on her own. As her sons grew and became older, Amanda realized she wanted more out of her life. Although she was a high school graduate she knew that in order to reach the goals she set forth for herself she needed to further her education and obtain a degree. She eventually quit her full-time job as an office manager at a local car dealership. She knew that going back to school wasn't going to be easy, but she had the fire, and passion to begin this exciting yet terrifying new journey. Amanda was enrolled in Northeast State Community College where she was accepted into the Cardiovascular Program. Once she applied for federal financial aid and went through the whole enrollment process, she was deemed eligible to receive assistance through the TN Reconnect program to assist her with tuition but that still left her having to come up with the funds for books, supplies, and her other required needs. Amanda was referred to her local American Job Center in Kingsport by a fellow classmate. She came into the office and met with Career Specialist Ashlei Jackson. Upon her initial assessment and intake interview Amanda was eligible to receive assistance through the WIOA Title 1 program. One of the requirements of the program is to establish an IEP for participants. Within that IEP individual goals are set for the participant to achieve throughout the program. Amanda has successfully completed all of her goals which included successful completion of her training program and obtaining full time employment in her career field. She is now a new graduate of Northeast State Community College and has accepted employment as a Cardiovascular Tech at Johnson City Medical Center.



“My Career specialist Ashlei was so kind. She explained how the program worked and gave me comfort that I wasn't alone on this adventure. This program has helped me in many more aspects than I thought. It would have been very difficult without the assistance, motivation and information that I am grateful to have received. It has been a journey I will never forget and the sense of accomplishment on graduation day lives on” – Amanda “Mandi” Love.

## A SECOND CHANCE FOR SAMUEL IRESON

Before his 9 year sentence at Turney Center in Centerville, Tennessee, Samuel Ireson had it all. A wife, two children, and a successful career as the owner of Kingsport Transfer Company, a trucking company based in Kingsport from 1978 to 2010.



While in prison, he lost everything including his family, company, and his CDL-A license.

As a previous truck owner and operator, Samuel visited the Tri-Cities Trucking Company to seek advice about the renewal of his CDL-A license. Staff at the Company referred him to the American Job Center (AJC) for assistance. At the AJC, Samuel applied for the Special Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP). Through SNAP, Samuel was referred to the Title I WIOA Program. Through the WIOA National Dislocated Workers Program, he was able to renew his CDL-A license.

Being a convicted felon posed a challenge to employment for Samuel. Some employers were reluctant to hire him because of his felony conviction. However, after a several pleas, his persistence paid off and the owner Gregory H. Green Trucking LLC agreed to give him a second chance.

Samuel shared his views on his life and had some advice for others based on his experiences. His message to people like him is “don't give up because hopefully someone will give you a second chance”. To anyone who hasn't experienced the justice system, his advice was just as direct, “avoid getting in trouble because it could be difficult for you to find a job once you are released”.

The following NDWG success story was received from the AJC Johnson City:

**The Story of Austin Thomas  
From Temporary to Full Time Hire  
Yes, WIOA Can!**

Austin Thomas, a father of five children, was involved in a car wreck in July 2022 and sustained serious injuries which adversely affected his capacity to continue his job at The Robinette Company in Sullivan County, Tennessee. Being unemployed and consequently unable to care for his family, Austin lost custody of his kids.

In early March 2023, Austin was referred to the non-Custodial program at the East Tennessee State University (ETSU) through the Carter County Court system. The main reason for the referral was to assist him overcome the difficulties he encountered whilst trying to find a job. After undergoing an eligibility assessment at the American Job Center (AJC) in Carter County, Austin was enrolled in the Title I WIOA National Dislocated Worker (NDWG) Program under Paid Work Experience (WEX) on March 20, 2023. Two days later, he was placed at the Habitat for Humanity Restore in Johnson City as General Laborer.



Even with the WEX, Austin still had a challenge because his job required him to be able to lift at least 10 pounds but the injuries to his back made it a Herculean Task. As a way forward, the Career Specialist advised Austin to consult his Primary Care Provider (PCP) and chart a way forward. After some examinations, the PCP recommended physical therapy for him and prepared a medical waiver which was sent to his employer.

On March 22, 2023, Austin began his WEX at Habitat for Humanity. He earns \$12.00 per hour and works Tuesday through Saturday. Austin said, “My goal is to be a full time hire at Habitat for Humanity once I complete the Title I WIOA WEX”. Through physical therapy, Austin’s health has improved, and his PCP has cleared him to lift 20 or more pounds. This improvement has made him more successful on the job. As a result, his supervisor is pleased with his performance,

On May 2, 2023, the Career Specialist met with Austin and his supervisor to discuss the possibility of him being hired full-time after his WEX ended on June 15, 2023. Austin’s supervisor agreed to hire him full time and wanted him to start two weeks earlier than the date his WEX would have ended. As a result, Austin’s last day of Paid Work Experience was brought forward to May 27, 2023, to give him the opportunity to commence his full-time employment on June 1, 2023. Austin is very appreciative of the assistance through Title I WIOA Program and said, “I am really happy to get my life back on the right track.”

The following is a TAA success story from Northeast:

My name is Caleb. I was laid off from my job after it moved to Mexico and was struggling to find meaningful employment afterwards. I learned about the program offered by the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance from a co-worker and reasoned that this would probably be the only chance I would ever have to go back to school and learn a skill that will help me be a more desirable employee. I started college as a first-generation student and quickly graduated Magna Cum Laude with an Associate of Applied Sciences degree. I am confident that I can now re-enter the labor market with more to offer. Hopefully I will land the dream job we all wish for. I will always be eternally grateful to the TAA program and cannot recommend it more for anyone who wants to take their future into their own hands and better themselves. If you have never had an opportunity like this, now is your chance!

