



# **WIOA ANNUAL STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE REPORT NARRATIVE**

**QUICK VIEW: PROGRAM YEAR 2022**

APRIL 2024

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# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AJC	American Job Center	TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation	UI	Unemployment Insurance
CTE	Career and Technical Education	WIB	Workforce Investment Board
DWD	Department of Workforce Development	WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
DWG	Dislocated Worker Grant	WIPS	Workforce Integrated Performance System
ETA	Employment and Training Administration		
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List		
ISY	In-school youth		
ITA	Individual Training Account		
JVSG	Jobs for Veterans State Grants		
LVER	Local Veterans' Employment Representative		
LWDA	Local Workforce Development Area		
LWDB	Local Workforce Development Board		
LWIB	Local Workforce Innovation Board		
OEO	Office of Economic Opportunity		
OJT	On-the-job training		
OSY	Out-of-school youth		
RESEA	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment		
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program		
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics		
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance		

# INTRODUCTION

## General Overview

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires states to prepare and submit annual reports describing the progress in meeting their strategic vision and goals for the workforce system. In their narratives, and in accordance with WIOA Section 185(d) specifications, states, and territories report on a variety of items, such as waiver requests, success stories, performance accountability, and promising practices.

This interactive document showcases a synthesis of the reported narratives from 57 states and territories and organizes them in two main sections: Section I – State Narrative Highlights and Section II – State Narrative Excerpts. Section I highlights common items from the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 05-18 and expands on other topics that arise from the syntheses, and how states and territories converge under such topics; these include:

- Use of State Funds
- Evaluations
- Waivers
- Success Stories

Section II provides a summary of the same items for each reporting state and territory, pursuant to TEGL No. 05-18.

All the information in this document comes directly from the Program Year (PY) 2022 States' WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narratives and it has been edited for clarity, consistency, and concision purposes. To access the complete annual statewide performance report narratives for each state and territory, please visit the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) website at: [dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results](https://dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results).

## Use of State Funds

In accordance with Section 128(a)(1) of WIOA, states and territories may undertake activities with funds reserved by the governor, which can be up to 15 percent of their allotment. This section shares ways states and territories described activities undertaken in whole or in part with their Governor's Reserve and how these activities have directly or indirectly impacted performance.

## Evaluations

In their annual report narratives, states and territories discuss several elements relating to current, planned, or completed evaluation and research projects. This section focuses on highlighting evaluation and research activities, including methodologies; continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated; and a summary of completed evaluations and reports.

## Waivers

Waivers, contingent to approval, aim at helping states and territories, particularly if affected by disasters or extraneous circumstances, to “improve jobseeker and employer outcomes, or otherwise achieve positive outcomes.”<sup>1</sup> Most states and territories applied and received approval for at least one WIOA waiver, and many received several. This section focuses on the most common types of waivers, the purposes for which states and territories received waivers, and highlights shared features of how states and territories executed those waivers.

## Success Stories

In their annual report narratives, states and territories share individuals’ success stories that highlight how services, such as industry-specific training, employment assistance and placement, certification programs, and vocational rehabilitation, helped them gain economic self-sufficiency. There are several programs that work specifically with priority populations such as veterans, low-income individuals, justice-involved participants, and individuals with other barriers to employment. WIOA also serves businesses through customized services, such as recruitment events and job fairs, human resource consultation, industry sector strategies, and providing labor market information. With such a variety of success stories, states are leveraging the innovation and flexibility of the types of programs and services that they offer to address the needs of their local communities. These success stories highlight WIOA Title I programs, including WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

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<sup>1</sup> WIOA Waiver Information. *What Can Be Waived*. [dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa/waivers](https://dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa/waivers)



## SECTION I

### STATE NARRATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

## Use of State Funds

### Overview

This section presents select examples of how states and territories share activities undertaken in whole, or in part, with their Governor's Reserve in reaching recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient and veterans through adult priority of service as outlined in [TEGL No. 07-20](#) "Effective Implementation of Priority of Service Provisions for Most in Need Individuals in the [WIOA] Adult Program."

This section illustrates practices and innovative approaches to WIOA requirements that certain individuals receive priority in the provision of individualized career and training services in the WIOA Adult program. The WIOA Adult program enables workers to obtain good jobs by providing them with employment services such as job search assistance and career guidance, along with training opportunities. Recipients of public assistance, individuals who are deficient in basic skills, or those who are low-income can receive priority for these services (in addition to veterans and eligible spouses).

### Use of State Funds Highlights

#### Adult Priority Service

##### *Delaware*

##### **APEX (Advancement through Pardons and Expungement Program)**

Provides opportunities to individuals with criminal histories who wish to obtain gainful employment. The program aims to accomplish this by helping clients through the pardons and expungement process, providing employer education, and advancing legislative reform. Staff provide these clients with an overview of DET services that includes fidelity bonding, training opportunities, workshops, résumé, and job search assistance, etc.

With partnership and financial support from the CJC, DHSS and DVR, over 8,000 justice-involved individuals were outreached, 479 new DJL enrollments, 240 pardons granted, 365 expungements granted, 58 ITAs and over 1,500 supportive services provided in FY23.

##### *Minnesota*

##### **Partnerships to Serve Teen Parents**

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), the Department of Human Services (DHS), and the MAWB have worked in partnership since 2009 to serve teen parents receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) benefits or in TANF-eligible households. This partnership has leveraged nearly \$8.4 million of TANF funds to provide work

experience and work-readiness training for over 4,800 teen parents or younger youth receiving MFIP benefits. The partnership addresses disparities in MFIP outcomes, especially the Work Participation Rate, for African American and American Indian participants. Many of the participants have little or no previous work experience, and they develop work readiness skills through their participation in the project.

### *North Carolina*

#### **Fresh Start Reentry Initiative of Guilford County: Outstanding Innovative Partnership**

The Fresh Start Reentry Initiative is a partnership providing opportunities for the justice-involved population, including training, employability workshops, job placement, and access to community resource partners to help people address barriers to self-sustaining employment. Primary partners in the initiative are the GuilfordWorks Workforce Development Board through the NCWorks Career Center – Guilford County, Goodwill Industries of Central North Carolina, and the Guilford County Sheriff's Reentry Program. Fresh Start has established on-the-job training opportunities with a variety of employers, who also receive information on incentives and benefits related to hiring justice-involved jobseekers. Meanwhile, partners work together to provide other services that empower people to succeed, such as securing acceptable identification documents, reliable transportation, adequate housing, food assistance, and other government programs. The initiative has sponsored several community events, including a hiring event/resource fair with over 25 employers and 15 community partners participating. As a result, more than 200 individuals have enrolled in federally funded workforce services, and 50 who did not have medical coverage have been connected to health insurance. In addition, the partners have organized clothing drives for individuals recently released from incarceration.

### *Utah*

#### **Navajo Nation Partnerships**

The Workforce Services Southeast Service Area has established partnerships with Monument Valley High School, Adult Education and the Tsé Bii' Ndzisgai Community Center (Monument Valley TBN Community Center). These partnerships have allowed Workforce Services to serve Navajo youth and adults in a community more than 70 miles from the nearest AJC. Since March 2023, WIOA services have been provided, (including six internship opportunities) to approximately 17 people in the Monument Valley area with several applications pending. At the end of the school year, staff met with senior students at Monument Valley High School to help them apply for WIOA Youth funding, utilizing Workforce Services laptops. Staff visit the TBN Community Center monthly for onsite career and training services.

### *Wisconsin*

#### **Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Partnerships to Support Justice-Involved Jobseekers**

DWD takes pride in its collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) to engage individuals in their care before they are released, and to connect them with DWD jobseeker services after release. DWD equally values its partnerships

with the 11 local Workforce Development Boards (WDB) and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), which help make engaging with and training justice-involved individuals possible.

At the foundation of DWD's work with DOC, local WDBs, and WTCS are the job labs DWD maintains in DOC facilities. These job labs function similarly to the job centers DWD operates in communities around the state. The state recognized the need to place additional focus on reaching harder-to-serve populations to meet employers' workforce needs. Among the targeted groups, DWD identified the need to engage justice-involved individuals in advance of their release from DOC care to re-establish connections to the workforce, so these individuals are best prepared to return to their communities.

DWD identified and implemented several strategies for preparing justice-involved individuals for employment upon release, including:

- Development of pre-apprenticeship programming in correctional institutions.
- Incorporation of employment/training programs in juvenile justice institutions.
- Expansion of registered apprenticeship opportunities within correctional institutions.
- Development of strategies to increase employer education and awareness of hiring justice-involved individuals.
- Increasing employer collaboration with apprenticeships, workforce training, and placements of justice-involved individuals.
- Creation of job labs within DOC facilities to provide job readiness, career assessment, and job service programming for soon-to-be-released justice-involved individuals.

DWD opened its first job lab at Oakhill Correctional Institution in 2018. Since then, DWD has opened 10 more job labs in DOC facilities around the state. Ten of the job labs are classroom-style rooms within correctional facilities and one, at New Lisbon Correctional Institution, is a mobile lab. In 2023, DWD and DOC continue to partner on innovative solutions and partnerships. This includes additional collaboration between the two agencies to create job labs at local probation and parole offices throughout Wisconsin, as well as new partnerships with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for two new job labs at the Wisconsin Resource Center in Oshkosh.

## Waivers

### Overview

In their submission of the PY22 WIOA Annual Report Narrative, most states and territories reported at least one WIOA waiver, while others reported more. This section shares the common purposes for which states and territories received waivers and highlights how states and territories executed those waivers. Although some states and territories did not have waivers in place long enough to report outcomes, many were able to share anticipated outcomes, or the initial impacts related to the approved waivers.

Generally, waivers helped increase flexibility for local workforce systems. Waivers were also used to help:

- Adjust reimbursement rates,
- Support in-school youth (ISY) who were at risk for disengagement,
- Increase the number of eligible and qualified training providers,
- Reduce administrative and reporting burdens on eligible and qualified training providers, and
- Build effective reporting systems or partnerships so eligible and qualified training providers could collect and submit WIOA required performance data.

Overall, state narratives described 72 waivers. Most states reported on the following:

- 35% Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all Governor's Reserve and local area formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).
- 22% Waiver allowing the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for ISY.
- 10% Waiver to increase on-the-job-training (OJT) reimbursement by up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

## Waiver Highlights

### **Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas expend 75% of all Governor's Reserve and local area formula youth funds on OSY**

#### *Georgia*

The flexibility afforded by the waiver continues to allow LWDAs to expand in-school youth (ISY) programming within their service area, create valuable partnerships with school districts, technical colleges, and other education and community partners throughout their area.

The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) continues to see an increase in total youth enrollment and will further disaggregate the data to fully evaluate youth services for the upcoming State Plan submission. In the analysis conducted for this reporting period, the State identified an increase in services to youth with the following barriers:

- Basic skills deficient,
- individuals experiencing homelessness,
- pregnant/parenting, and
- individuals with disabilities.

The largest increases in services were seen in paid Work Experience, Youth Career Services—specifically labor market and employment information, as well as paid internships, and the provision of supportive services—mostly for transportation and childcare.

The State also piloted a virtual Work Experience platform and has since expanded it statewide for any LWDA that wants to participate, contributing to the increase in services and accessibility for youth. The Career Compass Academy (CCA) is a five-week program that provides youth with the development of work-ready skills, along with career exploration opportunities and job shadowing activities in a virtual environment. It was created in response to the need for a virtual learning environment as a paid work readiness and career exploration program for WIOA-eligible youth. CareerRise, Inc., is a workforce intermediary contracted by Region 3 to implement the Technical College System of Georgia Sector Partnership grant, and is a collaborative partner to implement CCA and execute the model to engage youth. CareerRise facilitates Career Compass Academy, which recruits industry partners to participate, manages the relationship with Accenture to utilize its Skills to Succeed platform, and provides regular updates on student progress through the program. Local WorkSource partners conduct recruitment of youth, determine WIOA eligibility provide case management, and provide stipends to the youth. Through this partnership and demonstrated success, the program was expanded from five local WorkSource board in Metro Atlanta to also include Middle Georgia (which now includes Macon-Bibb), Northwest Georgia, and Georgia Mountains. Currently, the Career Compass Academy is offered in a live format with students participating in 15 live webinars, completing 36 self-paced online modules, and a career plan.

### Maine

Continuation of this waiver will allow the State and local areas the flexibility to direct more WIOA Youth funds toward delivery of workforce services to low-income, high school-aged youth with barriers to employment and education. The waiver will support the vision outlined in Maine's Economic Development Plan and the goals of the Maine Children's Cabinet.

The waiver has been particularly important in efforts to connect WIOA-eligible high school students to pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to registered apprenticeship. The Maine Apprenticeship Council, Maine high schools, and WIOA service providers have partnered with the following to develop and implement pre-apprenticeships for high school youth:

- Educate Maine,
- Associated Contractors of Maine,
- Hospitality Maine,
- Career and Technical Education Centers,
- The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers,
- The Maine Aquaculture Association, and
- Maine adult education programs and employers such as Reed and Reed Construction and ReVision Energy.

Pre-apprenticeships in Maine are a new tool for encouraging students to remain in school until graduation that results in entry into employment through transition to registered apprenticeship programs or post-secondary education. Pre-apprenticeship programs not only launch high school youth on a pathway to high-quality registered apprenticeship but are an innovative tool for supporting high school completion and renewed interest in academics, as students learn how to apply academic concepts to their day-to-day work activities.

### New York

This waiver—extended through the duration of PY22—allowed the State to lower the expenditure requirement for both Governor's Reserve and local funds to 50 percent for OSY. This waiver addressed an increase in local need for ISY services due to the COVID-19 pandemic and allowed LWDBs to invest in preventative strategies and address the myriad of current needs within the ISY population.

The waiver allowed the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) the ability to focus more state-level and local formula youth funds on the provision of services to ISY and focus on the following outcomes:

- Increased attainment of Measurable Skill Gains (MSG), especially educational credentials such as high school diplomas;
- Decreased high school dropout rates;

- Increased participation in occupational skills training and work experience opportunities;
- Increased industry-recognized credential gains;
- The expansion of program outreach to middle school students to plant the seeds for career success; and
- Increased collaboration with partners to align workforce programs and promote trades, both generally and for women in trades.

This waiver had a positive impact on state and local area performance outcomes. The State achieved 77.4 percent of its Youth MSG goal for PY21, with 2,213 positive outcomes. The State's PY22 statewide average adjusted goal for Youth MSG was 51.9 percent, and actual performance was 62.2 percent (119.8% of the adjusted goal). Likewise, the State achieved 78.1 percent of its Youth Credential Attainment goal for PY21, with 1,351 positive outcomes. The PY22 statewide average adjusted goal for Youth Credential Attainment was 57.6 percent, and actual performance was 60.8 percent (105.5% of the adjusted goal).

In addition to improvements in state and local area performance outcomes, Statewide ISY enrollments increased with the waiver, totaling 3,700 in PY21 and 2,523 in PY22.

## **Waiver allowing the use of ITAs for ISY**

### *Arizona*

In PY22, 89 training services funded by ITAs were delivered to 81 ISY participants. Of those participants impacting PY22 WIOA performance indicators, ISY who received training via ITA were more likely to have successful placement in the 2nd Quarter After Exit, Attained a Credential, and achieved a Measurable Skill Gain.

The overall Youth program credential rate decreased from PY21 (60.3%) to PY22 (59.0%). The total number of in-school youth participants receiving training services has increased every year that the waiver has been in place, from 112 to 167 to 175 in PY20, PY21, and PY22, respectively.

The impacts of the waiver on WIOA performance indicators appear promising for PY22, continuing a trend seen in PY21 data. The waiver was approved in late 2019 and ITA funding was accessible to participants during 2020 as the first full calendar year. While some cohort sizes remain low, they are increasing as more exiters will have benefited from the waiver over time. The impact of the ITA for ISY waiver will continue to become clearer in future program years as cohort sample sizes increase).

### *Illinois*

The request is made to permit Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIBs) to use the state's list of eligible training providers to secure training for all youth including the ISY who are preparing to graduate and extend their educational goals into post-secondary opportunities. The waiver is designed to increase program flexibility, enhance informed customer choice, allow all youth to benefit from services provided by Illinois' certified training providers, and expand training options without requiring Illinois



workNet (One-Stop) operators to register ISY participants 18 years old or older in the adult program. Funds used for ITAs would be tracked separately for each funding stream.

Using ITAs also allows youth service providers an opportunity to promote and encourage training as another option to entering an increasingly tough labor market. Approval of this waiver would allow youth to select approved training programs from Illinois' list of demand occupation training programs.

As a result of this waiver, Illinois expects that:

- Increase in the number of local workforce innovation areas that offer ITAs to ISY.
- Increase in the number of youth that utilizes an ITA to receive an industry-recognized and/or some other post-secondary credential.
- Increase in performance accountability measures for youth as found in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA (e.g., increases in credential attainment and measurable skills gains).

Through PY22, 16 of the State's 22 local workforce innovation areas, spread across eight of the ten Economic Development Regions, have ISY with an ITA, indicating a broad geographic use of the waiver.

The number of ISY enrolled in ITAs has increased over 12 percent since the inception of the waiver. For PY22, ISY that received an ITA have successfully exited the program with the following characteristics:

- Measurable Skill Gains: 23
- Completed Training: 19
- Earned Industry-Recognized Credential: 22
- Entered Employment: 13
- Average Wage: \$20.87

### Utah

The waiver is used to assist ISY in maintaining focus on education and exploring career options that require post-secondary education. Having more youth interested and engaged in education leading to credential attainment allows the State to increase its supply of workers to in-demand industries and occupations. Workforce Services has been monitoring its progress in implementing the waiver to ensure the State complies with waiver goals and meets measurable programmatic outcomes.

Workforce Services is exceeding the requirements for out-of-school youth (OSY) spending. By the end of PY22, 93.87 percent of WIOA Youth funds were spent on OSY and only 6.13 percent on ISY. A quarterly breakdown of ISY versus OSY expenditures indicates that OSY expenditures significantly exceeded the expenditure goal of 75 percent in each quarter.

The State maintains its ISY enrollments at a level that has supported the above indicated increase in OSY expenditures. At the end of PY22, only 130 of youth served (12.42%) were ISY, and a quarterly breakdown of enrollments shows a shift towards enrolling more OSY, as agreed upon in the waiver.

Out of the 130 ISY served in PY22, 29 youth were working toward obtaining a post-secondary credential. The remaining ISY were working on completing secondary school requirements with the intent to eventually enroll in post-secondary education. Six ISY attained a post-secondary credential and, so far, two have obtained employment. The youth who started post-secondary training and did not complete it still benefited from their exposure to post-secondary education and gained additional marketable skills. Out of nine ISY who did not graduate, five obtained employment (55.56%).

Workforce Services has maintained its partnership with John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and administered the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program by serving ISY who are preparing for post-secondary education. This federally funded program is designed to assist foster care youth, or youth who have aged out of foster care, with support needed to complete post-secondary education and obtain employment. Since most foster care youth are ISY, the waiver enables Workforce Services to serve this at-risk population and positively impact their ability to earn post-secondary credentials, enter the workforce and become contributing members of society. During PY22, the State served 56 ETV youth and four of them successfully completed the program and earned a credential. Additionally, 65 percent of ETV youth had their ETV enrollment closed due to income.

The waiver also positively impacted education providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as they were not required to go through procurement in addition to completing the list requirements. This encourages providers to continue to be on the ETPL, benefiting both ISY and OSY. Utah continues to certify the education providers and monitor their performance.

## **Waiver to increase OJT reimbursement by up to 90% for businesses with 50 or fewer employees**

### *Missouri*

DOL approved the waiver request to increase OJT employer reimbursement up to 90 percent through June 30, 2024. During PY22, 29 people were served through OJT, a significant decrease from the previous year. One local workforce area is utilizing the waiver to increase OJT reimbursement to the approved 90 percent rate, allowing that workforce area to remain steady with OJT enrollments.

The decline in OJT agreements is attributed to two issues: financial support and turnover in the local areas, from executive level staff to front-line staff, both of which affect the ability to promote and secure OJT employers. OWD has recently hired an apprenticeship and work-based learning coordinator whose job duties include increasing awareness of work-based learning opportunities and providing regular technical assistance regarding the use of OJT and other work-based learning services.

### *Nevada*

This waiver is approved through June 30, 2024, for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula funds. The waiver permits the State and its local workforce areas to increase the reimbursement rate for OJT contracts up to 75 percent. The State may also reimburse up to 90 percent for OJT for businesses with 50 or fewer employees. DOL-ETA expects the operation of OJTs to increase in Nevada as a result of the waiver.

Utilization of the 90 percent OJT waiver was 138 or 63.6 percent with over 73 percent completing an OJT successfully. The participants who benefited from the OJTs had an average wage of \$18.82 per hour as compared to a wage of \$18.42 for all OJT participants. Approximately 47 percent of the participants served identify as African American/Black; Asian; or more than one race with 37.7 percent identifying as Hispanic or Latino. The participants had the following barriers:

- Re-entry (2%),
- Veteran (2.9%), and
- Persons with a disability (7.3%).

Statewide performance was not measurably impacted by the waiver.

### *Puerto Rico*

The state board implemented public policy prioritizing OJT activity for companies committed to the registered apprenticeship program (RAP). This waiver allows businesses in Puerto Rico to adapt swiftly to technological and market changes by enhancing their ability to expand and remain competitive through cost-effective OJT options tailored to their specific development goals. The reduced match requirement, especially beneficial for new startups and small- to medium-sized businesses, presents an attractive and financially feasible incentive, expanding opportunities to utilize the OJT model for hiring and training new workers. From an economic development perspective, the increase in both the quantity and quality of the labor force stimulates Puerto Rico's economic competence and competitiveness.

This waiver, in effect until June 30, 2024, has proven instrumental in aiding LWDA's to attract new employers to the workforce system. For example, during PY22, 14 LWDA's utilized this waiver, engaging 171 employers and 1,568 employees, including 953 adults and 615 dislocated workers. The total expenditure amounted to \$9,239,516. The waiver significantly contributed to increased participation from both employees and employers, illustrating highly satisfactory performance by LWDA's.

### *Rhode Island*

The primary goal and outcomes of the waiver included increased flexibility for smaller Rhode Island businesses to help them ramp up operations and keep pace with evolving market demands as the state recovers from the economic impacts of the pandemic; and to increase the usage of OJT among smaller firms. Per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 92 percent of Rhode Island entities were those which employed fewer than 20 workers in 2022. The initial waiver was approved on August 13, 2021,

and reauthorized on June 7, 2022. Both local areas opted to utilize the flexibility provided through the waiver and passed policy reforms introducing a tiered reimbursement structure for OJTs based on employer size:

- 50 or fewer employees: up to 90 percent OJT employer reimbursement—or the maximum allowable (\$24.84 as of March 2023), whichever is less;
- 51–250 employees: up to 75 percent OJT employer reimbursement—or the maximum allowable reimbursement (\$24.84 as of March 2023), whichever is less;
- 250+ employees: up to 50 percent OJT employer reimbursement—or the maximum allowable reimbursement (\$24.84 as of March 2023), whichever is less.

In the Greater Rhode Island workforce area, 15 out of 16 (93%) OJT establishments were businesses under 50 employees in PY22. Ten of those 15 establishments had under 20 employees.

In the Providence Cranston workforce area, 11 out of 15 (73%) OJT establishments were businesses under 50 employees in PY22. Three of those 11 establishments had under 20 employees.

The State anticipates this ratio to maintain or increase as both local areas continue to build employer awareness and outreach regarding the enhanced match.

## Other Waivers

### *Waiver to allow the State Board to act as the Local Board*

#### **Alaska**

Alaska's waiver to WIOA Section 107(b) allows the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to carry out the roles of a Local Board. The modified role of AWIB representing two local areas consisting of Anchorage/Mat-Su and the remainder of the state is essential to offset excessive administrative costs, thwart inconsistencies in services, and maximize overall performance in a large state whose small population is dispersed over a vast area of economically distinct regions.

The State has made significant progress towards the goals outlined in the approved waiver. Two non-voting seats consisting of local elected officials were created during PY21, along with a sub-committee that ensures local area priorities are represented. Functioning as a single State Board has streamlined the process and timeliness of awarding grants by the elimination of multiple layers of administrative entities, allowed consistent eligibility standards across the state, and improved both visibility and accountability of workforce investment programs. Operating under the waiver, the AWIB has drawn representation from all areas of the state and from various interest groups such as organized labor, business and industry, state agencies, native organizations, educational institutions, individuals experiencing disabilities, and other relevant groups.

The AWIB continues to foster local participation and points of view, consulting local elected officials from the State's boroughs and cities in regional and statewide planning efforts. For example, the Workforce Readiness and Employment and Placement

Committee provides oversight for training and employment programs that are delivering education and training relevant to local employer needs. AWIB has prioritized attendance at gatherings surrounding local workforce issues, as well as informational events focused on Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunities for rural Alaskan communities. Additionally, the waiver allows the AWIB to foster regional collaboration among job centers, educational institutions, labor, and non-profits, and to work with employers to determine local or regional hiring needs that informs responsive training programs to ensure that the department meets all sector needs and serves all geographic regions.

*Waiver to allow the State to lower the local area and statewide reserve out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure requirement to 50%*

#### **Minnesota - Homeless Youth/Foster Youth Waiver**

The State secured a waiver from DOL that assures the LWDAs have the flexibility to target services to ISY who meet DOL's definition of homeless youth. A Minnesota Department of Education survey identified over 3,600 youth in grades 8–12 statewide who were homeless; over 75 percent were youth from communities of color. This waiver allows the state to reduce the required OSY expenditure rate from 75 percent to 60 percent for LWDAs who prioritize ISY who are homeless or foster youth.

In PY22, the waiver provided seven of the 16 LWDAs with the flexibility to target homeless youth and foster youth while they are still in school. Services include provision of critical employment and training services to at-risk ISY without jeopardizing the delivery of services to out-of-school participants. This waiver supports one of the goals of Minnesota's State WIOA Plan: to increase the high school graduation rate for under-represented youth.

Overall, of the 2,420 served, 401 were homeless/runaway youth. Of these 401, 66 were ISY homeless youth without a high school diploma at enrollment.

A total of 125 youth identified as either in foster care, or previously in foster care. Out of the 125, 37 were ISY.

*Waiver to allow TANF funds to count toward the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement.*

#### **Ohio**

The purpose of this waiver is to increase participant enrollment in work experiences by having TANF-funded, co-enrolled participants count toward the 20 percent requirement defined in 20 CFR 681.590. The waiver supports the principles of streamlining services and increasing accountability and accessibility, state and local flexibility, and ease of administration.

Both WIOA Youth and TANF expenditures will count toward the 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experience for youth co-enrolled in those programs. In addition to WIOA local Youth program funds spent on paid and unpaid work experiences—including wages and staff costs for developing and managing work experiences—local areas in Ohio may include TANF work experience expenditures in the calculation of the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement.

For PY20, the State's Youth programs (TANF, WIOA, and co-enrolled) had a total of 18,942 participants. Of those, 8,465 (44.7%) were enrolled in work experience programs.

For PY21, the State's Youth programs had a total of 18,779 participants. Of those, 8,022 (42.7%) were enrolled in work experience programs.

For PY22, the State's Youth programs had a total of 18,845 participants. Of those, 7,872 (41.8%) were enrolled in work experience programs.

The number of work experiences decreased slightly for PY22 due to local workforce areas struggling with several challenges. These included a tight labor market that made youth less likely to be interested in subsidized employment opportunities and workforce areas needing time to adjust wages provided in work experiences.

*Waiver to allow flexibility in the use of funds reserved by the Governor to provide statewide rapid response activities to instead provide statewide employment and training activities, including disaster relief employment to affected areas*

### **Puerto Rico**

Under this waiver, the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development and Commerce (DEDC) allocated state funds to local areas for the creation of temporary jobs following Hurricane Fiona's impact in September 2022. Additionally, work experiences for OSY related to the emergency were developed. Temporary jobs were created to assist municipalities with recovery and humanitarian aid in areas impacted by the hurricane. The jobs activities were carried out through 12 local areas to address emergency needs, including cleaning, disinfecting common areas, debris collection, assistance in distributing essential materials, food collection and disposal, safety protocol guidance, support for emergency management-related call centers, and disaster-related information requests. A total of 775 participants were impacted, with an investment of \$4,160,258.26.

## Evaluations

### Overview

TEGL No. 05-18 asks states and territories to include descriptions of current or planned evaluation and related research projects, including any efforts to coordinate the development of such projects with WIOA core programs, other state agencies, and local boards in their narrative reports. States and territories also include continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated. State and territory evaluation and research projects fall into several broad categories such as the assessment of toolkits and supporting products, workforce training processes and outcomes, agency services to participants, and labor force participation and barriers of entry, to list a few.

### Evaluation Highlights

#### California

##### **The CAAL-Skills Impact Study**

The evaluation by the California Policy Lab from the University of California measures impacts from 11 California workforce programs (WIOA and non-WIOA) on participant employment and earnings outcomes for individuals enrolled in services in state fiscal years 2014–2015 and 2015–2016. The non-experimental model, which relies on matching training recipients to a similar-at-entry population of non-trainees (in most cases, from the Wagner-Peyser program), allows researchers to isolate impacts from the training received reliably. Results of the evaluation include a finding that training through the Title I Adults and Dislocated Workers Program produces statistically significant and economically meaningful positive impacts on employment and earnings. The CAAL-Skills 1.0 Evaluation Report was completed and posted to the California Workforce Development Board's webpage on August 30, 2022.

#### Colorado

##### **Evaluation Initiative with Northern Illinois University (NIU)**

WIOA requires the Workforce Development Program (WDP) to conduct formal evaluations of WIOA program activities to research and test innovative services and strategies and achieve high levels of performance and outcomes. Working with NIU, WDP established a model for WIOA program evaluation using the Training Placement and Outcomes in Colorado Workforce Areas. WDP and NIU continued to provide technical assistance and training for a cohort of local area staff, the WIOA Evaluation Team, to build their capacity to employ a mixed-method evaluation approach involving quantitative and qualitative strategies. Each local workforce area completed a quantitative analysis in the area and is performing a qualitative analysis to understand the “why” behind the numbers. The Evaluation Team identified best practices in each local area and incorporated recommendations to improve outcomes for the WIOA participants. The Team provided state and local training and technical assistance on

evaluation processes to enable consistent application of evaluation processes with an emphasis on training-related outcomes, especially for disadvantaged populations. In conjunction with statewide local area evaluation teams, performed a sequential mixed-method evaluation of training related outcomes, incorporating an impact study to evaluate training related placement and workforce services for disadvantaged populations. The final report identified recommendations and best practices from the 10 local workforce areas. [Training Placement and Outcomes in Colorado Workforce Areas](#).

## South Carolina

### **The Secret Shopper Evaluation**

**(started in October 2022 and expected to conclude in Calendar Year 2023)**

The primary purpose for the effort is to better understand how a customer interacts with the SC Works system, and their experience and outcomes after using system programs, resources, and services. Results of the evaluation will aid in identifying exemplary practices and opportunities for improvement within the SC Works system.

Target SC Works centers were selected based on the type of center (comprehensive or affiliate), foot traffic, geographic location, and customer demographics. The centers selected were Aiken Center, McAllister Square (Greenville) Center, Charleston Center, and Coastal (Conway) Center. The data collection strategy for the Secret Shopper evaluation included two approaches: 1) a customer survey for businesses and jobseekers and 2) Secret Shopper visits to select SC Works centers.

The Business Customer survey administered from January 24–February 13, 2023, received 41 responses. The jobseeker survey administered from February 8–23, 2023, received 407 responses. The major themes that emerged from the survey were:

- Businesses rated SC Works phone, online, and in-person services highly. Businesses rated services on average between 6.6 to 10 out of 10.
- The majority (83%) of businesses felt the resources received from SC Works online were valuable to their business. Most businesses (80%) also felt the services they received from SC Works through in-person interactions were also valuable to their business.
- Jobseekers gave SC Works in-person customer experience a medium rating, ranging from 5.0 to 9.4 out of 10.
- Jobseekers believed the information they received from SC Works was useful to their job search.
- Overall, 21 percent of business customers and 18 percent of jobseekers reported difficulty navigating the SC Works Online System ([jobs.scworks.org](https://jobs.scworks.org)).



The Secret Shopper evaluation utilized five secret shoppers to visit the four targeted centers. Each of the four centers had three different secret shoppers who visited each of the centers on different days and times. Three profiles were developed for secret shoppers based on background data of actual jobseeker customers who visit SC Works centers. The overall findings from the shopper visits were:

- Professional and courteous staff
- Good physical environment and short wait time
- Low level of engagement by staff during visits
- Lack of personalized assistance during visits

Recommendations resulting from the evaluation include:

- Scale up and implement the program statewide to establish representative baseline data.
- The Secret Shopper model provides reliable data for the jobseekers' experience but does not allow the business customer experience to be assessed. To capture the business customer's experience, SC Works should disseminate surveys and conduct interviews or focus groups with a representative sample of business customers.
- Require a universal protocol or checklist for all SC Works center staff to be utilized during a jobseeker in-person visit.
- Require a universal training module for front-end staff on how to engage with jobseekers.
- Ensure brochures and the hot jobs board are mentioned and readily available for jobseekers.

## Wisconsin

### Assessing Effectiveness of Services

Wisconsin WIOA Titles I, III, and IV staff partnered to conduct an internal data analysis with a subset of individuals who could benefit from WIOA Title I, III, and IV employment and training services. More specifically, analysis focused on teenagers with disabilities and their parents who received Wisconsin Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE). Data analyses revealed youth and parents who received Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) (WIOA Title IV), or Division of Employment and Training (DET) (WIOA Titles I and III) services had higher employment rates and wages than those who did not connect to these services. More specifically, DVR (WIOA Title IV) services were associated with higher employment rates and PROMISE services were related to improved wages. WIOA Title I and III services were associated with even higher employment rates and wages. More specifically, youth receiving SSI were 5.5 times more likely to be employed if they received WIOA Title I Youth services, whereas their parents were 13 times more likely to be employed if they received WIOA Title III, Wagner-Peyser services and WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services. Parents' maximum quarterly wages were \$3,000 more after receiving WIOA Title III, Wagner-Peyser services, and WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services. Youths' maximum quarterly wages were \$2,000 higher after they participated in a youth apprenticeship. In looking at

categories of WIOA Title I and IV services, the analyses showed that Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW) self-services, Title I Youth services, case management, and youth apprenticeship opportunities had the greatest increases in employment rates and wages. This study was presented to local field staff and workforce partners as part of the Beyond Performance Friday series and was accepted for publication in the [Rehabilitation Counseling and Educators Journal](#). Overall, the study showed that WIOA Title I, III, and IV services together resulted in better employment outcomes for participants than for those who did not receive services. The evidence supports continued collaboration. Based on these research findings, WIOA core programs and partners can work together to set targets to increase observed co-enrollment using [Wisconsin workforce co-enrollment reports](#). These results are important but limited by a very specific population and a small sample size. Therefore, Wisconsin's Workforce Data Integration System (WDIS) Research and Evaluation workgroup is working on a follow-up research study to learn more about what demographics, employment influencers, and training services funded by different WIOA training programs predict employment outcomes for a larger more comprehensive group of jobseekers.

## Success Stories

### Overview

States and territories are encouraged to include information on customer accomplishments and successes. This section highlights a variety of success stories and provides valuable examples of how states and territories are implementing WIOA to help adult and youth jobseekers gain skills and employment. Other examples include how states and territories are implementing WIOA to assist dislocated workers, as well as create and maintain successful business partnerships with employers.

### Success Stories Highlights

#### WIOA Adult Program

##### *Alaska*

Richard, a U.S. Army veteran, first came into the Anchorage Midtown Job Center in April 2023 seeking veteran services. JVSG staff identified that Richard was eligible for services under VPL 03-14: he was homeless, low income, and had a justice-involved background. While his prior convictions made it difficult for Richard to obtain employment, JVSG staff identified career fields to accommodate that limitation. As current labor market information for Structural Iron and Steel Workers indicates there is a projected growth between 4 to 7 percent in the state of Alaska, with his experience as a Roadbuster in another state, Richard and staff decided to pursue the Ironworkers 751 Apprenticeship program. JVSG staff connected Richard with the union's Apprenticeship Coordinator, and they accepted him into their apprenticeship program. The Local 751 Ironworkers complete a four-year, 6,000-hour apprenticeship program including structural steel, welding, and rigging. Since Richard already had some work experience, he was quickly dispatched in May 2023 to work for Whalen Construction at the Port of Alaska in Anchorage with the starting wage of \$24.89 per hour. Richard was also co-enrolled in the WIOA Adult program and received assistance with tools and gear to maintain employment and complete his apprenticeship. As of September 2023, Richard is working with Iron Inc., earning \$25.79 per hour.

##### *Arkansas*

Sombra was approved for WIOA and TANF services in Crittenden County on September 15, 2022. At the time of enrollment, she was unemployed, a single parent of seven children, recipient of ARKIDS 1st and SNAP benefits, and high school drop-out. Sombra had been working off and on in retail and customer service for years but stated that she was in dire need of finding a career that would allow her to provide for her family. After thinking about her future, she expressed interest in work experience and career development due to her lacking the professional skills to retain a "good job." After being approved for TANF, she

needed assistance with childcare to complete the Work Based-Learning component of work experience. She was referred to WIOA as a wraparound service to help assist with services that TANF could not provide.

After working at different worksites, Sombra was encouraged to start applying for jobs using the skills learned in the WIOA program. She secured a job as a Cashier for QuickTrip using the Arkansas Job Link system and Indeed.com. As the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas (WDBEA) stood by her side through this journey, she received customer service training while also benefiting from supportive services that allowed her to work and earn money while training. Sombra states that with her faith and drive, she is going to aim for being a manager with hopes of owning her own company one day.

### *Connecticut*

Larry was raised in a community that was riddled with high crime, drugs, and gang activity. Some of his childhood friends are in prison, convicted felons, or deceased. At first, he followed the same pathway, but he overcame the odds. Before joining the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative and receiving American Job Center (AJC) services, he had just purchased a home. Shortly thereafter, he was terminated from his employment and was back to square one. That is when his search began for a new job or training opportunity. Eventually, he decided to pursue a career as a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machinist. Larry enrolled in the “Introduction to Manufacturing” training at Capital Community College through the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative and successfully completed the course in April 2023. Because of this training, Larry was able to attain both the 10-hour Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Construction Safety and Health Certificate and Six Sigma White Belt Certification. Within a week, he obtained employment as a CNC Machinist, making more money than at his previous job. He is grateful for the amazing instructors and career advisors that helped him find and stay on the path to success.

## **WIOA Youth Program**

### *Kentucky*

Amari was a senior at Hopkinsville High School and enrolled in the Medical Nurse Aide (MNA) class and Patient Care Tech (PCT) certification course pathways at Gateway Academy. She had her sights on attending nursing school upon graduation but needed support transitioning to life after high school, direction with FAFSA, scholarships, and navigating the tuition requirements for local colleges. She sought help from the Christian County Board of Education. She was determined eligible for their WIOA ISY program, funded by the West Kentucky Workforce Board.

Amari spent her senior year in the WIOA ISY program, attending tutoring, participating in transition services, and leadership development activities. She was provided a paid work-based learning experience at Jennie Stuart Health as a Student Patient Care Technician. Amari graduated with a high school diploma and MNA and PCT certifications in May 2023. Jennie Stuart Health hired her upon graduation because of her excellent work ethic, dependability, and reliability during her paid work-based learning experience, creating a seamless talent pipeline in a high-demand, critical-shortage industry. Amari is now enrolled in Hopkinsville Community College’s nursing program.

Amari has not forgotten the lessons she learned in the Youth program: “The WIOA program helped me get real-world and hands-on experiences to focus on getting my professional certifications and diploma while working in my chosen pathway. I am earning money in a meaningful and gratifying profession that is in shortage, and I have no college debt.”

### *North Dakota*

Francisco was referred to the Wahpeton office for possible WIOA services from one of the State’s partners, Motivation, Education and Training (MET) for assistance with welding training. He met with Sandy and said he was interested in welding training but would have to take a leave of absence from his job as a farmworker to complete the five-week welding training he desired. MET could either pay for the cost of the training or provide a stipend to make up for the income he would lose from not working. The cost of his training was paid through WIOA Youth funds, while MET provided a stipend, and the two programs split his transportation costs since he was traveling from Wahpeton to Fargo daily.

Francisco knew he wanted to improve his welding skills by taking a 200-hour course at Lynnes Welding in Fargo. He completed his first welding certification after two weeks of training. He said, “I didn’t know I have a natural talent for welding.” Francisco went on to complete all seven welding certifications within the five weeks of training; others take a 16-week class to accomplish that many certifications. Francisco said he only had time for one attempt each for his final certification tests, and he passed with flying colors. His instructor commented that, “[Francisco] is a pleasure to have in class.”

Francisco was also recognized for having 100 percent attendance. When the Admissions Director at Lynnes Welding Training sent copies of his certifications, she also thanked MET for referring him to them. Francisco is very appreciative of the assistance he got through WIOA and asked Sandy if he can refer his friends to her. He was offered two positions after completing his training and is trying to decide between them. Whatever he chooses, the future looks bright for Francisco.

### *Washington*

Olga was a 24-year-old high school graduate, unemployed, single mother who needed training, employment, housing assistance, and career guidance. Olga wanted to participate in training in either the nursing or dental field, to secure employment and provide for herself and her one-year-old daughter. Olga was enrolled as an OSY participant, and able to secure housing with the assistance of TC Futures and the Housing Resource Center.

While in the program, Olga explored her educational and career options and decided that the dental assistant industry was the right fit for her. She participated in the fall semester Dental Assistant Training at Tri-Cities Dental Assisting School, graduating in November 2022. Olga was top of her class and was referred by her teachers to various dental assisting jobs in the surrounding areas.

School Youth staff nominated Olga for the Soroptimist Live Your Dreams Scholarship, a unique education award for women who are the primary financial support for their families. Live Your Dreams gives young women the resources they need to improve their education, skills, and employment prospects. Live Your Dream recipients can use the \$2,500 cash award to help offset costs

associated with their efforts to attain higher education, such as books, childcare, tuition, and transportation. Preciado was the 2022 recipient of this award, thanks to TC Futures' ongoing partnership with Soroptimist 3 Rivers.

Olga worked hard to overcome her barriers and is a well-deserved recipient of this award. Olga continued her dedication to gaining self-sustainability and procured full-time employment with Columbia Basin Health Association in Othello, WA, her hometown. Olga has relocated to Othello to be closer to her family and is working full time as a Dental Assistant as of December 2022. She is making \$23.00 per hour, with full benefit options. Olga is now in her desired career and able to support herself and her daughter. Olga has expressed gratitude to TC Futures and is excited about her future.

## **WIOA Dislocated Worker Program**

### *Alaska*

Susan obtained full-time, year-round employment as a Social Services Associate for the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services earning \$20.16 per hour with benefits after she completed her Associate of Applied Science in Human Services degree from the University of Alaska, Anchorage, Mat-Su College branch. Mat-Su Job Center CSTS staff performed her assessment showing the need for Susan to obtain her degree to enter a high-growth, high-demand career field. Susan had been laid off from a previous job and had been long-term unemployed. At enrollment, Susan was also raising her grandchildren and receiving TANF, SNAP benefits, and Medicaid. She was also approved for a PELL grant to assist with tuition and fees. Since Susan was receiving TANF, she already had a Division of Public Assistance Case Manager assisting her with goals towards self-sufficiency. The CSTS and Division of Public Assistance (DPA) case managers worked together across departments to braid funds from both programs, fully supporting Susan through her training to ensure a successful outcome. Susan's DPA Case Manager provided support services during training, while CSTS provided funding for tuition and fees through the WIOA Dislocated Worker as well as National Dislocated Worker National Health Emergency and Trade and Economic Transition grant programs.

### *Hawaii*

A young man sought program services for employment and educational services after his employment was directly affected by COVID-19. His last day of employment was in March 2020 with the Department of Education (DOE) at Maui High School in the Arts and Communication Department. The young man was also working in the Extended Learning and Workforce Development Program at the University of Hawaii - Maui College (UHMC) as an Assistant. On becoming a client, he disclosed he was diagnosed at birth with neurogenic bladder, spina bifida, and a cognitive disability. His overall goal was to obtain a full-time teaching position in creative media. Through the support and services from Goodwill's workforce programs, he went on to receive his bachelor's degree in creative media and has since been building his professional portfolio. He is now a substitute teacher at Maui High School and sees the need to continue this route of work due to the lack of schoolteachers. He was encouraged by his fellow co-workers to obtain his Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers' licensure in the Career Technical Department. He applied and was accepted to the program at Leeward Community College via their online course. He is scheduled to start classes in Fall 2023. The CTE program will take up to one year to complete. The client shared that he had competed in the 2023

Pele Awards and won five awards: Best in Show, Best Logo, and two gold and one silver award. He was extremely pleased about his progress and due to the recognition, has received multiple work offers from local companies. He will be adding these to his portfolio. This young man credits hard work, focusing on his goals, and doing what's needed to accomplish them, despite bumpy roads.

### *South Dakota*

David received assistance through Wagner-Peyser, the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program after losing employment due to a business closure. The TAA program provided David support through a DLR Employment Specialist, career assessments, and financial assistance with tuition, fees, books, supplies, remedial training, and living costs through Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) payments while in training.

“My name is David, and I want to share my success story—a testament to resilience and the pursuit of dreams. Several years ago, I faced a major setback when the company I worked for, Littelfuse, closed the plant I was employed at and relocated its operations to Mexico. The closure left many of us without jobs, uncertain about our futures. However, I refused to let adversity define me. Instead, I saw it as an opportunity for growth and embarked on a journey that would ultimately lead me to where I am today.

Driven by my passion for technology, I made the decision to further my education in computer science and IT. I enrolled at Western Dakota Technical College, dedicating myself to acquiring knowledge and honing my skills. Through hard work and perseverance, I successfully obtained an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, specializing in computer science and IT technician. It was a challenging but rewarding experience that equipped me with a solid foundation in my field.

Armed with my newfound knowledge and qualifications, I was determined to forge ahead in my career. I sought opportunities that aligned with my aspirations and values. Thankfully, my efforts paid off when I landed a job at an innovative technology company known for its cutting-edge solutions. Joining their team not only allowed me to put my skills into practice but also provided an environment that fostered growth, learning, and personal development.”

### *Vermont*

Karen lost her job in August 2022 as the result of a permanent plant closure. She had worked in the plant for over 10 years. Her employer, Entergy, was the owner and operator of Vermont Yankee located in Vernon, VT. In December of 2014, the power plant was shut down and Entergy began a process of decommissioning. Karen continued to work as a Senior Administrative Assistant for Entergy for the Nuclear Decommissioning Organization. After the last site was closed, Karen was notified that her job would be ending on the last day of August 2022.

A Dislocated Worker in need of skills training, Karen applied for WIOA in the fall of 2022. She was enrolled in October 2022. She entered Occupational Skills training (non-ETPL)—a Paralegal Certificate Program with Boston University—November 1, 2022.



Karen successfully completed her skills training in February 2023 and received a Certificate in Paralegal Studies from B.U.'s Center for Professional Education.

Karen is currently employed with The Green Mountain Higher Education Consortium, a collaborative endeavor of three Vermont Colleges: Champlain College, Middlebury College, and Saint Michael's College. Karen is on salary in the Payroll Department at GMHEC. She started her position in June 2023. Karen has expressed her thanks to the Vermont Department of Labor for the support she received through the WIOA Program.

## Other Success Stories

### *Illinois*

Absolute Fire Protection is an industry leader in fire protection and prevention services in Northern Illinois with strong ties to the community. Absolute Fire Protection has a great need for skilled talent to install, test, repair, and perform maintenance on fire sprinkler systems—a critical role that encompasses many different skill sets. Absolute Fire Protection knew they needed to develop a talent pipeline for the talent and skill needed for these jobs, not only for the short-term but also for the long-term needs of their business and the community.

Absolute Fire Protection worked with The Workforce Connection and created the Fire Sprinkler Apprenticeship program. The partners worked together and spent time understanding Absolute's needs and goals to ensure the program was built out effectively and requirements were appropriate for the roles. We worked together on the selection process, which was valuable because we were able to ensure we had the right candidates for the apprenticeships. With the WIOA funding, Absolute was able to add additional positions beyond its initial projections which in turn, helped the business add capacity and depth to its team.

As an Apprentice Sprinkler Fitter, apprentices learn and earn over four years with 19 classes and credentials in addition to paid training in the field. At the conclusion of the apprenticeship, individuals earn their Journeyman Sprinkler Fitters card. Almost 18 months in, all of the initial candidates are still successfully on their way to becoming journeymen who will earn nationally recognized credentials and earn upwards of \$50 per hour once complete. We are also working to add additional classes with Absolute Fire Protection to continue to grow the team's capacity and provide more opportunities to individuals in the community.

We are grateful for the vision and leadership of Absolute Fire Protection to create this apprenticeship model to build talent and opportunity in the region.

### *Kansas*

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation Partnership**

Jacob visited the Great Bend KansasWorks Workforce Center seeking assistance in securing employment. Jacob worried that because he used a wheelchair, it would be more difficult to find a job. He also reported a history of substance abuse and was residing in a local Oxford House.



Kansas WorkforceONE staff began working with Jacob and made a direct referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Services to partner with them to assist with Jacob's job search and identifying resources that could assist with clothing and or transportation needs. Kansas WorkforceONE staff contacted the manager of a local hotel, and they discussed potential employment opportunities at the hotel and how the jobseeker might fit the needs the employer was looking to fill. Following this conversation, the manager agreed to interview Jacob and subsequently offered him a part-time position as a Night Auditor.

Jacob has now been employed with the Holiday Inn for approximately one year and the manager reports he has mastered all the skills needed for each of the shifts at the front desk. When Kansas WorkforceONE staff last visited Jacob to provide follow-up services, he was standing behind the front desk and walked into the conference room. Jacob reports he is in better physical condition, in large part because of his employment and staying physically active. The stability that has developed in Jacob's life has truly been transformational. Jacob is not only successful in his job, but he is also regularly active in the leadership of the Oxford Houses in his district.

## SECTION II

### STATE NARRATIVE EXCERPTS

## Alabama

Alabama Department of Labor  
Alabama Department of Commerce

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

Priority of Services has been established through policy from the State Workforce Development Board (WDB) in accordance with TEGL 7-20, for public assistance recipients, individuals with low incomes, and those who are basic skills deficient to receive the highest priority for WIOA services after all eligible veterans and eligible spouses of veterans have been considered for services.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)**

Workforce Development Division (WDD) uses the AlabamaWorks! internet-based system to ensure that the customers of local Career Centers have access to the State's ETPL. Development and maintenance of this system requires a great deal of cooperation between the WIOA Title I Career Center partner agencies and various training providers. Alabama Career Center staff have been trained in the use of the ETPL.

DOL has provided guidance regarding methods for the certification, gathering, and reporting of performance information, initial certification of out-of-state providers, and recertification of in-state and out-of-state providers. The WDD strives to keep training program information as current and up to date as possible.

Presently, there are approximately 72 different training providers and approximately 675 separate programs on Alabama's WIOA ETPL. Twenty-four of these providers are part of the Alabama Community College System and have over 66 locations throughout the State. There are also 30 Registered Apprenticeship Programs on the WIOA ETPL.

#### **Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP)**

IWTP is administered through the Alabama Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division (WDD). Section 134(a)(3)(A)(i) of the WIOA authorizes Incumbent Worker Training as a statewide workforce development activity. Alabama's IWTP was funded through the Governor's Ten Percent funds in PY22. The IWTP provides assistance to Alabama employers to help with expenses associated with new or updated skills training for current, full-time, employees. For-profit companies, non-profits, and governmental organizations in operation in Alabama for at least two years are eligible to apply for IWTP funds. An interested company must have at least one full-time, permanent employee other than its owner. Companies seeking IWTP

funding must also be current on all state and federal tax obligations. Applicants must provide a dollar-for-dollar “soft” match to requested funds. A soft match can include, but is not limited to, employee wages, benefits, and cash payments to vendors. Each applicant was eligible to apply for up to \$30,000 of IWTP funds in PY22 subject to not exceeding the lifetime award of \$60,000.00.

Successful IWTP applicant companies contract with outside training providers to provide basic work skills training to existing employees. Applicants must demonstrate a need for upgraded skill levels for existing employees. Within their applications, IWTP companies anticipate measurable training outcomes. IWTP skills training should support company efforts to minimize lay-offs (lay-off aversion) and/or help the company remain competitive. The technical and professional training programs provided with the assistance of these funds, equip incumbent workers with specific workplace skills required to provide optimal performance within existing jobs and may enable them to broaden the scope of their workplace responsibilities. Successful training completion should allow greater opportunities for employee retention and increased earnings potential, thus achieving one of the major DOL goals for the IWTP, which is layoff aversion.

The State of Alabama launched its IWTP in September 2001. Through June 30, 2023, Alabama has awarded nearly \$17,575,472 in IWTP funding to Alabama businesses, benefiting more than 26,066 workers. This includes \$198,876 awarded for seven new IWTP contracts for PY22 (07/01/22–06/30/23). Statewide, PY22 contracts were awarded to companies of all sizes in seven counties benefiting 95 individual workers.

In addition to WIOA funds, during PY22 the WDD also provided Incumbent Worker Services to additional individuals through a separate grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Reimagine Workforce Preparation fund. Throughout the life of the grant, the Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program has approved 262 employers for IWT and served approximately 1,136 incumbent workers, who were provided with training to upskill them in their current jobs. All of these participants were also co-enrolled in WIOA and received career services.

#### **WIOA Supportive Services including Relocation Assistance**

The State, through the WIOA Governor’s Set-Aside funds, provides relocation assistance to participants in need of assistance to accept employment in another location. It is intended to serve eligible adults and dislocated workers, who are unable to find suitable employment in their local area and who have secured employment outside of their commuting area (more than 75 miles) necessitating a move. This service is available statewide through the Alabama Career Center System, and information about the program is provided to dislocated workers by the State’s Rapid Response Team when responding to mass layoffs. One individual requested this service during PY22. The Rapid Response Team also presented information on this service during programs in PY22.

WDD established a program providing supportive services for WIOA participants such as reimbursement of exam and licensing fees and training materials not covered by Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) or OJT. This service was fully expanded in PY22. Two hundred and four participants were served, and reimbursements totaling \$59,784.19 were provided to support participants.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

During PY22, the State initiated and furthered several new and ongoing process evaluation activities as defined under WIOA Section 116(e).

- Ongoing evaluations of WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program performance.
- Implementation of discretionary grant performance evaluation policy.
- Development of the State Evaluation Plan and revisions to the sanctions policy.
- Continued improvement of Quarterly Reporting Analysis element accuracy.
- Research into the Employment Related to Training metric.
- Research into the Labor Force Participation Rate.
- Research into industry sector targeting and penetration rates.
- Planning and development of the One Workforce project to include learning and employment records (LER) data for job orders.
- Analysis of credential attainment across all Alabama state agencies.
- Further updates to the State Data Validation policy in the wake of TEGP No. 23-19, CH1/2.
- Interfacing with partner agencies to secure performance and priority data.
- Further development of the WIOA Provider Performance evaluation process.
- Fiscal and Programmatic Monitoring and Technical Assistance.
- Continuous training for all stakeholders and employees including: State and Local Workforce Board Training, Administrative and Case Management Training, and Monitoring and Oversight Training.

### *Continuous Improvement*

During PY22 several efforts to coordinate projects with WIOA, partner agencies, and workforce boards solidified a thoroughly developed working relationship with all required and optional partners and stakeholders of the workforce system which has culminated in the “One Workforce” working group. The group develops policy across all partner agencies. All process evaluation activities detailed above are presented to these partners and boards on at least an annual basis.

*Reports*

No information provided for this section.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

The State had one waiver in place during PY22: Waiver allowing the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY), ages 14–21.

*Strategies*

This waiver allows the State to offer ITAs to ISY. The waiver enhances the State’s ability to serve ISY with ITAs. Expected programmatic outcomes include:

- Serving 100 ISY per year who would not be eligible for an ITA otherwise (i.e., as an adult participant).
- 50 percent of ISY enrolled in ITAs will earn a credential.
- 45 percent of ISY enrolled in ITAs will obtain a Measurable Skills Gain.

*Impact on Performance*

This waiver has not boosted participation numbers as expected. Only one ISY was enrolled statewide during PY22 who would not have been eligible for an ITA as an adult at the time of enrollment. This participant earned a credential and a Measurable Skills Gain, resulting in 100 percent earned a credential, and 100 percent earned a Measurable Skills Gain.

This waiver will continue to be available in PY23. The State will look at data from all years of the waiver (PY21–PY23) to determine if it will reapply for the waiver in the upcoming PY24–PY28 State Plan submission due in March 2024.

**Success Stories***Adult – Anthony*

Anthony was determined to be eligible for the WIOA funding as an Adult-Economically Disadvantaged in January 2023. His entry-level employment had not provided occupational skills or wages for financial self-sufficiency. He was referred to an Individual Training Account (ITA) for occupational skills training in the high-wage/high-demand occupation of Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Truck Driver. Anthony successfully completed Commercial Truck Driver Training from technical school in May 2023. Anthony originally went to work for Coca-Cola out of Rome, GA, which was an hour’s drive from his home. He pursued a CDL Driver/Merchandiser position with Buffalo Rock in Gadsden, AL. He was hired in July 2023 with Buffalo Rock delivering Pepsi

Cola and making \$78,000.00 per year with benefits beginning after 90 days of employment and vacation beginning after one year of employment.

#### *Adult – Brantley*

Brantley's long-term goal of becoming a Registered Nurse (RN) seemed impossible when she failed the first semester at Lawson State in December 2020. WIOA paid for that semester. She was 28 years old at eligibility and was working in low-wage retail positions. Brantley paid for her first repeat and second semester of the RN program. She maintained monthly contact with her Case Manager. Her Case Manager continued encouraging her to reach her goal. WIOA funding paid for her third, fourth, and fifth semesters. She was not able to work due to the demands of the RN program, but she was able to survive financially because her WIOA funds paid for her tuition, books, and fees, and she used her Pell Grant funds for supplemental expenses like gas and food. She graduated Lawson State in January 2023, passed her National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), and is working at Brookwood Baptist Health Systems earning \$26.50 per hour with a \$3.00 per hour shift differential.

#### *Dislocated Worker – Beth*

Beth was laid off from Fred's (retail store) in September 2019 because of a store closure. She did not work during her layoff period and decided to go back to school to become a Registered Nurse. Nursing was a new adventure for her. She visited the Hamilton Career Center where she was eligible for ITA funding as a Dislocated Worker and an Adult. Beth had to wait several semesters before finally receiving ITA funds to cover her final four semesters. The Case Manager states that "Beth was always timely in providing requested information and completing any requirements to receive ITA funds." In December 2022, Beth received her Nursing Pin from Bevill State Community College. Graduation Day, December 19th, revealed her loyalty to the program and classmates as one of her instructors described Beth's class as "one of the best." Beth has entered the workforce in training-related employment as an Operating Room Registered Nurse for North Mississippi Health System in Tupelo, MS. Her first day was January 30, 2023.

#### *Dislocated Worker – Ronald*

Ronald owned a construction company, Blue Sky Scrape, that suffered a loss in the 2009 housing bubble and market crash. He continued to keep his business afloat until 2011. In 2011 he was forced to file for bankruptcy. Since losing his business he was never able to retain gainful employment or restart his business. Ronald met with a WIOA Case Manager in October 2022 and through that discussion of labor market information and an assessment of his interests, he decided to pursue truck driving training. He enrolled in CDL Class A training at Truck Driving Institute in Oxford, AL, in November 2022 and completed his training in December 2022. He was able to obtain employment with Rare Transportation as a Truck Driver earning \$24.00 an hour. He now has stable employment, wages, and enjoys his work.

### *Youth – Jayla*

Jayla came to the Career Center as a youth, single parent, and low-income with very few job skills. She successfully completed the Patient Care Technician (PCT) training program through The Dannon Project and is employed full-time as a Data Systems Technician. She plans to further her career in the medical field and become an RN.

### *Youth – A.H*

A.H. completed training in November 2022. She has been licensed as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) since January 2023 and has also been employed by Sumter Health and Rehabilitation since April 2023. She recently enrolled in post-secondary training (UWA's RN program) as of Fall 2023.

### *Youth – J.O.*

J.O. completed training on June 2023 and is licensed as a CNA since September 2023. She has been employed by Sumter Health and Rehabilitation since May 2023 and plans to pursue further education in the healthcare field.

### *Youth – D.W.*

D.W. completed training in June 2023. She is employed at Choctaw Health and Rehabilitation as CNA since June 2023. Plans to become licensed with UWA's new credential testing site in November 2023.

## **For more information, visit:**

### *Reports*

(Nov. 2023). [State of Alabama Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Titles I & III Program Year 2022 Annual Report.](#)  
Alabama Department of Commerce, Alabama Department of Labor.

### *Links*

Alabama Department of Labor

Alabama Department of Commerce

WIOA-Alabama.org



## Alaska

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

Some highlights of Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) efforts have been collaboration between Career Support and Training Services and Alaska Adult Education (AAE) to increase identification of individuals identified as Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) by refining a screening tool and creating a referral process to better serve BSD individuals, participation in a federal project which led to being featured in national Adult Priority of Service promising practices guidance for publication on WorkforceGPS in PY23, creation of opportunities for Integrated Education and Training plans with wraparound support for successful outcomes, as well as continuation of a partnership with the University of Alaska to increase local education and training programs eligible for WIOA funds. During PY22, DETS added 75 new programs to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), 50 of which were with the University of Alaska's three main campuses in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Southeast.

Housed in DETS, Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) case managers in One-Stop job centers provide support for Alaska's WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. CSTS staff work with individuals to determine program eligibility and, after enrollment, identify goals and appropriate programs and services to address individual needs via comprehensive assessments, career evaluation, and labor market analysis to develop an Individual Employment Plan while providing referrals for necessary additional resources. Participants may receive pre-vocational, vocational, occupational, apprenticeship, on-the-job, and Incumbent Worker training, as well as supportive services to help meet costs of housing, transportation, tools, clothing, books, and supplies while participating in program services.

Across all titles, WIOA programs prioritize high-need populations with special focus on supporting veterans and their eligible spouses, displaced homemakers, individuals with barriers to employment including but not limited to recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, older individuals, ex-offenders, youth in or aged out of foster care, long-term unemployed, basic skills deficient individuals, and other groups determined by the Governor to have barriers to employment.

#### **Helmets to Hardhats (H2H)**

In PY22 statewide funding continued to support Alaska's H2H program provided through Alaska Works Partnership for life-changing training, skill development and employment placement assistance to military veterans, transitioning service members, and their eligible spouses. The project served 74 individuals during the program year with a \$200,000 award.

**Northern Industrial Training (NIT)**

NIT received \$299,750.00 to develop curriculum to address the statewide shortage of entry-level and professional-level commercial truck drivers, diesel mechanics, health safety and environmental technicians, and project managers. With the developed curriculum, NIT is poised to significantly address the State's shortage in these crucial occupations.

*Other State Funds Activities***Alaska's At-Risk Youth Initiative**

Housed in DETS, CSTS case managers in One-Stop job centers provide support for Alaska's WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. CSTS staff determine program eligibility and, after enrollment, identify goals and appropriate programs and services to address individual needs via comprehensive assessments, career evaluation, and labor market analysis to develop an Individual Employment Plan while providing referrals for necessary additional resources. Participants may receive pre-vocational, vocational, occupational, apprenticeship, on-the-job, and Incumbent Worker training, as well as supportive services to help meet costs of housing, transportation, tools, clothing, books, and supplies while participating in program services.

**Evaluations***Activities and Methodology*

With a portion of statewide funds Set-Aside by the Governor, Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), through its Assessment and Evaluation committee, and Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) partner with the Department's Research and Analysis unit; other Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) divisions; national, state, and local agencies; trade unions and organizations; training providers; and other non-profit and private entities around the state to evaluate WIOA program performance via a variety of products. The Research and Analysis unit (R&A) collects national, state, and local data in addition to working with WIOA program leaders and partners to conduct and publish longitudinal studies regarding Alaska's demography and economy as they relate to the workforce, to ensure that the state is on a continuous path of improvement and excellence in providing targeted training and support to the state's employers and jobseekers. R&A's Occupational Database and other proprietary information systems providing participant data and rich labor market information create a platform for deep, long-term evaluation of workforce programs.

**Quality Pre-Apprenticeship**

During PY18, training provider Alaska Works Partnership (AWP) worked with the Federal Office of Apprenticeship, the state's apprenticeship program, the DETS, Trade and Economic Transition Dislocated Worker Grant program, and construction trade unions and employers to develop the state's first seven construction Quality Pre-Apprenticeship (QPA) framework courses, per policy 07-525.1. After federal approval, training delivery began in PY19, with five more construction QPAs approved in early PY21. During PY20, DETS laid groundwork to evaluate the effectiveness of QPA training as more participants complete the courses and gain indenture or employment to compare the rate of indenture, employment, and wage outcomes of QPA completers with other types of construction training from providers across the state to inform further development and use of the

QPA framework in construction and other trades in Alaska. This project was discontinued in PY22 due to insufficient available data.

### **RESEA**

Alaska initiated RESEA evaluation according to the requirements of the TEGL No. 06-19 to conduct evidence-based analysis to determine and deploy optimal interventions and service delivery during PY20. The DETS RESEA Coordinator worked with the Division's UI program and with R&A as the third-party evaluator.

During PY21, a second RESEA interview requirement was selected as the intervention subject to evaluation based on a comparison to single interview data, where a randomly selected sample of first interview completers (75%) will be selected for a second interview. The third-party evaluator will compare this group against the single interview control group (25%) to determine how successful an additional intervention is for individuals gaining and maintaining long-term employment based on four potential points: employment, median earnings, benefit weeks claimed, and benefit funds expended. DETS continued to work with its system developer and the Department's Data Processing unit to implement a second RESEA interview in AlaskaJobs, with completion anticipated by the end of Calendar Year 2023. Alaska has developed a statement of work for the evaluation project and will provide it to federally designated provider ABT Associates, for review and technical assistance during PY23. Evaluation of the second RESEA interview will continue through PY23 and beyond.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **JOBZ Club and S'Cool Store**

In PY18, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and school district staff began working with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to evaluate the effectiveness of JOBZ Club and S'Cool Store in increasing graduation rates and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities as identified in DEED's State Systematic Improvement Plan. PY18 was the first year of collecting data at the student level and this will be an on-going evaluation through 2025. DVR has been extremely successful in providing statewide services to transition age students in urban, rural, and remote locations. This has been accomplished through partnerships with school districts, specialized Pre-Employment Transition Services Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs), and other organizations that assist with coordinating transportation and enrollment. As part of this project, DVR also increased the distribution of training materials and resources specifically those that include culturally responsive programming for rural districts with large Alaska Native students with disabilities by:

- Changing the Pathways curriculum to include subsistence and self-employment through subsistence activities; and
- Distributing "Picture Your Future–Exploring Your Transition Goals" which is a culturally responsive assessment tool and transition planning guide.

## *Reports*

### **Nonresidents Working in Alaska Report**

Published in February 2023, the report examines the industries, occupations, and regions with high percentages of nonresident workers. The AWIB and other policymakers use this information to identify where to develop training programs that will prepare more Alaskans for high-paying jobs.

### **Training Program Performance Report (TPPR)**

The report details the employment and earnings for participants of several WIOA training programs in Alaska. These include Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and other programs. R&A uses data from its internal occupational database system to compare trainees' occupations and earnings the year before training to the year after.

### **Special Labor Market Topics**

R&A published a number of special research topics in the monthly publication Alaska Economic Trends Magazine, including:

- The Decline in Working Age Population
- Recovery in Alaska's Tourism Industry After the Pandemic

### **Other Reports**

- Employment Outcomes After High School Graduation
- The Decline of Working Age Population
- The Child Care Industry
- Recovery in Alaska's Tourism Industry After the Pandemic

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

WIOA State Board and Two Planning Area Waiver.

### *Strategies*

Alaska's waiver to WIOA Section 107(b) allows the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to carry out the roles of a Local Board. The modified role of AWIB representing two local areas consisting of Anchorage/Mat-Su and the remainder of the state is essential to offset excessive administrative costs, thwart inconsistencies in services, and maximize overall performance in a large state whose small population is dispersed over a vast area of economically distinct regions.

*Impact on Performance*

The State has made significant progress towards the goals outlined in the approved waiver. Two non-voting seats consisting of local elected officials were created during PY21, along with a sub-committee that ensures local area priorities are represented. Functioning as a single State Board has streamlined the process and timeliness of awarding grants by the elimination of multiple layers of administrative entities, allowed consistent eligibility standards across the state, and improved both visibility and accountability of workforce investment programs. Operating under the waiver, the AWIB has drawn representation from all areas of the state and from diverse interest groups such as organized labor, business and industry, state agencies, native organizations, educational institutions, individuals experiencing disabilities, and other relevant groups. Similarly, by ensuring the representation on the AWIB, the interests of a wide range of at-risk and priority populations are served, such as veterans, low-income youth and adults, dislocated workers, and rural residents.

The AWIB continues to engender local participation and points of view, consulting local elected officials from the State's boroughs and cities in regional and statewide planning efforts. For example, the Workforce Readiness and Employment and Placement Committee provides oversight for training and employment programs that are delivering education and training relevant to local employer needs. AWIB has prioritized attendance at gatherings surrounding local workforce issues, as well as informational events focused on Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunities for rural Alaskan communities. Additionally, the waiver allows the AWIB to foster regional collaboration among job centers, educational institutions, labor, and non-profits, and to work with employers to determine local or regional hiring needs that informs responsive training programs to ensure that the department meets all sector needs and serves all geographic regions.

**Success Stories***WIOA Adult – Christy*

As a stay-at-home parent and spouse of a military veteran, Christy had not worked in competitive employment for over 19 years. While studying at the University of Alaska Anchorage campus, her advisor referred her to the job center's Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) to seek funding to complete her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. Her CSTS case manager completed a comprehensive assessment which indicated that Christy had insufficient employment skills to be competitive in the local labor market. CSTS enrolled her and used WIOA Adult funds to cover tuition, fees, books, supplies, and testing and licensing fees. While Christy was not eligible for a PELL grant, she was able to use her spouse's GI Bill education benefits to cover the remaining costs of her training. Christy obtained full-time employment as a Registered Nurse at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital at a starting wage of \$32.00 per hour plus benefits. Christy is thrilled to be working her dream job as a Registered Nurse in her hometown of Fairbanks, AK.

*WIOA Adult – Jonathan*

Jonathan obtained full-time employment as a Driver/Equipment Operator with M&M Constructors, earning \$32.00 per hour plus benefits. Jonathan contacted CSTS in search of Heavy Equipment Operator training. Prior to enrollment, Jonathan was employed as a driver, working 35 hours a week, earning \$26.00 per hour. While he already had a Class A Commercial Driver License, Heavy Equipment Operator training would provide Jonathan with more employment opportunities and higher wages. CSTS used WIOA Adult funds to cover the cost of tuition and transportation. Jonathan self-funded his meals and incidentals. He completed a 120-hour Basic Civil Construction training course through the Alaska Driving Academy. Jonathan said, “My training was the best experience and thank you for making my dream come true.”

*WIOA Dislocated Worker – Susan*

Susan obtained full-time, year-round employment as a Social Services Associate for the State of Alaska Office of Children’s Services earning \$20.16 per hour with benefits after she completed her Associate of Applied Science in Human Services degree from the University of Alaska, Anchorage, Mat-Su College branch. Mat-Su Job Center CSTS staff performed her assessment showing the need for Susan to obtain her degree to enter a high-growth, high-demand career field. Susan had been laid off from a previous job and had been long-term unemployed. At enrollment, Susan was also raising her grandchildren and receiving TANF, SNAP benefits, and Medicaid. She was also approved for a PELL grant to assist with tuition and fees. Since Susan was receiving TANF, she already had a Division of Public Assistance Case Manager assisting her with goals towards self-sufficiency. The CSTS and Division of Public Assistance (DPA) case managers worked together across departments to braid funds from both programs, fully supporting Susan through her training to ensure a successful outcome. Susan’s DPA Case Manager provided support services during training, while CSTS provided funding for tuition and fees through the WIOA Dislocated Worker as well as National Dislocated Worker National Health Emergency and Trade and Economic Transition grant programs.

*WIOA Dislocated Worker – Deonte*

Deonte obtained full-time, year-round employment as a Heavy Truck Driver with Conoco Phillips on the Alaska North Slope, earning \$30 per hour with benefits. Mat-Su Job Center CSTS staff performed an assessment indicating the need for Deonte to upgrade his restricted Class B Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) to an unrestricted Class A CDL to enter a high-growth, high-demand career. Deonte was determined to be low income after being laid off from his previous job and was receiving UI, SNAP benefits, and Medicaid at the time of enrollment. He already had a current Department of Transportation medical card and a Commercial Learners Permit, and was assisted with tuition, fees, and housing to attend Kenai Peninsula Driving Instructions Entry Level Driver Training course from the WIOA Dislocated Worker program.

*WIOA Dislocated Worker – Jessica*

Jessica was a single parent and a SNAP recipient living in low-income housing when she came to the Ketchikan Job Center to inquire about funding for Commercial Driver training. She had been employed as a Pet Groomer earning \$16.00 per hour but was

laid off from her position when the facility closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. She has always enjoyed driving and working hard, and she wanted to obtain her Class A CDL. Jessica did some labor market research on her own, saw there was a large need for CDL Class A drivers, and that the income would help her support herself and her young child. Wagner-Peyser staff referred her to CSTS after providing information about potential financial assistance for training. Jessica was determined eligible for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program by CSTS staff and assessed to need additional skills to be competitive in the labor market and gain self-sufficiency. She received tuition and fees to attend the Entry Level Driver Training Course at Southeast Trucking and Training along with support for housing, meals, and transportation during training. Jessica relocated to Oregon to accept a full-time position as a Commercial Truck Driver and Warehouse Associate for Christensen USA at a starting wage rate of \$24.00 per hour plus benefits. She has since received a raise, is earning \$29.00 per hour and is now self-supporting and happy with her new career.

### *WIOA Youth – Emily*

Emily was introduced to construction training when she participated in the Cadet to Work Program (CWP) through the Alaska Military Youth Academy and Alaska Works Partnership in 2017. She completed several CWP classes including Electrical Wiring 40 Hour, Carpentry 40 Hour, Advanced Carpentry 40 Hour, and OSHA-10 Hour. Emily then received her GED and graduated from AMYA.

Emily was having a tough time personally after graduating and unfortunately became a substance abuser. She ended up at Hiland Mountain Correctional Center and entered a recovery program in Wasilla. Emily worked hard to recover and completed her program in the spring of 2022. Her Alaska Works Partnership Case Manager bumped into her while Emily was working in Palmer at a gas station and encouraged her to apply to a Heavy Equipment Operating 40 Hour training. With WIOA Youth funds, Emily successfully completed the training in July 2022. She excelled as a top student, enjoyed operating equipment, and felt she had found her career calling. After completing an interview skills class to help her prepare, she applied for the Operating Engineers Local 302 Heavy Equipment Operator Apprenticeship. Emily's hard work paid off and she was accepted into their apprenticeship in December 2022. Emily also received support services from Alaska Works Partnership during her 11 weeks of apprenticeship training before beginning work in June 2023. Emily attributes her success to the training and guidance she received as a WIOA Youth participant from Alaska Works Partnership. As of June 2023, Emily is operating for Western Construction and Equipment in Anchorage, AK.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

(Nov. 2023). [Alaska WIOA Annual Report Narrative PY 2022](#). Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

(Feb. 2023). [Alaska Training Program Performance: For participants exiting programs in state fiscal year 2021](#). Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Kreiger, R., et al (Feb. 2023). [2021 Nonresidents Working in Alaska](#). Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Training Program Performance Report.

R&A Alaska Economic Trends Magazine:

- Sandberg, E. (March 2023). [Decline in Working-Age Alaskans](#). Pp, 4–10.
- Wiebold, K. (Apr. 2023). [Has tourism fully bounced back?](#) Pp, 4–10.

### *Links*

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Alaska Economic Trends Magazine



## Arizona

Arizona@Work

Arizona Department of Economic Security

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **WIOA Governor's Discretionary Fund**

In the last quarter of PY22, the Governor's office requested grant applications for innovative workforce development pilot programs that engage individuals from communities with consistently high rates of unemployment and poverty. Approximately \$4,000,000 would be awarded, with a maximum annual award of \$500,000 per grantee, which is renewable for a combined term of three years. Applications from Arizona entities that include 501(c)(3) organizations; Arizona local, county, and state government entities; Arizona Tribal Nations and communities; Arizona public and charter school districts; Arizona institutions of higher learning (universities, community colleges, and trade schools); and any partnership of the above-listed organizations were accepted.

To increase participant accessibility and eliminate barriers to success, proposed programs are required to provide wraparound services during program enrollment and at least six to twelve months post-graduation. Examples of wraparound services include but are not limited to the following:

- Mentoring;
- Trauma-informed care;
- Personal employment counseling;
- Employment readiness;
- Childcare;
- Transportation support;
- Nutrition assistance; and
- Transitional housing.

Furthermore, programs should strive to implement programming in the communities they seek to serve and will need to demonstrate existing partnerships with the public workforce development system, education and human services systems and private establishments.

### **ElevateEdAZ**

The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and Arizona Commerce Authority are funding a \$5,000,000 project for the Phoenix Chamber Foundation to expand its ElevateEdAZ program. The program prepares individuals for college and career through stronger alignment between education, business, and the community. ElevateEdAZ focuses on increasing the number of students completing high-quality education to workforce learning pathways that align with the needs of the industry. This includes working with school partners to support students in completing industry recognized credentials, attaining early post-secondary credit, and participating in work-based learning (WBL) experiences such as internships and job shadowing. In addition, ElevateEdAZ supports educator professional development by partnering to provide externship experiences for teachers and counselors.

### **Jobpath Inc., Student Support Services**

Jobpath Inc., received \$210,000 to support the success of 547 low-income students pursuing short-term degrees or credentials throughout southeastern Arizona.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Arizona Western College Broadband Project**

The Project is a \$300,000 project that implements a broadband fiber optics training program at Arizona Western College, with a focus on related in-demand jobs in Yuma County. The program includes Fiber Optic Certification tuition assistance, paid work-based training, job placement assistance, and supportive services. The project serves local employers such as Arizona Public Service, Spectrum, ALLO Fiber Internet, Century Line, and others.

#### **Future48 Advanced Manufacturing Marketing Campaign**

Future48 is a \$300,000 marketing campaign through Ideas Collide to change perceptions in the advanced manufacturing trades industry as a STEM-based career pathway to capture an emerging workforce. The campaign will create a wide variety of digital, print, and other forms of media that will guide interested individuals to a website for additional information on advanced manufacturing.

### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Arizona Career Readiness Credential (ACRC).
- Maricopa County Community College District - Semiconductor Technician Quick Start Program
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Effectiveness of Training Programs on Participant Employment and Wage Outcomes**

The objective of the study is to establish a process to objectively evaluate the effectiveness of training programs offered by training providers in the Arizona@Work system by quantifying the effects of external factors outside the control of the training providers and removing them from consideration. The analysis provided in the study can help workforce policy makers adopt training program strategies that align with the goals of the Arizona@Work system: promoting resources that lead participants to meaningful employment with livable wages.

The study included 22,294 adult participants who exited the workforce system between 2018 Q1. and 2021 Q1. Among these participants, 5,182 participants completed at least one occupational skill training, while the remaining 17,112 participants either did not enter a training, or entered a training but did not complete it. The study only evaluated programs with greater or equal to five training completers. There was a total of 70 training providers and 104 training programs that met the minimum participant “completer” requirements and were included in the study. The remaining 127 training providers and 405 training programs did not meet the minimum participant completer threshold and were excluded from the study.

Other considerations included:

- The study treated the non-completers as a baseline group and compared this group’s outcomes to the outcomes of training completers in each of the ten education subjects.
- If a participant completed more than one training program, only the last completed training was considered.
- The study evaluated employment and wage outcomes for those participants who completed a training program in the other occupational skills training service type category. Note, other occupation training service is an official training type category defined under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) as training that combines workplace training with related instruction or skill upgrading and retraining.

The study used two methods to estimate the employment and wage effects of training programs. The first, referred to as the training subject effect, estimated the effect training programs had on employment and wage outcomes based on the educational subject of the training program completed. Training programs were organized into ten subject categories. The second method, referred to as the training program effect, estimated the effect training programs had on employment and wage outcomes. This method also identified differences in effectiveness for similar training programs offered by multiple training providers.

The study reviewed participant performance across three outcome measures to determine training program effectiveness. These measures included employment rate two quarters after exit, employment rate four quarters after exit, and the average quarterly wage received two quarters after exit. Individual participant outcomes were aggregated by training program education subject and training program provider for evaluation.

*Continuous Improvement*

Previously, the evaluation of training program effectiveness was extremely difficult given the varying characteristics of the participants being served, training providers and training programs offered, and the employment conditions of local economies. This research attempted to develop a framework that workforce staff and jobseekers could use to identify the most important externalities and quantify their impact on participant employment and wage outcomes. Future analysis will build from the analysis presented in the report and focus on developing standard resources for workforce board members, workforce staff, and jobseeker participants to use.

*Reports*

Methodology for Arizona@Work Training Program Effectiveness Evaluation Project.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

Individual Training Account (ITA) for in-school youth (ISY).

*Strategies*

No information provided for this section.

*Impact on Performance*

In PY22, 89 training services funded by ITAs were delivered to 81 ISY participants. Of those participants impacting PY22 WIOA performance indicators, ISY who received training via ITA were more likely to have successful placement in the 2nd Quarter After Exit, Attained a Credential, and achieved a Measurable Skill Gain.

The overall Youth program credential rate decreased from PY21 (60.3%) to PY22 (59.0%). The total number of ISY participants receiving training services has increased every year that the waiver has been in place, from 112 to 167 to 175 in PY20, PY21, and PY22, respectively.

The impacts of the waiver on WIOA performance indicators appear promising for PY22, continuing a trend seen in PY21 data. The waiver was approved in late 2019 and ITA funding was accessible to participants during 2020 as the first full calendar year. While some cohort sizes remain low, they are increasing as more exiters will have benefited from the waiver over time. The impact of the ITA for ISY waiver will continue to become clearer in future program years as cohort sample sizes increase.

<b>Performance Outcomes for In-School Youth with ITA (PY22)</b>		
Indicator	ISY with ITA Funding	ISY Total

	Numerator: Achieved a Positive Outcome	Denominator: Qualified to Achieve a Positive Outcome	Rate	Numerator: Achieved a Positive Outcome	Denominator: Qualified to Achieve a Positive Outcome	Rate
2nd Quarter Employment Rate	53	66	80.3%	218	294	74.1%
Credential Attainment Rate	18	20	90.0%	123	219	56.2
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	39	52	75.0%	252	396	63.6%

## Success Stories

### *WIOA Youth – Coconino County – Arturo*

Arturo's Juvenile Probation Officer referred him to the Arizona@Work Coconino County for career services and job-placement assistance. Although he faced significant challenges, he was determined to establish a career and progress from fast-food jobs. He wanted employment that would allow him to help his family and get a place of his own to live.

Arturo's objective was to get his Commercial Driver's License (CDL), so the Youth program facilitated his enrollment in the Phoenix Truck Driving school at Coconino Community College. He worked hard to get his permit and had to take his test twice, while his Workforce Coach continued to encourage him. As a result of Arturo's perseverance, he received his CDL permit and, after four weeks, received his CDL. The Youth program assisted with his placement at Legacy Beverage, where after two weeks, he was driving his own truck and making deliveries for the company.

The collaboration between Arturo's probation officer and Arizona@Work Coconino County, their support, and Arturo's dedication and hard work set him on the path to self-sufficiency.

### *WIOA Adult – Maricopa County – Ricky*

Ricky is a veteran who served one year in the Army and four years in the National Guard. Ricky received a dishonorable discharge from duty and had been in and out of prison for 42 years. While living at New Freedom for a few months, Ricky was referred to Arizona@Work Maricopa County and began his journey toward becoming an active contributor to his community.

At Maricopa County, Ricky participated in the Smart Justice Program and received individualized services. He was also enrolled in the WIOA Adult program and received occupational skills training that led to a CDL.

Through hard work and dedication, despite many life barriers, Ricky was successful with his training and was awarded his CDL. With the training completed, Ricky's Career Advisor recognized that Ricky lacked resources to purchase work-related items.

Thus, the WIOA Adult program provided supportive services, including work boots and tools. In December 2022, he gained employment with Otto Trucking and started receiving a livable wage as a Commercial Truck Driver.

Ricky reports: “I have overcome a great deal to finally begin a productive life. I love my job driving my double belly dump truck. Though it was difficult to begin my very first career, Maricopa County Workforce [did] not once ever failed [sic] to help me, especially with my computer struggles. Thank you. Seriously, thank all of you!”

#### *WIOA Adult – Mohave-La Paz Counties – Donald*

Donald’s triumph is a testament to the synergy of determination, assistance, and cooperation in overcoming obstacles and attaining personal and vocational advancement. His narrative underscores the pivotal elements that contributed to his successful integration into the workforce.

Initially, Donald’s lack of trust in institutions stemmed from a sense of abandonment as a veteran. Through collaboration with Arizona@Work Mohave-La Paz Counties, specifically the programs under Titles I and III of WIOA, Donald discovered the assistance he required to rekindle his self-assurance. Central to his success was his Career Coach, who adeptly navigated his unique challenges. This entailed addressing barriers such as an expired Class A CDL, absence of a cell phone or any technological devices, limited transportation, and past traumatic job experiences. This customized approach fostered trust and facilitated Donald’s transformation.

The story illustrates the program’s responsiveness to Donald’s immediate needs. By furnishing him with a cell phone and procuring his driving record, the program demonstrated its dedication to dismantling hindrances to his progress. Equally significant was the provision of interview attire and work attire, bolstering not only his self-esteem but also his sense of being valued and upheld.

The Career Coach’s role in empowering Donald to embrace assistance emerges as a linchpin. The Coach’s persistence and empathy proved pivotal in steering Donald toward aid acceptance, ushering in positive life transformations.

Beyond addressing hurdles, the Arizona@Work initiative paved Donald’s way to job prospects. Reinstating and transferring his Class A CDL, aiding his Department of Transportation physical retake, and facilitating his commute through insurance and gas vouchers positioned him for success in work experience. The program’s collaboration with the Mohave County Fairgrounds exemplifies the symbiotic relationship between workforce programs and potential employers. The Fairgrounds’ endorsement via a recommendation letter underscores Donald’s commitment and the efficacy of his support system.

Donald’s ultimate attainment of a full-time position as a Road Division Driver for Public Works underscores the Arizona@Work’s impact, substantiating enduring positive change. In essence, Donald’s odyssey from skepticism and barriers to success typifies the potency of a holistic, tailored workforce development approach.

### *WIOA Adult – Pima County – Jennifer*

Jennifer enrolled in the Building and Construction Technologies Integrated Basic Education Skills Training program, with a focus on carpentry, at Pima Community College in Fall 2022. From the first day of the program, Jennifer displayed an exceptional work ethic and dedication to her academic goals. She always arrived at class on time and had perfect attendance for the last two semesters. She paid close attention in each class and always asked pertinent questions and responded with meaningful and thoughtful information and ideas. Jennifer completed her assignments on time, took feedback from the instructors seriously, and sought ways to learn and improve from her mistakes. She provided support to her classmates whenever she could and studied with them outside of the classroom. Jennifer became an advocate for adult learners, using her voice to share her story and encourage others to reach for education to transform their lives. With her outstanding efforts, she received all A's in her classes in Fall 2022. Jennifer exemplifies what it means to be an Adult Education Honor Student.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

[Methodology for Arizona@Work Training Program Effectiveness Evaluation Project.](#)

Arizona@Work. [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative for Titles I and III.](#)

#### *Links*

Arizona@Work

Arizona Department of Economic Security

## Arkansas

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

Arkansas Workforce Centers integrate WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, TAA, TANF, UI, Adult Education and Family Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation. Local partnerships and integration also exist in many areas with SNAP, employment and training programs, and others.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **High Concentration of Eligible Youth Awards**

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services provided an additional \$200K of funding to seven of the ten LWDBs who are serving a high concentration of WIOA eligible youth, in accordance with the definition of “Eligible Youth” found in the WIOA Title I Section 129. Eligible Youth are defined as individuals 16–24 years of age, who are considered low-income persons, and who have one or more risk factors.

#### **Arkansas JobLink (AJL)**

AJL is the State’s integrated web-based workforce development management information system (MIS) used by the state and local areas to share and manage participant data between the Wagner-Peyser program, the Trade Adjustment Assistance program and the WIOA program. AJL provides jobseekers, employers, and workforce development professionals with tremendous flexibility and capacity for accessing, tracking, and reporting services: self-directed, staff-facilitated, staff-assisted, and case management.

All staff have access to and can view all services provided to clients regardless of individual program funding. This approach allows funding streams (regardless of specific target group) to consider the “complete package” of services provided or made available to the client reducing duplication of effort and maximizing outcomes. It also facilitates a single process to extract required data for the generation and submission of performance or demographic client details as required by current mandates. In short AJL provides all workforce partners with a “whole person view” of the services available, or provided to, each client or group.

Arkansas has taken a lead in the development of a direct electronic interface between their AJL and UI systems. Through this interface the State ensures that all UI claimants are registered for work and eliminates repetitive information gathering from UI



claimants. The State has also implemented a proactive approach to Reemployment Services (RES) and Reemployment and Eligibility Assessments (REA) to claimants with the goal of reducing the average length of time a client is out of work. This effort would have been exponentially more difficult if the State had not dealt with an integrated service delivery system. Through the use of electronic wage matching, records are regularly updated with information received from the State and other sources to identify those who have obtained employment and calculate average earnings.

Each quarter, quarterly wage record information is loaded into AJL to measure the progress on state and local common performance measures. The quarterly wage information includes wages paid to an individual, the social security account number, the name of the individual, and the Federal employer identification number of the employer paying the wages to the individual. State wage records are available to other member states through the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) on a quarterly basis. Likewise, Arkansas is able to track participants that work or move outside of Arkansas for performance measurement purposes through WRIS wage records from member states.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Enrollment to Employment**

In order to support evaluation and research efforts relevant to state strategy, policy, and practice needs, Arkansas worked with the Coleridge Initiative to develop a new Applied Data Analytics training program curriculum, titled “Evaluating Enrollment to Employment Pathways.” This program leverages the Arkansas workforce longitudinal data developed under the WDQI to train participants on applied use of data analytics on integrated WIOA, SNAP, TANF, and work-based learning data to design and develop scalable research and products for supporting data-driven policy and practice, with a particular focus on co-enrollment and integrated service delivery. Two cohorts of up to 30 students each will be supported under Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI), and DOL-ETA has funded two additional cohorts.

The curriculum leverages a scalable data model based on interoperable layouts to support collaborative development and use of continuously improving data products by interagency, multistate, and cross-sector teams.

#### **Administrative Data Record Linkage Roadmap**

During PY22, the State conducted research under the America’s Datahub Consortium to assess record linkage approaches for the foreign-born population and to recommend a roadmap for improving the fidelity of administrative data linkage on the foreign-born science and engineering workforce.

America’s Data Hub facilitates coordinated research to drive both infrastructure recommendations and response to relevant evaluation and research needs for current policy priorities through a series of research efforts for the development of a national secure data service. The Foreign-Born Scientists and Engineers and the U.S. Workforce (FBSE) project is focused on improving the evidence base for measuring the economic impact of foreign-born scientists and engineers, which can be particularly affected

by record linkage approached based upon Social Security Number (SSN), introducing coverage gaps and biases into data, evidence, and performance reporting.

Arkansas contributed to this work by researching record linkage approaches, assessing the quality of administrative data and the impact on record linkage performance for the foreign-born population, assessing and comparing the performance of a wide variety of record linkage approaches, and identifying methodologies for assessing, mitigating, and communicating record linkage bias.

Based on findings and consultation with a panel of experts, the Arkansas research team developed a roadmap of actionable recommendations for improving record linkage fidelity for the foreign-born population by:

- Raising awareness of record linkage bias.
- Improving mitigation and communication of record linkage bias through education.
- Increasing transparency of record linkage approaches, performance, and data quality.
- Enhancing the collection and sharing of individual identifiers to improve record linkage performance.

This research has broader implications for improving record linkage at the state and federal levels and will continue into PY23 with implementation or recommendations.

Some recommendations have already been implemented through changes in Applied Data Analytics training program curriculum. Some recommendations have relevance to discussions by the Workforce Information Advisory Council on enhanced collection and sharing of wage data. Record linkage improvement will also be assessed during Jobs and Employment Data Exchange (JEDx) pilots.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Arkansas Workforce Strategy**

- **Data-Driven Workforce Strategy**  
The Executive Order 23-16 requires the Governor's Workforce Cabinet to prepare and implement a data-driven strategic plan for workforce development in Arkansas. The development of the workforce strategy involved a collaborative, user-centered design process, engaging a wide array of stakeholders. This included state, regional, and national partners, ensuring that the strategy benefits from a range of insights and best practices. Input was also solicited from local businesses, non-profits, educational institutions, and community groups, ensuring that the strategy is grounded in the real-world needs of Arkansas's workforce and employers.
- **LAUNCH Skills-Based Workforce Platform**  
A key outcome of this collaborative process is the design of LAUNCH, a user-centered platform tailored to Arkansas's specific workforce needs. LAUNCH is envisioned as a comprehensive tool that will facilitate easier access to employment

and educational resources for residents and provide a streamlined talent acquisition and management system for employers. The platform, being collaboratively developed with Research Improving People's Lives (RIPL), is designed to integrate data-driven insights, leveraging the state's robust data sharing infrastructure and advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), to offer personalized and intuitive support for learning and employment.

### **Other Activities**

- Linked Open Data on Credentials
- Integrated Service Delivery
- Talent Pipeline Management
- Jobs and Employment Data Exchange (JEDx)
- Eligible Training Provider Reporting
- Adult Education Joint PIRL Development
- Workforce Data Quality Initiative
- Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program

### *Reports*

- Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report
- Roadmap for Improving the Fidelity of Administrative Data Linkage in Support of Evidence-Based Policy and Practice on the Foreign-Born Science and Engineering Workforce
- WDQI Web Convening Presentation on "A World Without Waivers: Arkansas' Journey Reporting ETPL All Participant Measures."
- The American Enterprise Institute Report
- Coleridge Initiative: Applied Data Analytics Training Summary Report

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

The State did not operate under waivers during PY22.

*Strategies*

Not applicable.

*Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

**Success Stories***WIOA Adult – Gerald*

Gerald, an Adult Participant, was a day farm laborer with a disability who was temporarily living with his son. Gerald sought services through multiple WIOA partners including Arkansas Rehabilitation Services who provided a referral to the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board to assist with achieving his career goals. Gerald received tutoring assistance through Fort Smith Adult Education to address a barrier with being basic skills deficient. Another barrier was that he was a justice-involved individual which made it difficult to obtain employment. After receiving career services and intensive services, Gerald qualified for occupational skills training and showed interest in becoming a truck driver. The local career advisor assisted Gerald with enrolling in the Cops CLD Academy and WIOA assisted with training costs. He earned his commercial driver's license (CDL) in the summer of 2023 and gained employment with a construction company where he utilizes his CDL to transport machinery. Gerald said it looks like he will be on track to make about \$65K this year, and \$150K by next year. Gerald expressed his gratitude for the WIOA program and all who helped him along the way.

*WIOA Adult/TANF – Sombra*

Sombra was approved for WIOA and TANF services in Crittenden County on September 15, 2022. At the time of enrollment, she was unemployed, a single parent of seven children, recipient of ARKIDS 1st and SNAP benefits, and high school drop-out. Sombra had been working off and on in retail and customer service for years but stated that she was in dire need of finding a career that would allow her to provide for her family. After thinking about her future, she expressed interest in work experience and career development due to her lacking the professional skills to retain a "good job." After being approved for TANF, she needed assistance with childcare to complete the Work Based-Learning component of work experience. She was referred to WIOA as a wraparound service to help assist with services that TANF could not provide.

After working at different worksites, Sombra was encouraged to start applying for jobs using the skills learned in the WIOA program. She secured a job as a Cashier for QuickTrip using the Arkansas Job Link system and Indeed.com. As the Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas (WDBEA) stood by her side through this journey, she received customer service training while also benefiting from supportive services that allowed her to work and earn money while training. Sombra states that with her faith and drive, she is going to aim for being a manager with hopes of owning her own company one day.

*WIOA Dislocated Worker – Ronnie*

Ronnie was determined eligible for WIOA services on May 31, 2023, as a Category B Dislocated Worker. Ronnie was impacted by a substantial layoff from his company. He was not low income, nor did he receive any type of public assistance, but he found himself unemployed after being accustomed to working daily. Not a stranger to work, Ronnie immediately began job searching and exploring opportunities to advance his career. He learned about the WIOA program and after completing career interest assessments he decided to pursue a new career in the trucking industry.

Ronnie was approved for WIOA funding to cover his CDL occupational skills training at Pine Bluff Truck Driving Academy. He began his training shortly after and kept his Career Planner informed every step of the way. He remained positive during each conversation. Ronnie successfully completed his training and accepted his first job offer as a Truck Driver with McElroy Truck Lines. Ronnie acknowledged his gratefulness to WIOA and for the assistance that was provided to him.

*WIOA Youth – Alisa*

Alissa, an out-of-school youth, completed the application for training assistance through the WIOA/Western Workforce Board program in hopes to receive financial assistance and enroll in courses towards a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) degree. She was in a homeless situation and said that she was very motivated to find employment to support herself. She was sure that she wanted to become a nurse after taking courses in high school and earning her Certified Nurse Aide license.

WIOA paid educational expenses not covered by PELL Grant and the Arkansas Academic Challenge scholarship. Alissa worked hard each semester to gain the best grades she could, kept up with all activities required, and worked enthusiastically to succeed. She earned her LPN license and now works at the Waldron Nursing and Rehab Center.

**For more information, visit:***Reports*

[\*Annual Report: Statewide Performance Narrative WIOA Titles I & III PY' 2022\*](#). Arkansas Division of Workforce Services.

Gudipati, V., et al. [\*Roadmap for Improving the Fidelity of Administrative Data Linkage in Support of Evidence-Based Policy and Practice on the Foreign-Born Science and Engineering Workforce\*](#). Coleridge Initiative.

(Jan. 2023). [\*Scaling Work-Based Learning in Arkansas: Applied Data Analytics Training Summary Report\*](#). Coleridge Initiative.

Bergeron, B. & Fryer, L. (Nov. 2023). *Credential Transparency: Judging Return on Investment for Higher Education and Workforce*. American Enterprise Institute.

*Links*

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC)

[Arkansas JobLink](#)

Research Improving People's Lives (RIPL)

The Coleridge Initiative:

- Applied Data Analytics
- Evaluating Enrollment to Employment Pathways

## California

California Workforce Development Board

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Employment Social Enterprise (ESE) Program**

The program aims to build on existing ESE programs and/or collaborate with the existing successful ESE programs. The ESE program focuses on the first step to transitioning participants into the workforce by placing individuals into employment, typically in a supported employment setting, to help them earn wages while building work experience, improving job skills, and providing supportive services and wrap-around support such as housing, access to childcare, and mental health services. The programs will also coordinate with the state efforts across multiple agencies and departments to increase access and retention of transitional employment through Social Enterprises to support recruitment, wrap-around support, case management, and job placement of the participants in the ESE program. The ESE program provided with the assistance of these funds will offer employment and skill-building opportunities that will support employees through employment challenges. Furthermore, successful participation should allow greater opportunities for employee retention and increased earnings potential, directly supporting one of DOL and State goals.

#### **Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF) Program – Planning Phase**

The CERF program aims to create meaningful regional planning procedures that will result in regional roadmaps outlining regional plans to foster long-term economic resilience. The funds support a wide range of planning activities, including capacity-building, community engagement, and research. Regional plans will meet regions where they are. They will be based on actionable research in partnership, shared decision-making with communities, and consultation with expert institutions, focusing on the CERF objectives.

The CERF defines “Disinvested Communities” as:

- Census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the California Environmental Protection Agency.
- Census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with the median household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development’s list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093 of the California Health and Safety Code.

- High poverty area and High unemployment area as designated by the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development California Competes Tax Credit Program.
- California Native American Tribes as defined by the Native American Heritage Commission Tribal Consultation Policy.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

- Campesino de California Outreach

## **Evaluations**

#### *Activities and Methodology*

##### **High RoadSM Training Partnerships (H RTP)/ High RoadSM Construction Careers (HRCC)**

The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) is currently finalizing the iterative research and evaluation framework that will be amended and adapted by the Research and Evaluation Team and the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Labor Center partners. The proposed framework is a mixed-methods, multi-sited High RoadSM Initiative case study. The proposed methodological approach entails a combination of in-depth interviews, surveys, document analysis, and inferential statistics. The CWDB Research and Evaluation Team is currently formulating an H RTP/HRCC performance index based on the High RoadSM model. The team has developed and implemented a new data system to ensure that CWDB has the appropriate data for the metrics needed.

##### **Other Activities**

- Education Stabilization Fund-Reimagine Workforce Preparation (ESF-RWP)
- Regional Plan Implementation (RPI)
- America's Job Center of California (AJCC)
- The CAAL-Skills Impact Study
- Prison to Employment (P2E) Initiative
- Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative (AB 1111)

#### *Continuous Improvement*

The CWDB Research and Evaluation Team continues to:

- Prepare separate white papers on the basic tenets for the CWDB's flagship High RoadSM Program. In addition, the CWDB Research and Evaluation Team is creating resources, materials, and guidebooks to accompany the white papers.



- Serve as CWDB point of contact on ongoing and current evaluations, given that the researchers are Ph.D.-trained social scientists and are well-versed in the techniques and tools to conduct full-scale evaluations. The CWDB Information Security Officer (ISO) and the researchers are all familiar with the different data systems within the LWDBAs.
- Use an intermediate safe and secure portal developed for housing all current and upcoming grants. Grantees will be using a pre-determined data list with simple specifications and filling them out into an Excel workbook that is broken up into five categories:
  - a) participant information,
  - b) career services,
  - c) supportive services,
  - d) training services; and
  - e) outputs and outcomes.

The goal eventually is to move all data collected under the different state grants to a Salesforce platform.

Under the CAAL-Skills program, the EDD received funding from the DOL as part of the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) and is working in collaboration with the CWDB to move the CAAL-Skills Databases to the Cloud.

Efforts in this regard include:

- Supporting the Cloud Computing Policy (TL 14-04) for all new reportable and non-reportable IT projects.
- Developing a publicly accessible Workforce Metrics Dashboard portal.
- Providing partners with a secure mechanism to exchange workforce metrics data.
- Direct public access to the Workforce Metrics Dashboard Reports (WMDRs).
- Program performance outcomes.
- An interactive dashboard allows users to query information by workforce program, population characteristics, program year, and participant region.

The CWDB is mandated to start a joint application design and data sharing between community colleges for HRTPs and HRCCs. This task involves collecting the data from community colleges, importing the data to the internal data store, further processing the data based on the predefined business rules, and generating dynamic, static, and interactive business reports. This project is currently in the design stages. It needs to be developed in the cloud environment for all CAAL-Skills technical and business staff to access and generate timely reports.

### *Reports*

- CAAL-Skills Workforce Metrics Dashboard Report 2022
- CAAL-Skills Workforce Metrics Dashboard Report 2025
- CAAL-Skills 1.0 Evaluation Report
- America's Job Center of California (AJCC) Evaluation Report
- Prison to Employment (P2E) Initiative
- Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative (AB1111) Evaluation Report
- Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) 2.0 Evaluation Report
- Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) 3.0 Evaluation Report
- Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) 4.0 Evaluation Report (being finalized for publication)

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) was approved for all requested waivers (effective July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023):

- Waiver of WIOA Section 134(d)(5), allowing up to 30 percent of WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker local formula funds to be used to provide transitional jobs.
- Waiver of WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(H)(i) allowing up to 90 percent reimbursement of on-the-job training (OJT) costs for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.
- Waiver of WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) allowing the State and Local Boards to decrease the federal 75 percent out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure requirement to 50 percent to increase the allowable expenditures for serving in-school youth (ISY) at risk for disengagement.

#### *Strategies*

The State worked with its WIOA partners in PY21 to implement Workforce Services Directives (WSDs), as well as update the COVID-19 WIOA Waiver Guidance (WSD 20-13) for the Waiver application cycle of PY22–2023.

To provide Local Boards with additional flexibility when assisting individuals affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the State requested three WIOA waivers from the DOL during PY21. In WSD 22-12, the State established policies and procedures for Local Boards to access the DOL-approved waivers. This included an application where Local Boards were required to outline how each waiver would impact their participants, community, and service delivery. They were also required to provide their projected programmatic outcomes so the state could track their progress via CalJOBS<sup>SM</sup> to fulfill DOL reporting requirements.

The CWDB has worked extensively to create policies to reduce the administrative burden on Local Boards and establish consistency in processes and procedures; the CWDB published formal guidance for the WIOA Waivers, followed by providing any necessary technical assistance directly to the Local Boards.

### *Impact on Performance*

No information provided for this section.

## **Success Stories**

No information provided for this section.

## **For more information, visit:**

### *Reports*

[CAAL-Skills Workforce Metrics Dashboard Report 2022](#). California Workforce Development Board.

Rothstein, J., et al (May 2022). [CAAL-Skills: Study of Workforce Training Programs in California](#). 1.0 Evaluation Report. California Policy Lab.

### [Corporation for a Skilled Workforce:](#)

- [Evaluation of America's Job Centers of California](#)
- Geckeler, C., et al (May 2022). [An Evaluation of AB 1111: The Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative - Implementation and Early Outcomes Report](#).
- [Regional Plan Implementation \(RPI\) 2.0 Evaluation Report](#)
- [Regional Plan Implementation \(RPI\) 3.0 Evaluation Report](#)

[Results Achieved Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) – Program Year 2022](#). California Workforce Development Board

*Links*

California Workforce Development Board

California Policy Lab

Employment Development Department

- [WSD 22-12, WIOA Waiver Guidance](#)

## Colorado

Colorado Workforce Development Council

### Use of State Funds

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Adult Priority of Service**

Colorado has implemented a robust adult priority of service policy with local service providers seeking to achieve 100 percent of participants meeting the statutory categories. Statutory Adult Priority of Service Categories for PY22: 83.26 percent - unique participants:

- Public assistance recipient (48.31%)
- Individual/Family income (62.61%)
- Homeless (6.08%)
- Foster Child (1.02%)
- Individual with disability - single income (12.79%)
- Free Lunch Recipient (4.13%)
- Basic skills deficient (15.10%)
- Underemployed (8.08%)

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Not applicable.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

##### **Evaluation Initiative with Northern Illinois University (NIU)**

WIOA requires the Workforce Development Program (WDP) to conduct formal evaluations of WIOA program activities to research and test innovative services and strategies and achieve high levels of performance and outcomes. Working NIU, WDP established a model for WIOA program evaluation using the Training Placement and Outcomes in Colorado Workforce Areas. WDP and NIU continued to provide technical assistance and training for a cohort of local area staff, the WIOA Evaluation Team,

to build their capacity to employ a mixed-method evaluation approach involving quantitative and qualitative strategies. Each local workforce area completed a quantitative analysis in the area and is performing a qualitative analysis to understand the “why” behind the numbers. The evaluation team identified best practices in each local area and incorporated recommendations to improve outcomes for the WIOA participants.

### **Program Year 2022 Evaluation**

Provided state and local training and technical assistance on evaluation processes to enable consistent application of evaluation processes with an emphasis on training-related outcomes. In conjunction with statewide local area evaluation teams, performed a sequential mixed method evaluation of training related outcomes, incorporating an impact study to evaluate training related placement and workforce services for disadvantaged populations.

### **Re-Envisioning the Workforce System through Appreciative Inquiry**

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) WDP conducts a strategic planning process every three to five years using Appreciative Inquiry to ensure that its priorities are aligned with the current needs of its stakeholders. In PY22, The Division of Employment and Training developed a strategic framework to support local and state planning, inform legislation and policy, guide grant applications, enhance programs in alignment with evaluation recommendations, and enable stronger partnership development. The strategic framework focuses on six key results, with goals and strategies for WDP tied to each one:

1. Build a pipeline of skilled talent and quality jobs for Colorado workers to prosper.
2. Innovate and advance strategies to educate stakeholders of the talent and workforce development ecosystem in Colorado and nationally.
3. Return on investment of public funds is realized and demonstrated throughout the public workforce system.
4. Create a seamless customer experience, regardless of the channel of engagement.
5. Increase reach and brand awareness of the public workforce system, through data driven strategies which lead to higher program success rates and outcomes.
6. Provide tailored, efficient, and effective services that meet the workforce needs of business/industry, resulting in increased job placements, improved employee skills and retention, while fostering partnerships with chambers and economic development.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Colorado Workforce Development Council–Continuous Improvement Process**

The State Council has developed a policy that includes a set of standards for awarding Performance Incentive Funds. This Policy Guidance Letter (PGL) can be accessed at the following link: [GRT-2023-01: PY22 Performance Incentive Funds](#) and includes the following:

- Rating Scale

- Reporting Template
- Application Guidelines
- Best Practices Form

### **Adult Education Evaluation Efforts and Outcomes**

The Office of Adult Education initiatives (AEI) offered opportunities for all Title II Adult Education programs to gather, share best-practices, learn about current state data trends, and ask questions. These in-person and virtual “Office Hours” provided space to dig further into state data and demographic information. Additionally, the Adult Education Program Coordinators and the State’s Data Coordinator met routinely with Title II Adult Education providers to assess program specific data and talk through areas of success while offering suggestions on ways to improve learner retention and credential access. Other evaluation efforts regarding grant compliance also took place throughout the year.

### **Other Continuous Improvement activities:**

- Evaluation Initiative with NIU  
The local areas use various tools, including The Evaluation Tool, to independently evaluate outcomes of WIOA programs with an increased emphasis on serving priority populations and improving program service delivery. This work has dramatically improved the capacity of state and local workforce area staff to improve yearly program planning to produce access to high-wage employment and to conduct independent program evaluations to make data-driven recommendations that maximize program performance for all customers. Colorado presented the evaluation work at three webinars and the 2023 National Performance Accountability and Reporting Convening hosted by DOL.

### *Reports*

- Program Year 2022 Evaluation
- Re-Envisioning the Workforce System through Appreciative Inquiry Report
- Workforce Intelligence Data Expert Workgroup (WIDE)
- At-A-Glance Reports

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

Waiver approved in PY20 through June 30, 2023:

- Ability to change youth expenditures from 75 percent out-of-school youth (OSY)/25 percent In-school youth (ISY) to 50 percent OSY/50 percent ISY for PY22 funds at the state and local levels.

Active waiver not utilized:

- Allow local areas to reserve more than 20 percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for incumbent worker training (IWT) (approved by DOL through June 30, 2023).

### *Strategies*

#### **Ability to change youth expenditures from 75 percent OSY/25 percent ISY to 50 percent OSY/50 percent ISY for PY22 funds at the state and local levels**

The Tri-County local area implemented this waiver in PY22 to target ISY with drop-out prevention services. Through partnerships with Arvada and Littleton NEXT, Project Search, School to Work Alliance Program, Jefferson County Human Services and Jefferson County Public Schools, Tri-County engaged and supported 56 young adults to continue and complete their education goals while supporting work readiness prep activities.

In addition to Tri-County, four additional local areas (Adams, Arapahoe/Douglas, Mesa, and the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium) plan to utilize this waiver in PY23. All participating local areas will track and report on the dropout prevention rate for participants on a quarterly basis to The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). CDLE will monitor credential attainment rate for the participating local areas.

#### **Allow local areas to reserve more than 20 percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for IWT**

Since this waiver was not approved until December 9, 2022, no local areas utilized the waiver in PY22.

Through its active participation on workforce committees within the National Governors' Association and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, the State has taken a leadership role to shape and align waiver initiatives across multiple states and effect workforce policies at the national level.

### *Impact on Performance*

#### **Ability to change youth expenditures from 75 percent OSY/25 percent ISY to 50 percent OSY/50 percent ISY for PY22 funds at the state and local levels**

Tri-County set the following goals in PY22 and exceeded both:

- PY22 Goal: 82 percent of in-school participants will succeed in dropout prevention by staying enrolled in school and/or graduating high school.
  - Outcome: 96.4 percent.
- PY22 Goal: Increase credential attainment rate for all Youth participants from 69 percent (PY21 goal) to 71 percent
  - Outcome: 72.2 percent.



## Success Stories

### *Scott*

Scott had been unemployed for about nine months after working as a contract employee in the Information Technology (IT) field for the last several years. Despite his experience and credentials, Scott was no longer getting contract job offers. After working with a Career Coach, Scott decided to return to a Salesforce Administrator role in a company with salary and benefits. Scott used workforce center resources to prospect and network as part of his job search strategy. He attended an IT Job Fair organized by his local workforce center. To prepare, Scott practiced in mock interviews. He networked effectively during the job fair and afterward with participating businesses. Scott was interviewed by two companies, and using the new interview techniques, Scott received offers from both. Scott selected a remote position with a company as a Sales Force Developer with a six-figure salary and benefits. He credited his new interview techniques with building his confidence and focusing his responses to better express his skills aligned for the positions he was seeking.

### *Brenna*

Brenna was working as a Project Manager, but the income was not adequate. She wanted to get training in back-end software engineering at Turing School of Software and Design, but the cost of the program was prohibitive. Brenna completed some online courses to prepare for the training. Her Career Support Specialist worked with her to identify appropriate job alignment with her interests, ability, and career goals, and he was able to enroll her into three grants that paid \$12,000 of the \$20,000 program. Brenna completed five months of the six-month program and was offered a job at a desirable company at twice the salary she had previously earned, with twice the vacation time, with more comprehensive benefits, a supportive, encouraging team, stating "...and I get all of that doing something I love."

### *Business Services – CableNet and Arapahoe/Douglas Works!*

Business Services worked to create a long-term talent pipeline solution through Work-Based Learning in 2021. An introduction to one of their region's education programs was done and students were invited for a tour of the CableNet facility. Four of those students were offered 12-week internships and Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was able to subsidize the wages of those interns while CableNet provided onboarding and on-site training and mentorship. Interns gained experience in cable harnessing and soldering, giving them a head start to their Aerospace Advanced Manufacturing careers. In 2022, an additional three participants went through the internship. Sarah, WBL participant, states: "During my employment at CableNet I have learned to solder, be more detail-oriented, think on my own and problem solve. I have also discovered that I enjoy smaller scale projects that require attention to detail, versus more repetitive, larger projects."

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Colorado PY 22: WIOA Annual Report: Program Year 2022 Report on Talent Development Activities Funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#). Colorado Workforce Development Council.

Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (October 2022). [Appreciative Inquiry Report](#). Workforce Development Programs, Division of Employment & Training.

*Links*

Colorado Workforce Development Council

## Connecticut

Connecticut Department of Labor  
Governor's Workforce Council Connecticut

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Jobs First Employment Services (JFES) Integration in the American Job Centers (AJCs)**

In partnership with the Connecticut Department of Social Services and the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) administers the JFES program which provides a host of employment-related services to recipients of Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), Connecticut's federally funded cash assistance program for low-income families under TANF. The WDBs operate as intermediaries that subcontract with other organizations to provide direct services to JFES participants in AJCs around the state. The JFES budget for this period was \$12,556,193 and a total of 2,535 JFES clients were served during the program year.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Statewide activities, delivered in Connecticut with 15 percent Governor's Reserve funds during PY22, included:

- Maintaining the state list of Eligible Training Providers;
- State administration of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth workforce development activities, by conducting performance evaluations, including programmatic monitoring and customer satisfaction surveys;
- Assisting in the operations of the AJCs;
- Operating fiscal management and performance accountability system activities; and
- Supporting CTHires, the state's WIOA case management information system.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Status of State Evaluation Activities**

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes at Section 10a-57g(e), enacted in 2021, the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) is mandated to develop a plan to compile, analyze, and report on data for the purpose of assessing the performance of Connecticut's workforce system. The resulting annual report will include the number of individuals served, demographic information, and outcomes achieved after completion of a workforce training program. Following a transition period, the report shall replace Connecticut's Higher Education/Workforce Legislative Report Card (LRC), which Connecticut Department of Labor's (CTDOL's) Office of Research has produced over the years. The most recent LRC, as of 2021, includes information on employment by industry and average wages of recent graduates of Connecticut's public colleges and universities. In addition to the performance report, OWS has been working closely with CTDOL to create a unified reporting module in CTHires for reporting outcomes from Career ConneCT.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

#### **Status of State Evaluation Activities**

The most recent LRC, as of 2021, includes information on employment by industry and average wages of recent graduates of Connecticut's public colleges and universities. Additionally, OWS has been working closely with CTDOL to create a unified reporting module in CTHires for reporting outcomes from Career ConneCT.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

No information provided for this section.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative – Larry*

Larry was raised in a community that was riddled with high crime, drugs, and gang activity. Some of his childhood friends are in prison, convicted felons, or deceased. At first, he followed the same pathway, but he overcame the odds. Before joining the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative and receiving American Job Center (AJC) services, he had just purchased a home. Shortly thereafter, he was terminated from his employment and was back to square one. That is when his search began for a new job or training opportunity. Eventually, he decided to pursue a career as a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machinist. Larry enrolled in the “Introduction to Manufacturing” training at Capital Community College through the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative and successfully completed the course in April 2023. Because of this training, Larry was able to attain both the 10-hour Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Construction Safety and Health Certificate and Six Sigma White Belt Certification. Within a week, he obtained employment as a CNC Machinist, making more money than at his previous job. He is grateful for the amazing instructors and career advisors that helped him find and stay on the path to success.

### For more information, visit:

#### *Reports*

(Dec. 2023). [State of Connecticut: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Report](#). Connecticut Department of Labor.

#### *Links*

Connecticut Department of Labor

- [Disability Resources](#)
- [Higher Education/Workforce Legislative Report Card \(LRC\)](#)

Governor’s Workforce Council Connecticut

## Delaware

Delaware Workforce Development Board

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **TANF**

Delaware's TANF Team is a partnership between the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Social Services (DSS), the Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training, the Economic Development Office, Workforce Development, and the Department of Transportation, Delaware Transit Corporation. TANF funds are contracted to agencies for two programs:

1. Employment Connection services help TANF recipients obtain and maintain full-time unsubsidized employment or participate in a combination of work activities to receive their cash grant.
2. Keep a Job services to provide employment retention assistance to participants who have obtained unsubsidized employment that results in maintaining employment and achieving long term economic independence, including income growth.

The TANF program administered through a joint effort with DSS, and the Delaware Department of Labor goal is to give people temporary help until they get a job. Within the program both the State and the TANF client have responsibilities. The State provides positive incentives for the family to become self-sufficient and self-supporting. Time on TANF is limited for most people, up to 36 months, but they must work or participate in work related activities for 30 hours a week to receive a TANF check. In PY22, the Division of Employment and Training (DET) enrolled 168 clients, 780 job placements and provided services to over 1,000 clients.

#### **APEX (Advancement through Pardons and Expungement Program)**

Provides opportunities to individuals with criminal histories who wish to obtain gainful employment. The program aims to accomplish this by helping clients through the pardons and expungement process, providing employer education, and advancing legislative reform. Staff provide these clients with an overview of DET services that includes fidelity bonding, training opportunities, workshops, résumé, and job search assistance, etc.

With partnership and financial support from the Criminal Justice Council (CJC), Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS) and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), over 8,000 justice-involved individuals were outreached, 479 new DJL enrollments, 240 pardons granted, 365 expungements granted, 58 ITAs and over 1,500 supportive services provided in FY23.

*Other State Funds Activities***Blue Collar**

Blue Collar allocates resources towards initiatives that furnish services, guidance, and assistance leading to participants securing unsubsidized employment or unsubsidized employment coupled with ongoing education tailored to their specific industry or occupation. This enables participants to actualize their career aspirations and implement their plan. All programs are obligated to adhere to the agreed-upon performance measures, offer training culminating in industry recognized certifications, administer assessments, incorporate compensated work experience, extend support in job search and placement, as well as provide retention services. Funds received through Blue Collar provide additional support for in-school youth, out-of-school youth, and adults.

**Learning for Careers (LFC)**

The purpose of LFC is to expand employer participation in youth employment programs in addition to increasing the number of youth served through summer youth employment programs, secondary school work-based learning and co-operative education programs, and postsecondary work-based learning and clinical/experiential learning programs. The Delaware Workforce Development Board, with a partnership with DOL's-DET, and DOE works to engage employer groups, chambers, and associations in creating paid work experiences for youth.

This program engaged over 52 students in work-based learning in PY22.

**Today's Reinvestment Around Industry Needs (TRAIN)**

TRAIN's goal is to engage providers to support employers in identifying workforce training need and then provide support around creating a solution. The solution is to provide targeted education and training to individuals, with a focus on serving unemployed and/or underemployed, to ensure Delaware employers have the talent they need to compete and grow.

In PY22, this program engaged 24 employers and trained over 81 individuals in Phase II.

**Additional State Fund Activities:**

- Elevate Delaware
- Focus on Alternative Skills Training (FAST)
- Summer Youth

**Evaluations***Activities and Methodology*

The Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) received a Statewide Planning Grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Delaware's Statewide Planning Grant will analyze the needs of persistent poverty communities and

formulate strategies to decrease disparities between those communities and more prosperous areas. Working with partners, DWDB is conducting a several statewide skills assessments and analysis to identify workforce development and training needs based on employer demand. The DWDB is analyzing the state's innovation and entrepreneurship assets, including mechanisms to access capital and financing to support business development and expansion, and identify gaps in access to capital for underserved rural and urban communities.

DWDB has commissioned the following studies:

1. A detailed statewide labor force studies with special emphasis on the Promise Communities.
2. An analysis of employer needs in or adjacent to the Promise Community zip codes.
3. A statewide skills assessment, with special emphasis on the 17 Promise Community zip codes.
4. Determine the delta between employer needs and jobseeker skills and employment interests in Promise Communities.
5. A gap analysis of wrap around services and service providers in and around the Promise Communities.
6. An entrepreneurial resource study for underserved communities.

The DWDB will use this data to develop a holistic strategic plan to bolster regional economic activity and increase the number of Delawareans in unsubsidized employment. The DWDB estimates this project will end in the spring of 2024.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Strategies*

Not applicable.



### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## **Success Stories**

### *Delaware Futures (DF) – Providenza Rocco (Executive Director)*

“I signed up another two FAST applicants last week—and these two young men were so grateful and overjoyed for the opportunity to achieve their dreams of getting the commercial driver’s license (CDL) certification—and their families were so excited too. They were beyond grateful. It’s not really DF providing this—it is DOL, and I wanted to pass on how life-changing this program is.

In addition, a DF alum is getting her medical coding and billing certificate. This young woman has had a hard life—having been kicked out of her home back when she was in programming with us as a high school student—and she is working full-time at Wawa and totally killing it in her program. I have been staying in touch with her several times a week to just let her know how proud of her we are—she is doing this on her own with not a ton of supports [sic]. FAST also is life-changing for her.

We are up to six FAST participants and it’s an amazing program. Thank you to DOL for making this happen.”

### *Pathways to Success Graduate – Sharnae*

Sharnae received a Congressional and Vice-Presidential nomination to attend the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Since being there, she became a system engineering major with a focus on industrial engineering. She has been a member of the Army Boxing team and has gone on to win two national championships. She has also won numerous scholarly awards for GPA (Dean’s awards) and attended military schools (Air Assault).

## **For more information, visit:**

### *Reports*

Delaware Works. [Annual Report PY2022](#). Delaware Workforce Development Board.

### *Links*

Delaware Workforce Development Board

Zogby Analytics



## District of Columbia

District of Columbia Department of Employment Services

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Not applicable.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

The District of Columbia has initiated an experimental evaluation of the District's RESEA program. The evaluation is a mandate by DOL, in accordance with the statutory provisions for RESEA contained in the Social Security Act (SSA) Section 306, and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (PL 115-123) states are expected to begin conducting interventions and service delivery strategies to support building new evidence on effective RESEA interventions that all states can rely on in designing and delivering the RESEA program. Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) 1-20 defines and provides the criteria for assigning evidence-based ratings of the effectiveness of a grantee's interventions and strategies. Specifically, an evidence-based intervention is defined as one that reduces claimants' average duration on UI by improving their employment outcomes. The proposed RESEA evaluation plan encompasses the guidelines and processes as outlined in UIPL 1-20.

The evaluation assesses the impact of being selected for RESEA versus not being selected for RESEA on individuals':

1. UI weeks paid in the first six months of the initial claim,
2. employment status in the second calendar quarter following the calendar quarter of the initial claim, and
3. earnings in the second calendar quarter following the calendar quarter of the initial claim.

Specifically, the evaluation compares outcomes across claimants randomly assigned to the treatment group (i.e., selected for RESEA) or to the control (i.e., not selected for RESEA) group. The evaluation will then attribute any differences in those outcomes to the treatment group's having been selected for RESEA participation.

*Continuous Improvement***The District's Virtual Referral Platform My Journey DC**

The DC Workforce Investment Council (DCWIC) is committed to developing and modernizing the data infrastructure of the workforce development system, building the infrastructure necessary to analyze and report on workforce development programs and outcomes. My Journey DC represents a comprehensive platform that includes a community catalog of more than 70 organizations and 250 workforce programs available for DC residents to self-refer to workforce-related programs and services. DCWIC has transitioned the in-person component of Career Coach DC to a virtual experience through the participant portal. In addition, WIC staff refer individuals between agencies and programs, ensuring the meeting of all jobseekers' needs for career success. To date, over 7,000 residents have been referred to services through My Journey DC including:

- Career coaching services
- Job-readiness assistance
- Access to occupational skills training

**DC One-Stop Operator**

In partnership with the DC Workforce Investment Council (DCWIC), the One-Stop Operator continues to host weekly WIOA AJC Partner meetings. These meetings have been instrumental in discussing customer flow in the centers, in-person and virtual service provision and a review and analysis of the customer referral process. Continuous improvement activities have ensured that residents are able to connect to the services and resources they need to be successful in their career, education, training, and employment goals.

**AJC Customer Experience Survey**

The surveys detect District resident, worker, and business experience with the AJCs. The surveys offer insight into the agency's continuous improvement approach to the service delivery model. The Department of Employment Services (DOES) looks forward to continuing to learn from residents, workers and businesses and providing the best service to fit their needs.

*Reports*

No information provided for this section.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

No information provided for this section.

*Strategies*

Not applicable.

*Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

**Success Stories***Wagner-Peyser Customer*

A Customer began to engage with the AJC in November of 2021 after a sudden loss of employment. The Customer was seeking employment as a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Mechanic. From the beginning of his involvement with the AJC, the Customer was committed to job search and followed an employment plan which detailed that the Customer should apply to a minimum of five jobs weekly. Often using the job leads sent to him by a Department of Employment Services (DOES) Workforce Development Specialist, the Customer received several job offers but struggled to find the right fit due to hurdles caused by the pandemic. Ultimately, the Customer accepted a position with AI's Twin Air, LLC, as an HVAC Technician earning \$28.00 per hour. The Customer started employment in September 2022.

*WIOA Adult – Customer #1*

A Customer was enrolled in WIOA program for a job search service since October 2019 and was interested in either local or federal government job opportunities. The Customer was provided job opportunities within DC Government for which he applied, and some federal jobs. The Customer worked with the assigned Workforce Development Specialist on searching for employment, applied for positions, and was finally called for an interview with the Department of Interior for an Executive Assistant position. The Customer passed the two interviews, background check, and clearance process to perform the job. In June 2022, the Customer received an offer letter to start in July 2022 making \$74,950.00 annually.

*WIOA Adult – Customer #2*

A Customer has been engaged in job search with the AJC since November 2021. The Customer was referred to Constituent Services Worldwide for a Career Coaching Pro training program. The Customer received her Career Pro Coaching certificate in March 2022. The Customer needed to refresh her interviewing skills due to not being actively in the workforce. After completion of the Career Pro training program, the Customer was ready for the job. The Customer worked with her specialist to secure job leads and connect with the Office of Talent and Client Services regarding career fairs and hiring events.

The specialist referred the Customer to the Office of Talent and Client Services (OTCS). The OTCS referred the Customer to So Others Might Eat (SOME) for a Housing Specialist position and the Customer was hired full-time. The Customer started working in July 2022 as a Housing Specialist at \$33.65 per hour.

### *WIOA Adult – Customer #3*

A Customer was enrolled in the WIOA program for job search assistance in July 2022. The Customer was interested in DC Government or a full-time permanent job opportunity. The Customer was provided with job opportunities in DC Government that she would apply for and some private sector positions. The Customer was a little concerned about her age; she thought it could be a barrier for her, but the specialist encouraged her to be confident that she would find full-time employment. The Specialist continued to provide the Customer with job opportunities. In August 2022, the Customer was called for an interview with Prince George's County, MD, for an Administrative Specialist position. The Customer had a successful interview and received an offer letter for employment at a salary of \$50,000 annually.

### *WIOA Dislocated Worker Customer*

A Customer solicited the services of the AJC headquarters and was counseled by an assigned Specialist. After assessment, the Specialist considered the Customer an ideal candidate for Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) training.

The Customer completed formal training at Intellectual Point and in December 2019 passed the CISSP certification exam. During the time between training completion and the certification exam, the Customer attended DCIA and obtained the Amazon Cloud certification.

The Customer met with the assigned specialist to revise her résumé and job search strategy. The specialist provided considerable encouragement and guidance. Esperis US, Inc., hired the Customer in December 2021 as a Product Development IT Specialist. Esperis US was an employment agency providing talent to the National Safety Council who offered the Customer permanent employment beginning July 2022 with the same job title, hourly pay, and with full benefits. The Customer simultaneously obtained employment at Sila Nanotechnologies, Inc., in June 2022 working remotely as an Application Developer earning \$67.30 hourly with full benefits.

### *WIOA Youth – Customer*

A Customer came to the office of OSY programs at the age of 18, having recently graduated high school. When inquiring where the Customer could see himself in five years, he was unsure. OSY provided information on careers and the training opportunities available. The Customer took interest in the culinary program with Constituent Services Worldwide (CSW).

The Customer's math comprehension skill was a barrier for employment along with having no employment history. After enrolling in training with CSW, the Customer fell in love with the hands-on experience he was gaining and began showing off his new cooking skills to his classmates. Cooking made it easy for the Customer to improve his math comprehension skills by using the food recipes and measurements to ensure the outcome of his meals.

The Customer gained work experience from working as a caterer for local community events. Soon, the Customer was ready to take his Hotel Certified Restaurant Cook exam and SERV Safe Food Manager exam. The Customer successfully obtained a Hotel Certified Restaurant Cook and SERV Safe certification. Because of the dedication and hard work, the Customer is now employed full-time with Whole Foods Market, on the prepared food service team.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[PY2022 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Narrative Report](#). District of Columbia Department of Employment Services.

*Links*

District of Columbia Department of Employment Services

## Florida

CareerSource Florida  
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Supporting Aviation, Aerospace, and Defense Manufacturing through a Comprehensive Sector Strategy Approach**

The CareerSource Florida Board of Directors approved \$9 million to support talent pipeline development in aviation, aerospace, defense manufacturing, and IT/cybersecurity. This allocation represented close to one-third of a more than \$27 million investment in this industry sector, leveraging funds from FloridaCommerce's Job Growth Grant Fund, the Department of Education's Cybersecurity and IT Training Grant, and the Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant. In partnership with FloridaCommerce, the Florida Department of Education, and the Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) office, funds were awarded to the following institutions:

- Eastern Florida State College – to develop pathways for pre-apprenticeship and support the Space Coast Machining Apprenticeship Program, the Space Coast Consortium Apprenticeship Program (mechatronics, CNC machining, composites, and welding), and the Technology and Health Apprenticeship Program (cybersecurity).
- Daytona State College – to work with the Volusia County School District to expand its electrical pre-apprenticeship program and link it more closely with current electrical apprenticeship programs.
- Indian River State College – to develop industry appropriate advanced manufacturing apprenticeship programs and other transportation and logistics programs and expand the current Advanced Manufacturing Bootcamp and Apprenticeship program.
- Brevard Public Schools – to offer a Certified Logistics Associate Course that provides students with the foundational knowledge needed to understand supply chain, material handling, quality control, workplace communication and problem solving.
- School District of Indian River County – to begin a 4,000-hour apprenticeship in the aviation industry that includes welders. This program will teach students fundamental welding processes and provide on-the-job training.



- St. Lucie County School District – to introduce welding concepts and give high school students a path towards apprenticeship welding programs. Additionally, they will implement an 18-month pre-apprenticeship program to introduce students to supply chain and logistical technical instruction.
- Florida Makes (\$1.16 million) – Florida Makes will serve as the Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor for an Advanced Manufacturing and Production Technology course.
- In September 2023, these institutions held an industry council meeting, gaining critical information to establish industry council committees for collaboration on initiatives and actions to be taken to boost the Aerospace/Aviation, Advanced Manufacturing, and IT/Cybersecurity workforce, and to meet growing industry talent pipeline demands across the region. These councils will meet throughout the year to discuss progress. A total of 164 participants have been served to date, with 150 receiving training services and 50 gaining employment.

#### **Additional Adult Priority Services Activities**

- Direct Support to Single Pregnant Women
- Apprenticeship Navigators
- Rural Initiatives
- Quick Response Training Program
- Paychecks for Patriots
- Department of Defense SkillBridge Program
- Veterans Workforce Summit
- Military Family Employment Advocacy Program
- HIRE Vets Medallion Program (HVMP)
- Florida Council on Homelessness

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Support System Improvements and REACH Act Implementation**

The CareerSource Florida Board of Directors allocated \$3 million to support implementation of the REACH Act, focusing on strengthening the alignment of local workforce development boards to better support service excellence across the entire CareerSource Florida network. This investment produced comprehensive reports generated from stakeholder interviews, labor market analysis, and in-depth research into Florida's existing 24 local workforce development boards. This research ultimately provided the foundation for the Florida Workforce System Transformation Plan.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Workforce Needs Study 2.0**

The Florida Chamber Foundation (Foundation) is finalizing the Florida Workforce Needs Study 2.0. This 24-month research project seeks to provide insight into how Florida businesses and educational institutions can better partner to promote the attainment of the hard and soft skills needed to narrow Florida's workforce skills gaps and improve its talent pipeline.

In early 2023, Foundation staff, in collaboration with CareerSource Florida, convened a series of employer focus groups in geographically and economically representative areas of the state. Employers weighed in on skills-based employment needs previously identified to have a key role in Florida's continued economic growth and development within distinct industry sectors: Production/Construction/Skilled Trades, Information Technology (IT), Healthcare, and Professional Services/Business and Finance.

Research objectives are to gain insight into current and emerging skill needs, capture best practices in employer-educator partnerships, and identify ways to maximize utilization of training support initiatives. Notably, each session included significant time devoted to introducing employers to the work of the Credentials Review Committee, an overview of the Framework of Quality, review, and feedback on the Master Credentials List, and identifying preferred methods of employer engagement moving forward. Everything learned will inform strategies and policy recommendations as part of the final report of research findings to be released by the end of 2023.

#### **Apprenticeship Standards Builder Requirement Assessment**

CareerSource Florida retained Ernst & Young, LLP (EY) to evaluate existing apprenticeship processes, engage stakeholders, learn from state and national best practices, and identify strategic considerations to inform the adoption of the standards builder within the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS). The results of the study, conducted in partnership with the Florida Department of Education and FloridaCommerce, are being used to align interagency efforts for the expansion of apprenticeships throughout the state.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Planned Research**

Florida seeks to better support low-income families in their transition from receiving public assistance benefits (such as Temporary Cash Assistance) to employment. Ultimately, helping them achieve long-term economic stability by maximizing the utilization of benefits within the TANF program through various strategies. These include case management services, job training, education services, increased access to childcare, transportation assistance, and financial education and counseling services. In the 2023–2024 Program Year, CareerSource Florida will engage in an evaluative study on the use of transitional benefits in the TANF program. This study will assess current usage and identify potential policy solutions to assist families in overcoming benefit cliffs and reduce public assistance recidivism.

*Reports*

Apprenticeship Standards Builder Requirement Assessment.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

The State had three waivers that were granted during PY22:

- Waiver of the reallocation provisions in WIOA Sections 128(c)(3) and 133(c)(3).
- Waiver associated with the requirement in WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the state and local areas expend 75 percent of the Governor’s Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on Out-of-school youth (OSY).
- Waiver associated with the requirements of 20 CFR 681.410 to allow WIOA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).

*Strategies***Waiver for recapture and reallocation of WIOA Funds**

Approval of the request (December 6, 2022) allowed the state to develop its own criteria rather than utilizing those required by federal statute for the reallocation of recaptured funds among LWDA’s. FloridaCommerce is developing policy and procedures to implement this waiver to meet the Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act requirement that recaptured funds be redistributed to LWDA’s based on a demonstrated need for additional funding.

**Waiver that the state and local areas expend 75 percent of the Governor’s Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY**

DOL approved the State’s request on March 9, 2023. In addition, DOL approved the State’s request to waive the requirement that LWDA’s expend 75 percent of local youth formula funds on OSY; Florida was permitted to lower the local youth funds expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY.

**WIOA ISY ITAs**

DOL approved the State’s request to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only OSY ages 16–21.

*Impact on Performance*

While the waivers for the WIOA Youth program were granted late in the program year, the initial outcomes show:

Program Year	Measure	Total OSY Youth Participants (%)	Total ISY Youth Participants (%)	Total Youth Participants
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2021	Total Youth Participants	4,302 (78.7%)	1,167 (21.3%)	5,469
2022	Total Youth Participants	4,322 (83%)	881 (16.9%)	5,203

Program Year	Measure	New OSY Youth Participants	New ISY Youth Participants	Total New Youth Participants
2021	New Youth Participants	2,363	347	2,710
2022	New Youth Participants	2,604	421	3,025

Program Year	OSY Enrolled in Education and Training	Using ITAs	ISY Enrolled in Education and Training	Using ITAs
2021	2,843	804	1,107	28
2022	2,976	846	843	14

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

## For more information, visit:

### Reports

(Oct. 2022). [Apprenticeship Standards Builder Requirement Assessment](#). Prepared by EY for CareerSource Florida.

### Links

CareerSource Florida

Employ Florida

FloridaJobs

## Georgia

WorkSource Georgia (The Technical College System of Georgia's Office Workforce Development)  
Georgia Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Sector Partnerships and Career Pathways**

Sector Partnerships have been critically important in ensuring that Georgia's workforce system meets the current and future needs of jobseekers, employers, education partners, and their surrounding communities. During the program year, the State executed and implemented the revamped structure of the WorkSource Sector Partnerships Grant, which directly invests in regional initiatives led by LWDAs to develop strong working collaboratives with partners to cultivate talent pipelines into specific high-demand industries.

This year's WorkSource Sector Partnership Grant introduced a required 25 percent match of the total award granted to encourage sustainability and partnership. This match can leverage training funds as well as partner contributions, which increases the alignment of WIOA services to sector partnerships. The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) also required applicants to submit five letters of commitment from their partners that clearly stated and defined the roles and responsibilities of those partners. Additionally, this year's grant implemented more robust metrics to review applications. Metrics were based on previous sector partnership work, evidence of strong partnerships, clearly defined projects, attainable goals, and budget accuracy and reasonableness. The award amount was given based on a composite score composed of five factors, which were:

- Previous sector partnership work,
- Population of the region,
- Regional unemployment rate, and
- Regional labor force participation rate.

A key and ongoing byproduct of Georgia's sector partnership activities and investment are accessible and aligned career pathways that ensure individuals in Georgia have access to quality and sustainable careers. To accomplish this, WorkSource Georgia worked to align sector partnerships to The Untapped Workforce Initiative and the QUEST Dislocated Worker Grant.

*Other State Funds Activities*

- Training Academy

**Evaluations***Activities and Methodology*

While the State did not have any formal evaluation or research projects in PY22, evaluating the current system is a high priority as they further integrate these programs and identify jobseeker and employer needs across the state. The State will maintain close communication with their Federal Project Officer and Regional Administrator at the DOL-ETA to identify opportunities to implement formal nine research projects in the future. Any additional technical assistance that can be provided by ETA will be greatly appreciated, particularly sharing funding opportunities in support of these projects.

*Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

*Reports*

No information provided for this section.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) currently has a youth expenditure waiver active until June 30, 2024, which lowers the expenditure requirements established by WIOA of at least 75 percent of funding to be spent for the out-of-school (OSY) population to 50 percent.

*Strategies*

The flexibility afforded by the waiver continues to allow LWDAs to expand ISY programming within their service area, create valuable partnerships with school districts, technical colleges, and other education and community partners throughout their area.

*Impact on Performance*

OWD continues to see an increase in total youth enrollment and will further disaggregate the data to fully evaluate youth services for the upcoming State Plan submission. In the analysis conducted for this reporting period, the State identified an increase in services to youth with the following barriers:

- basic skills deficient,
- individuals experiencing homelessness,
- pregnant/parenting, and
- individuals with disabilities.

The largest increases in services were seen in paid Work Experience, Youth Career Services—specifically labor market and employment information, as well as paid internships, and the provision of supportive services—mostly for transportation and childcare.

The State also piloted a virtual Work Experience platform and has since expanded it statewide for any LWDA that wants to participate, contributing to the increase in services and accessibility for youth. The Career Compass Academy (CCA) is a five-week program that provides youth with the development of work-ready skills, along with career exploration opportunities and job shadowing activities in a virtual environment. It was created in response to the need for a virtual learning environment as a paid work readiness and career exploration program for WIOA-eligible youth. CareerRise, Inc. is a workforce intermediary contracted by Region 3 to implement the Technical College System of Georgia Sector Partnership grant and is a collaborative partner to implement CCA and execute the model to engage youth. CareerRise facilitates CCA, which recruits industry partners to participate, manages the relationship with Accenture to utilize its Skills to Succeed platform, and provides regular updates on student progress through the program. Local WorkSource partners conduct recruitment of youth, determine WIOA eligibility provide case management, and provide stipends to the youth. Through this partnership and demonstrated success, the program was expanded from five local WorkSource board in Metro Atlanta to also include Middle Georgia (which now includes Macon-Bibb), Northwest Georgia, and Georgia Mountains. Currently, CCA is offered in a live format with students participating in 15 live webinars, completing 36 self-paced online modules, and a career plan.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

## For more information, visit:

### Reports

[State Of Georgia PY22 WIOA Annual Narrative Report](#). WorkSource Georgia.

### Links

WorkSource Georgia (The Technical College System of Georgia's Office Workforce Development)

Georgia Department of Labor

## Hawaii

State of Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Helpful, Useful, & Basic (HUB) Workshops**

WDD offered live interactive mini sessions to help make jobseekers' job search smoother by connecting them with "Helpful, Useful, & Basic" tools. The workshops were originally developed to cater to participants of the Summer Youth Financial Literacy Internship and were later made open to the public but specifically targeted to WIOA Title I participants. JOB HUB topics included Internet & Web Basics, Email Basics, Zoom Basics, Google Drive and Docs Basics. Three Job HUB Summits were virtually conducted that included participation by businesses and other resources. Summit titles were "Finding You," "Finding the Job for You," and "Taking Action & Getting the Job," each held over three days in August and December 2022, and March 2023. Staff HUB workshops were provided to partner State agencies on Teams and PowerPoint in August 2022 and September 2022. All interns who started in the Hele Imua Intern Job Workshop participated in the Work Skills HUBs: Workplace & ALOHA, starting in October 2022 with the last HUB session in April 2023.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Hawai'i Career Acceleration Navigator (HI CAN) User Research Testing Project by OmniTrak Group**

OmniTrak conducted research on a statewide level to assess HI CAN, the digital hub for jobseekers and employers, which uses Machine Learning (ML), Artificial Intelligence (AI), state administrative data, and cloud computing to provide job matches and recommendations to users. In order to better identify barriers to employment, OmniTrak linked results from the Digital Literacy and Readiness Study (2021). Research investigators collaborated with Research Improving People's Lives to conduct interviews, conduct surveys, and collect data about their job seeking and training experiences, needs, and challenges. Comparison of WIOA participants outcomes to all-student data is to be included in a proposed addendum.



Developed in partnership with the Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), the Hawai'i Career Acceleration Navigator (HI CAN) is a digital initiative that has been integrated into the State's Management Information System (MIS) program, HireNet, working to develop sector strategies and a career pathways system for in-demand industries, while increasing access to employment services for clients in remote locations. This has had the added benefit of integrating sector partnerships with the industry-driven employer partnerships including technology, engineering, healthcare, and agriculture. This creation of partnerships centered on workforce development and economic development will allow for partner and stakeholder growth to maximize resources.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

- State Workforce Initiatives and Economic Landscape report
- Hawai'i Career Acceleration Navigator (HI CAN) User Research Testing Project by OmniTrak Group report

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State was granted a waiver of the requirements of WIOA Section 107(b), to allow the State Board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of a Local board.

### *Strategies*

As of June 30, 2022, the State was allowed to assume the responsibilities of administering service delivery for Kauai upon the county's local elected officials request that the State assume responsibilities to ensure the provision of services to Kauai residents. WIOA allocations to the local area have been made available for the delivery of the services for the county, with staff of the local Kauai Workforce Development Division (WDD) staff in the AJC providing Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services.

### *Impact on Performance*

Kauai WDD staff received training, and in PY22 began to provide services to local area youth participants. Kauai WDD staff had been providing services for WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers and continued to do so in PY22. Outcomes are expected to improve with additional outreach to all programs, particularly youth.

## Success Stories

### *WIOA Hawaii NDWG – QUEST Program – Charmaine*

Charmaine is a Receptionist at the American Job Center Hawai'i (AJCH) in Hilo. Her journey towards success began in 2019 when she registered with Goodwill Industries' Ola I Ka Hana Youth program to study for and obtain her General Education Development. While participating in the Youth program, she was placed at the AJCH located at Kilauea Avenue, which later moved to Kanoiehua Avenue in Hilo. There she underwent a six-month Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) to gain the necessary skills to become a receptionist.

After completing the CWEP program, she enrolled in an internship through the State of Hawai'i's Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR). The QUEST program helped her identify her learning style, interests, and the career that she wanted. The staff encouraged her to step out of her comfort zone and build confidence. Before her position, Charmaine noted she was very shy and soft-spoken, especially when speaking in public. Staff made her feel like she could do anything if she put her mind to it. She learned how to work with the public, how different departments in State and county programs work, and how an office operates.

Charmaine stated,

"The QUEST program is an excellent opportunity to help find a career pathway. Thanks to the skills and knowledge I gained from these programs, I recently secured a permanent position as a receptionist with Hawai'i County Rural and Development. I will continue to work at the American Job Center Hawai'i, Hilo location. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and acquire the abilities necessary to become a successful and self-sufficient individual."

### *First-to-Work (FTW) – Mr. Underhill*

Mr. Underhill participated in the FTW Job Readiness Training (JRT) for hybrid training over Zoom. His participation stood out during group discussions and activities because he graciously allowed others to speak before himself. Mr. Underhill shared that his goal was to open a business in landscaping but did not feel he had the clientele to succeed. After many discussions, brainstorming on ways to build a list of clients, and taking in all that he has gained through the JRT program, Mr. Underhill officially opened his own business and became the owner/entrepreneur of Underhill Landscaping in December of 2022. He is no longer a participant in TANF and has successfully become self-sufficient, determined to become a success by setting and reaching his goals.

### *WIOA Maui Youth – Kaiyah*

Kaiyah was referred to the Ola I Ka Hana Youth program in July 2022 by Workforce Development staff. She was 19 years old, had recently graduated from King Kekaulike High School and was unsure of what she wanted to do. During her assessment meeting, Kaiyah was administered the Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC)

Assessment and was then able to identify some of her interests which assisted staff in mentoring her to narrow down some possibilities for employment and post-secondary transition. Monthly meetings were scheduled with Kaiyah to ensure a smooth transition from high school to college to employment. However, barriers at home and transportation issues put a halt to things. Her assigned Youth Specialist, Jenna S., offered the idea of putting college entrance on the back burner until Kaiyah was able to find herself in a more stable position. Kaiyah was open to the idea and worked with Jenna on finding entry-level work experience. Based on Kaiyah's work preferences, Jenna worked with community businesses to see which employer would be the best fit for Kaiyah to learn. After developing relationships with the employer, Jenna and Kaiyah were able to do a meet and greet. Fortunately for Kaiyah and the Youth program, Oshima Surf Shop welcomed the idea of Ola's Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) and provided Kaiyah with entry level work experiences to include basic skills of retail. Kaiyah was hired as a full-time employee. Currently, Kaiyah is still employed with Oshima Surf and credits her experiences to participating in CWEP as well as being afforded the opportunities to attend JRT and Soft Skills training with Goodwill.

### *WIOA Maui Dislocated Worker*

A young man sought program services for employment and educational services after his employment was directly affected by COVID-19. His last day of employment was in March 2020 with the Department of Education (DOE) at Maui High School in the Arts and Communication Department. The young man was also working in the Extended Learning and Workforce Development Program at the University of Hawaii - Maui College (UHMC) as an Assistant. On becoming a client, he disclosed he was diagnosed at birth with neurogenic bladder, spina bifida, and a cognitive disability. His overall goal was to obtain a full-time teaching position in creative media. Through the support and services from Goodwill's workforce programs, he went on to receive his bachelor's degree in creative media and has since been building his professional portfolio. He is now a substitute teacher at Maui High School and sees the need to continue this route of work due to the lack of schoolteachers. He was encouraged by his fellow co-workers to obtain his Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers' licensure in the Career Technical Department. He applied and was accepted to the program at Leeward Community College via their online course. He is scheduled to start classes in Fall 2023. The CTE program will take up to one year to complete. The client shared that he had competed in the 2023 Pele Awards and won five awards: Best in Show, Best Logo, and two golds and one silver award. He was extremely pleased about his progress and due to the recognition, has received multiple work offers from local companies. He will be adding these to his portfolio. This young man credits hard work, focusing on his goals, and doing what's needed to accomplish them, despite bumpy roads.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

(June 2023). [\*Hawai'i Career Acceleration Navigator \(HI CAN\) User Research Testing\*](#). Prepared for State of Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

[WIOA Title I & III Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative, Program Year 2022](#). State of Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

*Links*

State of Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations – Workforce Development Division

## Idaho

Idaho Workforce Development Council  
Idaho Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Idaho's Adult Priority of Service Policy**

- Priority Groups
  1. Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority service for all Department of Labor-funded training programs, including WIOA programs.
  2. Individuals receiving public assistance, other low-income adults, and individuals who are basic skills deficient have statutory priority service for individualized career and training services under the Adult program.
- Order for Priority of Service for Individualized Career Services and Training Services
  1. Veterans and eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient.
  2. Other individuals who are recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient.

Basic WIOA Title I-B services are available to all adults with minimal eligibility criteria and basic, individualized, or training services are authorized for adults who face significant barriers to employment. Priority is given to veterans and eligible spouses, low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, and individuals living with low income.

Adult Priority of Service is recognized as a strength of the Title I-B program, and among the strong partnership of core and One-Stop partners as it recognizes that this directive is critical for all workforce programs in the state. Understanding the importance of this federal mandate to target those most in need, program partners continue to make a concerted effort to refer prospective participants to the WIOA Title I-B Adult program. This helps to ensure Idaho meets DOL's minimum preferred service level of 75 percent enrollment of Priority of Service populations, in addition to the Adult provider's intake process which concentrates on identifying underserved individuals.

The development of virtual services helped to overcome impediments coming to light because of the pandemic. Many of these tools and strategies are still in place, as workforce programs can offer and provide virtual services at job seekers and employers' convenience, eliminating the need to travel to an office. Technological enhancements, such as increased use of social media and

virtual meetings to connect employers and job seekers are examples of these tools. Partners also continue delivering virtual services, which has increased the system's reach, especially in rural Idaho. Workforce partners systemwide have culled ineffective offerings from their service portfolio, having adapted virtual service delivery models as necessary. Because of Idaho's workforce development system's commitment to serve those in need throughout the state during this time, many programs are serving larger numbers than previously seen.

### **Additional Adult Priority Service Activities**

- Veterans

### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Teacher Externship Program**

Beginning in late PY18/early PY19, the Idaho Workforce Development Council and STEM Action Center piloted a teacher externship program with 16 educators and employers. Teachers were paired with an employer worksite for a minimum of 200 hours during the summer to not only gain practical experience in an occupation, but to also learn about the greater workforce needs of the organization. The results are very promising—with teachers taking real-world experiences back to the classroom and expanding the conversations they can have with their students about careers.

A recent grant for the program allowed for much broader outreach and recruiting for the externship program and made the experience free for employers. Participation in PY22 jumped to 85 externs.

### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI)

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **WIOA Evaluation**

In the fall of 2019, Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL) implemented a bold and innovative service delivery model that saw the department decrease its number of brick-and-mortar buildings by almost 60 percent, while simultaneously doubling the number of remote locations where services were provided. Through collaboration with local libraries, social service agencies, schools, local city halls, and other civic entities, predominantly in underserved rural areas, in-person services that were previously limited to 14 communities expanded to 50 different communities and locations throughout the state.

IDOL's Research and Analysis division conducted an evaluation that sought to answer whether the change in service delivery model affected which individuals would enroll into the WIOA Adult program based on their area of residence.

The roll-out of the new model began near the end of Calendar Year 2019 and took full effect in 2020; January 1, 2020, was selected as the beginning of the post-change period. Due to small enrollments in many parts of the state, six months was chosen for each pre- and post-change period to ensure a sample size large enough to permit a chi-squared test based upon its asymptotic properties. Two post-change periods were considered: the first half of 2020, which would have captured the brief period after the change in service delivery but before the disruptions of COVID-19, as well as the second half of 2020 to help account for potential seasonality effects in WIOA enrollment. The data used for the analysis was obtained from a registry of all IDOL services and program enrollments in the state between 2019 and 2023, WIOA Adult enrollments being a sample of this universe. The dataset contains anonymized person-level data on program enrollment, residence down to the county and zip code, where services were delivered down to the county and local IDOL office (or mobile office), labor market area, and program enrollment date.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

#### **WIOA Evaluation**

Upon completion, the final report will be published on the Publications page of IDOL's website.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

Waiver to allow the State Board to act as the Local Board—WIOA Section 107(b).

### *Strategies*

This waiver has been in effect since PY05, when the governor of the state consolidated the six workforce development areas at the time into two local areas. These two areas entered into an agreement, which is still in place, to have the state function as a single statewide planning area. By requesting the waiver to have the Idaho Workforce Development Council (WDC)—the WIOA State Board—conduct the functions of the local board, Idaho has been able to reduce its overall state and local administrative costs, which its governors have supported since the waiver's initial implementation. This move has become even more important since WIOA imposed increased reporting and administrative requirements upon states considering the significant funding reductions the state has faced since 2012. The primary goal sought by this waiver is to reduce administrative costs and maximize the available money directed to career and training services, including work-based learning, and services to business and jobseekers. The eventual programmatic outcome results in service to a larger number of participants than would otherwise be served due to higher administrative costs. To maximize resources available for service delivery, the state continues to use the

flexibility of this waiver to allow the WDC to serve as the local workforce board. When initially implemented, this move saved the state—then Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program—\$1,482,788 by removing the required maintenance of six local areas throughout the state. These former administrative funds have been utilized as program funds allowing for more participants to be served, which permits the state to maintain service levels despite funding cuts over the years. In today's dollars, the costs easily translate to a programmatic infusion of \$2,281,452 which, in 2023, amounts to just over 33.8 percent of the State's total WIOA Title IB allotment from DOL for PY22.

### *Impact on Performance*

The single statewide planning structure helps reduce annual overhead, emphasizing spending program funds towards direct training and support of businesses and participants. By strengthening administrative oversight and accountability processes, it has helped significantly in eliminating administrative deficiencies over the years that may have resulted in disallowed costs.

As state education policy aligns with the State's workforce development goals, Idaho's statewide structure enhances efforts to transform its workforce development system into a demand-driven system. Having the State Board provide the functions of both the state and local board presents an additional benefit to board members, as they can gain a full perspective of WIOA activities throughout the state and recognize that all areas of the state face similar challenges.

## **Success Stories**

### *WIOA Youth – Beatrice*

At 17, Beatrice came across the WIOA Youth program after dropping out of school. She struggled with anxiety and keeping up with school, even with an individualized education program (IEP) in place. WIOA helped provide travel support to cover the two and one half-hour trip from her home to the General Education Development Test (GED) testing site, allowing her to pass all four GED tests. Participating in the summer Youth program, she completed the Summer Youth Orientation, and scored high in having an interest in working with animals. WIOA Youth staff arranged for a paid work experience as a veterinarian technician assistant. This experience helped to confirm her desire to become a veterinarian technician, possibly even a veterinarian. She applied for and was accepted to a local community college to pursue training in this area.

### *WIOA Youth – Max*

Max enrolled in the Idaho Department of Labor's WIOA Youth program in spring of 2021 after dropping out of high school and attending a GED orientation. Unemployed and without a driver's license, program staff helped develop his Employment and Training plan after which he quickly found a job, obtained his license, and began making progress toward obtaining his GED.

Early on, Max had spotty interaction and some long gaps between contacting his career planner. Now, as a justice-involved youth, his plan was updated in summer of 2022 to get him employed and overcome his barriers. Within a month of establishing



his new plan, he completed two sections of his GED while maintaining contact with his career planner. He also found seasonal farm work lasting through harvest but needed something beyond that period.

Fortunately, with the help of WIOA staff, Max was connected to a work site for an on-the-job training (OJT) activity. Starting at \$21.00/hour, the employer required Max to obtain his GED before the 3-month OJT contract expired. Fully applying himself, Max completed his GED in fall of 2022.

#### *Warner-Peyser Customer – Janice*

In August, Janice visited her first ever local job fair looking for work. She graduated from college in the spring with a master's degree in human resources (HR). Unfortunately, she did not have any HR experience. An Employment Services (ES) Workforce Consultant from the local AJC working the event presented Janice to several participating employers and gave her a business card, encouraging her to set up an appointment in the office for more in-depth assistance.

The following Monday, Janice met with the workforce consultant, who enrolled her into the Career Acceleration Program (CAP). Together, they worked on Janice's résumé and explored various job opportunities. The workforce consultant found a job in IdahoWorks, the State's labor exchange system, that might be a good fit for Janice, despite her lack of HR experience.

The workforce consultant forwarded Janice's résumé to a local firm that was looking to hire an administrative assistant. She was somewhat defeated because she was told she was either overqualified or did not have enough experience with each résumé submitted. On cue, the employer responded that Janice was overqualified, but asked the ES staff member for their input. The consultant indicated that she simply needed an opportunity to prove herself. The employer agreed to an interview, as he would eventually need someone in HR. In the meantime, Janice's résumé was forwarded to a local recreation business looking for a recreational instructor for a sport in which Janice had participated in college. A few days after her administrative assistant interview, Janice received a call from the company offering her the position. Terms began at \$60,000/yr., with an evaluation for a raise in three months. The following day, she interviewed at the recreation facility, which offered her a teaching position on the weekends. Janice was thrilled to accept both jobs.

#### *Warner-Peyser Customer – RESEA Participant*

A RESEA referral to IDOL's CAP was very depressed as he had been let go from another IT job. He said this seemed to happen to him every 4–5 years. Being unemployed for several months, he was stressed about not being able to support his family, especially as school was just about to start. An IDOL staff member invited him to participate in that month's interview workshop, which he attended. He later set up an appointment for one-on-one assistance, where he shared some of his barriers. He spoke at an extremely slow rate of speech which is sometimes perceived as a speech impediment. This becomes more prominent when he's nervous. Staff shared strategies to overcome this to speak more clearly and, if given the opportunity, to take the time to acknowledge it and address it during an interview. He had several interviews and no call backs. Staff set him up for a mock interview with another IDOL staff member to receive additional advice. The staff provided him with positive and constructive

feedback and followed up with several referrals. After several interviews, he received a job offer from a regional federal contractor which he accepted.

#### *WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker – Stephanie*

After receiving her bachelor's degree, Stephanie looked to the WIOA program for help finding work in the Administration or Social Services fields. She explained that she has a lot of knowledge, but zero experience in the areas she was hoping to enter. She hoped that some companies would give her an opportunity to prove herself. However, finding something that fit proved to be a bit difficult, as she needed some accommodation to provide for her special needs child.

Stephanie entered the program knowing she needed to brush up on her basic computer skills. Fortunately, she utilized Linked-In-Learning to update her abilities, which allowed her to refine her résumé. Equus, the WIOA service provider, then presented her with some career exploration and several job leads, one of which was for a rehabilitation specialist. She applied for the position in the late spring, securing an interview. To prepare for it, she asked for help with interview clothes as she knew this work environment's dress code was business casual clothing, which she did not have. She underwent two rounds of interviews, landing the job, and hired in the early summer of 2023, starting at \$22/hour. Finding employment, with help, that allows her to be self-sufficient, Stephanie reports being very happy with her new position.

#### *WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker/Launch CDL – Don*

Don, a justice-involved Marine veteran, was referred to Idaho Launch and Equus' WIOA Adult program after visiting with the AJC Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP). His goal was to obtain a successful career, becoming self-sufficient to support his family and to overcome homelessness and the stigma of being considered a justice-involved participant. With the help of both WIOA and Launch, Don enrolled in Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training and graduated at the beginning of 2023. Days later, he accepted a position at \$19/hour. with a local concrete and asphalt paving company that allows him to work locally and to see his family daily.

#### **For more information, visit:**

##### *Reports*

[Annual Report Narrative Program Year 2022](#). Idaho Workforce Development Council & Idaho Department of Labor.

##### *Links*

Idaho Workforce Development Council

Idaho Department of Labor

## Illinois

Illinois Workforce Innovation Board

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Not applicable.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

##### **Effectiveness in Serving Employers Pilot**

Effectiveness in serving employers is a statewide indicator shared across all core programs and is assessed only as an overall State indicator score, and, therefore, it cannot be attributed to any one program by itself. Consequently, one program, Wagner-Peyser (Title III) is reporting on behalf of all six core programs in the State.

DOL-ETA indicated they planned to continue pilot approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY20–PY23 plans, however DOL-ETA guidance finalizing the performance indicator(s) was not issued during this plan timeframe, and the pilot remained in effect for the entirety of the PY20–PY23 plan. The pilot will continue to remain in effect for the beginning the PY24–PY27, as states are not currently required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers: WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(VI) established a primary indicator of performance for effectiveness in serving employers. States are piloting three approaches designed to gauge three critical workforce needs of the business community. Illinois initially chose Approach 1 and Approach 3 prior to PY17.

- Approach 1 – Retention with the Same Employer – addresses the programs' efforts to provide employers with skilled workers;

- Approach 2 – Repeat Business Customers – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time; and
- Approach 3 – Employer Penetration Rate – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy.

The Departments assessed the pilot through a Department of Labor contract that resulted in a final report titled Measuring the Effectiveness of Services to Employers: Options for Performance Measures under WIOA.

Illinois will continue to pilot the Effectiveness in Serving Employers approaches (1 and 3) until DOL-ETA issues final guidance.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Develop Strategic Indicators, Benchmarks and Related Planning Data Resources**

The Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC) of the Illinois Workforce Investment Board (IWIB) utilizes the recently created WIOA Performance and Transparency website. This resource provides users with a better understanding of WIOA, and the services provided by each core partner. The site includes information about the federal guidelines that govern WIOA, and the services offered through each title.

The site provides definitions of each performance measure as well as how success is calculated. Additionally, the performance data is displayed against the core partner’s negotiated target for the program year. Beyond performance, the site also includes disaggregated enrollment information for each quarter during the program year. Site visitors can see the number and percentage of individuals served by these demographic variables. The site was enhanced to additionally provide enrollment data. This information is updated on a quarterly basis for all titles, and performance data is updated quarterly for titles submitting quarterly. All data and information are updated annually.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

- Waiver associated with the requirement at the WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of the Governor’s Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY) and calculation of the local area expenditure for each local area.
- Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).

- Waiver of 20 CFR 680.780 to adjust the six-month employment requirement for incumbent worker training (IWT).
- Waiver of planning region alignment, WIOA Section 106(a)(2) and 20 CFR 679.210 (preamble) “In accordance with WIOA Section 106(a)(2), a single local area may not be split across two planning regions. Local areas must be contiguous to be a planning region and effectively align economic and workforce development activities and resources.”
- Waiver of WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720(b) to increase on-the-job training (OJT) employer reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.
- Waiver of WIOA Section 134(d)(5) and 20 CFR 680.195 to allow up to 20 percent of WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker local formula funds (Act and Final Rules allows up to 10 percent) to be used for the provision of transitional jobs.
- Waiver to allow flexibility in the use of the funds reserved by the governor for use to provide statewide rapid response activities (i.e., WIOA section 134(a)(2)(A)), and for use to provide statewide employment and training activities (i.e., WIOA section 134(a)(2)(B) and (3)) to provide comprehensive Disaster Recovery assistance to affected areas as described in WIOA 170(d) and 20 CFR 687.100(b).

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver associated with the requirement that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of the Governor’s Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY and calculation of the local area expenditure for each local area**

The State’s current efforts for aligning education, workforce, and economic development are laying a solid foundation for promoting leading career pathway models and best practices. Career pathway development in Illinois is being expanded to encompass every level of the education system as well as across the needs of those that face multiple barriers to achieving self-sufficiency.

Of importance to the governor’s vision, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) Strategic Plan, and the Unified State Plan, is the expansion of career pathway systems into the secondary system for opportunity youth. This waiver will allow the State to provide youth with the necessary support to successfully equip them with the academic and technical skills necessary to improve their employability. Furthermore, Illinois anticipates that this waiver will provide greater opportunity for blending funds at the federal, state, and local levels across the partners to increase innovative strategies for improving career pathway opportunities for youth.

As a result of this waiver, Illinois expects that:

- The number of ISY served will increase; and
- Performance accountability outcomes for overall WIOA Youth (including both ISY and OSY) will remain steady or increase for the majority of the WIOA Youth performance indicators.

**Waiver to allow ITAs for ISY**

The request is made to permit Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIBs) to use the state's list of eligible training providers to secure training for all youth including the ISY who are preparing to graduate and extend their educational goals into post-secondary opportunities. The waiver is designed to increase program flexibility, enhance informed customer choice, allow all youth to benefit from services provided by Illinois' certified training providers, and expand training options without requiring Illinois workNet (One-Stop) operators to register ISY participants 18 years old or older in the adult program. Funds used for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) would be tracked separately for each funding stream.

Using ITAs also allows Youth service providers an opportunity to promote and encourage training as another option to entering an increasingly tough labor market. Approval of this waiver would allow youth to select approved training programs from Illinois' list of demand occupation training programs.

As a result of this waiver, Illinois expects that:

- Increase in the number of local workforce innovation areas that offer ITAs to ISY.
- Increase in the number of youth that utilizes an ITA to receive an industry-recognized and/or some other post-secondary credential.
- Increase in performance accountability measures for youth as found in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA (e.g., increases in credential attainment and measurable skills gains).

**Additional Strategies**

- Waiver to adjust the six-month employment requirement for IWT
- Waiver of planning region alignment.

*Impact on Performance***Waiver associated with the requirement that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of the Governor's Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY and calculation of the local area expenditure for each local area**

Under this waiver authority, the state has generally seen an increase in the number of ISY served every program year; however, OSY served decreased during the same timeframe.

Performance accountability outcomes for overall WIOA Youth (including both ISY and OSY) slightly increased in PY21, which is the latest year performance outcomes are available. The majority of the WIOA Youth performance indicators are on track to either remain steady or increase for PY22.

**Additional Impact on Performance**

- Waiver to allow ITAs for ISY

- Waiver to adjust the six-month employment requirement for IWT
- Waiver of planning region alignment

## Success Stories

### *Local Workforce Innovation Area 1 – Shaquita*

Shaquita began a job as an Account Specialist with a large manufacturing company in early 2020, participated in training for three weeks, then was sent home to work remotely due to COVID-19. She worked from home for over a year before the company began laying off workers, including her. While receiving UI and using food stamps to stretch her family budget, Shaquita began volunteering at the Greater Waukegan Development Coalition (GWDC), first building their event studio, then planning a 10-year anniversary gala. GWDC is a community development organization that fosters economic development in economically challenged communities. GWDC's management team noticed how valuable Shaquita's contributions were to the organization and worked with Lake County Workforce Development to secure a work experience. Shaquita began her work experience as a Receptionist/Executive Assistant in January 2022. She quickly adapted to her new role and began developing relationships with key stakeholders, local legislators, and organized GWDC's board of directors.

Shaquita continued to develop professionally by upskilling and utilizing WIOA training funds to complete office management training at Computer Training Source. Within one year, she obtained certifications in managing projects and Microsoft products including: Access, Excel, QuickBooks, Outlook, and PowerPoint. Shaquita said that a flexible online learning schedule was important to her while raising her two boys. The training provider worked with her to identify classes that fit her work and home schedule. Shaquita gained the necessary skills to apply for a direct-hire position with GWDC as Program Manager for their new Community Contracting Project in February of 2023. In this role, she works with small minority owned businesses in Waukegan, Zion, and North Chicago, helping them to develop by accessing grants and loans. She coordinates a seven-week training program that will help participating businesses obtain their Minority Owned Business (MBE) certification. Shaquita loves the fact that her role allows her to give back to her community. When Shaquita needed to fill a receptionist position at GWDC, she knew where to turn. She contacted Lake County Workforce Development's business team who sent her résumés of qualified candidates. A Workforce Development customer was hired for the role. Shaquita shared that the services she received from Workforce Development helped her achieve her career goal to work in a field that she is passionate about. Her advice to future jobseekers is, "Trust that all the dreams you want, want you back."

### *Local Workforce Innovation Area 2 – Justin*

It is unfortunate, but not uncommon, for a teenager to make a bad decision that would cost them years of their freedom growing up. Then 19-year-old Justin was sentenced to 16 years in prison for a decision that cost him the ability to grow up as a young adult. Years of being away from life outside had posed more barriers and adjustment than just getting a job. Unfamiliar with how the world worked, he was still determined to find his potential. He had contacted the McHenry County Workforce when he was



about to be released to get assistance with employment. Upon release, he met with Business Service to explore job opportunities. His original thought was to pursue a job and training as a tattoo artist using his artist skills. Further conversations and assessment with Business Service identified other transferable skills that he possessed. Those skills led to career exploration and then to a work experience as an administrative assistant intern in the McHenry County Workforce office. During the work experience Justin completed the remaining credits to receive his associate degree. He was also able to engage with jobseekers that were referrals from Illinois Department of Corrections and from County Specialty Courts to assist them in their employment plans. He also assisted with work readiness workshops for justice impacted jobseekers. All that experience came at a time when a position for a career planner became open. He was hired full time in a new profession and his artist talent was left as a hobby. Currently, in less than a year, his jobseeker caseload is 25 percent justice impacted customers. He has developed skills to explore career options with jobseekers that feel limited because of their past. He is using his past to help others with their future.

### *WIOA Youth – Rosie*

Rosie enrolled in the Maine Township District 207 JumpStart Youth program when she was a 16-year-old sophomore at Maine East High School. Rosie was found to be basic skills deficient and received special education services due to a disclosed disability. Rosie was also an English Language Learner who received free lunch at school and never worked. Early on, Rosie shared her career goals with her Career Advisor, who helped Rosie set objectives to help her reach her goal of becoming a nurse. Rosie was provided with a Paid Work Experience (PWE) in the Food and Nutrition Department at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital. This experience provided Rosie with her first employment opportunity, and helped Rosie develop her work readiness skills. Since Rosie has a strong interest in the medical field, the PWE also provided Rosie with valuable exposure to the industry. As a result of her PWE, the Food and Nutrition Department offered her a permanent position. Rosie excelled in her role and was soon promoted to a Hostess position. During this time, her Career Advisor helped Rosie apply to a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program. With financial support services from JumpStart, Rosie earned a credential when she completed the program and received her CNA license. Because she is now certified, Rosie applied to new departments in the hospital. In June 2023, Rosie was hired as a Nursing Assistant at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital. She is currently employed in the Neurology/ Stroke Unit and is enjoying her new role. With the services provided by JumpStart, Rosie overcame several challenges. While she completed her last semester of traditional high school, Rosie also enrolled in an evening high school program to earn additional credits. With the support of her Career Advisor and Tutoring Services, she was able to achieve success while attending both day and night school twice per week. Rosie has been provided with résumé and job search assistance, career development, job readiness training, leadership development, post-secondary education preparation, incentives, and various financial support services (school fees, tuition reimbursement, medical, uniform, etc.) to help her succeed. She has worked closely with her Career Advisor to set specific and attainable objectives and has completed them in a timely and professional manner. Rosie's work ethic, diligence and empathy towards her patients make her a role model for others. In addition to her career accomplishments, Rosie earned a credential, graduating from Maine East High School in December 2022. With her Career Advisor's assistance, she enrolled in Oakton College for the Spring term of 2023. Rosie excels in her classes and has plans to apply to Oakton's nursing program. This degree will allow Rosie to further advance her career within the medical



field, while providing exceedingly quality care to her patients. Rosie looks forward to continuing to learn and grow in her current role, while achieving successful academic results to help her advance her career.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative PY2023](#). Illinois Workforce Innovation Board

*Links*

Illinois Workforce Innovation Board

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

## Indiana

Indiana Department of Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

#### Performance Support Grants

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) continued to support the endeavors of the local areas by amplifying its efforts in engaging and serving employers that seek a better skilled workforce. During PY22 the Governor's Discretionary funds were used to support projects and activities that fell into one or more of the following categories:

- Capacity building.
- Services to target populations.
- Business Services and employer engagement.
- Youth engagement.

Performance support grants were awarded to local areas and aimed to:

- Increase labor participation (in general and for target populations).
- Decrease the percentage of long-term unemployment.
- Improve employment outcomes for target populations.
- Increase credential attainment leading to improved employment outcomes.
- Increase youth engagement.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Learning Management System (LMS), and collaboration with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)**

To support greater cross-agency coordination, DWD in collaboration with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation developed a training program to cross-train staff within the State's AJCs and VR field offices to better coordinate and deliver services to their joint customers. Two training courses were developed:

- Workforce Collaboration and Integration: Co-enrollment and Joint Case Management

- Workforce Collaboration and Integration: Indiana’s Workforce System and WIOA Program Partners.

DWD leveraged its WIOA Discretionary funds to purchase the LMS system and deploy training.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Not applicable.

## **Evaluations**

#### *Activities and Methodology*

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) continued its Federal Quarterly Performance Dashboard in PY22. This dashboard allows staff and workforce partners to quickly review and analyze both individual quarter and annual rolling WIOA performance data—both statewide and for local areas in one location.

In addition to ease of access to performance level data, DWD has continued its commitment to evidence-based performance evaluations. While the last WIOA evaluation was conducted in 2019, and reviewed WIOA Adult training programs, DWD plans to continue to build on this work through additional performance data elements and new evidence-based evaluations.

DWD has also begun the process to conduct an evidence-based evaluation of their RESEA program. While this evaluation will be focused on specific efforts and data elements of the RESEA program, the goal is to seek opportunities throughout the evaluation to also evaluate WIOA programming where applicable. DWD expects to complete and begin implementation of their findings from this evaluation in PY23.

While PY22 has been primarily focused on building and preparing DWD’s teams and selection of a vendor to conduct evidence-based evaluations on their workforce programs, DWD has a continued interest in building its technical knowledge on evaluations through participation in the upcoming Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort in 2023.

As in previous years the Indiana State Legislature conducted an annual review, analysis, and evaluation process for Indiana’s workforce related programs during PY22. The Office of Fiscal and Management Analysis (OFMA), a division of Indiana’s Legislative Services Agency (LSA), conducted this review during PY22.

Indiana also compiled the state’s annual Indiana Economic Analysis Report, which used industry, employment, and other labor market information made available through the DOL.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

DWD’s efforts in planning, developing, and conducting evidence-based evaluations over the upcoming year includes active involvement and engagement of their LWDBs. As part of DWD’s application for participation in the Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort in 2023, local board participation is included to continue to build on their collaborate efforts to address program efficacy.

DWD is committed to continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices. As part of DWD's planning process to conduct evaluations, a segment of the work following evaluations is focused on actionable items that can be implemented to improve overall program delivery and service design.

DWD's continuous improvement efforts to date on evaluations have been focused on setting the foundation and building a framework to be able to conduct meaningful evaluations across WIOA programs on an ongoing basis. This includes the establishment of a team of individuals made up of program subject matter experts, data and performance specialists, and research and analysis team members that will participate in and contribute to evaluations routinely throughout the program year. The final key element to continuous improvement efforts is securing an appropriate partner to support the statistical design of DWD's evaluations.

DWD has partnered with the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC) to support the facilitation of its evaluation design, collection and analysis of data, and reporting. DWD's long-standing partnership with IBRC will allow their already collaborative teams to expand on the research and analysis that their teams are currently supporting for the agency.

DWD intends to conduct two program evaluations in the next program year, one will be focused on the RESEA program and include elements of WIOA within the evaluation. The other will be focused on general WIOA programing. In addition to these evaluations, DWD has applied to participate in DOL's 2023 Peer Learning Cohort on evaluations to learn from other states what evaluation efforts have been made and to share their ideas on possible evaluation topics to consider. DWD intends to use this peer learning group, if selected, to further enhance the foundation setting and framework building of the agency's efforts in conducting evidence-based evaluations.

### *Reports*

- Indiana Workforce Programs Report
- Federal Performance Metrics Dashboard
- Indiana WIOA Analysis of Adult Training Programs
- 2022 Indiana Economic Analysis Report
- LSA 2022 Indiana Workforce-Related Program Review
- LSA 2023 Indiana Workforce-Related Program Review

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

- Waiver to require that State and local areas spend 75 percent of the Governor’s Reserve youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).
- Waiver on WIOA state board membership requirements.

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver to require that State and local areas spend 75 percent of the Governor’s Reserve youth funds on OSY**

Indiana Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), or local areas, in regions 3, 5, 11 and 12 utilized this waiver during PY22. These WDB’s and others saw a decrease in funding to support the State’s in-school youth (ISY) programming, like Indiana’s Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) program. These funding decreases were due to continued COVID-19 reversions affecting state sponsored funding and WIOA formula youth allocations. The WDBs in Indiana rely on programs like JAG, which is a 43-year nationally recognized workforce preparation and dropout prevention program that helps improve high school graduation rates, increase post-graduation employment, and increases access to and utilization of post-secondary education and training by Indiana’s new high school graduates. Despite four consecutive years of decreases in the overall reduction in funding to WDBs for youth service, regional workforce boards were able to utilize the waiver on Youth Funding Expenditures to ensure that the State’s JAG program continues to outperform both peer states and Indiana’s own programmatic goals.

#### **Waiver on WIOA state board membership requirements**

During the 2018 Legislative Session, the State’s General Assembly created the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC, or Cabinet) and designated it with the responsibilities of the state workforce board, in addition to assigning the authority to direct the state agencies required to strategically address current and future workforce and education needs. The Cabinet is comprised of 34 total members with 29 voting members representing different geographic areas of the state, and includes business and community leaders, K–12 and Career and Technical Education representatives, appointees from post-secondary institutions, Indiana lawmakers and experts from state agencies. This unique structure allows for a comprehensive view of the workforce from early childhood, K–12, post-secondary, and adult education to the world of work. During PY22, seven board members were appointed to address term limits or vacancies. Per DOL’s request, two individuals were appointed to represent Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation. With additional Cabinet appointments, industry/employer representatives continue to remain a majority. In June 2022, the Cabinet began conducting its meetings regionally. By December 2023, ten of the twelve designated economic growth regions will have served as Cabinet meeting locations.

The waiver modification review in 2022 included the following quantifiable goals established:

1. Increase the State's educational attainment rate with a specific goal of having 60 percent of Hoosiers with a quality credential beyond high school by 2025. Consistent with its Perkins submission, Indiana will target an 8 percent increase in credential attainment over the waiver period.
2. Expand work-based learning opportunities for both youth and adult populations. The State will target a 6 percent increase in work-based learning participation over the waiver period.
3. Increase employer engagement with a focus on engagement with minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses. The State will target a 10 percent increase in employer engagement over the waiver period.

### *Impact on Performance*

#### **Waiver to require that state and local areas spend 75 percent of the Governor's Reserve youth funds on OSY**

The flexibility allowed by the waiver has contributed to the success of Indiana's JAG program, by allowing it to continue in-class instruction, student mentoring, and participant follow-up services.

Notable improvements from PY21 to PY22 include:

- Entered employment outcomes, up 5 percent from PY21.
- Full-time positive outcomes (defined as FT employment, FT education, FT enlistment or a combination of PT placements), up 3 percent from PY21.
- Post-secondary education outcomes, up 2 percent from the prior year.

JAG Indiana students continue to outperform all other JAG affiliated states in scholarship funds secured for post-secondary enrollment—to the tune of \$24 million for the class of 2023. These scholarship funds reflect strong partnerships between in-school JAG programming and Indiana's higher education system, including the 21st Century Scholars program.

Included in JAG outcomes are nearly 2,500 ISY in the follow-up phase of services and over 4,500 junior and senior students in classrooms across the state.

JAG Indiana's 95 percent graduation rate is 9 percent higher than that of all Indiana Class of 2022 seniors, and 11 percent higher than all low-income students in Indiana. Additionally, enrollment partnerships with the State's Vocational Rehabilitation Pre-Employment Transition program have created more access for students with individualized educational plans (IEPs) or 504 plans to enroll in JAG classes; 94 percent of JAG students in this population graduated high school, compared to 76 percent of their special education peers not enrolled in JAG.

These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of Indiana's JAG program, effectiveness made possible in part by utilization of the waiver, at reducing the state's overall high school dropout rate, while also preparing participants for entry into the 21st century workforce.

#### **Additional Impact on Performance**

- Waiver on WIOA state board membership requirements

## Success Stories

### *Out-of-School Youth– Ben*

Ben was a walk-in referral at an AJC in Southeastern Indiana in January 2022. Although he possessed his high school diploma, Ben had a documented disability, individualized educational plan (IEP), and was not in school at the time, so he was enrolled in the Out-of-School Youth program. During the first two quarters of Ben's participation in the program, he worked with his family and case manager to enroll in college to work towards a degree in technology and website development. Ben's Indiana Career Explorer (INCE) assessment showed strengths in using technology, using his hands in a skillful way, and supported the idea of post-secondary education. Unfortunately, Ben was not successful and after two semesters Ben had only earned three credits and was placed on academic monitoring; following that, Ben changed his major, but he was still unsuccessful. In May 2023, his Case Manager approached Ben about work experience as a street laborer. After reviewing the duties of a street laborer, Ben agreed to give it a try. In the first week, Ben's supervisor reported that he was an excellent worker, showed great potential, and demonstrated a willingness to learn. At the end of Ben's second week his case manager met with him to discuss his work performance evaluation, which showed above average on his work ethics. Ben's parents reported their son was coming home and talking to them about his new job and duties, and no longer was going straight to his room to play video games. His mother also noted that Ben was maturing and was spending more time outside.

After four weeks of working, one of Ben's job mentors announced his retirement and wanted to recommend Ben as his replacement. After talking with Ben, the city manager agreed to give him an interview. The case manager offered Ben additional work readiness services to prepare for his interview, and Ben confided, he loved being a street laborer and hoped that he would get hired. Ben's case manager noted that Ben had matured, grown confident in his abilities, and showed no struggles communicating with his peers. In a recent follow-up, Ben reported he was doing well and "loves" his job with the City of Aurora. Since starting work for the city, Ben has been trained in how to back-in a trailer, operating small engine machines, and is working with the public during the city's summer community events.

## For more information, visit:

### *Reports*

Indiana Department of Workforce Development:

- [WIOA Annual Performance Report Narrative – Program Year 2022.](#)
- [Indiana Workforce Programs Report](#)
- [Federal Performance Metrics Dashboard](#)

- Brauneller, H., et al (Oct. 2023). [\*Indiana Economic Analysis Report\*](#).

(March 2019). [\*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: An Analysis of Adult Training Programs\*](#). Indiana Business Research Center at Indiana University's Kelley School Of Business for the Indiana Department Of Workforce Development.

Legislative Service Agency

- [\*LSA 2022 Indiana Workforce-Related Program Review\*](#)
- [\*LSA 2023 Indiana Workforce-Related Program Review\*](#)

### *Links*

Indiana Department of Workforce Development

[SEAL program](#)

[Next Level Jobs](#)



## Iowa

IowaWorks

Iowa Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

Iowa recognizes that additional statewide programming utilizing the 15 percent Set-Aside funds is a beneficial opportunity to serving a wide range of Iowans in specialized projects that advance the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB)'s vision and goals. A Special Projects team has been developed to advance these strategies, with intent to execute two to three statewide projects utilizing these funds during PY23.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Home Base Iowa (HBI)**

HBI is a one-of-a-kind program connecting veterans, service members, and their families with resources and opportunities in Iowa.

- Vision: to make Iowa the “State of Choice” for Veterans and transitioning service members for employment, education, and/or continued service.
- Mission: to provide Veterans, transitioning service members and their families with opportunities in Iowa.

HIB's 3 Focus areas are:

1. Workforce Solutions and Growth
2. Quality Education and Student Access
3. Community Support

As a core component of the IowaWorks system, HBI provides jobseekers with a wide range of reemployment services to find meaningful employment in Iowa and to connect Iowa businesses with qualified and skilled employees.

PY22 was highlighted by the continued success of program improvements and changes made in PY21. The five HBI Career Planners have helped place 142 jobseekers since January 1, 2023. In total, HBI Career Planners have helped place 431 jobseekers since being added to the program on January 1, 2022. The One HBI Career Planner began working at Camp Dodge on a full-time basis due to the relationships established with Iowa National Guard leadership and successful employment

outcomes. Additionally, HBI Career Planners attended numerous events during PY22 to include career and resource fairs, Yellow Ribbon events, retirement ceremonies, and other gatherings of key stakeholders and programs.

During PY22, the IowaWorks for Veterans Portal was launched. This marked a significant step in the integration of HBI with the IowaWorks system. The portal is a landing page for all Veterans, service members, spouses, and employers to learn about resources and opportunities in Iowa. Additionally, it is an avenue for them to create an account in the IowaWorks system to take full advantage of the employment services the State must offer. The portal has numerous tabs across the top for easy navigation for access to information and resources.

### **Offender Reentry Program**

The State appropriates \$418,312.69 in general funds to Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) for the purpose of placing six Reentry Career Planners at the following locations: Iowa Correctional Institution for Women (Mitchellville), North Central Correctional Facility (Rockwell City), Newton Correctional Facility (Fort Dodge), and the Clarinda Correctional Facility (Clarinda). The funding also covers one Reentry Operations Manager.

The program staff partners with the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) and other offender-related partners throughout Iowa, to assist in the overall goal of reducing recidivism. IDOC has nine correctional institutions that house around 8,516 individuals. Nearly 90 percent will return to their communities; just over 3,000 were released in PY21. Community Based Corrections (CBC) has eight judicial districts that supervise about 40,200 individuals on probation, parole, special sentence, and pre-trial release. CBC also has 22 residential facilities that house and supervise around 1,180 individuals.

Nearly 50,000 individuals are currently incarcerated or on community supervision in Iowa. The average daily cost of incarceration per individual is \$101.81, totaling just under \$37,000 per individual per year. The IDOC reports that the three-year recidivism rate for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 is 34.3 percent; or 2.7 percent lower than the recidivism rate observed in FY21. These numbers show three consecutive years of reduction in the system's overall recidivism rate. The national average for state prisons is around 70 percent.

Iowa's re-entry program supports WIOA through recording registered-only individuals and program enrollment into Wagner-Peyser. The goal is to teach work-related skills, find a career pathway, job placement prior to release from the institution, and network with employers and community reentry service providers to ensure a successful transition for the returning citizen. The Reentry Career Planners help create resumes, assist with mock interviews, and proctor the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and O\*NET assessments.

Empowering and Motivating Ex-offenders to Reach Gainful Employment (EMERGE) is a workshop they teach that focuses on how to get back into the workforce and explain their criminal history to potential employers. The staff act as a sponsor for the IDOC Registered Apprenticeship programs and host career fairs inside the institution. They also network with employers and educate them on incentives to hire returning citizens, including the Federal Bonding program, Work Opportunity Tax Credit program, and the Iowa income tax benefit. They perform individualized job referrals based on skill set and job search three weeks prior to the incarcerated individual's release, including referrals to IowaWorks Centers in the area the individual will return to.

Referrals also happen through Earn and Learn Iowa's electronic referral form for apprentices that need to continue in their program after release.

During PY22, the Reentry Career Planners served 1,685 individuals, which is nearly 20 percent of the incarcerated population in Iowa. This number is smaller compared to the last program year as these positions were not fully staffed due to staff turnover.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

- Enhanced Program Management Responsibilities (260E, 260F, 260G (ACE).

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) has an MOU in place with Iowa State University and Iowa's Integrated Data System for Decision Making (I2D2) to assist with the WIOA Title I Evaluation in accordance with 20 CFR Section 682.220. The project will begin with a pilot and planning effort to evaluate Iowa's WIOA Title I programs between May 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. IWD's Workforce Services Division is responsible for overseeing this work and has dedicated \$41,023.00 of State Set-Aside funds to support the initial planning phase of this project. The planning phase includes the following:

- A comprehensive inventory of existing administrative data systems that contain relevant information to inform study of Iowa's WIOA Title I programs.
- Acquire WIOA datasets from IWD and conduct a rigorous quality exploration to inform future data collection and evaluation efforts. Secure datasets and existing data documentation, profiling dataset contents, exploring patterns within data, and developing preliminary codebooks to aid development of analytic/evaluation approaches.
- Development of an evaluation plan that includes scope of possible evaluation questions that can be addressed with IWD data and possibly with other I2D2 data holdings, datasets, and elements necessary to address IWD priority questions, proposed analyses, evaluation timelines, and budget estimates for the work to address IWD's evaluation goals.

### **RESEA Evaluation**

The DOL requires each state that participates in the RESEA program to conduct an impact evaluation. Specifically, the evaluation must be designed to provide evidence of a causal relationship between program interventions and outcomes.

The RESEA program is administered in all IowaWorks Centers. The program assists individuals receiving unemployment benefits to return to work (RTW) and reduces the time an individual receives nine unemployment benefits by providing reemployment services. The RESEA theory of change holds that unemployed individuals reenter the workforce at a more rapid rate when provided reemployment services and unemployment insurance requirements are enforced. These individuals also engage in

more reemployment services, are referred to more partner programs/services, receive more individualized résumé assistance and have more able and available issues resolved.

Iowa's RESEA program is currently structured to allow in person and virtual initial appointments and reemployment services. Program staff theorize that expanding the method to receive virtual services will increase the participation of initial appointments and reemployment services. Iowa offers additional individualized RESEA meetings and believes this will assist the customer to update their reemployment plan, gain additional reemployment services, obtain more referrals to partner programs/services and can troubleshoot job-seeking issues with their RESEA Career Planner.

The overall objective of this evaluation is to assess the effect of the RESEA program on individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits who are required to look for employment. Iowa has secured a professional evaluator and the evaluation started October 2022. The data collection will conclude December 31, 2023.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

WIOA section 121(d)(2)(B) waiver of the requirement that the One-Stop Operator (OSO) be "located in the local area."

#### *Strategies*

The State has had the waiver in place for several program years. Since the inception of WIOA, the waiver has allowed the State additional flexibility in supporting local areas in securing OSOs. During PY22, four local areas continued to take advantage of this waiver. Those local areas included Northwest, North Central, Northeast, and Western. These local areas, as well as Central Iowa, utilized State Public Policy Group (SPPG) as their OSO. During PY22, contracts were terminated with SPPG in all five local areas in Iowa for which they had been providing OSO services for.

#### *Impact on Performance*

The State has concluded that although this added flexibility was beneficial during the preceding program years, the waiver did not add any long-term value for the local areas using it during PY22. The State will no longer request this waiver and IWD continues to provide support to the existing local areas to procure an entity within their local area to serve as the OSO.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

## For more information, visit:

### *Reports*

[\*PY21 WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report – Program Year 2022\*](#). Iowa Workforce Development.

### *Links*

IowaWorks

- [Veterans Portal](#)

Iowa Workforce Development

## Kansas

KansasWorks State Board

### Use of State Funds

In addition to required activities mandated in Sections 129 and 134 of WIOA, the Governor has used reserve funds to support projects designed to implement innovative programs and strategies to meet the needs of all employers in Kansas, and to develop strategies for effectively serving individuals with barriers to employment.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Workforce/Corrections Initiatives/Addressing Barriers to Reentry**

The Manager for Justice-Involved Programs serves as the liaison between Kansas Department of Commerce and Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) to work statewide at increasing opportunities for individuals involved in the criminal justice system to rejoin the workforce in sustainable living wage employment. Statewide involvement activities include:

- Regular meetings with KDOC Executive Director of Programs and Risk Reduction, Job Readiness Program Manager, and Director of Education to discuss goals and connections needed to foster employment for individuals exiting the correctional facilities,
- Train Department of Commerce Workforce Services Specialist Registered Apprentices and other staff on assisting individuals who have been involved in the justice system with rejoining the workforce,
- Train Workforce Center Business Services Teams on engaging employers in conversations about hiring justice-involved individuals,
- Providing training for partner agencies on employment support specific to individuals involved in the justice system,
- Technical assistance and connection to workforce professionals provided to several KDOC staff,
- Connecting with businesses interested in expanding their hiring pool to qualified justice-involved individuals,
- Administering RESPECTWorks (Re-Entry Specialized Employment Counseling and Training), an “inside/outside” employment counseling and training program funded by DOL, and
- Providing oversight for new shared position with Commerce and Kansas Juvenile Correctional Complex (KJCC).

### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **My (Re)Employment Plan (MRP)**

Beginning June 2021, MRP was revived and updated in KS HB2196. The program is a collaboration between the Kansas Departments of Commerce and Department of Labor and KansasWorks Workforce System and provides enhanced reemployment services to Kansans who are unemployed and looking for work. The program connects unemployment recipients who have received three consecutive UI payments with Kansasworks.com. Selected claimants are required to complete a Job Search Plan and have an active résumé at Kansasworks.com. Customers needing assistance are encouraged to visit their nearest Workforce Center. During PY22, 6,801 claimants were notified of their required participation in the MRP program. 3,690 have successfully completed all program requirements. The remaining 2,177 potentially returned to work prior to completion or other unknown factors. 936 were waived from participation, mainly due to returning to work.

In September 2022, the program achieved full automation via the customer's utilization of kansasworks.com. This automated system seamlessly integrates the job search plan and skills assessment components within the kansasworks.com platform. Upon successful completion of these tasks and a published résumé, the program's associated services are finalized, and notifications are automatically transmitted to KDOL to update customer status.

During Phase 2 of the program, designated staff have been tasked with quarterly reviews of the résumés uploaded during the MRP process, checking for content and quality. This was followed by two local areas initiating a pilot initiative involving proactive outreach, which includes cold calling, customers who have completed their MRP requirements to extend supplementary workforce services. These endeavors serve as a pivotal entry point for individuals seeking access to the Workforce Center.

#### **Neosho County Community College**

For example, the Kansas Department of Commerce continued its project with Neosho County Community College to provide underserved youth post-secondary education and training in preparation for demand occupations.

Funds were granted for a January 15, 2022, start date with the emphasis of youth aging out of foster care. The program start-up period resulted in the selection and hiring of a Program/Case Manager and outreach to youth aging out of foster care through public schools, state agencies and social media. As of June 30, 2023, 27 new participants had been enrolled and had begun both High Scholl/GED preparation and/or postsecondary education programs. The purpose of this project is to demonstrate effective strategies for reducing the multiple barriers this youth population faces when trying to make it on their own when services and support from foster care ends.

#### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- WorkReady
- Workforce Innovation Conference.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

Commerce program evaluation processes are focused on two areas: 1) topic/activity specific evaluation and 2) program specific evaluation. Currently, processes and schedules are being developed surrounding these evaluations. This process is intended to create a consistent and meaningful evaluation regardless of focus area within a reasonable amount of time. Evaluations will further support continuous improvement and assist in identifying best practices across programs within the local areas and state. The following diagram shows the proposed stages of a program evaluations and the various activities within each stage. This process encompasses activities to be completed from the beginning to the completion with the final summative report being publicized. Each evaluation will vary within the time taken to complete, however the stages noted below are proposed to be applied to all evaluation efforts to ensure integrity and thoroughness with each evaluation.

Commerce is in progress with WIOA Title I program evaluation in which a task group of experts will come together and focus on pointed questions to identify best practices and promote continuous improvement. The WIOA Title I task group members have a good understanding of the programs to include Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. This long-term evaluation for WIOA Title I started in the spring of 2023 with the establishment of the task group. This group consists of representatives from all five local areas to include One-Stop partner representation, a research analyst, program managers, and other key partners as needed. This evaluation is currently in the Pre-Implementation state. During this stage, the group assembled to become familiar with the process, review objectives, and address questions. Progress continues within this phase in that the WIOA Title I task group experts submitted for consideration questions in which are high priority for evaluation. This exercise provided definition to the course for the program evaluation as the task group moves forward. Questions were narrowed to two questions per program.

With questions being agreed upon, the task group will be transitioning into the Accountability stage. During this stage, the research analyst will be conducting data analysis to provide the task group for assessment of program operations against expectations. Based on the questions posed, outcomes could result in a wide spectrum of conclusions from higher employment rates to increased wages. When the data analysis is complete, the task group will resume meetings to continue with the stages of the program evaluation efforts. While a firm completion date has not been identified, progress continues to be made with evaluation efforts.

Additionally, Commerce was approved to participate in a Peer Learning Cohort (PLC) on Program Evaluation. This PLC will be meeting during PY23 and forward. Commerce team members include WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV partners. This comprehensive team will be working to create a transparent program evaluation process, which could expand beyond those receiving employment and training services to adult basic education and vocational rehabilitation services. By working together, this could reduce duplication of services to participants and become a more efficient model for identifying ways to improve Kansas' service delivery across agencies.



### *Continuous Improvement*

In PY22, the State continued the efforts of Workforce 2.0 to ensure they are continually adjusting to meet the needs of their customers and improving the services they provide and how they provide them.

One of the key efforts the State has been working on improving is developing candidates to be qualified for positions. This effort was in response to employers requesting better résumés in the system. For this effort, the State résumé expert provided in-depth résumé training for all Workforce Center staff, followed by consistent auditing of résumés. Based on the overall results of the audits, the State then offers feedback to staff on what improvements have been made and those that still need to be worked on. Another strategy to assist with this effort was the addition of the Big Interview tool on Kansasworks.com. This tool is an online resource for jobseekers that provides basic and best practices of interviewing, the opportunity to practice behavioral questions across all industries and feedback to assist in preparation for the real interview.

Two additional efforts include connecting businesses to jobseekers and providing hands-on assistance to jobseekers. For connecting businesses to jobseekers, each local area was tasked with working together as a leadership team to develop two connecting activities per area. An example of this is hosting an industry-specific job fair. Paired with that event, reaching out to jobseekers who match the open positions with those hiring at the job fair and preparing the jobseekers to be equipped for the fair (ensuring their résumé is current and providing interview assistance, if needed). Examples of the hands-on assistance to jobseekers includes a variety of jobseeker workshops, both in-person and virtually.

Another avenue to ensure continuous improvement of customer service has been the sustained usage of the customer service kiosk surveys within each Workforce Center. As they leave the Centers, customers are encouraged to fill out a survey regarding the services they received.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State technically did not have any approved waivers for PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

*Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

**Success Stories***Veteran's Services – Michael*

Michael is a Master Sergeant in the U.S. Air Force (USAF) stationed at McConnell Air Force Base (AFB) who most recently served as the section chief over for fuel operations at this station. During the DVOP's first visit with Michael, he indicated he had no specific career field in mind and said only that he would like to find a high-paying position that would allow him to use his logistics and personnel management skills. Michael said he and his family own a home in the Tampa, Florida area and planned to return there after his retirement. Michael has a bachelor's degree in reverse logistics.

The Disabled Veterans Outreach program (DVOP) began helping Michael explore jobs in the Wichita area since his wife works as a civilian employee of the USAF at McConnell. After working with Michael on completing his job-ready résumé, the DVOP then showed him how to customize his résumé for positions he might apply for.

Michael developed several excellent customized résumés and began working with the DVOP on his job interview skills. During his job search, he applied for positions with Koch Industries and Amazon.com. Michael was interviewed for a position as a manager of project managers at Koch and a supervisory position at Amazon. However, he did not feel he was right for either position.

After attending the Get Hired Job Fair in Wichita in November 2022, Michael applied for and was interviewed for a position with UCI Industrial Construction Services in Wichita. Michael was hired by UCI as the company's Procurement Manager earning \$90,000 per year. Throughout the process of working with the DVOP, Michael was apprehensive about retiring from the U.S. Air Force. However, he worked hard to develop his job search and interviewing skills. As a result of his new job with UCI, Michael and his wife are remaining in the Wichita area and have no plans currently to return to Florida.

*Veteran's Services – Patricia*

Patricia is a disabled veteran who came into the Manhattan Workforce Center in December to find a better working situation. She was making a good salary, but it was a long commute from where she lives. She has a lot of experience in management of retail locations, good computer skills and inventory management skills but had three jobs in the last year and she was worried how that would look to a prospective employer. She was seeking a position where she would have the ability to use her strengths and make at least \$45,000. DVOP conducted a comprehensive assessment and learned that in her job search so far, she had gotten several interviews, but that was when things seemed to fall apart. DVOP reviewed her résumé and made some suggestions to tailor it but saw that Patricia had captured some great highlights that she should keep. DVOP did a job survey for the types of work that met her criteria. DVOP also sent her announcements for virtual and in-person hiring fairs, as well as referrals to employment as her job search continued. Patricia let DVOP know that she accepted an offer and started as a Coach at Walmart

on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at a salary of \$65,000. She appreciated the referrals and support during her work search and was happy to get an offer that was \$20,000 more than the job she left.

### *Barriers to Employment – Jacob*

Jacob visited the Great Bend KansasWorks Workforce Center seeking assistance in securing employment. Jacob worried that because he used a wheelchair, it would be more difficult to find a job. He also reported a history of substance abuse and was residing in a local Oxford House.

Kansas WorkforceONE staff began working with Jacob and made a direct referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Services to partner with them to assist with Jacob's job search and identifying resources that could assist with clothing and or transportation needs. Kansas WorkforceONE staff contacted the manager of a local hotel, and they discussed potential employment opportunities at the hotel and how the jobseeker might fit the needs the employer was looking to fill. Following this conversation, the manager agreed to interview Jacob and subsequently offered him a part-time position as a Night Auditor.

Jacob has now been employed with the Holiday Inn for approximately one year and the manager reports he has mastered all the skills needed for each of the shifts at the front desk. When Kansas WorkforceONE staff last visited Jacob to provide follow-up services, he was standing behind the front desk and walked into the conference room. Jacob reports he is in better physical condition, in large part because of his employment and staying physically active. The stability that has developed in Jacob's life has truly been transformational. Jacob is not only successful in his job, but he is also regularly active in the leadership of the Oxford Houses in his district.

### *Dislocated Workers – Courtney*

Courtney was referred to the Workforce Center in July of 2020 due to a layoff from his employment in the aviation industry. Prior to his layoff, Courtney was working full time as an engine mechanic making \$33.20 per hour. Courtney was seeking training to upgrade his skills to stay in the aviation industry but in a different occupation. Courtney is a single father to three children, so it was crucial for him to be able to match or exceed the income he earned prior to his layoff.

After working with a Workforce Center professional, Courtney decided on training at a local community college for non-destructive testing (NDT). He began training in August of 2020. While attending training he took advantage of fuel assistance supportive services to assist him in traveling to school. Courtney was able to gain entry level employment at a local aviation employer towards the end of his training to assist in providing for his children. While this entry level employment led to less income than prior to his layoff, he was able to gain experience and earn income while attending school.

Courtney graduated in June 2022 with his NDT technical certification. This certification allowed him to obtain a promotion and wage increase at the aviation employer he was working at. Courtney is now earning \$39.56 per hour with full benefits and is again able to support his family.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

KansasWorks. [\*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program Year 2022 Annual Report.\*](#)

*Links*

KansasWorks

- KansasWorks State Board

[My \(Re\)Employment Plan \(MRP\)](#)

## Kentucky

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

### Use of State Funds

In PY22, the Governor's Discretionary Funds were updated to focus on three primary categories of funding: local innovation, the Governor's statewide priorities, and workforce system improvement. Funded projects included youth employment support, construction trades exposure (across several areas of Kentucky), statewide sector strategy collaborative development, multi-area IT training, and an initiative in recruiting and retaining talent in the line technician occupation.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Co-enrollment with the Office of Adult Education**

The Office of Adult Education (OAE) assists Kentuckians in improving the quality of their lives through education, training, and employment. Services and programs are governed by WIOA 2014, Sections 200-243, specifically Sections 202 and 203 regarding the purpose and associated definitions, and Sections 225, 231, and 243 regarding the delivery of services and activities. In addition, Kentucky Senate Bill 1, 2000 (Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) 151b.400-410) addresses the requirements for delivering Adult Education services in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Adult Education services are provided by a Local Provider Network (LPN) comprising 26 local providers across all 120 counties selected based on a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process covering the 2022–2025 RFP/Grant cycle.

Kentucky Adult Education is committed to being a valuable WIOA partner. It is embedded within the Kentucky WIOA partnership community and provides Title II services to support and align with the efforts of Title I, III, and IV partners and support agencies. The focus of the Path Ahead for Adult Education in Kentucky is to mitigate barriers to education, training, and employment through co-enrollment across the WIOA partnership community. Integrated Education and Training (IET), Workplace Literacy Programs (WPL), and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs are opportunities to address the needs of Kentuckians by leveraging the efforts of all WIOA partners. This includes partnerships across the non-profit sector, such as the Earn and Learn Program with Goodwill Industries of Kentucky; the private sector, such as the English language acquisition and Cultural Competency programs with KCC Companies; and the public and quasi-public sector, such as the Student Basic Needs Action Network and the Commonwealth Education Continuum which sets the conditions for success for citizens transitioning to employment and or postsecondary education.

In addition, OAE continues to expand partnerships in support of justice-involved and recovery citizens throughout the Commonwealth. The OAE, in conjunction with the Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and the 11 selected counties per KRS 533.270-290, assists with the

administration of the Behavioral Health Conditional Dismissal Program, which is designed to provide eligible participants charged with a qualifying offense an alternative to receive treatment and recovery support services, as well as education and training instead of incarceration, resulting in dismissal of the charges upon successful completion of the program. Additionally, OAE has adopted the Putting Kentuckians First Program, which provides education, training, and employment services and opportunities to Kentuckians transitioning out of jails.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Putting Kentuckians First**

This program serves individuals in local jails in the collective impact approach by bringing together local resources and wrap-around services to serve the individual needs to ensure employment placement and retention. It was elevated to a statewide program by creating the Targeted Services Branch in the Kentucky Office of Adult Education. The involvement and orchestration of the workforce, behavioral health partners, adult education, vocational rehabilitation, judicial entities, and recovery resources has created an ecosystem of services.

#### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Information Technology – Code Kentucky
- Partnership with Office of Employer and Apprenticeship Services

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Planned Evaluations and WIOA State Plan Listening Sessions**

Throughout the second half of PY22, the planning process for the upcoming WIOA State Plan began. Kentucky conducted listening sessions in every local workforce area that included breakout sessions for key stakeholder groups. These breakout sessions consisted of employers, education, and workforce partners, elected officials, and individual customers. The goal of the listening sessions was to share the state's strategic goals and ask local stakeholders to reflect on the current workforce development system and reimagine the future state of the workforce development system. By breaking down individuals into peer categories and visiting local communities, the goal was to capture honest feedback for consideration in the WIOA State Plan process.

This coordination is further supported by the “Workforce Board Chair Roundtable,” a local and state partnership among the workforce development board business-led chairs. The Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWI) chairman launched the Roundtable initiative in PY22 to grow the alignment and collaboration between the state and local chairs in a business-to-business atmosphere. The goal of the Roundtable is to meet quarterly in a virtual setting and have an in-person, end-of-year meeting where local executive committee members, board directors, and board chairs can come together. This platform will allow

for the dissemination of the collected research for the WIOA State Plan from the local listening sessions. The findings will be provided in the PY23 Annual Narrative and included in the upcoming WIOA State Plan.

Additionally, research was done to establish a visual representation of the state's workforce pipelines at the urging of the KWIB members, specifically those most interested in understanding the labor force participation rate and, more specifically, the workforce participation opportunities.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

The State does not have any waivers in place.

#### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

#### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

### **Success Stories**

#### *WIOA Youth – Jacobe*

Jacobe was depressed and making “bad decisions” before he came to The Spot. He found a community of peers going through similar challenges and got connected to resources, including mental health counseling and a computer. The Spot also helped him get an internship at Republic Bank in Louisville. “I’m very optimistic now as far as my future goes... it’s limitless.”

*WIOA Adult – Kristina*

Kristina was a single parent to one child who relocated to Rockcastle County from North Carolina. She received public assistance and struggled to make ends meet when she was signed up for WIOA Adult program services in May 2022. She was very interested in attending Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training to support herself and her son. Kristina successfully passed and was issued her CDL on July 19, 2022, and began working at Covenant Transport out of Chattanooga, TN. Kristina continues to be employed at Covenant Transport.

*WIOA Adult – Adriel*

Adriel worked at a fast-food restaurant, earning \$11.30 an hour, which was not enough to make ends meet. With several manufacturing companies recruiting new employees, he decided to try a new career path. He applied at Martinrea International, a Tier 1 automotive supplier of lightweight structures and propulsion systems. Martinrea International works closely with the West Kentucky Workforce Board. Since Adriel had no manufacturing experience, the company referred him to a WIOA Career Coach at the Hopkinsville Career Center. He was eligible for WIOA services, including 640 hours of OJT. Adriel began working as a Production Assistant for Martinrea International on February 13, 2023, earning \$17.85 an hour, including benefits. He completed his OJT on June 7, 2023, and is employed with Martinrea International.

*Dislocated Worker – Alec*

Alec had been working on a land surveyor crew with DDI Engineering for 18 months when the company announced that they would be closing. His last day at DDI Engineering was February 23, 2022. After a year of looking for work, Alec knew he needed help searching. He visited the Hopkinsville Career Center and met with a WIOA Career Coach who helped him evaluate his challenges and stressors. Alec realized that he was interested in finding new employment in manufacturing. Alec was hired by Delavan Fluid Power, a privately owned pump, sprayer, lawn, and garden manufacturer, and hydraulic company in Elkton, KY. He started OJT with Dislocated Worker funding from the West Kentucky Workforce Board on March 7, 2023. Alec completed his 320 hours of training on May 17, 2023. He continues to work at Delavan Fluid Power working as a Commercial Sprayer.

*WIOA In-School Youth – Amari*

Amari was a senior at Hopkinsville High School and enrolled in the Medical Nurse Aide (MNA) class and Patient Care Tech (PCT) certification course pathways at Gateway Academy. She had her sights on attending nursing school upon graduation but needed support transitioning to life after high school, direction with FAFSA, scholarships, and navigating the tuition requirements for local colleges. She sought help from the Christian County Board of Education. She was determined eligible for their WIOA ISY program, funded by the West Kentucky Workforce Board.

Amari spent her senior year in the WIOA ISY program, attending tutoring, participating in transition services, and leadership development activities. She was provided a paid work-based learning experience at Jennie Stuart Health as a Student Patient Care Technician. Amari graduated with a high school diploma and MNA and PCT certifications in May 2023. Jennie Stuart Health



hired her upon graduation because of her excellent work ethic, dependability, and reliability during her paid work-based learning experience, creating a seamless talent pipeline in a high-demand, critical-shortage industry. Amari is now enrolled in Hopkinsville Community College's nursing program.

Amari has not forgotten the lessons she learned in the Youth program: "The WIOA program helped me get real-world and hands-on experiences to focus on getting my professional certifications and diploma while working in my chosen pathway. I am earning money in a meaningful and gratifying profession that is in shortage, and I have no college debt."

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Team Kentucky: Workforce Program Year 2022 WIOA Statewide Annual Narrative](#). Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

*Links*

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

## Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Labor,  
Louisiana Workforce Commission

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Reintegration of Justice-Involved Personnel**

Wagner-Peyser funds provide full time dedicated staff working directly in or coordination with Day Reporting Centers (DRC). In order to accomplish a more aligned reintegration of justice-involved personnel, Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards decreed the reduction of recidivism as a top priority in the State. Employment is widely seen as a crucial element for successful reintegration for justice-involved personnel.

LWC currently supports seven-day reporting centers in the following parishes: St. Tammany, Caddo, East Baton Rouge, Ouachita, Calcasieu, Rapides, and combined Orleans/Jefferson.

The staff provide individualized career services to formerly justice-involved persons that contribute to their successful transition to society. Staff also conduct outreach and advocacy on behalf of the participants to coordinate with local service agencies to provide various needs such as housing, clothing, transportation, legal assistance, etc. coordination with the local shelters—housing, other partners.

A comprehensive assessment and employment plan including follow-up every 30 days to ensure gainful employment. Substantial employment can assist individuals in succeeding after release from incarceration. This process allows the individuals to refocus their time and efforts on improving positive outcomes and can provide meaningful careers for the workforce.

##### **Drive Your Future 2.0**

This initiative aimed to alleviate the truck driver shortage across the state by offering training grants to qualified applicants. These grants covered tuition for accredited truck driving schools, with a particular emphasis on enrolling veterans and underemployed individuals. With a total budget of \$563,545,000, Louisiana partnered with the Louisiana Technical Community College System, Diesel Driving Academy, and Coastal Truck Driving School to establish 100 training slots statewide.

As of October 27, 2023, 97 eligible participants have completed CDL training, and 53 of these graduates are currently employed in the transportation industry.

*Other State Funds Activities***Jobs for America's Graduates Louisiana (JAG-LA)**

JAG-LA works with Louisiana students as early as grade 7 through grade 12 and provides services to out-of-school youth who did not thrive in the regular education setting. The core program is dedicated to providing opportunities for students challenged with life and learning hurdles, including academic, social, behavioral, and economic. JAG-LA's mission is to identify students who face barriers and guide them on to a successful path toward continued education, a meaningful career and productive adulthood.

The JAG-LA Program is an affiliate of the National Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Program, the nation's largest dropout prevention program and career readiness program serving youth 12–21 years of age.

**Grow with Google**

This initiative is a direct response to the growth of the IT Sector, which continued to expand during the pandemic, prompting increased interest in pursuing employment in this field.

Grow with Google scholarships, funded through a partnership between the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and Google, aim to make 30,000 program scholarships available nationwide. Google offers career certificates in high-growth fields such as project management, user experience (UX) design, data analytics, IT support, digital marketing, and e-commerce.

The program features self-paced classes offered through Coursera, requiring under 10 hours of flexible study per week and taking an average of three to six months to complete. It includes hands-on projects and employer connections, with graduates gaining free access to career resources such as coaching sessions, mock interviews, résumé-building tools, and access to the Google Career Certificates employer.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission has 500 scholarships for jobseekers, which cover Google certifications in various fields, including IT support, project management, data analytics, UX design, digital marketing, and IT automation with Python. The program has witnessed significant engagement, with numerous individuals completing courses and earning certifications.

**Evaluations***Activities and Methodology***RESEA**

The RESEA program participants who are identified as transitioning veterans receiving UI benefits for Ex-Service members (UCX) and UI claimants who are most likely to exhaust all unemployment benefits are required to participate in four appointments over the course of 10 weeks to get them back to work.

The RESEA program uses statistical modeling to rank unemployment benefits claimants based on their likelihood to exhaust all unemployment benefits. This process includes a statistical evaluation of numerous work and related factors, including but not

limited to length of workforce attachment, occupational field, industry, wages, and location. Claimants are assigned a score, with a higher score indicating a greater risk of exhausting unemployment benefits.

There were 46,655 individuals profiled for RESEA services in PY22 and PY23. During these program years, the RESEA Department assisted 16,608 participants of scheduled services that were successfully completed, which is a 58 percent increase from the previous year.

The RESEA procured The Policy and Research Group (PRG), an experienced independent evaluator, to conduct its evaluation of the RESEA program in January 2022. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is taking steps to ensure that RESEA service delivery strategies are viable in assisting with “Putting People to Work.”

PRG will continue to work with LWC to decide which RESEA program component(s) to evaluate and conduct an Evaluability Assessment of the RESEA program component(s), develop research questions that explore the RESEA program’s influence on a particular population’s outcomes of interest (e.g., employment, benefit duration, earning), develop a Logic Model of the RESEA component(s) to be evaluated and assess existing data and data systems.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

During PY22, the State had two WIOA waivers through DOL (both approved June 30, 2024):

- Waiver of requirement that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all Governor’s Reserve and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY)
- Waiver of requirement that only permits WIOA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for OSY for PY22 and PY23.

#### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver of requirement that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all Governor’s Reserve and local formula youth funds on OSY**

The state may lower the expenditure requirement of the Governor’s Reserve to 50 percent for OSY.

**Waiver of requirement that only permits WIOA ITAs for OSY for PY22 and PY23.**

The approval also outlines that the state may use ITAs for in-school youth (ISY) ages 16 to 21 years of age. The approval of this waiver should not impede the State's efforts to prioritize OSY, including outreach to the OSY population.

*Impact on Performance*

No information provided for this section.

**Success Stories**

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Louisiana Workforce Commission. 2022 WIOA Program Annual Report.](#)

*Links*

Louisiana Department of Labor – Louisiana Workforce Commission

## Maine

Maine Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Use of Wagner-Peyser Set-Aside Funds**

Wagner-Peyser 10 percent continues to support Career Center access for speakers of languages other than English, funds and to support staff development. Additional digital training recordings were made by workforce program experts and added to the video training library. The program overviews are used to train new staff and refresh existing staff on workforce system programs and services. It also houses other training opportunities that are beneficial to system staff. The library is accessed through a new portal where staff can access training, policies, and other resources as well as where they can document and track their staff development accomplishments.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Program Evaluation**

The Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI) collaborated with the Maine Bureau of Employment Services (BES) to evaluate the long-term earnings outcomes of Maine's WIOA Adult participants who received training in entry-level occupations to identify earnings and upward mobility outcomes over time. The evaluation looks at employment and earnings outcomes over a five-year period starting with excisers of the 2016 WIOA Adult program.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Virtual American Job Center (VAJC)**

The next steps in VAJC development include design, testing and deployment of the platform followed by training on the solution for Maine service providers and partners. A promotional campaign will be launched, including recurring and incremental

communications. A customer feedback mechanism will be employed for continuous improvement purposes. The solution will track user access by targeted population to measure increased usage of Career Center services.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State submitted a request to extend/continue the waiver of Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 which requires that state and local areas spend not less than 75 percent of youth funds to provide career and training services to Out-of-school youth (OSY).

### *Strategies*

Continuation of this waiver will allow the State and local areas the flexibility to direct more WIOA youth funds toward delivery of workforce services to low-income, high school-aged youth with barriers to employment and education. The waiver will support the vision outlined in Maine's Economic Development Plan and the goals of the Maine Children's Cabinet.

Extension of the waiver will support increases in the following:

- Number of high school graduates.
- High school graduates' successful entry into employment, registered apprenticeship, or post-secondary education.
- Services to youth at risk of dropping out of high school.
- The overall number of WIOA Youth served per program year.
- Maine High Schools' awareness of WIOA services available to eligible high school students.
- Involvement of Maine employers, apprenticeship sponsors, schools, and workforce system partners in activities that ensure high school youth successfully transition to employment and/or advanced training.
- Decrease in the number of disconnected youths through connecting youth with paid work experience, pre-apprenticeship, and extended learning opportunities, before they drop out or detach from the system.

Continuation of this waiver supports the principles outlined in the DOL's recent Youth Employment Works Strategy, which includes:

- A “no wrong door” system that permits both in-school youth (ISY) and OSY to access a seamless system of services that lead to high-quality careers.
- Increase in public and private commitments to youth and young adult career pathways such that businesses, employers, labor organizations, schools, workforce system partners invest in high-quality pathways for young people.
- Guaranteed paid work experience, so that all young people can access and participate in career aligned work experiences that are safe and age appropriate.

Continuation of this waiver will also result in additional innovative collaborations between WIOA Youth services, Maine high schools, Maine employers and Apprenticeship sponsors. The State will be able to document the value of youth pre-apprenticeship programs and paid work experience activities for high school youth by tracking performance outcomes of ISY enrolled in these activities, including high school completion rates, transition to registered apprenticeship, employment, and/or advanced training. Maine expects to see an increase in the median earnings achieved by youth who enter employment as well as a reduction in the number of youths disconnected from work or education, thereby, expanding Maine’s labor pool. Other expected outcomes for youth participants include an increase in the number of youths who attain a Measurable Skill Gain and earn an industry-recognized credential.

The State will oversee and monitor the implementation of continuation of the waiver, including quantifying expanded services to ISY and expanded expenditure of ISY funding through regular tracking of in-school enrollments and performance outcomes.

### *Impact on Performance*

The waiver has been particularly important in efforts to connect WIOA-eligible high school students to pre-apprenticeship programs that lead to registered apprenticeship. The Maine Apprenticeship Council, Maine high schools, and WIOA service providers have partnered with the following to develop and implement pre-apprenticeships for high school youth:

- Educate Maine
- Associated Contractors of Maine
- Hospitality Maine
- Career and Technical Education Centers
- The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- The Maine Aquaculture Association
- Maine adult education programs and employers such as Reed and Reed Construction and ReVision Energy

Pre-apprenticeships in Maine are a new tool for encouraging students to remain in school until graduation that results in entry into employment through transition to registered apprenticeship programs or post-secondary education. Pre-apprenticeship programs



not only launch high school youth on a pathway to high-quality registered apprenticeship but are an innovative tool for supporting high school completion and renewed interest in academics, as students learn how to apply academic concepts to their day-to-day work activities.

Increased outcomes resulting from the waiver show that most ISY being served are at the high school level, which aligns with the goals of the Maine Children's Cabinet. PY20 was an anomaly due to the pandemic, but overall enrolled youth are on track for credential attainment and measurable skill gains as well as increases in the number participating in paid work experience while in school.

## Success Stories

### *Title IB Youth – Eastern Maine Development Corporation*

The Youth program service provider in the Northeastern workforce area initiated a Youth Ambassador program that engages youth participants in conducting outreach to their peers to promote WIOA services to both in-school youth and out-of-school youth. The program offers the opportunity for youth participants who have completed the Young Mainer's Academy, a formal cohort training that provides multiple youth elements to a group of participants as a cohort. Ambassadors are selected from completers who show leadership skills to assist with peer mentoring during future cohorts and who reach out to high schools and youth and teen centers to present information about WIOA Youth services.

### *Title IB Youth – Aroostook County Action Program*

The Youth program service provider in the Northeastern area has established a working relationship with Loring Job Corps to enroll Job Corps participants who have almost completed their program to provide paid work experience with local employers as a direct pathway to employment.

### *Title IB Youth – Workforce Solutions*

The Youth program service provider in the Coastal Counties local area has embedded a career advisor in the local YouthBuild program in Portland. The staff person provides youth service elements to the co-enrolled participants.

## For more information, visit:

### *Reports*

(Dec. 2023). [Maine WIOA Annual Report Program Year 2021](#). Maine Department of Labor

*Links*

Maine Department of Labor

## Maryland

Maryland Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Reentry Navigators**

Maryland used \$500,000 of WIOA Governor Set-Aside funding to hire five Reentry Navigators. The Reentry Navigators serve the following local areas: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, the Lower Shore, Prince George's County, and Western Maryland. They interface with inmates in correctional education programs (both academic and occupational) and serve as the critical point of contact to the local AJC. In addition, Reentry Navigators interact with businesses who hire ex-offenders.

Due to the success of the initial pilot, in 2022, six additional navigators were hired to serve all the local workforce areas in Maryland. In addition, in 2023, the staff were hired as state merit and will continue to report directly to the Reemployment Program Directors in each Local Area. The goal of this intervention is to create a connection between the correctional education program and the workforce system as well as to inform the State regarding best practices for engaging this population.

During the report period, Reentry Navigators provided intensive services previously not provided prior to release to 1,231 returning citizens behind the fence. A total of 916 of the returning citizens who worked with Reentry Navigators were placed in employment opportunities.

##### **Workforce Solutions to Address Homelessness (WSAH) Demonstration Project \$997,976**

The WSAH pilot program was conceived by the Interagency Council on Homelessness's (ICH) Workforce Subcommittee. The goal of the pilot is to bridge the gap between workforce and homeless services on both a system and provider level.

Using best practices put forth by the ICH and identified via a landscape analysis conducted by the Workforce Subcommittee, grantees were required to form comprehensive partnerships to coordinate the delivery of employment and related services to best meet the needs of individuals experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. Applicants could apply for up to \$200,000 to be spent across a three-year period. The pilot launched in October 2022 and will conclude in September 2025.

##### **Supporting Recovery Through Employment (SRTE) \$996,364**

Since 2019, MD Labor has benefitted from a fruitful partnership with the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), in which there has been a shared recognition of the value of employment to a person's recovery from a substance use disorder (SUD). Following the conclusion of the successful Opioid Workforce Innovation Fund grant made possible through a partnership with BHA, MD Labor continued to advance the efforts of organizations currently serving

unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers in recovery from a SUD, by directing resources to the development of a pipeline from training to employment through the release of SRTE. The grant was launched in November 2022 and concluded in October of 2023.

#### **Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) \$100,000**

MOED received a grant in January 2023 to expand one-on-one service provision to individuals who engage with the career center and identify as someone in recovery from a SUD. As a result of their participation in the DOL Support to Communities grant, MOED identified a need for rapid employment among individuals impacted by SUDs. MOED used this funding from DOL to hire a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist to serve as a liaison between behavioral health treatment providers, patients in treatment, and the career center. The results have been astounding.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **School-to-Apprenticeship Pathway - International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)**

The State funded the Baltimore Electrician Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) to continue expansion of its apprenticeship program by working with participating local public school systems to offer a School-to-Apprenticeship pathway. IBEW received \$57,000 to accomplish the following:

- Work with local public-school systems to recruit student candidates who: will be entering their senior year, are on pace to graduate, are able to pass a drug test, have taken and passed a minimum of Algebra I, and will have a valid driver's license and vehicle by the end of the School to Apprenticeship year.
- Have the opportunity to take the first year of the JATC's related instruction in an online format (up to 50 students).
- Be provided classroom time and space to work with instructors as needed on both the curriculum and hands on labs.

COVID-19 hampered activity in 2021 and early 2022 but the project has had more success in late 2022 and 2023. The DWDAL MATP Director and the Sponsor and Baltimore County Public Schools met multiple times to facilitate entry for high school students. The number of individuals participating has more than doubled from 13 to 28, with two entering apprenticeships.

##### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH)
- Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) – Charles County Public Schools (CCPS), Apprenticeship \$73,748.95
- IEC – Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Apprenticeship \$74,392.93
- Association of International Professional Accountants (AICPA) \$119,875
- American Rescue Plan Act and MOED \$250,000
- Maryland Business Works (MBW)

- Career Pathways
- Youth Work Experience

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

### *Continuous Improvement*

The PY19 and PY20 reports provide the foundation for the next wave of Maryland RESEA evaluation studies. In the near term the State will conduct a new post-COVID-19 process analysis, and another retrospective quasi-experimental evaluation based on PY21 program data. Those two studies have relatively quick turn-around and should be completed within 12 months of contract signing. Given the increased RESEA funding to Maryland, the State will also start randomized controlled trial (RCT) evaluations on two-tracks:

- 1) Nudges for participation which will have relatively quick turnaround for near term outcomes, and
- 2) Unpacking separate effects of the RESEA services bundle.

The State intends to begin a cost analysis during work on the new process analysis. Ultimately, cost data will be combined with impact estimates from the quasi-experimental evaluation and the RCT of services components to produce cost-effectiveness estimates. The following is an outline of planned evaluation activities starting in fall 2023.

- PY21 quasi-experimental evaluation based on administrative data
  - Impacts on UI dollars, UI weeks, exhaustion, employment, earnings
  - Subgroup impacts on UI dollars and weeks
  - Hazard analysis (time to UI exit) for first unemployment spells
- Post-Pandemic RESEA process analysis
  - Visit selected local offices
  - Document RESEA procedures for services and data recording
  - Set up cost data collection procedures
- Plan RCTs
  - Behavioral nudges for participation

- Short-term outcomes—participation
  - Medium-term outcomes—employment, earnings, exhaustion
- Alternative bundles of RESEA services
  - Medium-term outcomes
- Begin RCT evaluations
  - Enrollment
  - Data collection
  - Analysis

### *Reports*

The Division of Unemployment Insurance (DUI) Set-Aside funds from the RESEA grant to evaluate Maryland's RESEA for program years PY19 and PY20. The W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research working with the Jacob France Institute (JFI) at the University of Baltimore for MD Labor delivered the following reports:

- Process Analysis Report PY19
- Formative Evaluation Report PY19
- Plan for Annual Assessments with Incremental Improvements PY19
- Impact Evaluation Report PY20.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State does not have any waivers in place related to WIOA.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *WIOA Adult – Jessica*

Jessica was a 49-year-old woman facing multiple employment barriers when she was referred to her local AJC for employment and training services. Jessica had not held a job for a long time and was essentially homeless, residing in a long-term residential treatment facility. In addition to suffering from opioid addiction, she was receiving benefits through SNAP and had limited education and marketable occupational skills. Jessica needed the coordinated resources of multiple workforce system partners to rise above such an overwhelming set of circumstances. And that is exactly where the Western Maryland Consortium stepped in.

The workforce professionals at the Hagerstown AJC teamed with the other organizations who were helping Jessica on a variety of fronts to address her employment barriers. They helped her connect with a transitional job that would allow her to gain some recent work history, build her résumé, and acquire some usable skills that would also support her efforts in recovery while in treatment. Not only did Jessica successfully complete her transitional employment period, but she also graduated from her treatment program.

The treatment center assisted her in moving into a transitional living situation. During this period, Jessica began Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training at Hagerstown Community College and worked part-time to sustain her living expenses. She passed her CDL exam and obtained her Class A license in November of 2022. With assistance from the Hagerstown AJC staff, she prepared a résumé and conducted a job search, and found full-time employment with benefits utilizing her new CDL license within a matter of weeks. Today she is on her own with the skills and support she needs to make a sustainable living wage and thrive in recovery. Considering the journey, Jessica remarks, "I am incredibly grateful for all the support I have received along the way!"

### *WIOA Youth – Frank*

Frank was a high school graduate with multiple disabilities who loved working with computers, but he lacked any credentials beyond a high school diploma when he began working with staff from the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance. He had a steady job he liked, working in a local restaurant, but he wanted more. He knew he would need to acquire specialized skills to be considered by local information technology companies, so Frank acted to achieve his dreams. While maintaining employment at a KFC/Taco Bell restaurant, he purchased a simulator with his own money, so that he could practice repairing and re-building computers. He completed 27 free online courses available through Metrix Learning, a program he accessed free of charge through the local workforce area's website. He participated in tutoring sessions twice a week to improve his math and reading skills, and completed WIOA-funded basic, intermediate, and advanced CompTIA, and A+ Prep courses, obtaining multiple certifications through Wor-Wic Community College. A Workforce Specialist assisted Frank in crafting a competitive résumé and helped him connect with a work experience opportunity repairing computers at the Telamon organization. His own perseverance and support from the local workforce area's WIOA Youth program have prepared Frank to reach his career goals.

### *Recovery to Work Program – Shelby*

Shelby was first connected to Frederick County Workforce Services (FCWS) through a referral from her Case Manager at the local Department of Social Services (DSS). Her DSS Case Manager encouraged her to meet with FCWS staff, who could help her upgrade her skills and search for a better job.

Shelby was glad she followed the Case Manager's advice; she was pleased and surprised to learn that, in addition to a wide range of other career services FCWS offered, they had a program explicitly organized to assist those in recovery called Resilient Frederick County (RFC). Being nearly two and half years sober, Shelby worked at Weis Markets for minimum wage as a single mother. She took the bus to and from work and her daughter's daycare daily. Just getting by was a struggle. Shelby knew she needed to focus on building a career to support her family, but thinking about reconnecting to school made her feel paralyzed. She thought she had wasted her opportunity to earn a college degree when she dropped out during active addiction. The RFC program helped her get a new lease on her dreams.

Through the RFC program, Shelby participated in the Recovery to Work Academy. She completed six months of modules that taught her skills for gaining and retaining employment in a professional work setting while balancing her recovery. She also attended a three-week business communications class at the local community college. Shelby then engaged in transitional work experience as an Administration and Communication Assistant, where she put her newfound confidence and skills into action. While participating in the RFC program, Shelby also secured a car from Second Chances Garage and was assisted in researching options to complete her bachelor's degree.

As Shelby finishes her year in the RFC program, she will also complete her last class to earn her college degree in Communications from Salisbury University. But her success story does not end there. She has also accepted a position as a Job Specialist II with Maryland's Department of Labor and will be working to help other Marylanders get back to work. Looking back on her experience, Shelby says,

"There are so many people willing to help, so many programs established to help those of us who want to live our lives differently in recovery. But it doesn't happen all at once. It's an ongoing journey that takes time and effort every day. The best opportunities I found have been entirely unexpected, and the RFC program is most definitely at the top of the list! Working with someone understanding and non-judgmental makes all the difference."

### *WIOA Youth – Ebony*

Ebony is a 24-year-old mother who enrolled in Employ Prince George's (EPG's) Youth Services program. EPG's Youth Services staff worked with Ebony to help her match her passion for digital marketing and social media management with a work experience opportunity at Sincerely Wilma, a Maryland-based small business that handcrafts an assortment of sweet and savory pancake and waffle batters. Ebony's work ethic and performance during an internship with the organization landed her a contractual position with the company as their Social Media Manager. Although she thrived in her new role, the owner was unfortunately not able to retain her services beyond a few months. This did not stop Ebony from pursuing her dreams though. She continued to meet regularly with EPG's Youth Services staff for weeks to coordinate the appropriate next steps.



While waiting to begin a small business certification at Prince Georges Community College, Ebony worked with one of EPG's Youth Business Consultants, who helped her learn how to effectively engage with employers. Ebony applied her newly acquired skills during one of EPG's quarterly job fairs, scheduling three employment interviews. She made it through three rounds of interviews with the Maier & Warner Public Relations Firm for a role as the organization's Digital Marketing Manager. The company hired her, and she is now making over \$50,000 annually.

### For more information, visit:

#### Reports

(Jan. 2024). [\*WIOA 2022: Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Report\*](#). Maryland Department of Labor.

W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research:

- O'Leary, C.J., Pepin, G., and Zhang, T. (2022). [\*Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments \(RESEA\) in Maryland—Plan for Annual Assessments with Incremental Improvements\*](#). Upjohn Institute Technical Report No. 22-046. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.
- O'Leary, C.J., et al. (2022). [\*Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments \(RESEA\) in Maryland—Formative Evaluation, Program Year 2019\*](#). Upjohn Institute Technical Report No. 22-043. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.
- O'Leary, C.J., et al. (2021). [\*Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments \(RESEA\) in Maryland: Process Analysis Report\*](#). Upjohn Institute Technical Report No. 21-041. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.
- Pepin, G., et al. (2023). [\*Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments \(RESEA\) in Maryland—Program Year 2020 Evaluation\*](#). Upjohn Institute Technical Report No. 23-047. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

#### Links

Maryland Department of Labor

- Career Pathways Program - Workforce Development & Adult Learning

## Massachusetts

Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP)**

WTFP, operated by Commonwealth Corporation, provides Massachusetts businesses with resources to invest in the skills of their workforce. Financed by Massachusetts employers, WTFP offers matching grants up to \$200,000 to offset the costs of training workers. In PY22, the Workforce Training Fund Program awarded two types of grants to Massachusetts businesses. Businesses who are eligible to participate must contribute to the Workforce Training Fund Program via a surcharge on Unemployment Insurance payments. These grants support training for thousands of workers and improving the competitiveness and productivity of hundreds of businesses across the Commonwealth. The types of grants are described below:

- **General Program:** Businesses of any size are eligible to apply. (Intermediaries may lead a consortium application.) They may request up to \$200,000, for up to two years, to support training for their workforce. Grant funds must be matched dollar-for-dollar. The match may be cash or in-kind (including wages paid to employees during training).
- **Express Program:** Small businesses with 100 or fewer Massachusetts employees are eligible to apply for grants to cover training selected from a database of over 3,000 registered courses. Businesses may receive up to \$20,000 per calendar year; the maximum payment per trainee per course is \$3,000.

#### **Grow with Google**

MDCS began offering the Grow with Google program in March 2022. The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) partnered with Google and Coursera to offer the Google Career Certificate Scholarship Program to prepare customers for a new career in three to six months in high-growth fields with no experience required.

Recipients received professional training through Coursera that was designed by Google to earn a credential in Data Analytics, IT Support, Project Management, User Experience (UX) Design, Digital Marketing and E-Commerce, and IT Automation with Python. At the end of the training, completers had the opportunity to connect with top employers that were currently hiring.

The Grow with Google program is scheduled to sunset in January 2024. Massachusetts saw 347 individuals take advantage of this training opportunity, among the highest participating in the program across the country.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

Massachusetts did not have any waivers in process during PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

(Jan. 2024). [Massachusetts Program Year 2022 WIOA Annual Report Narrative](#). Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

*Links*

Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

## Michigan

State of Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Integrated Education and Training**

The State has allocated funding to support Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs that have already been developed by adult education providers and/or that will be developed jointly by their local MWAs and adult education providers. The intent of IET programming in Michigan is for WIOA Title II Adult education providers to partner with a local MWA and/or an existing training provider to co-enroll participants in WIOA Title I and Title II services, when appropriate. The IET program must be part of a regionally or locally defined career pathway. The IET program must include three required components:

- 1) Adult education and literacy activities,
- 2) Workforce preparation activities, and
- 3) Occupational training.

The three required components must occur simultaneously within the overall scope of the IET program and must each be of sufficient intensity and quality.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **Career Exploration and Experience Events**

Funding has been awarded to the local areas to coordinate and expand career exploration and experience events. These hands-on experiences introduce young adults and educators to career paths available in their region with in-demand businesses and industries. These innovative and interactive events provide real-time information regarding employers' education and training requirements necessary to secure employment. Impacts include career awareness, relationship building, establishing a talent pipeline, and talent retention.

##### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- High Concentrations of WIOA Eligible Youth
- Sector Strategy Employer-Led Collaboratives

- MWA Apprenticeship Success Coordinators and MWA Registered Apprenticeship Program Intermediary Functions
- Young Professionals

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

In September of 2023, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget's Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (MCDA) released a special *Annual Economic Report for 2022* issue of Michigan's Labor Market News publication. This report is a useful general narrative on trends in the Michigan labor market in 2022. This issue focuses on historical trends in Michigan's labor market, as well as recovery from the impacts of 2020, and insight into how the market may progress. The report highlights Michigan's labor force and unemployment rate, industry jobs, wages, employment projections, and population. The population section also includes the state's ranking by natural population change, compared to other states.

### *Continuous Improvement*

The MCDA updated and expanded its workforce program dashboard in PY22. Currently, the dashboard focuses on WIOA Title I and III program participants, giving details on program demographics, barriers to employment, and wage and employment outcomes. The dashboard is currently available to State of Michigan staff. An expansion began at the end of PY22, that will make dashboard data available by the MWA and the dashboard will be made available to Michigan Works! leadership staff. This project is funded by WIOA Governor's Reserve funding.

Workforce Development (WD) is partnering with the MCDA to commence an evaluation that will analyze the long-term impacts of WIOA Title I programs. Earning trends of program participants showing employment and/or wage record data, prior to and post-participation, will be evaluated as the first component of this evaluation. This evaluation will then look closely at disaggregated demographic data to identify trends in reporting and to highlight opportunities for continuous improvement efforts. WD and MCDA are in the pre-implementation phase of this evaluation and are working to identify available data and to determine appropriate timelines as well as where additional partners, resources, and agreements are needed.

### *Reports*

The MCDA issues monthly publications highlighting workforce data which incorporates relevant ongoing evaluations.

- (Sept. 2023). *Michigan's Labor Market News: Special Issue - 2022 Annual Economic Analysis*. Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget.
- Michigan's Labor Market News reports, Research publications, Job Demand reports, and Archives.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State sought and was granted approval for the following:

- WIOA Youth Expenditure Waivers
  - Waiver to lower the minimum out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure requirement to 50 percent for formula funding at both the state and local levels.
  - Waiver to lower minimum OSY expenditure requirement for WIOA Statewide Activities funding to 50 percent when providing direct services to youth.
- Workforce Development Board Membership Requirements
  - Waiver to substitute the WIOA state board membership requirements with alternate requirements, which specify board membership, chairperson, and category/sub-category representation requirements for PY22 and PY23.

### *Strategies*

#### **WIOA Youth Expenditure Waivers**

The State tracks performance and expenditures quarterly and annually using the One-Stop Management Information System (OSMIS) and the Management of Awards to Recipients System. Should any area be identified as at-risk following a quarterly review, technical assistance is available and immediately provided.

### *Impact on Performance*

#### **WIOA Youth Expenditure Waivers**

Flexibility of funding has increased the State's ability to provide resources to meet the needs of all youth populations to ensure they have access to quality workforce development programming. Each of Michigan's local areas met or exceeded their performance metrics, in compliance with the waiver approval. Receipt of these waivers has resulted in an increase in the number of both OSY and in-school youth (ISY) served in the last three program years with a 7.24 percent increase in OSY and 19.32 percent increase in ISY in PY22.

#### **Workforce Development Board Membership Requirements**

Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from alternate state workforce development board composition include better support for true engagement of employers and education providers with the state's workforce development system. The composition also provides an enhanced opportunity for the creation of innovative solutions that address the challenges employers in key sectors are facing. An increase in Michiganders possessing post-secondary credentials was also anticipated to occur. As of PY22, the

percentage of working-age adults with a certificate, associate degree or higher increased from 49 percent in PY21 to 50.5 percent.

## Success Stories

### *WIOA In-School Youth Program – Izaha (Northern Michigan University)*

Izaha was a high school senior looking for assistance with job exploration and post-secondary preparation and transition. He began working with a Youth Career Advisor at Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium in Crawford County.

After learning about Izaha's goals, the Youth Career Advisor helped Izaha secure work experience at a local real estate office. She also provided post-secondary preparation and transition assistance, high school completion assistance, and supportive services.

Izaha was eligible for a Tuition Incentive Program Scholarship, which would provide tuition for his first two years at Northern Michigan University (NMU) with little to no cost. The Youth Career Advisor also assisted Izaha with the orientation process and helped secure housing.

Izaha thought he had a well-planned career path, starting with a real estate license followed by pursuing a career in real estate law. After his work experience, he decided it was best to pursue real estate law.

Thanks to the support and guidance provided by the Youth Career Advisor, Izaha has graduated from high school and is currently enrolled at NMU, pursuing his real estate law career goal.

Izaha states that he is grateful for the experience working at a real estate office. This truly helped shape his career path.

### *WIOA Out-of-School Youth Program – Kionie (PTI Assembly & Machining)*

Kionie came to Michigan Works! requesting tuition assistance to follow his dream of becoming a Welder. He enrolled in the Young Professionals initiative to work on a strategy to meet his goals.

Following initial assessments, he spent time with the in-house tutor to help improve his reading and math skills. In the meantime, Kionie and the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) developed a plan that would lead to a welding certification.

Following research and a visit to the Detroit Training Center, Kionie began the Welding MIG Production certificate program. Due to dual eligibility for training funds from WIOA, and a just-in-time award of the Industry Infinity Grant, all tuition expenses were paid for Kionie.

After successfully earning his welding certificate, the CDF helped Kionie update his résumé and made a referral to the Placement Specialist. He quickly secured employment as a Welder at PTI Welding & Machining in Detroit.

He enjoys his job as a Welder and is appreciative of the assistance from the Michigan Works! Young Professionals initiative.



### *WIOA Adult Program – Annette (Weinlander Fitzhugh)*

Annette had recently immigrated to the U.S. from Jamaica when she came to the Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! (GLBMW) office. She had 15 years of work experience in accounting and administrative assistant roles in Jamaica, but knew her schooling and credentials would not be recognized in the U.S.

Annette knew there would be challenges to continue working within the field of accounting as U.S. tax laws would be different than what she was accustomed to in Jamaica. However, she was also experiencing additional cultural challenges and unexpected differences in the job market. Finances were tight, as she and her husband left the life that they had in Jamaica to come to the U.S. to start over.

The GLBMW Career Coach offered job search assistance, updated Annette's résumé, assisted with interview questions, and invited her to a job fair. The job fair offered her the opportunity to interview with Weinlander Fitzhugh, where she was offered, and accepted, the position of Payroll Specialist. She is currently working full-time, earning \$18.00 per hour with benefits. Her hourly pay in Jamaica was between \$2.45 and \$4.45 per hour equivalent to the U.S. dollar.

Annette stated, "I recommend that anyone having a hard time gaining employment to check out Michigan Works! I want to express my sincere gratitude to my Career Coach and Michigan Works! for their kind assistance given to me in the time that I needed it most."

### *WIOA Dislocated Worker Program – Nygel (Coca-Cola)*

After being laid off for the second time as Leak Surveyor, Nygel decided it was time to acquire a career where layoffs were not as common. Nygel came to Genesee Shiawassee Thumb (GST) Michigan Works! and met with a Career Coach to discuss the path to become a CDL-A Driver. After completing the Workplace Excellence workshops and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) assessment, Nygel was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program.

Nygel started CDL-A training at the 160 Driving Academy in Flint. Since Nygel was training during the winter months and spent a lot of time outside, he needed winter gear to keep warm. He reached out to his Career Coach and was able to get a pair of boots, a coat, insulated pants, and other cold weather accessories.

Nygel graduated from the 160 Driving Academy and received his CDL-A license. He was very diligent in applying for employment and secured an interview with Coca-Cola within a week after receiving his license. Nygel became employed with Coca-Cola as a CDL-A Driver making \$24.98 per hour with benefits.

Nygel stated "I really appreciated how GST Michigan Works! helped me with a career change. I am now in a new tax bracket. It took a lot of trying to get there, but now I am in the big league and getting my turn at bat."

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development:

- [Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative: Program Year 2022.](#)
- (2022). [Poverty Task Force Report.](#)

*Links*

State of Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives - Publications

## Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **State-Funded Dislocated Worker**

Minnesota is unique in having both a state and federally funded Dislocated Worker (DW) program. The state funded DW program, through the State's Workforce Development Fund (WDF), allows Minnesota to serve a greater number of DW participants. The State's DW program has added eligibility criteria that allows individuals who are long-term unemployed to receive DW services and has also removed the requirement for men to prove they registered for Selective Service. The program served 4,299 individuals in PY22. To provide direct services to customers, the DW program provides state grants to a network of 16 LWDAs, as well as eight independent non-profit service providers. Several of the independent service providers focus on providing unique language-and culturally specific services.

#### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- YouthBuild Projects

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Wagner-Peyser**

The Employment Service (ES) team examines performance of the Wagner-Peyser Act funded the ES Program throughout the year through close collaboration with Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Performance and Technical Management (PTM) team. PTM assembles quarterly and annual PIRL reports and submits them to DOL. The ES team routinely runs reports to evaluate the impact of the ES Program. Reports include demographic data on the number of customers reached; types of service delivered; co-enrollment information that is used to monitor connections to other WIOA programs and Unemployment Insurance; and other data points used to evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery of services.

Additionally, PTM provides ES with data on the services offered to different demographic populations. Recent data reports compared ES with the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI). The SVI ranks each zip code on 15 social factors, including poverty, lack of vehicle access, crowded housing, and groups them into four related themes. The SVI assigns quartiles of vulnerability from most vulnerable (Q1) to least (Q4).

Minnesota uses MinnesotaWorks.net, the state's labor exchange, SharePoint, and Microsoft Excel as tools to track the administration of ES. MinnesotaWorks.Net provides the data for Minnesota's reportable individuals under WIOA. In Minnesota, all WIOA titles encourage customers to register with MinnesotaWorks.Net to ensure reportable individual activities are tracked. The ES program takes the reportable individual tracking one step further by tracking the specific basic career services delivered in MinnesotaWorks.Net.

MinnesotaWorks.Net is available to all WIOA partners to track and monitor delivery of reportable individuals as well as basic career services. The tool offers a method to promote group activities via registration in the labor exchange, and track attendance for those activities. Through integration with CareerForceMN.com, the group activities are promoted to all Minnesotans. The ES program staff can schedule, promote, and record attendance for these services via MinnesotaWorks.Net. ES services are codified as Wagner-Peyser/Title III services in the PIRL.

Minnesota uses Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) to goal-set and guide strategic initiatives. Every year, OKRs are established, and all DEED teams strive to achieve key results with the intent to improve program performance. The key results statements are evaluated quarterly and are made public.

Wagner-Peyser's ES program cooperates with federal evaluations, monitoring visits and reports by providing the data necessary to review reportable individual performance metrics for the entire system, collected in Minnesota's labor exchange system. Furthermore, the program cooperates through participation in evaluations that intersect with the ES program or coordination.

### **Dislocated Worker and Adult**

All Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs must participate in the State of Minnesota's Uniform Outcome Report Card. This mandated report includes several measures that DOL does not, including median wage change by previous employment status, retention in Q3 and Q8 after exit, and occupation of employment in Q1, Q3, and Q8 after exit.

Minnesota evaluates WIOA programs under 20 CFR Section 682.200. For Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, the following evaluations have been or will be conducted:

1. Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) Study (Phase I complete Phase II beginning): This study uses the Center for Disease Control's social vulnerability index. PTM is working with WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker to establish baselines for Title I adult programs and create interactive multi-layered maps and measures to help program staff target outreach.
2. Family-Sustaining Wage Calculation and Attainment study (Complete): This study has two parts. The first involves working with the LMI team to calculate individual-level family-sustaining wage thresholds of participants based on their family size and location. The second part consists in analyzing when participants exit a program and if they attain a family-sustaining wage within a year after exit. The results of this study indicated that while a decline in enrollment (mainly attributable to the

pandemic and closure of services) prevented programs from attaining similar family-sustaining wage placement numbers, the percentage of participants who achieved a family-sustaining wage recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

3. Study of changing populations (in progress) This study includes partnering with the LMI team to see if programs are properly set up to serve Minnesotans most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Co-Enrollment Study (planning) This study, which might be done with the Minneapolis Federal Reserve, will examine the impact of co-enrollment between Title I and state-funded workforce programs. This study will look at training completion, credential attainment, employment, retention, and median wage, along with program reentry and how these measures are impacted by co-enrollment.

In addition to the evaluations above, Minnesota continues to partner with DOL, to share their approach to evaluation, analysis, and how to conduct rigorous independent evaluations without needing an external vendor via technical assistance sessions or larger meetings.

### *Continuous Improvement*

Continuous Quality Improvement strategies are on-going and follow the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle as a “trial-and-learning” method to test changes quickly for the Dislocated Worker and Adult programs. As new guidance is received, multiple protocols, including database and data entry procedures, need to be evaluated to determine the actual impacts of the change. This may include applying changes to multiple programs, updating policy, remapping the state’s case management system (Workforce One), updating case management desk guides, and scheduling training sessions to inform LWDAs. Planning for DOL monitoring visits begins with coordinating with LWDAs to inform of the planned visit and to prepare files for the monitoring visit. DEED is already unified with local areas via Workforce One. Minnesota responds to DOL monitoring reports in collaboration with LWDAs.

### *Reports*

#### **Dislocated Worker and Adult**

- Social Vulnerability Index Dashboard
- Family-Sustaining Wage Calculation and Attainment Dashboard

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

- Homeless youth/Foster youth waiver.
- Waiver allowing the use of ITAs for ISY.

- Waiver of 75 percent of OSY expenditure requirement: Governor’s Reserve funds for direct services.

### *Strategies*

#### **Homeless Youth/Foster Youth Waiver**

The State secured a waiver from DOL that assures the LWDA’s have the flexibility to target services to ISY who meet DOL’s definition of homeless youth. A Minnesota Department of Education survey identified over 3,600 youth in grades 8–12 statewide who were homeless; over 75 percent were youth from communities of color. This waiver allows the state to reduce the required OSY expenditure rate from 75 percent to 60 percent for LWDA’s who prioritize ISY who are homeless or foster youth.

#### **Waiver allowing the use of ITAs for ISY**

The COVID-19 Pandemic impacted the State’s use of ITAs: 69 were set up statewide.

#### **Waiver of 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement: Governor’s Reserve funds for direct services**

In PY20, the State awarded (Competitive Request for Proposal Process) \$250,000 of State Set-Aside funds/Governor’s Reserve funds to two agencies serving under-represented youth, using the YouthBuild program model: Goodwill/Easter Seals of Minnesota (targets OSY) and Southeastern Minnesota Workforce Development, Inc., (targets ISY).

### *Impact on Performance*

Minnesota plans to renew all waivers for PY23; the waivers provide Minnesota WDA’s with the flexibility to provide high-quality, cost-effective services to both OSY and ISY.

#### **Homeless Youth/Foster Youth Waiver**

In PY22, the waiver provided seven of the 16 LWDA’s with the flexibility to target homeless youth and foster youth while they are still in school. Services include provision of critical employment and training services to at-risk ISY without jeopardizing the delivery of services to out-of-school participants. This waiver supports one of the goals of Minnesota’s State WIOA Plan: to increase the high school graduation rate for under-represented youth.

Overall, of the 2,420 served, 401 were homeless/runaway youth. Of these 401, 66 were ISY homeless youth without a high school diploma at enrollment.

A total of 125 youth identified as either in foster care, or previously in foster care. Out of the 125, 37 were ISY.

#### **Waiver allowing the use of ITAs for ISY**

In PY22, 11 ITAs were set up for ISY and another 58 ITAs were set up for OSY.

#### **Waiver of 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement: Governor’s Reserve funds for direct services**

The waiver eliminated the requirement that 75 percent of the funding be spent on OSY: the agencies had the flexibility to determine the mix of ISY and OSY.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

### For more information, visit:

#### Reports

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

- (Aug. 2023). [\*SFY 2022–2023 Youthbuild: Governor's Reserve Funds Progress Report\*](#).
- [Minnesota Annual Report Program Year 2021](#).

Communications, Analysis and Research Division

- [Social Vulnerability Index Dashboard](#)
- [Family-Sustaining Wage Calculation and Attainment Dashboard](#)

#### Links

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

- [Disability Employment Initiative](#)

[Governor's Reserve YouthBuild Reports](#)

[MinnesotaWorks.Net](#)

[Disability Employment Initiative](#)

## Mississippi

Mississippi Works - Mississippi Department of Employment Security

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **MagCor**

The target group for our Governor's Discretionary Grant was adults, 21 years of age or older, who are currently confined to a Mississippi State/Regional correctional facility with a reentry/release date within the next 16 months. Priority will be given to incarcerated veterans and spouses of certain veterans for participation in the program. Skills training that will lead to industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeship, OJT, or career pathways is the focus of the program. Support services are essential in all reentry programs and begin at the time of enrollment and continue throughout the length of the program, including the follow-up period. Cognitive behavior therapy, training/credentials incentives, and emergency/needs payments are some of the support services that will be provided to participants.

##### **Jackson State University (JSU), College of Education and Human Development, School of Lifelong Learning**

The Adult and Career Education Services (ACES) at JSU is designed for OSY and adults facing employment or job promotion challenges because of basic skill deficiencies, justice system offenses, or a lack of High School Equivalency (HSE), college degree, or job readiness training. Participation increases essential foundational skills that lead to gainful employment. ACES activities include Adult Basic Education, HSE examination preparation, computer-assisted academic instruction, employability skills training, online soft skills/workforce development courses, development of career pathways, and workforce training.

JSU used the Governor's Discretionary funds to provide education and training for sixteen 24-year-olds to obtain an HSE and create a pathway to gainful employment. The primary focus of the efforts is to help students pass either the HSE or HiSet examinations successfully.

##### **Meridian Community College (MCC)**

MCC continued its Utility Lineman Training program during PY22. Twenty-two students enrolled during the fall semester and 13 had job offers upon completing the training.

MCC tracks the students who participated during the entire grant period. The PY21 completers are employed with earnings between \$15–\$30 per hour and the same is expected for the PY22 completers.

The training program remained a non-credit, workforce training program for PY22, but will transition to a for-credit, Career and Technical program, effective August 1, 2023.



### **Goodwill Industries of Mississippi**

During PY22, Goodwill served Mississippians with two Governor’s Discretionary grants. The continuation of the PY21 grant funded the first half of the year by serving adults, while the PY22 grant served youth during the second half of the year.

In the first half of PY22, Goodwill provided a training program for adults needing a “hand up” to employment. These services were available to the public with a focus on individuals with disabilities, formerly or currently incarcerated, single parents, and individuals unemployed or underemployed. These services included digital skills training, virtual reality career exploration, and vocational assessments.

Digital Skills Training offered 15 classes in basic computer skills. Participants chose which classes to complete, and a certificate was awarded for successful proctored completion.

Virtual Reality Career Exploration assisted in the exploration of potential careers. Participants could virtually explore and perform over 300 simulations for various careers. Vocational Assessments were completed to assist in determining interests, aptitude, and abilities for areas of career interests.

This program was extremely successful, touching almost 600 individuals needing assistance and providing over 4,850 needed services to them during a full program year.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

- Cleveland Career Development and Technology Center (CCDTC)
- The Mississippi Coding Academies (MCA)
- Golden Triangle Planning and Development District (GTPDD)
- Claiborne County School District

### **Evaluations**

#### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

- Waiver associated with the requirements at the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 129 (a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410, which requires not less than 75 percent of youth funds be used for OSY.

### *Strategies*

Twin Districts LWDA has been diligently working on partnering with local school districts to expose ISY to WIOA services and in-demand occupations. The high school CTE programs provide the youth with training in a specific pathway and the WIOA Youth programs provide the youth with work readiness skills training, supportive services, and connect the youth to paid work-based learning/work experience opportunities.

In addition to the State's partnership with high school CTE and work-based learning programs, they have joined efforts with their sister program, the Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD) High School Career Coach program funded through AccelerateMS. The High School Career Coaches work to equip students and parents with information about career options and help them navigate their future after high school. The High School Career Coaches help identify ISY that need direction towards a career path and spread awareness of programs and career opportunities, including the WIOA Youth program.

All these partner programs have common goals for the same population. Together, they all work to maximize the State's efforts to increase the awareness of in-demand occupations, increase college and career readiness, and connect ISY to work-based learning opportunities. In addition to utilizing the 50/50 waiver by increasing the State's in-school enrollments, these partnerships are enabling the Twin Districts to achieve their sector strategy goals, such as aligning CTE programs with Community Colleges and business needs in the area.

### **The Mississippi Partnership**

This partnership was the first workforce area in the state to begin implementing the new 50/50 strategy, using the waiver during PY18–PY22. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted not only OSY but ISY as well. ISY lost valuable instruction time and opportunities for exposure to careers after high school in addition to in-person assistance with developing career pathways for after high school. The Mississippi Partnership utilized the 50/50 OSY/ISY waiver to provide needed services to ISY to help fill the gap for the students. With the Mississippi legislation recently providing funding for Career Coaches to be placed in local high schools and given the continual funding cuts for its WIOA Youth allocation, the Mississippi Partnership will utilize this waiver but to a lesser degree during PY23.

The Mississippi Partnership currently has OSY programs that serve 21 out of 27 counties in the State's workforce area and served 407 OSY (70.54%) and 170 ISY (29.46%) in PY22. The Mississippi Partnership will continue to provide OSY services and prepare OSY for the workforce and continued education.

The Delta Workforce Development Area is utilizing the 50/50 youth expenditure waiver to serve ISY in three school districts. In the Sunflower County and Washington County districts, youth providers have collaborated with Mississippi Delta Community College to provide short-term training to youth in the programs of pharmacy technician, welding, and CDL permit. In addition, the youth receive career-readiness training and work experience. In Panola County, the North Panola Career and Technical Center serves youth who have completed two years of work-based learning. They will receive career-readiness training and complete work experience in the areas of their CTC training.

### *Impact on Performance*

As a result of the waiver, there was an increase in connection between education and training providing work-based learning opportunities that include work experience and pre-apprenticeship and increasing access to workforce services to disadvantaged youth. For instance, Twin Districts LWDA will continue to serve OSY; all nine OSY providers (including SMPDD) will continue to serve OSY and adding ISY will be an enhancement to the total number of youths served in the Twin Districts. In PY21 Twin Districts served 232 OSY and 48 ISY, in PY22 they served 285 OSY and 65 ISY which shows an increase in the total number of youths served, both OSY and ISY. Additionally, the increase in partnerships formed serving ISY also serves as a source of referrals for OSY.

## **Success Stories**

### *Governors Reserve Fund: MDOC Works – Michael*

Upon release from prison, Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Works staff provided support services and job search assistance to Michael to ensure he had a successful transition back into society. He obtained employment at a major furniture manufacturing plant in North Mississippi as a forklift operator. Since beginning work, he has received multiple pay raises and was able to purchase a vehicle. Life looks very different for Michael now. Sundays find him playing the bass guitar or drums at his church, providing great joy and fulfillment that keeps him grounded spiritually, and weekdays find him gainfully employed.

### *SkillUp Mississippi – Mr. Brown*

Mr. Brown dropped out of high school because he was bored and wanted to find a job to earn a living. The sequence of events that transpired after led him to a career he has become passionate about.

Wanting better job quality opportunities, Mr. Brown knew he would have to earn his High School Equivalency (HSE) first. He enrolled in Jones College and was surprised how the faculty and staff challenged him to think of other possibilities while in the program, such as attending short-term training while attaining his HSE.

“My brother is a lineman. I was always interested in that as a career, but I didn’t realize they offered it here,” said Mr. Brown. The staff at the Jasper County Center worked with Mr. Brown to ensure he could manage the adult education classes and the lineman

course to achieve all the goals he had set for himself. He chose the online option to complete the HSE, so he could attend the lineman courses during the day.

Mr. Brown has one section to complete, math, to earn his HSE. Once he passes math, he will add that to the list of the other credentials he has earned since enrolling in adult education. He received the line worker certification at the end of the lineman program in April; the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a nationally recognized credential in the industry; his CDL; OSHA-10; and the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Core.

Mr. Brown is excited about starting his career as a lineman and is grateful to Jones for the opportunities he has been given. He stated, “They’ve treated me like family since I first came to the Jasper County Center. They’ll take care of you.”

#### *WIOA Youth and National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDGW) – Errick*

Errick participated in the WIOA Work Readiness program in Sharkey County through Warren, Washington, Issaquena, Sharkey Community Action Agency (WWISCAA), Inc. He successfully completed all his coursework, was placed at the Treasure Chest as a store associate/stocker, and successfully completed 200 work hours at \$10.00 per hour.

On Friday, March 24, 2023, his hometown was forever changed when a deadly tornado devastated Rolling Fork, MS (population 1,800). Most of this population was displaced, including WWISCAA’s Case Manager and some WIOA participants, including Errick and his mom. The area was declared a state of emergency by the Governor and President, and its devastation was broadcast nationally.

Once recovery efforts began, he and his mom were hired through the National Dislocated Grant Worker Program, which assisted dislocated workers with temporary employment opportunities to assist with clean-up and recovery efforts in Rolling Fork. Errick was assigned to the Landscape Workers Debris Cleaning department. hand to his community. He remains employed to date.

#### *WIOA In-School-Youth – Kamaria*

Kamaria’s goal was to work in transportation and logistics in the U.S. Air Force. She had spoken to a recruiter and had researched the types of jobs in the military. Through the partnership with the Capps Center, Kamaria received her CDL Certificate and graduated with honors from Greenville High School the following month. She has now graduated from basic training in San Antonio, Texas, and is moving forward toward her dream.

#### *WIOA Out-of-School Youth – James*

James dropped out of school when he was in the 9th grade. He had previously tried to get his high school diploma through a home-school program but had not succeeded. He went to the Northwest Community College (NWCC) WIN Job Center (WJC) hoping to find help. Staff at the WJC explained how the WIOA Gateway OSY program could help him reach his goal of earning a High School Equivalency (HSE) and provide valuable work experience so he could get a job with a sustainable wage upon completion.

James enrolled in the program in September of 2022, was assigned to Gateway Tire and Battery in Senatobia where he would complete the 320-hour work experience portion of the program and began working on his HSE. After completing the work experience, James was offered a permanent position that included a raise with Gateway Tire and Battery. He continued working on his HSE in the program while also working full-time. He successfully earned the coveted HSE and graduated from the Adult Education Program in May. James plans to enroll in the Automotive Technology Program at NWCC in the Fall of 2023 with continued help from the WIOA Gateway OSY Program that will assist in completing the enrollment forms and scholarship applications.

#### *Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) – Deborah*

Long-time California resident, Deborah, and her disabled spouse, moved to the Mississippi Gulf Coast where her spouse could receive much needed medical attention from the Veterans' Administration hospital. The move had been expensive, and Deborah needed to find work that would supplement their monthly social security benefits. She was over the age of 65, lacked computer skills, knew little about local job market requirements, and needed flexible hours so she could check on her husband throughout the day. After having no luck for several weeks, Deborah visited the local Harrison County Win Job Center and received a referral to the Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD) SCSEP. She was deemed eligible and assigned to train as a Gallery Attendant at the City Museum of Art.

Although she had never had the opportunity to work in an art museum, Deborah quickly realized that she enjoyed the world of art and museums. She attended her project's Job Club, excelled in hard skills computer training, and completed soft skills training. During June 2023, Deborah obtained that "perfect-for-me" position when she was hired as a receptionist at a local Cultural Arts Center. She is enthusiastic about being able to use the skills she learned during her SCSEP assignment and working only 29 hours per week provides a nice supplement to her income and allows time to care for her husband.

#### **For more information, visit:**

##### *Reports*

[Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in Mississippi: Program Year 2022 Annual Report](#). Mississippi Works.

##### *Links*

Mississippi Works - Mississippi Department of Employment Security

## Missouri

Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development  
Missouri Job Center

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Coursera**

The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) partnered with the Missouri Department of Corrections (DOC) to create a Reentry program for justice-involved individuals as part of DOC's Reentry 2030 efforts. Reentry efforts focus on ensuring individuals released from incarceration get a job and stay employed. OWD provides workforce development staff to work with individuals to provide career counseling and job search assistance, and also access to the Coursera learning platform, starting with MJRD1. The efforts of the reentry program prepare the justice-involved individual for a successful exit from prison back into society to become a productive citizen who is able to obtain successful employment quickly upon release.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **CompTIA Partnership**

OWD expanded partnerships with organizations, such as CompTIA, to provide enhanced opportunities for individuals. This partnership was made available through December 2022, and allowed individuals the ability to obtain stackable credentials and establish clear career pathways through virtual learning. By modernizing the way the Missouri Job Centers offer services, individuals could learn essential skills to find employment or elevate career opportunities in IT. The following CompTIA programs were offered through OWD:

- CompTIA A+
- CompTIA Network+
- Security+
- Project+
- ITF+

### **Coursera**

OWD has a partnership with Coursera, a learning platform that collaborates with more than 275 leading universities and companies to provide Missourians with transformative learning experiences and career development. This free program is offered statewide, with enrollments handled through OWD's Virtual Learning Unit. During PY22, OWD served 1,485 individuals through Coursera. The State's Annual Report shows the top three types of skill development obtained through the programs, as well as the top 10 Coursera programs utilized by Missourians. Additionally, 14 employers were served through building training programs with content specific to the employer's needs.

In fall 2022, Coursera for Government chose OWD as the recipient of the Government Innovation Award for the development and use of the customized curation of MJRD1. The purpose of this curation is to empower Missourians with the core skills necessary to showcase themselves as job-ready to employers.

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC)**

Missouri was selected to participate in the 2022 EvalPLC. Representatives from all parts of Missouri's public workforce system learned about the WIOA evaluation process by building an evidence-based framework to be replicated and used to build research projects.

During the EvalPLC, the Missouri team worked through two assessments to determine current strengths and areas to focus on when building the culture of evaluation. The Evaluation Readiness Assessment helped to understand baseline knowledge and use of data in WIOA partner agencies. The Evaluation Design and Implementation Assessment was instrumental as the team was thinking about topics for projects.

Missouri's evaluation efforts did not stop after cohort completion. Missouri's team will continue meeting quarterly for updates and discussion on the topic of evaluation and research projects to inform the public workforce system. Team members include staff from data teams and Equal Opportunity in OWD, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Literacy, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Department of Social Services, and LWDBs representing both urban and rural areas of Missouri.

The Missouri team compiled a list of questions about the public workforce system to be answered through the data. The team prioritized the list of research topics and Missouri's first formal Evaluation project scheduled for completion in early Calendar Year 2024. Research, analysis, and writing will take place in-house with OWD taking the lead on evaluation activities. The project plan for Missouri's first formal evaluation focuses on barriers, the types of services provided to individuals with barriers, and how outcomes may be affected based on the services.

*Continuous Improvement*

Missouri is striving to improve the workforce system and how citizens are served, and research and evaluation is part of the continuous improvement process. Missouri will continue strategically choosing projects to help better understand the population, unique needs based on geographic region, barriers, demographics, etc., and how services are designed and delivered to different populations. Projects will provide meaningful feedback and an objective assessment of the system and services available, allowing Missouri to validate, rethink, and pivot where needed.

Missouri's informal evaluation process includes comparing the performance of Missouri's public workforce system to 14 surrounding states. Data and information used in the state-to-state comparison helps understand effective workforce strategies used by other states and local workforce development directors that may be replicated in Missouri. Comparing PY21 (most recent) performance to PY 2018, Missouri has improved performance on most measures as well as the rankings. Missouri has moved up in the rankings and percentage achieved for all programs in the category of Employment Rate 2 Quarters after Exit. Missouri has also improved the percentage achieved for Credential Rate in all WIOA programs.

*Reports***Quarterly Performance Reports**

The reports were developed four years ago and have successfully evolved to meet regional needs over time. The current reporting format provides performance comparisons toward meeting negotiated performance targets, as well as financial information for the region. CLEOs, Local Board Chairs, and Directors collaborate and brainstorm with OWD each quarter to address issues and identify accomplishments, resulting in a downward trend in performance issues.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

Missouri was approved for four distinct waivers from DOL to support workforce development activities and provide flexibility for individuals accessing WIOA programs. The waivers include:

- OSY expenditure waiver – WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410.
- ITAs for ISY – 20 CFR 681.550
- OJT waiver – WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720(b)
- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) waiver – WIOA Section 134(d)(4) and 20 CFR 680.800(a)



## Strategies

### OSY expenditure waiver

DOL approved Missouri's waiver request to reduce the WIOA OSY expenditures from the 75 percent requirement down to 50 percent for PY22 and PY23. The State has received this waiver for a total of five consecutive program years. The waiver provides flexibility to the state and local areas to serve more ISY in areas such as work experience, pre-apprenticeship, registered apprenticeship, and other work-based learning opportunities.

### Youth-related waivers

The State Office of Workforce Development (OWD) works closely with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Career Readiness, to expand registered apprenticeship programs and launch new programs, providing young adults with an alternative to self-sufficient career opportunities outside of the post-secondary journey. In addition, Missouri regularly connects high schools and career and technical education centers (CTE) with WIOA resources and encourages building relationships with the LWDA's and associated job centers for support. Since PY22, OWD has engaged 36 of Missouri's 57 CTEs, promoting WIOA Youth services and registered youth apprenticeship. Two waivers are being utilized to increase the number of ISY to support work-based learning opportunities for students and workers in high-growth industries throughout the state. OWD is reviewing proposals from high schools and CTE centers and will award contracts through its Apprenticeship Missouri team to support further apprenticeship growth. The waiver will continue to support the Governor's initiatives to support youth registered apprenticeship and increase the number of youths served through WIOA.

### ITAs for ISY waiver

DOL approved the waiver request to allow WIOA ITAs for ISY ages 16–21 for PY22 and PY23. This waiver request provides the state and local areas the flexibility to serve more youth in classroom training and registered apprenticeship training regardless of school status.

### IWT waiver

DOL approved the request to allow local workforce areas to reserve more than 20 percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for IWT. This waiver increases the threshold available for IWT from 20 percent to 50 percent through June 30, 2024.

## Impact on Performance

### ITAs for ISY waiver

During PY22, 61 ITAs were used for ISY, an increase of 13 from the previous reporting year. Outcomes associated with this measure were expected to be 64.5 percent for both measurable skills gain (MSG) and credential attainment. For PY22, the actual achieved MSG was 53.33 percent for all youth and 54.23 percent for ISY. The actual credential attainment rate was 67.57 percent for all youth, and 60.83 percent for ISY.

Since PY19, the use of this waiver and the OSY expenditure waiver has increased the number of ISY served using WIOA funds by 17 percent from last program year (PY21) and by 33 percent from the first year (PY19).

The goals initially set for youth waivers included all youth participants and incremental increases for each program year. In PY22, the achieved MSG was 53.71 percent for all youth and 54.23 percent for ISY. The actual achieved credential rate was 66.03 percent for all youth and 60.83 percent for ISY.

**OJT waiver**

DOL approved the waiver request to increase OJT employer reimbursement up to 90 percent through June 30, 2024. During PY22, 29 people were served through OJT, a significant decrease from the previous year. One local workforce area is utilizing the waiver to increase OJT reimbursement to the approved 90 percent rate, allowing that workforce area to remain steady with OJT enrollments.

The decline in OJT agreements is attributed to two issues: financial support and turnover in the local areas, from executive level staff to front-line staff, both of which affect the ability to promote and secure OJT employers. OWD has recently hired an apprenticeship and work-based learning coordinator whose job duties include increasing awareness of work-based learning opportunities and providing regular technical assistance regarding the use of OJT and other work-based learning services.

**IWT waiver**

Missouri's Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Unit serves as the subject matter expert for IWT. In PY22, this unit hosted regular calls with participating LWDBs directors or other local staff to discuss the IWT program, provide technical assistance, and promote continuous improvement efforts. This form of technical assistance discontinued during the latter part of PY22 but is planned to resume in PY23. Five LWDBs elected to offer IWT in their service areas this program year. Two LWDBs increased IWT numbers in PY22 from last program year, Jefferson-Franklin and West Central.

Although there is a decline in IWT, the regions continue to offer this service to Missouri workers and businesses. The decline in enrollments for IWT is attributed to two issues: financial support and turnover in the local areas, from executive level staff to front-line staff, both of which affect the ability to promote and establish IWT agreements. With the onboarding of the new apprenticeship and work-based learning coordinator, specific efforts will begin to increase awareness of IWT and other work-based learning opportunities.

**Success Stories**

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:***Reports*

Missouri Job Center (Dec. 2023). [Missouri WIOA Annual Report Program Year 2022](#). Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development

*Links*

Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development

Missouri Job Center

## Montana

Montana Department of Labor & Industry

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Instrument Shop**

Instrument Shop is a hands-on educational program dedicated to empowering teens through the building musical instruments. Participants learn to build instruments in a workshop setting in a small student/teacher ratio. Instrument Shop is a social and creative environment that also offers plenty of room for independent work. It is an excellent place for youth to develop soft skills such as problem solving and communication. The grant of \$65,300 was awarded during PY22 and \$28,864 was spent on the project.

#### **Jobs for Montana Graduates**

MTDLI granted \$7,500 to the Jobs for Montana Graduates (JMG) program to assist students with developing skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the workforce. JMG provided funding for three additional schools. The schools received curriculum, program materials, professional development, training technical assistance, and access to the National Data System. The program assists students with the development of skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the workforce.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

MTDLI updated the Post-Secondary Workforce Report, research that synthesized data on Montana's labor market demand with statewide training program graduation information to provide a broad assessment of worker supply and demand. This study combined occupational employment projections data alongside Montana University System graduate data and Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) by degree and certification type to assess the numbers of people trained each year compared to the projected demand for those skillsets in the workforce. The report also included graduates from private and tribal educational institutions, along with the Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program (MRAP) and provided a comprehensive analysis of

workforce gaps in the state. The analysis looked at graduates' wage and employment outcomes to determine which trainings lead to worker retention in local labor markets and which results in the highest earnings. Using data from this report, Montana also created a post-secondary outcomes dashboard that allows data users, such as prospective students, to explore the labor market outcomes and supply/demand analysis of specific post-secondary programs.

MTDLI completed in-depth reports on workforce programs in the state. Every year, MTDLI updates its report to analyze MRAP participation trends and apprentice outcomes. The report consistently identified positive program outcomes, demonstrating the value of apprenticeship, and providing information that can be used for continuous improvement within MTDLI.

MTDLI also produced information on topical issues in the labor market. This included updating a report on nursing, describing, and identifying workforce trends and changes induced by the pandemic between 2020 and 2022. The report also highlights supply and demand issues faced by the nursing occupation, such as an aging workforce and decreasing numbers of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) relative to other nursing occupations. This report included an analysis of data from the state occupational licensing board for nurses, supplemented by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing's national survey of nurses conducted in 2020 and 2022. Similarly, reports on childcare supply and demand along with the workforce impacts of any lack of supply were updated in a report that analyzed childcare licensing data and population estimates of the number of children and working parents in the state. Finally, MTDLI produced its annual Labor Day Report that details statewide economic issues with a particular emphasis on labor market trends and topical issues of interest to workforce developers and professionals.

In March 2023, MTDLI began a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) evaluation of new service delivery strategies in the RESEA program. The RCT will make it possible to perform an impact analysis of an online reemployment "course" that delivers important information and strategies to jobseekers. MTDLI partnered with the Minneapolis Federal Reserve bank on this research and intends to measure the impact of the new services on unemployment duration, wages, and employment outcomes. Additionally, the evaluation will examine impacts that this service may have on continued participation in WIOA activities, such as further Wagner-Peyser program participation or enrollment in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program.

### *Continuous Improvement*

MTDLI continues to plan future evaluations, including further research into WIOA Title I programs to explore differences in outcomes by several factors. One such report will explore outcomes by service provider and typical spending per participant. This report will be used to establish guidelines and work with specific providers to improve performance outcomes. Additionally, a second report on WIOA Title I programs will explore outcomes by worker demographic. This report will expand upon typical outcomes reported in PIRL processes to examine measures such as training program completion, duration, and other relevant metrics. In doing so, MTDLI intends to improve its understanding of how program success varies between participants across different backgrounds, be it race, ethnicity, age, education, or prior income background. Together, these two reports will be leveraged for improving program policy and guidelines in future iterations.

MTDLI continued to expand the agency's access to program-related data across multiple formats. MTDLI distributed the research and reports to the WIOA core programs, providing presentations and question and answer opportunities for core program

managers so that the information is understood and applied effectively. Additionally, MTDLI generated new data dashboards and data visualization tools to support the use and accessibility of the information created in this research. This included dashboards providing on-demand tracking and outcomes information for a variety of workforce programs including Montana's ARPA Rapid Retraining, HELP-Link, RESEA, and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs. These tools provided visual analytics of labor market information and program activities to inform managers, workforce consultants, and other staff for decision-making purposes. Easy access to downloadable data on program activities improved monitoring and auditing, information sharing, and management decisions.

An in-progress evaluation of the new virtual service platform ("Reemployment Central") will provide key information about the ability to utilize virtual tools more broadly across all WIOA programs. By evaluating wage and employment outcomes and the medium for which assistance is being provided, MTDLI will gain valuable knowledge about whether barriers such as internet access or computer literacy are significant impediments to the widespread adoption of the new services.

Finally, MTDLI has applied the knowledge gained from research on childcare, nursing, and apprenticeship to ongoing practices. This information is used to improve service to businesses and jobseekers who are either interested in or affected by the issues that were studied.

### *Reports*

- Montana Post-Secondary Workforce Report
- Childcare Deserts
- MT Nursing Report
- Labor Day Report
- MT Apprenticeship Report

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

During PY22, the State had three approved waivers:

- Waiver to allow the State Board to carry out the functions of the Local Board
- Waiver to lower the expenditure requirement of Governor's Reserve funds from 75 to 50 percent for OSY
- Waiver to allow WIOA ITAs for ISY

### Strategies

#### **Waiver to allow the State Board to carry out the functions of the Local Board**

Under this waiver, the State continued to allocate WIOA Title I funds by local area. From each local area, funds are allocated to counties utilizing local unemployment and poverty data to ensure funds are distributed in a way to maximize service delivery. County-elected officials sat on the State Board and were able to provide local input into activities carried out throughout Montana.

#### **Waiver to lower the expenditure requirement of Governor's Reserve funds from 75 to 50 percent for OSY**

Under this waiver, ETA expects that the number of ISY served will increase and performance accountability outcomes for overall WIOA Youth (both ISY and OSY) will remain steady or increase for the majority of the WIOA Youth performance indicators.

#### **Waiver to allow WIOA ITAs for ISY**

Under this waiver, the use of ITAs may be expanded beyond OSY, ages 16–24, to include ITAs for ISY, ages 16–21.

### Impact on Performance

No information provided for this section.

### Success Stories

See:

- [\*The Need is Exponential: Browning welcomes 22 CNAs\*](#)
- New structural welding program spearheaded by MTDLI's Business Engagement Team and located at Great Falls College-Montana State University (GFC-MSU): [\*Single mom reflects on new structural welding program at GFCMSU\*](#).

**For more information, visit:**

### Reports

MTDLI:

- Watson, A, Moseman, T., & Burg, X. (Jan. 2024). [\*Childcare Deserts: An Analysis of Child Care Supply and Demand Gaps in Montana\*](#). Montana Department of Labor & Industry.
- (Dec. 2023). [\*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative – PY 2022\*](#).
- Watson, A., et al (Sept. 2023). [\*2023 Montana Labor Day Report\*](#).

- Watson, A., Wagner, B., & Trautman, E. (Oct. 2022). [Montana Post-Secondary Workforce Report: A Report on Workforce Needs and Labor Market Outcomes of Graduates](#). Montana Department of Labor & Industry.
- Holom, N. (Nov 2021). [Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program: Data Report 2021](#).
- Trautman, E. & Watson, A. (Nov. 2021). [The Status of the Nursing Workforce in Montana: A Summary of the Results from the National Council State Board of Nursing 2020 Survey](#).

### *Links*

Montana Department of Labor & Industry



## Nebraska

Nebraska Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

No information provided for this section.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

Evaluation and research pertaining to core and One-Stop partner programs was not conducted during PY22, as expected pursuant to Nebraska's PY22 state plan modification, as the self-assessment methodology was not effective or statistically sound and the results were not published. The State is, however, actively planning a pilot evaluation project, in collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) Labor Market Information Division, state board, state plan partners (including non-core plan partners), and local boards/areas. The pilot project will focus on Nebraska's Title I and Title III programs, assessing the quality and effectiveness of the programs by local area or provider, as applicable, based on performance accountability measures established under the WIOA Section 116(b) and PIRL data. The resulting data, as well as data resulting from the planned state-level customer outreach project described above in subsection (a), will be used to determine opportunities and methods for evidence-based program improvement. During ongoing development of this project, the State will design and coordinate the project with evaluations provided for by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

Regarding efforts to provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits in relation to Federal evaluations, Federal evaluations involving the State of Nebraska were not conducted during PY22, assuming that "evaluation" is not referring to routine monitoring events conducted by DOL Region V. It is important to note that the Division became a member of the DOL Region V Evaluation Team during PY21, which has increased the State's technical evaluation knowledge and better prepares Nebraska to collaborate with the Department during future Federal evaluations.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

During PY22, two waivers were in place for the State:

- Waiver of the 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement.
- Waiver of the prohibition against ISY use of ITAs for occupational skills training.

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver of the 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement**

The State's strategic goal under this waiver is to increase the number of youths participating in evidence-based programs that result in positive outcomes for ISY and OSY, including high school graduation, participation in post-secondary education, career development, and employment. Further, this goal aligns with one of the State's two-part statewide goals and strategies for preparing an educated and skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers, specifically the selection and prioritization of development of career pathways.

Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from waiver implementation. Projected programmatic outcomes of the waiver at the time of approval were:

- Ten new ISY participating in JAG Nebraska statewide during each of PY22 and PY23;
- Five new ISY participating in youth Registered Apprenticeship programs during each of PY22 and PY23;
- Ten percent increase in local area high school graduation rates among Title I Youth participating in JAG Nebraska compared to Title I Youth not participating in JAG Nebraska during PY22 and PY23; and
- Ten percent statewide increase in Q2 and Q4 employment retention rates among Title I Youth participating in youth Registered Apprenticeship programs compared to Title I Youth not participating in youth Registered Apprenticeship programs during PY22 and PY23.

**Waiver of the prohibition against ISY use of ITAs for occupational skills training**

The State's strategic goal under this waiver is to enhance efforts of state plan partners regarding goals and strategies to overcome barriers to participation in career pathway programs and the workforce system (see Section II.b.2. and II.c. of *Nebraska's Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System*), specifically in relation to Youth program participants.

*Impact on Performance***Waiver of the 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement**

The projected impact of this waiver is enhancement of the State's ability to serve ISY, including those with basic skills deficiency and those who are English language learners, offenders, in or have aged out of foster care, pregnant or parenting, have a disability, or require additional assistance to complete education or secure employment. In addition, this waiver is expected to increase the ability of local area Title I Youth programs' ability to enhance services for ISY, while continuing to serve OSY.

Only one projected programmatic outcome was measurable during PY22 and expected progress on that outcome was not met, even though the Division provided technical assistance to local areas following waiver approval regarding the goals and projected outcomes of the waiver, as well as expected local implementation efforts. Concerning the outcomes that could not be measured during PY22, the Division determined that the original data collection tool established for this waiver does not collect data reliably. The Division is redesigning the original tool to ensure reliable data is available for progress evaluation and technical assistance purposes. Also, the Division will provide additional technical assistance to local areas on the goals and projected outcomes of the waiver, as well as expected local implementation efforts.

**Waiver of the prohibition against ISY use of ITAs for occupational skills training**

Projected programmatic outcomes of the waiver at the time of approval were:

- Establishment of 30 ITAs statewide using Title I Youth program funds during each of PY22 and PY23; and
- Credential attainment rates of 90 percent among Title I Youth program participants who have utilized an ITA funded by Title I Youth programs.

The projected impact of this waiver is enhancement of Nebraska's ability to serve ISY, including those with basic skills deficiency and those who are English language learners, offenders, in or have aged out of foster care, pregnant or parenting, have a disability, or require additional assistance to complete education or secure employment. In addition, this waiver is expected to increase the ability of local area Title I Youth programs to enhance services for ISY, while continuing to serve OSY.

Only two of the projected programmatic outcomes were measurable during PY22 and expected progress on those outcomes was not met, even though the Division provided technical assistance to local areas following waiver approval regarding the goals and projected outcomes of the waiver, as well as expected local implementation efforts. Concerning the outcomes that could not be measured, the Division determined that the original data collection tool established for this waiver does not collect data reliably. The Division is redesigning the original tool to ensure reliable data is available for progress evaluation and technical assistance purposes.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

## For more information, visit:

### Reports

(Nov. 2023). [\*State of Nebraska Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative Program Year 2021\*](#). Nebraska Department of Labor.

### Links

Nebraska Department of Labor

- [\*Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System, Program Years 2020–2023\*](#). 2022 Modification (effective July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024).

## Nevada

Nevada's Workforce Development Boards  
State of Nevada Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Pathway to \$20 program**

This state-funded program targets the underemployed or part-time worker by providing intensive employment services, training, and other services to assist an individual to obtain a job paying at least \$20.00 per hour or puts them on a pathway to a position paying at least that wage.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

Each EmployNV Career Hub includes a self-service resource center with personal computers and internet access wherein jobseekers can avail themselves with résumé assistance, employment information, skill testing, and other services beneficial to their securing employment. These services include:

- **Career Enhancement Program (CEP)**  
CEP is a state-funded program offering services such as short-term academic or vocational training, assistance with items required to begin training and assistance with items needed to begin employment (e.g., work cards, health cards, tools, and uniforms).
- **Silver State Works (SSW) program**  
The initiative is a state-funded program designed to create an opportunity for business to help strengthen Nevada's economy while receiving incentives to hire pre-screened qualified workers. The SSW program targets unemployment claimants, reentry individuals, TANF recipients, disabled individuals, and veterans providing OJT and incentive-based employment opportunities.
- **ESD Work Experience (WEX)**  
The ESD state-funded WEX initiative targets hard-to-place individuals. It allows a business to provide a work-based learning experience to an individual for approximately 320 hours before making a hiring decision. During the 320 hours, EmployNV Career Hub will pay the individual's wages.

In addition to the above-referenced services, all EmployNV Career Hubs are certified affiliate sites and have the presence of WIOA Title I services either in person or virtually.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research Data System (NPWR)**

In December 2022, the Office of Workforce Innovation (OWINN) received approval from the Nevada Legislature's Interim Finance Committee to launch competitive NPWR research grants using \$100,000 funding provided by Nevada's WIOA Governor's Reserve funding that supported research studying Nevada's most challenging policy problems in the areas of workforce development, economic diversification, and education. The inaugural 2023 funded projects included:

- Workforce and Economic Development
  - The Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Center for Business and Economic Research's (CBER) project An Analysis of Nevada's Pre- and Post-Pandemic Labor Force Participation Rate, which will identify and evaluate factors contributing to Nevada having the third largest decrease in labor force participation following the pandemic.
  - The University of Nevada, Reno's (UNR) Center for Economic Development's Examination of the Relationship between Workforce Development and Housing, Education and Childcare Services, and Healthcare Services, which will explore how labor force barriers impact workforce and economic development and business creation, retention, and expansion abilities.
- Education
  - The Lincy Institute's project Nevada K–12 Performance and Implications for Economic Diversification, which will evaluate the differentiating factors between Nevada's highest and lowest performing schools and districts in terms of on-time graduation rates, performance on standardized tests, and college-going rates.
  - Dr. Megan Rauch Griffard from UNLV's Department of Educational Psychology and Higher Education's project Dissecting the Educator Talent Pipeline and Educators' Return on Investment in Nevada, which will focus on whether career and technical education (CTE) certificates in education concentrations lead to eventual employment in education, seek to understand how long NSHE education majors take to earn their desired degree by educational attainment level, and how the wages of educators compare to other workers with comparable education and experience in Nevada by educational attainment level.
- Students
  - Anna Dreibelbis, a UNLV law, and doctorate student, for her project Assessing Career Readiness Gaps in Nevada, which will facilitate understanding of what the gaps are in soft skill development in CTE programs across Nevada.
  - Curtis L. Cobbins, a doctorate student, for his project Causes of Innovation Engineering Management Failure in Workforce Development Within the Nevada System of Higher Education, which will facilitate understanding of how

strong the correlation is, if any, between employee analysis of skills gap alignment and the role of innovation engineering management.

The NPWR system continues to expand its capabilities for public and private users to leverage state data to make data-driven policy. Kristen Dwyer is actively identifying and applying best practices for NPWR by actively seeking out, applying, and participating in programs such as the 2023 Data Labs, which was a nationwide initiative led by the Beeck Center for Social Impact + Innovation at Georgetown University and the National Governors Association. Additionally, the 2023 NPWR Research Forums are already scheduled in December 2023 in Reno and Las Vegas to share the findings of the 2022 NPWR research grant recipients, unveil NPWR's Strategic Plan, and share the project proposals for the awarded 2023 NPWR research grant recipients.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Self-Appraisal System (SAS)**

During PY22, the Self-Appraisal System (SAS) reviews were conducted on the WIOA Title I Program, Wagner-Peyser WIOA Title III Program, Nevada's Career Enhancement Program, and Nevada's Silver State Works Program entries to determine the following:

- Success in reaching State Entered Employment and Placement goals for participants.
- Appropriateness of services provided to employers and participants.
- Timeliness in service delivery to employers and participants.

In PY22, DETR's program staff monitored, analyzed, and coached Nevada's EmployNV Career and Business Hub offices to ensure goals were met and appropriate program services were recorded. Staff utilized the Semi-Autonomous Research Assistant (SARA), integrated with EmployNV, to ensure consistent and timely communication with participants. SARA has allowed for DETR program staff to send scheduled program-specific communications via text and email, schedule and remind participants about appointments, allowed for documentation to be obtained and recorded, helped alert staff to urgent client needs, and has enhanced participant and staff communications overall.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Office of Workforce Innovation (OWINN)**

OWINN actively engages with core partners, state and local agencies, communities, and workforce stakeholders to achieve continuous improvement in Nevada's workforce system. These agencies include, but are not limited to, the following: Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR), Nevada Department of Education (NDE), Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), the Office of Science, Innovation, and Technology (OSIT), Workforce Connections and Nevadaworks (the

State's LWDBs), and the GWDB. The OWINN also engages in meaningful partnerships with the State's Regional Development Authorities (RDAs), local chambers of commerce and other community memberships.

### **Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research Data System (NPWR)**

The Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research Data System is a state-of-the-art research tool that provides Nevadans with unparalleled access to the knowledge needed to understand the trends shaping the State's education and workforce outcomes. NPWR was built on a federated system that merges data across participating agencies using a sophisticated matching algorithm. NPWR leaves all private data behind the existing firewalls of each agency and de-identifies all data during the matching process. Using this de-identified and matched aggregate data, NPWR is a reporting tool that can be used by participating agencies for the purpose of better understanding the trends shaping Nevada's education and workforce outcomes. A public-facing NPWR presence is also available to enable transparent and data-driven decision making in the state.

NPWR is truly a statewide collaboration, with the NPWR Advisory Committee made up of data-sharing partners and established to assist in the support of the statewide longitudinal system. These data-sharing partners include but are not limited to the following: DETR for wage data and Title I and Title III data; NDE for Title II data; NSHE for post-secondary data; Nevada DMV for the unique matching ID data link; DHHS for early childhood information (at the moment that is collected through NDE, but working towards sharing more data); NDOC; Nevada Department of Veteran Services (NDVS); the Nevada Department of Business and Industry (B&I) for apprenticeship data.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State has in effect the following waivers:

- Waiver to allow WIOA individuals training accounts (ITA) for in-school youth (ISY).
- Waiver to increase on-the-job training (OJT) employer reimbursement by up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.
- Waiver to allow State and local areas to expend 75 percent of Governor's Set-Aside (Reserve) youth funding and local formula funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).



### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver to allow WIOA ITAs for ISY**

This waiver is approved through June 30, 2024. This waiver allows the State to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only OSY, ages 16–24; the State may use ITAs for ISY ages 18–21. The approval of the waiver should not impede State’s efforts to prioritize OSY, including outreach to the OSY population.

#### **Waiver to increase OJT employer reimbursement by up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees**

This waiver is approved through June 30, 2024, for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula funds. The waiver permits the State and its local workforce areas to increase the reimbursement rate for OJT contracts up to 75 percent. The State may also reimburse up to 90 percent for OJT for businesses with 50 or fewer employees. DOL-ETA expects the operation of OJTs to increase in Nevada as a result of the waiver.

#### **Waiver to allow State and local areas to expend 75 percent of Governor’s Set-Aside youth funding and local formula funds on OSY.**

The waiver is approved for PY22, which includes the entire period for which the state is authorized to spend PY22 funding.

### *Impact on Performance*

#### **Waiver to allow WIOA ITAs for ISY**

Utilization of the ISY ITA waiver was 21 (or 6.8%) of ISY. Approximately 51 percent of participants identified as African American/Black; Asian; or more than one race with 49 percent identifying as Hispanic or Latino. The largest barrier identified was basic skills deficiency at 71 percent.

#### **Waiver to increase OJT employer reimbursement by up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees**

Utilization of the 90 percent OJT waiver was 138 or 63.6 percent with over 73 percent completing an OJT successfully. The participants who benefited from the OJTs had an average wage of \$18.82 per hour as compared to a wage of \$18.42 for all OJT participants. Approximately 47 percent of the participants served identify as African American/Black; Asian; or more than one race with 37.7 percent identifying as Hispanic or Latino. The participants had the following barriers:

- Re-entry (2%),
- Veteran (2.9%), and
- Persons with a disability (7.3%).

Statewide performance was not measurably impacted by the waiver.

#### **Waiver to allow State and local areas to expend 75 percent of Governor’s Set-Aside youth funding and local formula funds on OSY.**

Utilization of the ISY waiver in Nevada has allowed ISY enrollments to grow to 24.8 percent of total enrollments. Approximately

51 percent of the participants served identify as African American/Black; Asian; or more than one race with 49 percent identifying as Hispanic or Latino. The participants had the following barriers:

- Re-entry (5.6%),
- Persons with a disability (23%), and
- Basic skills deficiency (71.0%).

High school diploma rates for ISY were 37 percent compared to OSY drop-out recovery diploma rates of 18 percent. Additionally, entered employment was 77 percent for ISY as compared to 76 percent for OSY drop-out recovery.

## Success Stories

### *Incumbent Worker Training Program – Columbia Dental*

“As a recipient of the Incumbent Worker Training Program, I can confidently say that this program was a lifesaver for our office. Thanks to the grant, we were able to send four employees to undergo training on a specific scanner to take impressions of crowns and nightguards. At a time when the economy is at an all-time high, the opportunity to improve our skills and knowledge was crucial in maintaining our business. The training not only helped us save considerable cost, but also equipped us with the tools to perform better and provide more efficient service to our patients. We are grateful to have been part of this program and highly recommend it to other businesses looking to improve the skills of their staff.”

## For more information, visit:

### *Reports*

(Dec. 1). [WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative Program Year 2022](#). State of Nevada, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation and Nevada’s Workforce Development Boards.

### *Links*

Nevada’s Workforce Development Boards

State of Nevada Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation

## New Hampshire

State Workforce Innovation Board  
New Hampshire Business and Economic Affairs

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA)**

The State allocated funds to hire TPMA to complete a workforce needs assessment. Work began on this assessment late in PY21 and was completed during PY22. The assessment took place in stages which included a best practice research, secret shopper experience, and stakeholder engagement. The team from TPMA worked closely with staff from the Office of Workforce Opportunity (OWO) to conduct this assessment. Recommendations from the assessment have been organized around three topics: digital modernization, employer engagement, and service delivery. The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) was provided with the report on October 17, 2023. Amongst other uses, the SWIB and workforce development staff will be utilizing this report while preparing the 2024–2028 WIOA Combined State Plan for New Hampshire.

##### **The Public Consulting Group (PCG)**

The State allocated funds to hire PCG to complete a Return to Community Strategic Partner Engagement and Study. To complete this work, PCG engaged with several stakeholders and conducted a feasibility study to determine what employment barriers exist to successful re-entry after incarceration and involvement with the criminal justice system, what programs and services exist in New Hampshire to aid re-entry after incarceration with an emphasis on employment, and what programs and services are needed to fill geographical and programmatic gaps in re-entry service. OWO and the New Hampshire SWIB will use the results and recommendations included in the State's WIOA Annual Report to determine whether a Return to Community program is needed. If this program is deemed necessary, information from this study will be used to design a program that addresses the workforce needs of this population.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **System Evaluation - Statewide Workforce Needs Assessment**

Through competitive procurement, the State awarded a contract to Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) to conduct a Statewide Workforce Needs Assessment. This assessment was done to help New Hampshire build a stronger, more impactful public workforce development system. TPMA staff used both qualitative and quantitative data collection to complete the assessment of the New Hampshire workforce system with a particular emphasis on ensuring that workforce services operate as envisioned under WIOA.

The recommendations resulting from this assessment are based on a process of gathering key insights through a secret shopping experience, collecting feedback from stakeholders across the workforce system, and evaluating the successes of existing programs and strategies through the lens of those who have been directly affected by them. The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of what is working and what can be improved as New Hampshire continues to grow and develop its approaches to building a competitive and sustainable workforce.

### *Continuous Improvement*

Program Monitoring, including federal reviews are an important component of system evaluation for compliance with WIOA regulations, as well as State policy and procedures for program and financial management. PY22 WIOA monitoring activities included the following major activities.

- OWO staff completed 12 individual program and fiscal desk reviews.
- OWO staff completed onsite monitoring which generated 13 program and fiscal reports. Any findings or disallowed costs resulting from these monitoring activities were resolved.
- On-site reviews with service providers included Equal Opportunity monitoring.
- Desk reviews and on-site reports document the on-going concerns regarding the WIOA Youth programs. Both subrecipients of WIOA Title I Youth funds faced difficulties in staffing, implementation of new site locations and funds expenditure.

The ability of Consortium partners to collaborate as the One-Stop Operator was cited by many stakeholders as a success of the New Hampshire workforce system. This cross-agency approach involves agencies responsible for WIOA core programs and key partners, working to offer seamless referrals and a cohesive workforce development ecosystem. The One-Stop Operator plays a vital role in building authentic relationships that can make the system more responsive to jobseekers and employers. Stakeholders also acknowledged the vision of leadership within the NH Works system as a driving force behind its successes.

## Reports

### System Evaluation - Statewide Workforce Needs Assessment

This report provides a concise summary of multiple reports prepared by TPMA and includes assessment process, findings, and implementation recommendations for New Hampshire to consider. Based on the 9 quantitative and qualitative research completed, TPMA has developed recommendations that have been organized around the topics of digital modernization, employer engagement, and service delivery.

## Waivers

### Waiver Implemented

The State had requested and received approval for the following waiver:

- Waiver through June 30, 2023, from the requirement to expend all WIOA Dislocated Worker and Governor's Discretionary funds for the PY19/FY20 which are not expended in the required three-year period. 20 CFR 683.110 (b)(1)

### Strategies

This waiver will allow the State access to WIOA PY19 funding for an entire year through June 30, 2023. With the unprecedented circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State has seen NH Works Offices closed only to re-open part-time, significant reductions in customer traffic, and decreased spending on WIOA programs. As the New Hampshire economy has opened back up, the State has seen a decrease in those seeking career and training services. However, the State does anticipate an influx of customers who will require WIOA services and programs in the coming months. To address the financial demand of this influx, OWO believes that the state should have PY19 WIOA funding available for an additional program year. This will allow the state to continue to offer training programs, OJT programs, and virtual seminars for WIOA customers and prevent any denials to these programs based on the lack of available funding. In addition, the ability to retain PY19 discretionary funds will allow the State to develop and implement new initiatives to deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the New Hampshire workforce system.

Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from waiver implementation include improved flexibility of state and local funding to best meet the needs of New Hampshire citizens and businesses during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approval of this waiver would support DOL's strategic priorities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of workforce development programs. ETA made it an objective in the FY18–22 Strategic Plan to support flexibility for governors and LWDBs, to enable them to effectively tailor their workforce strategies to meet state and local needs. This support is needed more than ever as the State adapts to serving citizens and businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Additionally, the waiver will positively impact all eligible participants as identified at WIOA Section 129 and 134 and 20 CFR 680.120; 20 CFR 680.130; and 20 CFR 681.200. These participants include Adults, Dislocated Workers, in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY).

The waiver would secondarily benefit people who are not WIOA eligible recipients but who have an economic relationship with recipients. These include businesses and employers, residents, and other individuals and entities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### *Impact on Performance*

The State was able to utilize all PY19 funds that were granted under the extension. PY19 grants have been closed out and the state will not be requesting this waiver in PY23.

## **Success Stories**

### *WIOA Adult – Kevin*

Kevin was enrolled in the WIOA Adult program in PY22. He is 18 years old, living in Londonderry, NH, and working part-time at Papa Gino's as a food preparation Team Member. Kevin was considered underemployed, and his highest level of education was a high school diploma with no post-secondary training. His barriers consisted of low income, underemployed, and lack of currently marketable skills/credentials for the current labor market. His goal was to work in the manufacturing field, which has a bright outlook, is in high demand, and has many good paying jobs in NH. Kevin was accepted into the Microelectronics Boot Camp Training Program at Nashua Community College in Nashua, NH. The WIOA Adult program was able to cover the entire cost of the program's tuition, as well as offer mileage reimbursement to and from training. This program was designed to both meet industry demands and teach students basic military standards and assembly techniques for radio frequency (RF) and microwave electronic (MW) assemblies. The Microelectronics Boot Camp builds a portfolio for future interviews as well, with a strong 95 percent success rate and a job growth of 5–10 percent. During training, Kevin also received his Lean White Belt Certification to help him become more marketable to some of the high-end companies he was interested in working for.

In the final weeks of training, Kevin became very sick and was bedridden with a 104-degree temperature that forced him to miss some critical training time. As soon as he recovered and returned to class, he started to experience car troubles that almost sidelined him again. Fortunately, he had been maintaining frequent communication with his Career Navigator and the Adult program was able to approve support services to cover the cost of his auto repairs, enabling Kevin to continue with his training. Kevin had never created a résumé, so on the days that he was not at training, he was actively working with his Career Navigator to get professional job search tools created and begin doing some interview preparation. Kevin was able to develop an excellent résumé that highlights the skills that he possesses and the training that he has now completed. This went a long way to boost his confidence level as he embarked on a new career path.

Without WIOA, he would not have had this training opportunity. Throughout the training, Kevin received positive comments, showed up on time, and worked hard in every class. All his hard work allowed him to successfully complete the training and earn a valuable industry-recognized credential.

Kevin has now accepted a full-time position working at Macom, where he is receiving a competitive rate of pay, with a comprehensive benefits package. He is very thankful for the opportunity that WIOA provided him with and for helping him develop a new career that he truly enjoys.

#### *WIOA Adult – Doris*

Doris first arrived in the United States from El Salvador on March 29, 2022. Spanish is her first language, but she enrolled in English classes at the International Institute of New England in Manchester. Doris worked very hard on her English, and eventually improved to a level where she was accepted into the LNA for Success program. A specialized program in collaboration with Manchester Community College and the International Institute of New England. Through this specialized program students would learn to become an LNA while also attending specialized English class to review their coursework and provide translation with the day-to-day medical terminology that will be used in their day-to-day jobs. Doris was enrolled in the WIOA program on July 26, 2022. She started training on September 12, 2022, and successfully completed the LNA for Success program on November 18, 2022. Doris sat for the LNA state test and passed on her first try. She was awarded her LNA license in December 2022. Doris secured employment shortly after and is now working as an LNA at Villa Crest Nursing and Retirement Center where she is making \$20.00 per hour.

#### *Dislocated Worker Program – Dale*

Dale was laid off from Credit Adjustments Inc as a programmer making \$28.85 an hour. Dale entered the Dislocated Worker program and was interested in data analytics. Dale entered the Visible Edge training for Data Analytics and completed the training. He was offered a position with Monument Tech, but the offer was lower than expected. In discussions with the president of the company, a deal was created where Dale was hired as a consultant at \$150,000 a year (\$72.11 per hour) in April 2022.

#### *Dislocated Worker Program – Susan*

Susan is a 59-year-old unemployed woman with a disabled spouse and grown children who came to NHES when she was laid off from her job at the VNA. Susan had been working as a Licensed Nursing Assistant (LNA) scheduler for the VNA for several years before being terminated for not meeting performance requirements. Susan's goal was to stay in the medical/ nursing field but as more than a scheduler as well as finding full-time employment at a higher rate of pay with more responsibility because she was the primary support of her family. Susan entered the Dislocated Worker program through the Somersworth office and after working with her Employment Counselor Specialist, chose to enter training to become a Medical Assistant. Susan started her training June 2022 at Great Bay Community College to earn her Medical Assistant Training Certificate and graduated from the program on September 28, 2022. Susan was hired by Wentworth Douglass Hospital in Dover New Hampshire on October 17,

2022, as a Medical Assistant full time with benefits. Not only was Susan able to fulfill her goal of a more satisfying position but was earning more money and full benefits allowing her to support her family, including her disabled husband. On follow up, Susan reports that she loves her job and that being a Medical Assistant is much more rewarding than just scheduling medical appointments. Susan also talked about possible additional training through work to continue learning.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Annual Report for the Period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023](#). NHWorks

- Appendix A: *New Hampshire Workforce Needs Assessment*.
- Appendix B: Public Consulting Group (Apr. 2023). *Return to Community Strategic Partner Engagement Study*.

*Links*

State Workforce Innovation Board

New Hampshire Business and Economic Affairs



## New Jersey

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLA)**

The Governor's office has partnered with the Office of Innovation and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) to fund a two-year pilot program to provide job-coaching and employment skills to jobless and chronically underemployed residents who do not have college degrees or workplace credentials. The LiLA program—part of Gov. Murphy's Future of Work initiative—is built on the idea of empowering participants to drive their own career development, helping them secure the training and supportive services they need to find and keep sustainable employment. Participants' career plans are tailored to their individual goals and needs.

"The barriers to family sustaining employment are well known, but here in New Jersey— with this grant and other forward-thinking initiatives—we are creating life-changing opportunities for underserved residents," said Gov. Murphy. This program exemplifies what it means to build a stronger, fairer economy for all.

The \$9 million program, funded by the Governor's Reserve, was conceived to promote upward mobility and economic opportunity. It is designed to help participants overcome barriers to gainful, permanent employment in part by making wrap-around services such as childcare and transportation stipends are available to those who need them to complete a training course or succeed at work. The integration of career coaching, professional mentoring, and up-to-date information on labor market trends provide critical support to participants as they drive their career plans forward.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Re-Entry/Job Opportunities for Building Success (JOBS)**

Justice-involved individuals encounter many unique challenges when attempting to return to the workforce. This population has a multitude of barriers to employment compared to the rest of the community and requires additional services and client-specific approaches to resolve these issues. In 2023, to better serve the justice involve population, NJDOL successfully launched and funded this program in partnership with NJ Probations and Parole in the amount of \$6 million via Governor's Reserve funding.

- **Goals of JOBS:**  
The main goal of JOBS is to promote successful reentry of justice-involved participants into the workforce by providing the following:

- Partnerships: Develop partnerships with justice-involved entities to (1) support enrollment of target populations, (2) strengthen career coaching/mentoring practices, and (3) ensure connection to critical support services, such as Identification obtainment and expungement.
- Individual Employment Plan: Ensure, per participant's IEP, the timely delivery of appropriate and necessary career-training, and support activities to Justice involved individuals.
- Career Coaching: Provide ongoing and consistent career coaching/mentoring, including connection to supportive services, to help participants navigate IEPs and manage decisions about how to utilize JOBS funding.
- Outcomes: Help participants navigate to successful outcomes, including the attainment of industry-recognized credentials and entry and advancement in career path and employment.
- Virtual Services: Offer training and career coaching/mentoring via digital platforms to ensure participant accessibility.
- Internships: Provide placement into internships to help participants gain work experience and possible opportunities for employment.
- Work-Based Learning: Partner with employers to increase unsubsidized employment opportunities and retention. • Evaluation and Learning: Use data and evidence to track outcomes and improve how participants utilize JOBS funds.

As of from April 2023 through November 2023 this program has successfully:

- Served 141 participants.
- Trained 125 participants.
- Provided 116 participants with credentials.
- Placed 7 participants into internships.
- Assisted 32 participants to obtained employment.
- Helped 15 participants retain employment for 90 days.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Pathways to Recovery**

The goal of the Pathways to Recovery program is to provide support and training to eligible participants who have become dislocated due to the opioid crisis and promote successful and sustainable reentry into the workforce. NJDOL will contribute to the humanitarian needs of opioid-affected communities by making headway into one of the most vital social determinants of

health–employment. The program has been funded by the Governor’s Reserve in the amount of \$15 million and DOL funding in the amount of \$9 million.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **PY20 WIOA Evaluation: A Study of WIOA Title I Services and Service Delivery in PY20**

The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey worked with the New Jersey Department of Labor (NJDOL) to conduct a process study of WIOA Title I services during PY20. This study encompasses all three WIOA Title I main populations—Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services and examines both career and training services. The goal of this study was to examine WIOA Title I service delivery in PY20. The context of PY20, however, cannot be understated. As the first full program year operating within the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, this study examines how NJDOL and local areas adapted services to virtual, remote, or hybrid formats to accommodate the influx of jobseekers and the public health directives at that time, and how virtual and remote services affected overall WIOA Title I service in PY20. The study further examines how service modifications were perceived to have worked by local One-Stop Career Center staff. A third, and final, goal of the study was to provide information to NJDOL for use in future decisions around investments in WIOA Title I service delivery and when it considers continuous system improvements to provide customer-centered services to those in need of support.

The Heldrich Center used qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to assess information regarding WIOA Title I services as they were operated and delivered in PY20. To understand and provide a broad overview of WIOA Title I adaptations in PY20, researchers utilized the following multi-method approach to data collection:

- Conducted an analysis of the WIPS customer data from PY18, PY19, and PY20;
- Administered one bifurcated survey of local area One-Stop Career Center personnel to document and collect WIOA Title I service adaptations in PY20;
- Conducted structured interviews with state-level NJDOL workforce staff who are responsible for the implementation of WIOA Title I services;
- Conducted structured interviews with local area One-Stop Career Center staff at a variety of One-Stop locations in New Jersey; and
- Conducted focus groups with customers who received WIOA Title I services in PY20.

In developing the research instruments, Heldrich Center researchers used the following definitions for modes in which WIOA Title I services may have been delivered during PY20:

- In person: Service delivery that takes place in the One-Stop Career Center office location in a face-to-face setting;

- Remote: Service delivery that utilizes phone-based technology platforms and devices delivered synchronously;
- Virtual: Service delivery that utilizes computer-based technology platforms and devices delivered synchronously or asynchronously; and
- Hybrid: A mixture of service delivery modes.

#### **Other Research and Evaluation Activities**

- RESEA Evaluation: Impact Evaluation Study
- PY21 WIOA Evaluation Plan
- State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) Performance Dashboard
- Research Improving People's Lives (RIPL) engagement to build research data lake with workforce and UI dashboards
- Application of a new statistically adjusted score to Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) training programs
- Worker Experience Project Portfolio
- Feasibility Study for an Enhanced Wage Record Pilot Program in New Jersey
- Local Area Statistical Model Development

#### *Continuous Improvement*

One of the recommendations from NJDOL's PY20 evaluation, conducted in partnership with the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, was the importance of investing in technological tools that help to support consistency of service across local areas.

One of the key areas that New Jersey is currently focused on is modernizing its system of record and developing data tools that better support high quality service delivery and real time information about career and training services in New Jersey—for of the LWDBs, One-Stop Career Center staff, and internal NJDOL teams.

Over the last year, several different divisions, and offices across NJDOL, led by the Office of Technology, have convened to identify specifications for a new system of record to replace AOSOS (America's One-Stop Operating System). Through this collaborative process, the State has developed a Request for Proposal (RFP) that is about to be released. The State anticipates that a new data system will support easier data collection, improved access to data reports, and greater coordination/collaboration across required and recommended One-Stop partners.

In addition, the Workforce Division has made new investments in staff positions that will support the integration of data and evaluation in the implementation of WIOA programs. The State has hired a Supervising Administrative Analyst who has begun convening a Workforce Reports group that consists of NJDOL, LWDBs, and One-Stop staff to develop new reporting tools that

align with the AOSOS Technical Guide for Title I Service Delivery. The State recognizes the importance of creating new data tools that better support the use of data in their existing system, as they also prepare for the replacement of that system.

The State continues to support and develop technological tools that ease and support access to services—including through Simply Sign which allows for electronic documentation, investments in Metrix Learning which provides access to a wide catalog of training and skill-building opportunities, and through the development of NJDOL's custom Learning Management System that houses specific professional development opportunities for workforce professionals in New Jersey.

### *Reports*

All ongoing and future evaluations reports will be published on the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and NJDOL websites, as they are completed.

- The Heldrich Center Final Evaluation Report
- SETC Dashboard

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

No information provided for this section.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## **Success Stories**

No information provided for this section.

## **For more information, visit:**

### *Reports*

State of New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development:

- [\*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Annual Report Narrative PY 2022.\*](#)
- (Dec. 2021). [\*AOSOS Technical Guide for Title I Service Delivery.\*](#)

Volpe, L., et al (July 2023). [\*An Evaluation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Services in New Jersey, Program Year 2020.\*](#) Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers.

### *Links*

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
State Employment and Training Commission

- [SETC Performance Dashboard](#)

## New Mexico

New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System**

Funding was utilized to sustain a virtual system available 24/7 to support access to services and supports including, unemployment benefits, career exploration/readiness tools, résumé development, links to labor market information and access to career professionals to provide one-on-one assistance and career counseling. The New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System is a state-of-the-art system that is also utilized to manage and report performance, maintain accountability, and support case management work statewide.

#### **Personnel Costs of WIOA Program Coordinators and Monitoring**

Staff assigned provide ongoing support to each of the four local LWDBs, including consultation for local board and chief elected officials on best and promising practices; Title I program implementation for Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Workers, fiscal compliance, policy development, local/regional planning, sector strategy and career pathway implementation, and partnership engagement at federal, state, and local levels.

#### **New Mexico Performs Data Dashboard/System**

The dashboard system is licensed from FutureWork System. The NM Performs system performance monitoring data views and reports are designed to provide timely and accurate data on activities and outcomes to assist NMDWS leadership, including SWDB and LWDBs, to set priorities, target resources, review, and report on program goals.

#### **Career Solutions and Why I Work**

Online tools/resources designed to support career readiness/exploration for youth and young adults. The Career Solutions tools also includes a curriculum that can be utilized by public/charter schools to support classroom instruction. These two tools have quickly become recognized and valued for their ability to connect.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **RESEA**

In 2019, the Eastern Workforce Board began rolling out a revised participant intake model. In February 2019 staff in the Clovis office began providing all RESEA participants with wrap around services which included Title I intensive training services and easy access to external partners, including providers of Title II and Title IV services, and TANF. The new model was implemented in Roswell in June 2019. The planned rollout to the other offices in the region was scheduled for March 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and public health orders implemented to contain the spread of the disease, the rollout for the remainder of the region's office was delayed until October 2020. The Eastern Workforce Board continued to co-enroll Title I/Title III participants in PY22 after The RESEA module Geographic Solutions came back on-line on August 8, 2022.

The staggered rollout of the new RESEA model facilitates three types of evaluations. The first set of evaluations will examine participant success in exhausting unemployment benefits before and after the model was implemented in the office serving them. The second evaluation will compare participant success in not exhausting unemployment benefits in the Clovis and Roswell office between July 2019 and September 2020 with the success of participants in the rest of the region. These two comparisons have the advantage of minimizing differences in the type of employers and employment opportunities, and other labor market factors. A potential third analysis would compare the results in the Eastern Board region with state, however the variations in the type of employers and employment opportunities, and other labor market factors, may bias the analysis. RESEA State Plan was updated in June 2023, and subsequently approved.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

The following studies were used to inform and guide state and local planning for the Combined State Plan, and for LWDB local plans. Research included focused data studies and publications which were used to facilitate discussions for economic recovery and workforce planning. Additional agencies benefitting from evaluation/research documents included Department of Health, Economic Development, Senior Employment, and legislative staff and representatives.

- 2023 State of the Workforce Report
- New Mexico Data Focus: Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey
- Highlights from the New Mexico 2022 State of the Workforce
- New Mexico's Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization



- New Mexico Data Focus: Senior (65 Years and Over)
- Tribal Population and Employment Status Data
- 2022 Veteran's Profile
- New Mexico Data Focus: STEM Occupations
- 2020-2023 Occupational Employment Projections
- Poverty in New Mexico: 2021
- New Mexico's Budding Cannabis Industry
- New Mexico Data Focus: Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey
- Employment at New Mexico's Ski Facilities
- New Mexico Health Care Workforce Committee 2022 Annual Report
- Career Solutions pamphlets

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State did not have any waivers during PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

- [\*Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative Program Year 2022\*](#)
  - (Sept. 2023). [\*New Mexico 2023 State of the Workforce: A Report Highlighting New Mexico's Current and Future Workforce.\*](#)
  - Welby, J. (Aug. 2022). [\*New Mexico Data Focus: Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey.\*](#)
  - Moskowitz, R. (Aug. 2022). [\*Highlights from the 'New Mexico 2022 State of the Workforce'.\*](#)
  - Friedman, N. (Aug. 2022). [\*New Mexico's Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization.\*](#)
  - Welby, J. (Sept. 2022). [\*New Mexico Data Focus: Senior \(65 Years and Over\).\*](#)
  - [\*2022 Veteran's Profile.\*](#)
  - (Nov. 2022). [\*New Mexico Data Focus: STEM Occupations.\*](#)
  - Friedman, N. (Aug. 2022). [\*2020–2023 Industry Employment Projections.\*](#)
  - Callan, D. (Feb. 2023). [\*2020–2030 Occupational Employment Projections.\*](#)
  - Larranaga, J. (Mar. 2023). [\*Poverty in New Mexico: 2021.\*](#)
  - Welby, J., & Moskowitz, R. (April 2023). [\*New Mexico's Budding Cannabis Industry.\*](#)
  - Welby, J. (Apr. 2023). [\*New Mexico Data Focus: Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey.\*](#)
  - Moskowitz, R. (May 2023). [\*Employment at New Mexico's Ski Facilities.\*](#)
  - Career Solutions pamphlets ([English/Spanish](#))
- (Oct. 2022). [\*New Mexico Health Care Workforce Committee 2022 Annual Report.\*](#) Albuquerque NM: University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center.

*Links*

New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

## New York

New York State Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Low-Income Adults**

As required in WIOA, low-income adults are given priority for career and training services in Career Centers. WDS TA #23-01: Serving Priority Populations and Priority of Service under the WIOA Title I Adult program, was issued in PY22, as well as multiple training opportunities for staff Statewide on this topic.

##### **Long-Term Unemployed (LTU)**

The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Business Services staff outreach to businesses with job opportunities that align with targeted LTU customers. The purpose of this outreach is to build relationships with area businesses and increase the number of employment leads for customers, as well as customize recruitments and targeted career fairs, and create multiple opportunities to connect qualified candidates with businesses.

##### **Justice-Involved Individuals**

NYSDOL administers DOL's Federal Bonding Program (FBP) in NYS to provide fidelity bonding to businesses that hire individuals who meet one of the eight eligibility criteria of the program. Fidelity bonding protects businesses from losses such as theft, larceny, or embezzlement due to employee dishonesty. Businesses receive these fidelity bonds free-of-charge as an incentive to hire applicants with barriers to employment. Bonding coverage begins at a default amount of \$5,000 and increases by increments of \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000, depending on the amount of coverage the employer would like to have. Fidelity coverage is free and lasts for six months. In most situations, the coverage can be renewed with the business for an additional six months at no charge. During the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, NYSDOL issued bonds to five businesses for a total of \$65,000 in coverage.

The Gun Violence Prevention (GVP) initiatives will also support many individuals involved in the justice system through coordination with local partners.

##### **Displaced Homemakers**

NYSDOL administers the NYS Displaced Homemaker program, which is funded with \$1.62M in non-federal, state funds. In 2022, NYSDOL issued funding to 10 organizations in Albany, Bronx, Brooklyn, Nassau, Oneida, Schenectady, Schoharie, Suffolk, Tompkins, and Westchester counties. Additionally, under WIOA, displaced homemakers are considered Dislocated Workers. This

makes them eligible for all WIOA DW services, including but not limited to, career pathway development and counseling; help applying for jobs with interview preparation, résumé, and cover letter writing; job search strategies, readiness, and referrals; career and computer workshops; information about training and educational services; and referrals to supportive services to address needs such as childcare, medical, housing, transportation, and financial literacy. In total, 1,026 Displaced Homemakers were served during PY22, a slight drop of less than 1 percent (1,033) from PY21.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Out-of-School Youth**

The State continues to build the capacity of local areas to help retain out-of-school youth (OSY). The NYSDOL Youth Unit continues to host a monthly “Bring Your Own Questions” call to address WIOA Youth program providers’ immediate data entry, policy, program, and practice questions. During these calls providers also get to network and learn from each other’s best practices for recruitment of OSY. In addition, “All About WIOA” youth trainings and resources are offered with peer support structures to onboard new WIOA Youth staff at the local level. Along with one-on-one and group online technical assistance, NYSDOL’s Youth Unit has started to meet virtually with LWDB Youth programs to support local staff efforts with OSY. Many LWDBs also co-enroll WIOA Youth with NYSDOL’s Gun Violence Prevention (GVP) local initiative to recruit and extend career development and work experiences for underserved youth. Statewide partnerships will be forged for continued collaboration with the LWDBs and entities that serve youth with multiple barriers to employment, including those living in areas affected by gun violence.

#### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Individuals who are Basic Skills Deficient
- At Risk and Priority

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

#### **COVID-19 Disaster Recovery (DR) and Employment Recovery (ER) NDWGs**

Quarterly reports include a summary of grant progress including total expenditures; challenges and concerns; key issues and

technical assistance needs; and significant activities, accomplishments, and success stories. Internal bi-weekly reports are also compiled by NYSDOL staff and reviewed to track grant progress.

### **Syracuse 1-81 Project**

The bi-weekly reports include a summary of grant progress with participants served, total grant allocations, and accrued expenditures.

### **Fidelity Bonding Demonstrations Grant**

The report included cumulative bonds purchased within a quarter; the number of bonds issued within a quarter; any issues or concerns related to grant implementation; and outreach, education, and marketing activities directed to stakeholders within NYS regarding the Federal Bonding Program. This four-year grant concluded on June 30, 2023.

### **JVSG**

The report includes information about outlays, expenditures, and obligations related to the budget; staffing expenses; performance goals and outcomes; the individualized career services rate for JVSG staff; services to non-veterans' rate; staffing changes and vacancy information; and best practices for the Hire a Veteran Medallion Program.

### **NYSOL Teacher Residency Program (TRP)**

An internal weekly report compiled by NYSDOL staff includes a summary of grant progress, including the number of residents to be enrolled in a residency program registered with NYSED and total grant allocations.

### **RESEA**

This quarterly report includes a summary of how many customers were scheduled for and completed mandatory reemployment services meetings with Career Center staff in comparison to the annually projected goals.

### **Education Stabilization Fund-Reimagine Workforce Preparation (ESF-RWP) U.S. Education Department Grant**

This quarterly report includes a narrative of short-term trainings that are being offered to participants, impactful supportive services, and credentials earned. In addition to the narrative quarterly report, ESF-RWP State partners also submit participant data information every quarter that includes the total number of enrolled participants, total number of participants who completed training, credentials earned, and income 2nd Quarter After Exit.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor's Reserve and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

*Strategies*

This waiver extended through the duration of PY22 and allowed the State to lower the expenditure requirement for both Governor's Reserve and local funds to 50 percent for OSY. This waiver addressed an increase in local need for in-school youth (ISY) services due to the COVID-19 pandemic and allowed LWDBs to invest in preventative strategies and address the myriad of current needs within the ISY population.

*Impact on Performance*

The waiver allowed the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) the ability to focus more state-level and local formula youth funds on the provision of services to ISY and focus on the following outcomes:

- Increased attainment of Measurable Skill Gains (MSG), especially educational credentials such as high school diplomas;
- Decreased high school dropout rates;
- Increased participation in occupational skills training and work experience opportunities;
- Increased industry-recognized credential gains;
- The expansion of program outreach to middle school students to plant the seeds for career success; and
- Increased collaboration with partners to align workforce programs and promote trades, both generally and for women in trades.

This waiver had a positive impact on state and local area performance outcomes. The State achieved 77.4 percent of its Youth MSG goal for PY21, with 2,213 positive outcomes. The State's PY22 statewide average adjusted goal for Youth MSG was 51.9 percent, and actual performance was 62.2 percent (119.8% of the adjusted goal). Likewise, the State achieved 78.1 percent of its Youth Credential Attainment goal for PY21, with 1,351 positive outcomes. The PY22 statewide average adjusted goal for Youth Credential Attainment was 57.6 percent, and actual performance was 60.8 percent (105.5% of the adjusted goal).

In addition to improvements in state and local area performance outcomes, Statewide ISY enrollments increased with the waiver, totaling 3,700 in PY21 and 2,523 in PY22.

**Success Stories**

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative - Program Year 2022](#). New York State Department of Labor.

*Links*

New York State Department of Labor

## North Carolina

North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

The State has made strides in the Clean Energy and Advanced Manufacturing sector. DWS has made available \$700,000 in State Set-Aside dollars for local workforce boards to assist them with the development of local plans for engaging employers in advanced manufacturing, including electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing.

The North Carolina Sector Strategy Council, made up of key system leaders representing workforce development, education, and economic development systems, as well as the NC Chamber, has furthered the strategic vision for employer leadership as the driver of successful career outcomes. This continues to be a key principle of Governor Cooper's workforce development initiative, "NC Job Ready." DWS supported local workforce partners who contributed to 14 sector partnerships across the state, mainly in advanced manufacturing. The NCWorks Commission's Employer Leadership committee continued to evaluate options to better acknowledge and support sector partnerships as part of their strategic plan. One area that emerged in PY22 was in the EV subsector of Advanced Manufacturing. This is also a priority subsector of Clean Energy initiatives in North Carolina. At the state level, workforce partners began collaborating to develop strategies to support the growth of the EV industry, including employer engagement, curriculum, and pathway development.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

DWS partners is also partnering with the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) to implement initiatives resulting in improved services to veterans and those employers supporting veterans. As part of the North Carolina for Military Employment (NC4ME) initiative, DWS conducts ten NC4ME hiring events across the state throughout the year (often adapted to a virtual format after the pandemic began). These events entail veteran jobseeker résumé and interview preparation, jobseeker skill set matching with employer needs, and on-site interviews during the hiring event. A supporting effort of this initiative is formal training for employer Human Resources Directors on interpreting/cross-walking service member skills into civilian parlance, and on the benefits of hiring veterans. DWS also partners with DMVA to publish the annual North Carolina Veterans Resource Guide as an all-encompassing reference for veterans and employers.

#### **Fresh Start Reentry Initiative of Guilford County: Outstanding Innovative Partnership**

The Fresh Start Reentry Initiative is a partnership providing opportunities for the justice-involved population, including training, employability workshops, job placement, and access to community resource partners to help people address barriers to self-sustaining employment. Primary partners in the initiative are the GuilfordWorks Workforce Development Board through the NCWorks Career Center – Guilford County, Goodwill Industries of Central North Carolina, and the Guilford County Sheriff's Reentry Program. Fresh Start has established on-the-job training opportunities with a variety of employers, who also receive



information on incentives and benefits related to hiring justice-involved jobseekers. Meanwhile, partners work together to provide other services that empower people to succeed, such as securing acceptable identification documents, reliable transportation, adequate housing, food assistance, and other government programs. The initiative has sponsored several community events, including a hiring event/resource fair with over 25 employers and 15 community partners participating. As a result, more than 200 individuals have enrolled in federally funded workforce services, and 50 who did not have medical coverage have been connected to health insurance. In addition, the partners have organized clothing drives for individuals recently released from incarceration.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

Consistent with Governor Cooper’s NC Job Ready initiative, the DWS awarded three grants totaling almost \$288,000 to support innovative youth workforce development projects in July of 2021, which continued to be implemented through PY22 and into PY23. Three LWDBs have used these “Youth Initiative Grants” to expand or enhance employment and training services to eligible youth and young adults in their regions.

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Employer Needs Survey**

Every two years, the NCWorks Commission partners with the NC Commerce Labor and Economic Analysis Division (LEAD) to gather and use relevant data to inform strategies that enable North Carolina’s workforce and businesses to compete in a global economy.

The upcoming 2024 Employer Needs Survey will not only be an update to reports published biannually since 2014, but it will also be the first year in which it will be implemented in two parts—the first to continue its base questions for trends and tracking purposes, and the second to study more locally-focused topics. The results of the 2022 survey showed that more employers were interested in being contacted by a workforce professional to become aware of workforce programs and services. Employers also expressed an interest in participating in discussion and focus groups about their workforce needs. As a result, the NCWorks Commission facilitated Employer Roundtables in each of the state’s economic prosperity zones. The Employer Roundtable report showed that feedback was consistent, with common themes including the need for soft skills training, more funding resources, more engagement with middle and high school students and more work-based learning opportunities. Also consistent was the awareness and familiarity of the NCWorks “brand.” The NCWorks Commission has been evaluating ways to improve employer services and engagement through the recommendations of the report.

Meanwhile, LEAD also created a separate “Business Pulse Survey” of employers in 2021 to track pandemic impact over time. This survey concluded in June 2023.

### *Reports*

#### *2022 Employer Needs Survey*

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

For PY22 and PY23, the State received approval from DOL-ETA to waive the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor’s Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY. The waiver allows North Carolina to lower the expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY.

### *Strategies*

No information provided for this section.

### *Impact on Performance*

No information provided for this section.

## **Success Stories**

### *Adult – Amanda*

After she was laid off from her job in 2020, Amanda inquired about services at the Tri-County NCWorks Career Center in Murphy. She received a workforce training scholarship through NCWorks to attend Tri-County Community College. While juggling responsibilities as a mother and as a caregiver to her grandfather, Amanda excelled as a student and was accepted into the Tau Upsilon Alpha and Phi Theta Kappa honors societies. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, she and her son grew closer and helped each other as both attended school in an online format for some time. In May 2023, Amanda graduated with honors, with two degrees: Human Services Technology and Human Services Technology/Social Worker. With the encouragement of her Macon Program for Progress advisor at NCWorks, she applied for a position with the Cherokee County Department of Social Services and was hired as a Visitation Coordinator. Amanda plans to continue her education at Appalachian State University for her undergraduate degree and then pursue her master’s in social work degree, while continuing to work for Cherokee County DSS.

### *Young Adult – Jeffrey*

Struggling with school during the pandemic, Jeffrey dropped out in the eleventh grade, but he realized that getting an education would be critical for his future employment prospects. In 2022, he enrolled in the GED High School Equivalency (HSE) program at Wilkes Community College, which referred him to the NCWorks Career Center - Wilkes County for workforce and career development services. Jeffrey identified diesel mechanics as a potential career, and the NCWorks team connected him to a local business, Injected Diesel Performance, which was willing to provide him with a work experience program so he could learn about the field. He found his niche there and gained technical skills through the work experience that complemented the education he received at the college. His excellent work ethic, willingness to experience and learn the business and work with his co-workers demonstrated to Injected Diesel that Jeffrey was a good fit for the company. In November 2022, he was offered and accepted a full-time position at Injected Diesel, where he is currently employed as a mechanic's assistant. His next goal is to earn his degree in diesel technology at Wilkes Community College.

### *Teen – Elijah*

Through the NCWorks NextGen Youth program of Foothills Workforce Development Board, Elijah has found support and opportunities to gain skills while overcoming obstacles. He has a diagnosed disability of juvenile arthritis, which brings with it some physical limitations. Elijah has demonstrated positivity, determination, and persistence in the face of barriers and continues to be successful both in his high school curriculum and in college level courses. He anticipates graduating in May 2024 from Pinnacle Classical Academy with his high school diploma and an associate degree from Cleveland Community College. In the NextGen program, Elijah has participated in activities such as a Youth Summit, an entrepreneurial workshop, the Chess Club, and multiple work experiences, with employers such as the Cleveland County Library and Hospice of Cleveland County. A model NextGen program participant, he has applied himself wholeheartedly in his work experiences and learned numerous critical skills, such as time management, organization, communication, customer service, problem-solving, and teamwork.

### *Employer – Master Tech Auto*

A small, family-owned auto repair business, Master Tech Auto recognizes the value of a talented workforce and partners with the NCWorks system to provide skill development opportunities for the community. For several years, Master Tech Auto has hosted paid interns through the NCWorks NextGen program of Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board. Their leadership in providing work-based learning has allowed 11 young adults to become trained as they gain real world experience. One of the shop's current full-time employees started as an intern. Training participants not only to learn the mechanics of a car and how each component functions, but also acquire the "soft skills" that will be valuable in their future careers. Active in the community, Master Tech Auto also supports local schools by furnishing school supplies and hosting fundraisers, advocates for the homeless, donates car repairs to those in need, and provides oil services to military families at no charge.

### Employer – Driver Heating and Cooling

Driver Heating and Cooling, a small business in rural Jones County, has an intentional focus on providing a family-friendly work environment. Jeff, the owner of the company, has a passion for providing his staff with great working conditions, competitive wages, and a holistic approach to employment. Jeff makes a point of encouraging employees to share their specific family needs and providing them flexibility, whether that means giving time off to care for newborns or adjusting an employee's schedule to accommodate his wife's college classes. He also pays for employees' textbooks and tuition while they work on completing HVAC certification training. The company also partners with the workforce system, including 10 successful on-the-job training contracts through NCWorks and Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board over the past five years, and works with Jones County Schools to offer job shadowing opportunities to high school students. Meanwhile, the business has also welcomed transitioning military service members and justice-involved individuals as employees. Driver Heating and Cooling's workplace practices have contributed to the company's growth and employee retention, demonstrating the value of such investments to other employers.

### Innovative Partnership – Fresh Start Reentry Initiative

The Fresh Start Reentry Initiative is a partnership providing opportunities for the justice-involved population, including training, employability workshops, job placement, and access to community resource partners to help people address barriers to self-sustaining employment. Primary partners in the initiative are the GuilfordWorks Workforce Development Board through the NCWorks Career Center – Guilford County, Goodwill Industries of Central North Carolina, and the Guilford County Sheriff's Reentry Program. Fresh Start has established on-the-job training opportunities with a variety of employers, who also receive information on incentives and benefits related to hiring justice-involved jobseekers. Meanwhile, partners work together to provide other services that empower people to succeed, such as securing acceptable identification documents, reliable transportation, adequate housing, food assistance, and other government programs. The initiative has sponsored several community events, including a hiring event/resource fair with over 25 employers and 15 community partners participating. As a result, more than 200 individuals have enrolled in federally funded workforce services, and 50 who did not have medical coverage have been connected to health insurance. In addition, the partners have organized clothing drives for individuals recently released from incarceration.

### For more information, visit:

#### Reports

North Carolina Department of Commerce

- (Dec. 2023). [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative: State of North Carolina Program Year 2022](#). Division of Workforce Solutions.
- [2022 Employer Needs Survey](#). NCWorks Commission.

*Links*

North Carolina Department of Commerce - Division of Workforce Solutions

## North Dakota

Job Service North Dakota

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Statewide funding is essential for the operation of federal programs JSND offers and for continued workforce development in our state. This funding is utilized for the North Dakota Workforce Development Council, One-Stop certification and monitoring, maintenance and development costs related to our Virtual One-Stop management information system and continued work on our Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

In cooperation with the North Dakota Department of Corrections (DOCR), statewide funds are used to provide a full-stack web development curriculum and will be taught to 48 residents of the state penitentiary over the next 24 months. The program includes equipment to train residents with industry-leading courses with remote instruction designed specifically for correctional facilities. This initiative supports the Workforce Development Council's (State Board) recommendation for bridging the technical skills gap and supporting those with barriers to employment. The curriculum provides a certificate of completion in alignment with WIOA requirements.

Statewide funds were used to purchase 20 iPads for DOCR. These iPads are used by residents for job-searching, résumé building, cover letters, and career readiness classes taught by One-Stop Center staff. Funds were also used to continue to fund the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) module from the State's vendor Geographic Solutions. This has enhanced the efficiency and accuracy of the ETPL and ties it into the case management and labor exchange system allowing direct reporting into the PIRL.

Statewide funds were used to promote a virtual job fair highlighting high-wage/high-demand careers in North Dakota. The promotion centered around recruitment for out-of-state jobseekers based on data the State identified from the Virtual One-Stop System. The State had jobseekers from 20 states and five different countries attended this virtual event. In addition, Job Service North Dakota (JSND) purchased a virtual career headset and the software required to use the device. This headset is used in DOCR facilities, area schools, and colleges to promote 50 high wage/high demand occupations across the State.

Through the activities supported by these funds, North Dakota's One-Stop Delivery System provides high-quality, outcome-focused workforce development services consistent with the State's four-year plan, while tracking progress toward meeting strategic goals and implementing the Governor's vision for North Dakota's workforce system.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

North Dakota did not have any waivers in place for PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *WIOA Adult – Ben*

Ben came to Job Service in Bismarck in late September of 2022 and was delivering for a local package company in town making \$17 an hour. WIOA assisted him with the two-week CDL class at TrainND Southwest two months later, and he obtained his Class A license. He moved the week after to Dickinson to be with his fiancé and child who were already living there. He interviewed and gained employment at a Mahlen trucking company for \$25 an hour starting as a truck driver for a local route.

*WIOA Adult – Sedarian*

Sedarian is a recent graduate of the Combination II Welding training program at Lynnes Welding in Fargo. He started welding training in another state, but the school abruptly closed. When Sedarian moved to North Dakota, he contacted Job Service to apply for WIOA services. Sedarian has family members who work in welding, and he was very serious about getting these skills for a career that would change his life. He was approved for welding training and finished the 16-week course with perfect attendance and multiple welding certifications. Sedarian went to work in Fargo one week later as a welder earning \$30 per hour.

*WIOA Adult – Allan*

Originally from the small rural community of Michigan, ND, Allan enrolled in the WIOA Adult program at the Grand Forks One-Stop Center, qualifying based on a basic skills deficiency. He attended the Lynnes Welding program and received every certification that they offer for a total of 12 certificates. After recovering from a shoulder injury that delayed gaining employment, Allan was hired by Summers Manufacturing as a welder in February and has been making \$20 an hour.

*WIOA Adult – Delores*

Delores is a single woman, guardian of two teenage nephews, a Veteran of the Marines, and lives in a very rural area of North Dakota. She had been working as a welder in the oil field, however, with the COVID-19 pandemic and slowdown in the oil patch in the state, she was laid off from her last three jobs with oil companies. She had started her own business on the side doing custom metal and wood designs in 2015, and that had slowed down to nothing during the pandemic and had not picked back up. Delores reached out to Job Service in November of 2022 to discuss training options and financial assistance with training.

In December of that year, Delores was determined eligible for the WIOA Adult program and was approved for CDL Class A training. She started training April 17, 2023, successfully completed 165 hours of training within a month. In addition to successfully completing her driver tests with tanker endorsement, she also received her specialized HazMat endorsement.

During training, WIOA assisted with per diem, temporary housing, and some transportation as she was over 80 miles away from home and would not be able to travel back and forth each day for training safely or easily. WIOA assisted with the cost of the required Hazmat background check and fingerprinting.

Delores was busy looking at CDL jobs while in training. The instructor used one day of training to take students around the Minot area to meet employers looking for drivers, and Delores was offered a job with Bechtold. She started with them on May 17, 2023, full-time at \$27 an hour to start, with a 401k and health benefits. Once she qualifies for the Davis Bacon Wage scale, her pay is expected to go up to \$30.99 an hour.

*JOBS – Heather*

Heather, a divorced single mother of two young boys, came to be involved with Job Service in 2020. After witnessing how the criminal justice system has affected people in her life, Heather realized that she wanted to become an attorney—an advocate for



people who need one. With tremendous support from her case manager Sabina, Heather was able to attend law school for the past three years and was set to graduate this year according to her most recent follow-up. In a letter to Sabina, Heather had this to say: “I do not have enough words to express my gratitude but please know that you and Job Service are making a positive impact on people’s lives, especially mine!”

### *WIOA Youth (partnership with MET) – Francisco*

Francisco was referred to the Wahpeton office for possible WIOA services from one of the State’s partners, Motivation, Education and Training (MET) for assistance with welding training. He met with Sandy and said he was interested in welding training but would have to take a leave of absence from his job as a farmworker to complete the five-week welding training he desired. MET could either pay for the cost of the training or provide a stipend to make up for the income he would lose from not working. The cost of his training was paid through WIOA Youth funds, while MET provided a stipend, and the two programs split his transportation costs since he was traveling from Wahpeton to Fargo daily.

Francisco knew he wanted to improve his welding skills by taking a 200-hour course at Lynnes Welding in Fargo. He completed his first welding certification after two weeks of training. He said, “I didn’t know I have a natural talent for welding.” Francisco went on to complete all seven welding certifications within the five weeks of training; others take a 16-week class to accomplish that many certifications. Francisco said he only had time for one attempt each for his final certification tests, and he passed with flying colors. His instructor commented that, “[Francisco] is a pleasure to have in class.”

Francisco was also recognized for having 100 percent attendance. When the Admissions Director at Lynnes Welding Training sent copies of his certifications, she also thanked MET for referring him to them. Francisco is very appreciative of the assistance he got through WIOA and asked Sandy if he can refer his friends to her. He was offered two positions after completing his training and is trying to decide between them. Whatever he chooses, the future looks bright for Francisco.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

[WIOA PY 2022 Annual Report](#)

#### *Links*

Job Service North Dakota

## Ohio

Department of Job and Family Services

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Broadband and 5G Sector Partnership**

The Ohio Broadband Strategy is a strategic plan to bridge the digital divide and establish highspeed internet access to unserved and underserved areas of the state. Significant investments are being made to expand broadband service to every household and business. In addition to the substantial financial resources Governor DeWine and the Ohio General Assembly have made available for broadband expansion, Ohio expects to receive nearly \$800 million in federal Broadband dollars over the next several years to provide high-speed connectivity in rural communities.

To ensure enough skilled workers are available to build the critical broadband and 5G infrastructure, ODJFS and other state agencies, private-sector companies, and educational institutions formed the Ohio Broadband and 5G Sector Partnership led by OSU and WIA.

The primary objectives are to raise awareness about occupations and career pathways in the telecommunications industry, to establish new education and training programs leading to employment in broadband, and to leverage state and federal funding streams that can cover tuition costs and support implementation of broadband and 5G workforce strategies.

Recently, the partnership formed six regional nodes to accelerate the launch of new educational programs at universities, community colleges, and career centers in each region and to tailor service plans and training curricula to the needs of local communities.

As the central convening entity, the state-level partnership will continue to reduce duplicative efforts among regions and share best practices. The ultimate goal is to increase the broadband workforce, ensuring that Ohio remains a prime destination for new, innovative technology companies to form and utilize the next generation of wired and wireless communications.

As the state workforce agency, ODJFS is supporting the partnership's success by:

- Applying for and receiving the federal grants to fund the costs of staff and infrastructure in the six regional nodes,
- Investing additional federal workforce dollars to purchase supplies and materials needed by training providers to launch new programs,
- Adding institutions that implement new training programs in this field to the state's eligible training provider list, so that they qualify for local workforce dollars to train eligible students,

- Guiding employers in setting up Registered Apprenticeship programs to train the workers they hire through both classroom instruction and on-the-job learning.

Simply stated, the development of high-speed internet ensures that Ohio's families and businesses can participate in the modern economy. Providing reliable statewide access to data and resources is critical to the state's economic and employment future. The Ohio Broadband and 5G Sector Partnership is working to help individuals enter telecommunications careers by providing tuition dollars and other supports, to keep Ohio businesses competitive in the global marketplace, and to reduce the technology gap so families in rural communities can access online services, innovations, and opportunities.

### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **OhioMeansJobs Centers**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) recently certified ten specialized OhioMeansJobs Centers in seven adult correctional facilities and in three youth correctional facilities. Each center includes a virtual classroom with webcams and television monitors that allow training providers to deliver interactive workshops from remote locations. These centers also have computers that individuals can use to search for jobs, view instructional videos, and access employment resources.

#### **Veteran's Employment Services**

OhioMeansJobs Centers offer a full range of individualized employment and training services for veterans and eligible spouses who are unable to obtain employment through basic career services. All veterans and their eligible spouses receive priority of service access to the full range of OhioMeansJobs Center services. Emphasis is placed on meeting the employment needs of veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged, especially disabled veterans and those with significant barriers to employment. The Veterans Program continues to deploy a strong social media presence with @OMVetJobs to promote OhioMeansJobs Center services, including job fairs, other events, and veteran community resource information.

Program staff continue to conduct Transition Assistance Program (TAP) briefings at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. They also attend Ohio Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee meetings to target transitioning service, National Guard, and Reserve members. All transitioning service members receiving unemployment benefits are given priority of service in the RESEA program to help them transition to civilian life. Wagner-Peyser staff also identify veterans on registration reports, providing reemployment services and partner program referrals.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

- TechCred
- Path of OhioMeansJobs Center Customers/InnovateOhio
- The Advancement through Resources, Information and Employment Services (ARIES) Project
- Ohio's Workforce Mission

- In-Demand Occupations
- Individual Microcredential Assistance Program

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Department of Labor Behavioral Insights Pilot**

The DOL Behavioral Insights team, which includes researchers from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), worked with 11 Ohio counties to design, implement, and assess a texting behavioral intervention to encourage Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) participants to maintain engagement in the program and benefit fully from available program services. The goal of the pilot was to learn how to improve service use and secure continued youth engagement in youth workforce programs, especially in the context of remote service delivery. This study was funded by DOL.

Selected CCMEP participants were randomly placed in either one of two groups: intervention (treatment) or no intervention (control). Participants in the treatment group received a series of encouraging text messages, one per week for 12 weeks starting a week after program registration. Messages were sent from a centralized and automated messaging system at the state level. All participants in the treatment group received the same sequence of messages aimed to foster engagement and prompt continuation with the CCMEP program. There were 530 participants overall, from 11 counties, enrolled between November 2021 and April 2022.

Outcome measures, including services received and completed, were compared for the two groups to understand the effectiveness of utilizing an external prompt (the text messages) on CCMEP participants' engagement and success. Within the first 60 days, weekly text messages informed by behavioral science: a) increased the number of services started, and b) increased the services completed.

The pilot found that the text messages had higher impacts for participants who were a) younger than 18 years old, b) basic skills deficient, and c) were not parents. Although there were no significant impact findings on the number of services started or completed within 90 days, this may be the result of the study ending six months earlier than planned. ODJFS launched a new case management system in April 2022, and the study had to be ended at that time to enhance reporting functionality in the new system.

#### **Ohio's Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) Evaluation**

The Ohio Workforce Association (OWA) was enlisted to organize an evaluation of the CCMEP program in 2023, with funding from ODJFS. After a competitive bidding process, ICF was selected to evaluate program performance for PY17 through PY21. This evaluation is in progress. It will leverage a mixed-methods approach, with both a participant outcomes study and an implementation study to provide qualitative context to the findings. The implementation approach will assess fidelity, identify best

practices, present expansion opportunities, uncover challenges, and document solutions. It will include state- and county-level components, including document reviews, surveys, and interviews with staff, as well as focus groups with staff and participants.

This evaluation will also review data for specialized groups to identify opportunities. It will also look specifically at Ohio's coaching case management model, which is being implemented statewide, with over half of counties currently using it.

The outcome evaluation will examine five years of data (PY17 to PY21) to identify the characteristics, types of services offered and received, and outcomes of CCMEP participants. The study's findings will provide insights into how well the program recruited and served young adults. The timeframe of this study is limited to five years, given that PY22 data were not available due to issues with the new case management system launched by ODJFS in advance of PY22. This evaluation is scheduled to be completed by December 2023.

### **RESEA Program**

DOL contracted with the Abt Associates to provide technical assistance and guidance to states to help them adopt a culture of evidence and align their FY 2023 RESEA State Plans and program design with federal evaluation and evidence-based requirements. OWD's RESEA Section is responsible for managing this evaluation in Ohio.

As a result of this study, Ohio hopes to learn whether there are differences between unemployment insurance claimants who:

- 1) receive RESEA services as delivered today,
- 2) received RESEA services with enhanced workshop experiences, and
- 3) did not receive any RESEA services.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **RESEA Program**

A randomized controlled trial will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the RESEA program, including an implementation and impact study. A pilot study is planned to begin in fall 2023, with statewide randomization of 30,000 unemployment claimants to begin in 2024.

Ohio meets one-on-one biweekly with Abt Associates. The State also meets with them quarterly as part of a multi-state cohort, to learn more about evidence-based studies and how they can benefit Ohio's RESEA program. Ohio is currently in the research and design phase of its study. The State is working closely with OSU, which will be the evaluator.

### *Reports*

#### **Ohio's CCMEP Evaluation**

Given that this evaluation is in progress, there is no report with results to share at this time. For PY22, there were no requests from DOL or from the U.S. Department of Education contractors for data or survey responses. Nor have there been any site visits

from DOL or the U.S. Department of Education contractors. The total cost of this evaluation is \$272,417.50. It is being funded using Ohio WIOA statewide funds.

### **Department of Labor Behavioral Insights Pilot**

A takeaway from this evaluation is that a sustained messaging effort can increase participant service use and service completion rates among youth. Also, text messages can be incorporated at a relatively low cost for the state and counties that already have access to mass-messaging technology. Additionally, automation can play a constructive role in supplementing staff outreach efforts.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

- Waiver to allow TANF funds to count toward the 75 percent expenditure requirement for out-of-school youth (OSY) and allow the expenditure requirement to be calculated on a statewide basis.
- Waiver to allow the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).
- Waiver to allow TANF funds to count toward the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement.
- Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State expend 75 percent of Governor's Reserve youth funds on OSY.

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver to allow TANF funds to count toward the 75 percent expenditure requirement for OSY and allow the expenditure requirement to be calculated on a statewide basis**

This waiver supports the implementation of the State's expanded Youth program, Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP), by using both WIOA and TANF funding sources to support the unique needs of the same customer while easing administrative burdens associated with managing two federal funding streams. The large infusion of TANF dollars allows WIOA Youth dollars to have a greater impact, and it also allows more disconnected youth to be served. Additionally, by allowing the expenditure rate to be calculated statewide, the waiver gives LWDA's more flexibility to address the unique needs of participants in their communities.

To recognize the TANF dollars invested in WIOA OSY under CCMEP, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) includes the amount of TANF dollars spent on co-enrolled WIOA OSY during a program year in both the numerator and denominator of the OSY rate calculation.

#### **Waiver to allow the use of ITA for ISY**

The intent of ITA for the WIOA OSY program is to expand training options, increase program flexibility, enhance customer choice,

and reduce paperwork. The State desired the same benefits for the ISY program. This waiver encourages ISY to explore in-demand occupations and career pathways and to take responsibility for planning their futures. The State is working to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes:

- Improve the ability of LWDBs, Youth program providers, and CCMEP lead agencies to respond quickly to the needs of ISY.
- Increase the quality of learning opportunities.
- Increase employment and training opportunities.
- Improve coordination by reducing fragmentation of service delivery.
- Improve customer choice and empower youth to make responsible career choices.
- Reduce unnecessary paperwork.
- Develop an emerging workforce of prepared candidates ready for work.
- Increase accountability.

#### **Additional Strategies**

- Waiver to allow TANF funds to count toward the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement
- Waiver that the State expend 75 percent of Governor's Reserve youth funds on OSY

#### *Impact on Performance*

##### **Waiver to allow TANF funds to count toward the 75 percent expenditure requirement for OSY and allow the expenditure requirement to be calculated on a statewide basis**

Using this waiver, the OSY expenditure statewide rate for the PY21 funds was 86.1 percent, and for the PY22 funds, it was 82.4 percent. The number of WIOA participants co-funded with TANF dollars was 4,821, which was an increase from the previous program year (4,721 participants). Also, the overall percentage of co-funded participants increased from 24.9 percent to 25.7 percent in PY22.

##### **Waiver to allow TANF funds to count toward the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement**

For PY20, the State's Youth programs (TANF, WIOA, and co-enrolled) had a total of 18,942 participants. Of those, 8,465 (44.7%) were enrolled in work experience programs.

For PY21, the State's Youth programs had a total of 18,779 participants. Of those, 8,022 (42.7%) were enrolled in work experience programs.

For PY22, the State's Youth programs had a total of 18,845 participants. Of those, 7,872 (41.8%) were enrolled in work experience programs.

The number of work experiences decreased slightly for PY22 due to local workforce areas struggling with several challenges. These included a tight labor market that made youth less likely to be interested in subsidized employment opportunities and workforce areas needing time to adjust wages provided in work experiences.

**All four waivers' indirect effects on performance and priority populations**

A review of the PY22 WIOA Youth participants identified the following:

- 11.5 percent were justice-involved;
- 8.2 percent were homeless or runaways;
- 19.8 percent had disabilities;
- 17.0 percent were single parents; and
- 6.9 percent were in foster care.

The percentage of WIOA Youth who obtained employment or enrolled in training and were able to maintain employment or training was 70.0 percent, which was a decrease from PY21 (72.0%).

**Success Stories**

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Ohio Annual Report Program Year 2022](#)

Amin, S., et al (Mar. 2023). [Using Behavioral Insights to Increase Youth Use of Workforce Services in Virtual Contexts: Final Report](#). Mathematica prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor.

*Links*

Department of Job and Family Services



## Oklahoma

Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Impact Partnership Grants**

PY22 provided Oklahoma with the opportunity to introduce Impact Partnership Grants, the product of an increased investment in sector strategies and career pathways throughout the state.

- The STEAM Engine
- Central Oklahoma Manufacturing Association (COMA)
- Enid Regional Development Alliance (ERDA)
- Broken Arrow Economic Development Corporation (BAEDC)
- Premier Logistics
- South Central Workforce Board

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **Increased Pass-Through Funding**

Throughout PY22 Oklahoma's LWDBs experienced an unprecedented number of Oklahomans seeking assistance from the workforce development system. Funding the participant demand and their needs was a top priority which resulted in a review of the statewide budget and adjusting statewide spending to pass through additional funding to the LWDBs. Between July 2022 and June 2023, the State passed through an additional \$1,649,000. These funds were made available for training costs and supportive services directly related to the applicable training. Funding served Youth and Adult programs in four of the State's six local areas.

##### **Frontline Staff Training**

Between July 2022 and November 2022, training was provided for frontline staff in three different areas of practices: Career Advising, Case Management, and Customer Service for Workforce Development Professionals. There were a total of five cohorts and trainings were held at different locations to accommodate each of the LWDBs. While frontline staff were the primary

beneficiary of the trainings, openings remained if LWDB staff was also able to attend. The cohorts covered several sessions including topics such as: building strong relationships, developing the six helping skills, elements of building trust, tools to deliver superior customer service, types of communication, and conflict resolution and de-escalation. The training sessions were well received by LWDBs and frontline staff and resulted in additional training opportunities being pursued using outside sources of funding.

### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Oklahoma Department of Libraries Partnership
- Oklahoma Department of Transportation Partnership to Revolutionize Job Fairs and Hiring Events

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Participant Wage Outcomes**

OOWD performed a pre-/post-wage evaluation on participants employed 2nd Quarter After Exit from one of the WIOA core programs. For this analysis, the State followed the cohort reported in the Annual Report (ETA-9169) for each program year for employment 2nd Quarter After Exit. The purpose of this evaluation is to further evaluate the Median Earnings between participant cohorts in program years 2021 and 2022 to identify differences that might exist between the median earnings of participants before and after their participation in the WIOA Title I programs in Oklahoma.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

Following their annual practice, Oklahoma updated the Workforce Area Labor Market Briefings. The briefings examine the current and projected status of the geographic area, its citizens, and the workforce. A briefing is completed for each LWDA and for the State and includes data on populations, education, labor force, target sectors, etc.

#### **Critical Occupations**

The State also updated their Critical Occupations list in PY22 and provided a documented methodology. This list is released annually to show in-demand occupations across the state. Occupations are selected based on several factors including support of target sectors, statistical relevance, median wages, and growth.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

No information provided for this section.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *WIOA Adult – Erica*

Erica embarked on her transformative journey with the WIOA program on April 14, 2022. Her goal was to achieve her CDL, and with determination and hard work, she succeeded. Enrolling at the Oklahoma Truck Driving Academy on August 1, 2022, she earned her certificate of completion by August 26, 2022, and obtained her CDL license on November 2, 2022. Her journey did not end there—she started her full-time position as a driver at B&B Farms on November 3, 2022.

Before joining the WIOA Adult program, Erica faced numerous challenges. She was unemployed and struggling to provide for her young daughter. The situation was so dire that she lost her home and her vehicle. Fortunately, she found support in her sister, who welcomed them into her home during their time of need. At that time, Erica kept her difficulties hidden from her Career Navigator, feeling reluctant to share her struggles with others.

However, after successfully completing the WIOA program and securing employment, Erica's life underwent a remarkable transformation. She now has a job she loves and has regained her independence. Erica proudly states that she not only takes care of her daughter's needs but also provides her with things she desires. Additionally, she has the pleasure of enrolling her daughter in various activities, bringing immense joy to their lives.

Erica extends her heartfelt gratitude to her Career Navigator for their unwavering support throughout her journey. There were moments when she felt like giving up, but her Career Navigator's encouragement and unwavering belief in her capabilities provided the hope and strength she needed to overcome adversity.

### *WIOA Youth – Champaign*

Born in Tulsa, Champaign faced a challenging childhood. As a teenager life took a drastic turn; Champaign found themselves in the Central Oklahoma Juvenile Detention Center until age 18. Champaign's years in the detention center were arduous but served as a turning point. Champaign realized they had to make significant life choices, not just for themselves but for their daughter. After release, Champaign embraced motherhood but the shadows of the past lingered, leading to a painful relapse.

Everything changed last May when Champaign entered Women in Recovery. The journey was challenging, but held the promise of a brighter future. They worked through the program diligently and the exciting opportunity to apply for the Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machinist course at Central Technology Center presented itself.

Champaign was accepted and discovered a calling in the world of CNC machining. Their newfound skills did not go unnoticed, and Champaign crafted a sign for the Gasoline Alley Classics Museum in Sapulpa. Champaign was featured in the local newspaper.

Through WIOA, Champaign attended the Elevate Youth Summit Leadership Conference, refining their leadership skills and winning a virtual reality headset. They also obtained crucial certifications, including OSHA-10, CPR, forklift, and overhead crane, while setting their sights on becoming a Programmer.

Today, Champaign sees a future with endless possibilities. They have transformed into a person to be proud of, a mother ready to be a role model for their daughter, and a skilled professional eager to contribute to the workforce. Champaign's story is one of resilience and an example of the potential for change that resides within each of us. It proves that, with the right support and determination, anyone can rewrite their story.

### *WIOA Adult – Stacey*

Stacey relocated to Bartlesville, OK, from California in March of 2022 with her husband and two children. Prior to relocating to Oklahoma, she obtained her Massage Therapy Certification, and held employment as a Massage Therapist working in various hospitals and doctor's offices for approximately 15 years.

Once settled in Bartlesville, she found herself unemployed and on public assistance with little direction of what this new chapter in her life would look like. Referred by the California Works office, Stacey came into the Bartlesville AJC on July 28, 2022, to update her résumé. During this process, Stacey was referred to a WIOA Title I representative by Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC), a co-located AJC partner. Stacey was enrolled in the WIOA Title I Adult Program on August 12, 2022. She began her work experience at the Bartlesville AJC on August 22, 2022, as a Reception Desk/Resource Room Assistant Trainee where she completed 520 hours on January 17, 2023. Stacey received outstanding recommendations from the Bartlesville Center Manager.

Once Stacey completed her work experience, she applied for and accepted a position with the Department of Human Services as a Child Support Specialist making \$13.15 per hour. After working in that position, Stacey had the opportunity to apply for a

different position as a Career Coordinator with OESC in the Bartlesville AJC. On June 17, 2023, Stacey started her new position making \$19.23 per hour.

Stacey is extremely grateful for the opportunities that she received through the WIOA Title I program that have allowed her to become financially self-sufficient. She is excited that the dream of purchasing a home is now becoming a reality and that this new chapter in life has become a positive change for the entire family.

### *WIOA Youth – Emily*

Prior to the WIOA program, Emily was a 24-year-old mom of four and a high school dropout. Emily was underemployed as a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) and wanted to make a change. She started her journey by visiting Red River Technology Center, where she signed up for high school equivalency classes. Emily's Adult Basic Education instructor referred her to a WIOA Case Manager.

She was determined eligible for the Youth program and was enrolled in September of 2021. Emily worked hard and attained her high school equivalency diploma on December 8, 2021. After that, Emily worked with her WIOA Case Manager to determine the next steps in her career path. She enrolled at Red River Technology Center for the Medical Assistant program. She started her classes in June of 2022 and finished almost a year later, on May 8, 2023. She began working for Duncan Regional Hospital (DRH) Pavilion immediately after completion, making \$15 an hour. During her time in the program, Emily received various supportive services such as utility assistance, a Chromebook for school, and incentives for completion. Emily is still working and just reached her two-month anniversary at DRH Pavilion.

Emily is thankful for the WIOA program's assistance and now potentially plans to continue furthering her education in the medical field. The WIOA program was able to help her become successful and to start contributing to her family. She is able to be an active role model to her children. Without this program, she would not have been able to complete any of this.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

[PY22 Annual Performance Narrative](#). Oklahoma Works

#### *Links*

Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development – Oklahoma Works

[Workforce Area Labor Market Briefings](#)

## Oregon

State of Oregon Employment Department

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Updates to Oregon's Labor Market Information Website – QualityInfo.org**

Oregon's Systems Development team, under the leadership of OED's Research Division, completed a project in November 2022 to migrate the QualityInfo.org website to an updated platform. This multi-year project incorporated new features for the site that increased its functionality and usability on mobile devices, along with other display changes for article and publication content.

- The project resulted in a completely redesigned homepage and regional pages. These were built to highlight article content with a centered listing for new articles and links to 'More Articles' that contain all the published content. Also included were links to the most used job search tools and graphs containing job growth and unemployment insurance claims data developed during the pandemic.
- The site's tools all got a refresh that both simplified the entry point into the tool and grouped all the filtering options in slide outs contained on the right-hand side that scroll on the page with the user on longer reports.

#### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Supporting Oregon's Workforce System

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **RESEA**

States are required to implement federal RESEA interventions and service delivery strategies that have strong evidence to support their work, and to evaluate any strategies without such evidence. OED is in negotiation with a third-party evaluator to begin a three-year evaluation of the RESEA program starting in 2024. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine if changes to

the program will result in better employment outcomes for participants. OED looks forward to this evaluation and the opportunity to make significant research-based improvements to the RESEA program and related workforce programs.

### **State Efforts to Support Federal Evaluations**

DOL contracted with Mathematica to evaluate the impact of reentry programs supported by several grant programs: Training to Work, the Reentry Demonstration Project, and the Reentry Project. These programs provide job training and employment support to boost participants' integration into society, employment opportunities, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency. A data sharing contract was finalized in PY22 with Mathematica, and they were provided a dataset of customer demographics to support federal evaluation efforts.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **The Workforce Talent Development Board (WTDB) Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC)**

WTDB CIC is charged with assessing the effectiveness of Oregon's public workforce development system, or WorkSource Oregon. WorkSource Oregon is a system comprising public and private partners who work together to respond to workforce challenges faced by individuals and businesses across Oregon. The purpose of the CIC is to:

- Complete a continuous improvement assessment of WSO Oregon every even-numbered year.
- Ensure that the assessment is jointly supported and participated in by all WSO Oregon partners.
- Consult with Local One-Stop Operators and align assessments with center certification requirements and State monitoring efforts.

In support of a recommendation from the CIC's Initial Assessment Report (Coraggio Group, 2021) to clarify and communicate the current WorkSource Oregon accountability and evaluation system, Coraggio Group was engaged to conduct an in-depth analysis of WorkSource Oregon's governance and accountability structure, with a particular focus on the participating state agencies responsible for allocating programmatic resources originating from the federal WIOA Titles and closely related workforce development programs delivered through WorkSource Oregon (WSO). This Governance Assessment Report emphasized a state level view and the WTDB members are looking at how additional local WSO partner input can be incorporated going forward. Approved by the WTDB in December 2022, it was forwarded to the Governor and legislature. It included four pillars necessary for good governance within the WSO system and associated near and long-term recommendations:

- Pillar One: A Clear and Shared Definition of the System
- Pillar Two: Committed Leadership from the Governor and Executive Branch
- Pillar Three: A Strong, Educated, Empowered, and Accountable State Board
- Pillar Four: State Agency Alignment

The CIC is planning the next Assessment to be completed in 2024.

The WTDB anticipates two new reports coming in the next Program Year. The first is the 2024 Talent Assessment. The second is the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon 2023 which is a report produced every three years in partnership with Worksystems, Inc. (LWDB). Both reports can be found on the WTDB's Data and Reports webpage.

Finally, the WTDB will be establishing a policy workgroup in 2024 to facilitate collaboration, transparency, and accountability for system and governance policies affecting the workforce system. The workgroup will include WTDB, LWDB, and other WorkSource Oregon representatives and policy subject matter experts.

### *Reports*

- Initial Assessment Report
- Governance Assessment Report
- WTDB's Data and Reports webpage

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State had no WIOA waivers in place during PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## **Success Stories**

### *WIOA Youth Program – Jonah*

Jonah heard of Phoenix Charter School. This organization is a WIOA Youth service provider in Southern Oregon. The resources and support provided to Jonah by the program and his employment coaches allowed him to begin work experience in the Forestry Industry. Forestry is the lifeblood of Jonah's area and one that can offer livable wages. In addition to experience, Jonah was able to obtain safety and other certifications that will enhance his employability. When asked to describe how he feels about the job and skills he obtained, Jonah remarked:



“I love being outside, working with my hands in nature, and knowing that this is the beginning of the career I will enjoy long term. Eventually I would like to be on the Wild Land fire crew or go into college to become a ranger for the National Parks Services [sic].”

#### *WIOA Youth Program – Donovan*

Donovan was struggling to find meaningful employment while trying to complete his high school diploma. An intellectual disability added to the difficulty he faced. After a referral from his high school to the local WIOA Youth provider, Donovan was able to gain employability skills as well as knowledge on effective job search. Career exploration with his Employment Coach led to a training in bicycle tech, which fit his interests, skills, and abilities. Once he completed the training, Donovan was placed in a work experience as a bicycle mechanic at a local community resource center. Donovan’s dedication and passion for helping others allowed the work experience to turn into a permanent position within the center’s staff.

“I am happy that I was able to get some help so that I can go to work and start to live more independently. I like to be able to wake up and have something to do every day that I am good at. I like the people at the FRC [Family Resource Center] because they made sure that I can find a job and that I can get my diploma someday soon.”

The meaning and success Donovan has found through this opportunity has also allowed him to focus on future goals. “I want to be able to finish my school and then work for the Mission full time. Once I can get to go to Job Corps, I will be able to come back and maybe have my own shop someday.”

#### *Supplemental Training and Employment Program (STEP) Success – Brandon*

Brandon was receiving Unemployment Insurance and SNAP benefits in Oregon but staying at his brother’s house in Washington. Through a careful orientation to STEP and the benefits of the Peter Sutton Memorial Fund, Brandon knew that pursuing his Commercial Driver License (CDL) was a great career move. Brandon carefully researched and chose the truck driving school that was right for him and his situation.

He started school at 160 Driving Academy in Clackamas during the month of April 2022. STEP Coach Erin provided wraparound services while he was battling the elements during his training by providing excellent, individual career coaching, quality shoes and a warm sweatshirt/jacket.

As graduation from 160 Driving Academy approached, Brandon was referred to the next portion of the STEP Program. The next portion was the newly piloted STEP on-the-job training (OJT) program. In the OJT program, Brandon was introduced to Aaron, who was developing relationships with local employers to help newly certified and qualified STEP participants break into their newly chosen industry.

Aaron assisted Brandon with obtaining an OJT position with Oregon Trail Trucking, LLC. He developed a four-week training plan for Brandon with objectives and goals to ensure a smooth transition from training to employment. Aaron and Erin continually checked in with Brandon and the employer to see how things were going.

Brandon wrote the email below:

“I have a fantastic job that pays well and great people to work with/for. On average, I’m getting \$32.50 an hour, so that’s a \$12.50 an hour jump in pay from my last job, and an 800% jump from what unemployment was paying!! I was worried about a career change and was close to backing out but the constant pushing you gave me to get the paperwork in and do what was needed left me no room to give up and I’m so happy and thankful that you did all you did for me.”

### *Trade Adjustment Act Success – Zach*

“When my company announced they were moving out of the country, I didn’t want to admit how difficult the change could be. It is hard to lose your job and admit you have to make a change.

I knew I was capable, but there were not any roles fitting my experience. The future looked dark, offering less pay and little security.

The Trade Act offered me something else. A chance to retrain, to find a job in a field where jobs were in demand. To get there meant I would have to spend a lot of time in school. Even knowing it’s the best choice, it is a lot to commit to months or years of learning. That is especially true when most of your working years are already behind you.

Two years later, imagining I ever had those worries is hard. The school was great; it opened my mind to new possibilities. I’m in a new field. Jobs are in high demand. The work is interesting and engaging. It has not been easy, but it is rewarding.

Friends tell me they are impressed I made a career change, that they cannot imagine doing it themselves. On this side of that change, I know I made the easy choice. Staying in my old job field would have been the harder choice. I just didn’t know it then.”

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

Coraggio Group

- (Dec. 2021). [\*Initial Assessment Report\*](#).
- (Dec. 2022). [\*Governance Assessment Report\*](#).

(Dec. 2023). [\*State of Oregon: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Performance Report Narrative\*](#). WorkSource Oregon.

*Links*

State of Oregon Employment Department

[Worksourceoregon.org](https://www.worksourceoregon.org)

[Workforce and Talent Development Board: Data & Reports](#)

## Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board  
Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Digital Literacy and Workforce Development Grant (DLWDG) Round 3**

A continuation and enhancement of the DLWDG Round 1, grantees in Round 3 were able to continue their existing projects with 12 months of additional funds (up to \$45,000/project). The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's (L&I) \$600,000 DLWDG Round 3 supports 16 effective programs that enhance foundational digital literacy skills for these jobseekers in their local communities. This grant has a period of performance from October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023. These grants support L&I's vision to prepare individuals for job searching and emerging employment opportunities, to gain access to employment with family sustaining wages, and to increase communities' infrastructures for providing foundational digital literacy skills. Acquiring these skills will prepare today's jobseekers and employees for success in the 21st century labor market.

##### **Digital Literacy and Workforce Development Grant (DLWDG) Round 4**

A continuation and enhancement of the DLWDG Round 2 grant, grantees in Round 4 were able to continue their existing projects with 12 months of additional funds (up to \$45,000/project). The award totals nearly \$700,000 and will connect Pennsylvania workers with the skills they need to effectively navigate the technology platforms used in today's workplaces. DLWDG Round 4 supports 16 effective programs that enhance foundational digital literacy skills for these jobseekers in their local communities. This grant has a period of performance from August 1, 2023, through July 31, 2024. This is an additional round of digital-literacy funding that builds on \$835,000 awarded in May 2022 (DLWDG Round 2) to support local programs that provide computer-skills training to help people find good jobs in Pennsylvania. Digital literacy grants support the Commonwealth's WIOA Combined State Plan and are 100 percent federally funded.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **Agribusiness Workforce Services Engagement**

In collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, BWDA revised the structure of agriculture initiatives and plans to solicit proposals beginning in January 2024. A selected vendor for this project will connect small agribusinesses to workforce development resources and offices; they will also develop training and guidance for navigating the unique workforce circumstances in the agribusiness industry. The program will educate eligible farmers and agribusiness owners to ensure that

they understand and have access to the services offered through the PA CareerLink®/PA Workforce Development System, including tax credits, on-the-job training contracts, apprenticeship opportunities, writing effective job postings and job descriptions, and Recruitment of populations not traditionally employed in agriculture.

### **Additional State Funds Activities**

- Business Education Partnerships.
- Youth Reentry
- Near Completer

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Digital Literacy and Workforce Development Grant (DLWDG) Round 1 – Third Party Evaluation**

In the previous program year, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) brought on a third-party vendor to evaluate the effectiveness, impact, return on investment, and overall success of the DLWDG. The evaluator visited 31 grantee sites to examine each grantee's quality of curriculum, best practices, challenges, technical assistance needs, successes, and other information requested by the Bureau of Workforce Development Administration.

#### **Business Service Delivery Evaluation**

Initiated by the Pennsylvania Keystone Command Center, L&I, and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) evaluated whether the workforce and economic development (WED) system is effectively serving businesses and if the system infrastructure is sufficient to support service delivery. The evaluation (concluded on March 30, 2023) included components for a research review of best and promising practices, a qualitative study of business services in the Commonwealth, and a quantitative study of business services data that includes a five-year forecast of industry growth trends.

The evaluation identified small and medium employers as the prime target for engagement. It outlined the need for consistent statewide communication and training for employers, and consistent engagement of all partners and community agents that interact with employers across the state. The Commonwealth is currently working on initiatives to move services to employers forward in all areas.

#### **RESEA Program**

In alignment with new federal regulations for the RESEA program, the Commonwealth's first annual RESEA evaluation concluded on June 30, 2023, which viewed the program pre-COVID-19. The evaluation was used to build data on the efficacy of the program performance metrics, including shortening the time the claimant receives unemployment benefits and employment retention, and to measure the value of program participation.

In the next phase of the RESEA evaluation, L&I will use a randomized controlled trial study to:

- Compare Unemployment Compensation benefit durations of virtual RESEA participants, in-person RESEA participants, and non-participant claimants.
- Compare rates of employment (two and four quarters after exit from the program) of virtual RESEA participants, in-person RESEA participants, and non-participant claimants.
- Compare the wages (two and four quarters after exit from the program) of virtual RESEA participants, in-person RESEA participants, and non-participant claimants.

#### **Additional Activities**

- Digital Literacy and Workforce Development Grant (DLWDG) Round 2 – Third Party Evaluation
- Pre-Apprenticeship Success in Serving Youth and Integration into the Secondary School System
- Workforce Longitudinal Data System (WLDS)

#### *Continuous Improvement*

To improve its service to jobseekers and employers, the Commonwealth equips PA CareerLink® staff with training and resources that apply the results of studies and evidence-based practices to workforce development programs. As a result of the Professional Development Delivery Model Recommendations from the PA Workforce Development Administration (PWDA), the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO) Staff Development team strategically shifted its focus during this performance year to provide programmatic training and technical assistance for BWPO-administered programs, which include:

- WIOA Title I Adult, Title I Dislocated Worker, Title I Disaster Grant, and Title I Youth
- Rapid Response;
- TANF Youth;
- Labor Exchange/Wagner-Peyser;
- Trade;
- RESEA;
- Foreign Labor Certification;
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit;
- Federal Bonding;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants; and

- Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)

“Back to Basics” was the training theme for this performance year—ensuring workforce development professionals have the foundational knowledge, skills, and resources to deliver effective services to shared jobseeker and employer customers. In addition to program-specific trainings and resources created, there were two major projects that highlighted the back to basics theme this performance period. They were the CareerLink 101 course and CWDS Foundational Training project.

#### **Additional Continuous Improvement**

- Digital Literacy Grant Round 1 – Third Party Evaluation
- Digital Literacy Phase II – Communication Toolkit
- Grant Performance Evaluation
- Common Digital Intake Form

#### *Reports*

- Digital Literacy and Workforce Development Grant (DLWDG) Round 1 – Third Party Evaluation
- Digital Literacy and Workforce Development Grant (DLWDG) Round 2 – Third Party Evaluation

#### **Waivers**

##### *Waiver Implemented*

The State had no active WIOA waivers during PY22.

##### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

##### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *Air Force Veteran – Julie*

Veterans Representatives from the PA CareerLink® worked with Julie, an Air Force Veteran and spouse of a current active-duty service member who was on the PA CareerLink® Tioga County Self-Service Job Search Outreach Initiative report. Julie is a single mother moving back to the area with her 13-month-old child. She had just finished her master's degree in clinical nutrition in December 2022 and wanted to become a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Dietitian. She was currently studying for her PA Dietitian Certification. Despite receiving support from TANF, SNAP, WIC, Medical Assistance and receiving 10 percent compensation from the VA she was still in need of assistance. While waiting for her exam in May 2023 she worked with the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) to overcome her barriers of not having childcare or transportation. The DVOP was able to provide Julie with referrals to local day care agencies. The DVOP and Veteran also worked on updating her résumé to highlight her education and healthcare background so when she passed her exam, she would be ready to apply for openings. Julie passed her state exam in May 2023 and was immediately offered a position as a Pediatric Clinical Dietitian - Acute Care in the NICU in a local medical facility. She started in August and is doing well. She was also able to find daycare during this time to allow her to work. Julie has gone from being unemployed to earning \$55,000 a year with full-time benefits. She was also able to buy a used car thanks to the support and assistance provided. She is excited to start a new chapter in her life and grateful for the support from the DVOP and her Employment, Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) Case Manager in helping her to achieve her goals and not give up.

### *Career-Ready – Eric*

Eric began working with the Washington Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services office when he was a high school senior. He is an individual who has autism, cyclothymic disorder, ADHD, and oppositional defiant disorder. While in high school, he participated in job exploration counseling and counseling on post-secondary training opportunities, and in paid work experiences. Eric enrolled in the Commonwealth Technical Institute at the Hiram G. Andrews Center in the spring of 2018 and started in its welding program in November 2019. He obtained his diploma in Welding Technology in April 2022, and in August 2022, Eric began his first job as a Welder. Throughout his training at the Commonwealth Technical Institute, Eric faced and overcame adversity. As he was adjusting to the academic requirements of his program, independence and college life, his educational program was interrupted by COVID-19. Through all of this, Eric persevered and succeeded. About his experience as a student there, Eric shared that the school “sets people up to succeed.” For example, he credits group therapy with helping him get beyond his comfort zone and the Dorm Counselors with providing additional support. His advice for other students with disabilities as they consider work and post-secondary options is to “show up on time. Be consistent at work. Be able to work independently or with others. Be open to learn new things.”



### *Career Launch – Philip*

Philip, a high school student in Philadelphia, interned with the School District of Philadelphia through “Project Career Launch,” a program supported by the Philadelphia Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and local partners that is designed to help students who do not have an intellectual disability diagnosis but need hands-on support to be successful in finding employment. Philip worked in the school district sorting, moving, casing, and repairing Chromebooks. He shared that the best benefit of the internship was the connections he was able to make. His advice to employers on hiring people with disabilities is: “Make sure to look at the big picture [...]. Keep it in mind that they might be a very, very good worker. They might be very unique and be able to add something that nobody else was able to in the workforce.”

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

(Dec. 2023). [\*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative\*](#). Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board

#### *Links*

Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board

Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

## Rhode Island

Governor's Workforce Board

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

During PY22, Governor's Reserve funds were predominately spent on required activities including the WIOA monitoring and compliance work of the Department of Labor and Training's Office of Policy, Integrity, and Compliance (formerly known as the Integrity and Compliance Unit), as well as finance and accounting staff and operations. Funding was also used in support of the State Workforce Development Board staff and operations for WIOA oversight and related activities.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

##### **Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC)**

In PY22, the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (RIDLT) lead a coalition of partner WIOA state agencies in applying to the 2022–2023 EvalPLC hosted by the DOL in the hopes that the initiative would offer a shared space where the state could identify collective evaluation needs and wants, receive guidance, support and expertise from experienced facilitators on how to overcome barriers to collaboration, and begin the development of an action plan for joint data analysis and performance evaluation.

The Rhode Island team was comprised of ten individuals from each of the four core WIOA programs, plus TANF; as well as an observer representative from the SNAP Employment and Training program. Each WIOA program appointed one program and one data/evaluation staff person to the effort. RIDLT was the lead applicant and facilitator for the EvalPLC, helped engage each partner state agencies in the work, oversaw agency collaboration in finalizing data sharing agreements, and will be the primary entity responsible for data analysis and final dissemination of evaluation results to the rest of the team and external stakeholders.

*Continuous Improvement*

RIDLT's participation in the EvalPLC was of great value and has considerably enhanced the State's capacity for conducting 20 CFR 682.220-compliant evaluations and expanded their overall evaluation toolbox. As State Workforce Agency and administrative agent for the State Workforce Development Board, the RIDLT will serve as lead for conducting WIOA evaluations. The evaluations will be overseen by the Department's Ph.D.-level Director of Data and Performance, in concert with designated staff from each involved program.

As of the writing of this report, the State is in the process of completing its first cross-program evaluation—a study of the geographic location of the WIOA service locations and their associated outreach and recruitment networks, as compared to state's communities and subcommunities of greatest economic need. The design and scope of this evaluation was consistent with the state WIOA Plan and the Governor's priority of ensuring access and a specific focus on serving traditionally underserved communities. The state will share the results of the evaluation with appropriate DOL parties once completed.

*Reports*

No information provided for this section.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

The State had three waivers from the DOL-ETA in place for at least one program year in PY22:

- Waiver of the requirements outlined at WIOA Section 107, allowing the State Board to function as a Local Board for the Greater Rhode Island area.
- Waiver of WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720(b) to increase on-the-job training (OJT) employer reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.
- Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor's Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

*Strategies***Waiver allowing the State Board to function as a Local Board for the Greater Rhode Island area**

The primary goal and outcome related to this waiver was to comply with the governance provisions of WIOA and resolve a DOL-ETA compliance finding. WIOA requires Chief Local Elected Officials to administer WIOA Title I funds and to appoint LWDB members. In Rhode Island, dating back to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Governor had performed the functions of the

Chief Local Elected Official for the Greater Rhode Island (GRI) Local Workforce Development Area. This means the Governor was appointing both the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) and the GRI LWDB.

Under WIOA, the Governor continued to serve as the Chief Elected Official for the GRI LWDB. During a compliance monitoring review conducted in February 2018, DOL regional staff identified that the Governor acting in this capacity was inconsistent with WIOA requirements because the Governor was not a local elected official and, thus, could not appoint the local board. DOL-ETA staff advised finding one or more local elected official(s) to assume the role of Chief Local Elected Official for the area or submit a waiver requesting that the SWDB act as, and carry out roles and responsibilities of, the GRI LWDB. After conferring with the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns (which represents all 39 municipalities in Rhode Island, including the 37 that make up the GRI area), the State elected to submit a waiver to allow the State Board to function as a Local Board for GRI. This waiver was initially approved in September 2019 with the condition that the Board ensure continued local input and feedback into decisions impacting the GRI. In response, the Board worked with the League of Cities and Towns to establish a Local Area Advisory Committee for the State Board. This Subcommittee has continuously met throughout PY21 and PY22 and helps ensure local area representation in key WIOA-related matters including policymaking, service data and demographic analysis, modification of the local WIOA plan, overseeing rehabilitation and upgrading of the local area AJCs, and other matters. The ultimate responsibility for these functions remains with the board.

This waiver was subsequently reauthorized in September 2020 and June 2022, with the conditions that the State meet the following requirements:

1. Establish a written agreement delineating the roles of and firewalls among the state board, board staff, fiscal agent, and service providers;
2. Demonstrate administrative procedures and policies consistent with Uniform Guidance; and
3. Conduct regular and complete monitoring of local areas.

**Waiver to increase OJT employer reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees**

The primary goal and outcomes of the waiver included increased flexibility for smaller Rhode Island businesses to help them ramp up operations and keep pace with evolving market demands as the state recovers from the economic impacts of the pandemic; and to increase the usage of OJT among smaller firms. Per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 92 percent of Rhode Island entities were those which employed fewer than 20 workers in 2022. The initial waiver was approved on August 13, 2021, and reauthorized on June 7, 2022. Both local areas opted to utilize the flexibility provided through the waiver and passed policy reforms introducing a tiered reimbursement structure for OJTs based on employer size:

- 50 or fewer employees: up to 90 percent OJT employer reimbursement—or the maximum allowable (\$24.84 as of March 2023), whichever is less;
- 51–250 employees: up to 75 percent OJT employer reimbursement—or the maximum allowable reimbursement (\$24.84 as of March 2023), whichever is less;

- 250+ employees: up to 50 percent OJT employer reimbursement—or the maximum allowable reimbursement (\$24.84 as of March 20230, whichever is less.

**Waiver that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor’s Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY**

The goal of this waiver was to better meet the needs of the youth population and help expand and scale school-to-career programming and drop-out prevention strategies, especially considering and in response to the challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Impact on Performance*

**Waiver to increase OJT employer reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees**

In the GRI workforce area, 15 out of 16 (93%) OJT establishments were businesses under 50 employees in PY22. Ten of those 15 establishments had under 20 employees.

In the Providence Cranston workforce area, 11 out of 15 (73%) OJT establishments were businesses under 50 employees in PY22. Three of those 11 establishments had under 20 employees.

The State anticipates this ratio to maintain or increase as both local areas continue to build employer awareness and outreach regarding the enhanced match.

**Additional Impact on Performance**

- Waiver allowing the State Board to function as a Local Board for the Greater Rhode Island area
- Waiver that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor’s Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY.

**Success Stories**

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[State of Rhode Island WIOA PY2022: Narrative Performance Report](#). Department of Labor and Training.

*Links*

Governor’s Workforce Board

[Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training](#)

## South Carolina

South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

### Use of State Funds

South Carolina's Workforce Development Board directs the investment of up to 10 percent of the Governor's Reserve funds. The Board invests in meaningful workforce development strategies that align with the state's vision of developing a skilled workforce and a responsive workforce system that meets the needs of business and industry. In PY22, the SWDB invested more than \$6,000,000 in statewide employment and training programs as well as investments in the infrastructure, technology, outreach, and efficiency of the workforce system.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Individual And Employer Training (LWT Expansion Grant)**

Toward the end of PY22, the State made available \$2,000,000 to local workforce areas through the Individual and Employer Training Grant to expand the utilization of training models including incumbent worker training, occupational skills training, on the job training, and customized training strategies. Local areas were encouraged to align the utilization of training funds to build, retrain, or upskill a local workforce for high-demand occupations and industries, with emphasis on cybersecurity, electric vehicle production, and energy.

#### **Shared Case Management System Feasibility Study**

As discussed in a previous section of the report, the SWDB allocated \$250,000 to conduct a system integration feasibility study. The study will result in options available to DEW and system partners for achieving a more integrated case management system and recommendations for consideration by the SWDB and partners.

#### **SC Works Learning Management System**

In support of staff training and professional development, the SWDB set aside \$200,000 to procure an SC Works Staff Learning Management System (LMS) that will provide centralized training content and a way for staff and managers to track completion of required training. The state expects to award a contract in the third quarter of PY23 with implementation occurring soon after.

#### **Virtual Engagement Center**

The Virtual Engagement Center (VEC) is the first of its kind and was created specifically for South Carolina. This center offers a

virtual solution for both the jobseeker and employer who cannot access in person services at a brick-and-mortar SC Works center. Using \$360,000 in Governor's Reserve funds, DEW hired a full-time Workforce Consultant to provide virtual service delivery to employers and jobseekers. The VEC is open five days a week.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **SC Works Customer Satisfaction Initiative**

In PY21, South Carolina's State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) initiated an SC Works Customer Satisfaction Initiative. The initiative involves the development of state-specific survey questions that LWDA's must include in their customer satisfaction feedback systems, guidance on annual reporting of customer satisfaction data, and a Secret Shopper evaluation of select SC Works Centers. The Secret Shopper evaluation started in October 2022 and is expected to conclude in the Calendar Year 2023.

The primary purpose for the effort is to better understand how a customer interacts with the SC Works system, and their experience and outcomes after using system programs, resources, and services. Results of the evaluation will aid in identifying exemplary practices and opportunities for improvement within the SC Works system.

Target SC Works centers were selected based on the type of center (comprehensive or affiliate), foot traffic, geographic location, and customer demographics. The centers selected were Aiken Center, McAllister Square (Greenville) Center, Charleston Center, and Coastal (Conway) Center. The data collection strategy for the Secret Shopper evaluation included two approaches: 1) a customer survey for businesses and jobseekers and 2) Secret Shopper visits to select SC Works centers.

The Business Customer survey administered from January 24–February 13, 2023, received 41 responses. The jobseeker survey administered from February 8–23, 2023, received 407 responses.

The Secret Shopper evaluation utilized five secret shoppers to visit the four targeted centers. Each of the four centers had three different secret shoppers who visited each of the centers on different days and times. Three profiles were developed for secret shoppers based on background data of actual jobseeker customers who visit SC Works centers. The overall findings from the shopper visits were:

- Professional and courteous staff.
- Good physical environment and short wait time.
- Low level of engagement by staff during visits.
- Lack of personalized assistance during visits.



*Continuous Improvement*

Recommendations resulting from the evaluation include:

- Scale up and implement the program statewide to establish representative baseline data.
- The Secret Shopper model provides reliable data for the jobseekers' experience but does not allow the business customer experience to be assessed. To capture the business customer's experience, SC Works should disseminate surveys and conduct interviews or focus groups with a representative sample of business customers.
- Require a universal protocol or checklist for all SC Works center staff to be utilized during a jobseeker in-person visit.
- Require a universal training module for front-end staff on how to engage with jobseekers.
- Ensure brochures and the hot jobs board are mentioned and readily available for jobseekers.

*Reports*

No information provided for this section.

**Waivers***Waiver Implemented*

The State has an approved waiver reducing the WIOA Youth program out-of-school expenditure requirement from 75 percent to 50 percent for PY22 and PY23.

*Strategies*

The State submitted the waiver in the third quarter of PY22 and was notified of the decision in the fourth quarter. Guidance was promptly provided to the LWDAs, encouraging program directors to utilize this flexibility to:

- Expand access to employment and training services for in-school youth (ISY) in rural communities.
- Increase engagement of and expand services to ISY with barriers to education and employment.
- Increase collaboration with partner programs to assist ISY in foster care, vocational rehabilitation programs, and the juvenile justice system.
- Increase use of work-based learning programs for career exploration and employment preparation.

Through implementation of the waiver, the State will:

- Increase enrollment of ISY by 25 percent.

- Increase the number of participants provided WIOA Youth work experience, as defined by the WIOA regulations, by 10 percent.
- Increase the number of WIOA Youth participants that receive a credential by 10 percent.
- Increase WIOA Youth employment in the 2nd Quarter After Exit by 10 percent.

### *Impact on Performance*

As of June 30, 2023, the state achieved the following outcomes:

	Baseline Before Waiver	Planned Outcomes	Actual Outcomes PY22
Number of ISY Enrollment in WIOA Youth Program	122 average PY19–PY21	153	78
Number of WIOA Youth Provided a Work Experience	339 average PY19–PY21	373	285
Number of WIOA Youth Achieved a Credential	722 average PY19–PY21	794	477
Number of WIOA Youth Employed 2nd Quarter After Exit	1,216 average PY19–PY21	1,338	914

It is important to note that LWDAs were not informed of the flexibility to enroll more ISY until May 2023, following notification from DOL, leaving only weeks in PY22 to utilize this flexibility. The State anticipates significant progress to occur in PY23.

## **Success Stories**

### *WIOA Adult – Mr. Rojas*

Mr. Rojas had been visiting a South Carolina Works (SC Works) center consistently in order to receive assistance with filing for unemployment insurance after recently losing his job. He was referred to a hiring event, to which he reported successfully connecting with an employer. Upon sharing his new employment status, the Business Solutions Team contacted the employer and enrolled Mr. Rojas into an on-the-job training (OJT) program.

Mr. Rojas has shared that he was very pleased with the help and support he had received from the SC Works staff and said that the staff provided him with “vision for his next steps.”

### *WIOA Youth – Mr. Fuller*

Mr. Fuller entered the WIOA Youth program in May 2022. He was no longer enrolled in school and had a basic skills deficiency. He expressed an interest in the Commercial Driver License (CDL) program since several of his relatives were employed in the

transportation industry. Mr. Fuller successfully obtained his CDL permit and started his training at Palmetto Training in August 2022. He persevered until he successfully received his CDL license the following November.

However, due to his age, Mr. Fuller experienced difficulty in obtaining employment. Through SC Work's partnership with the Department of Social Services, Mr. Fuller was hired by the City of Sumter, before moving on to work for HT Hackney, which offered him better pay.

Wanting a shorter commute, Mr. Fuller found full-time employment the following year with Roebuck Nursery and Landscaping as a CDL Delivery Driver, earning \$21 per hour with benefits. Mr. Fuller has reported that he is very happy with his new position and states that he fits in well with the company's culture.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[WIOA Annual Report PY' 2022](#). South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce.

*Links*

South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

[SC Works Online System](#)

## South Dakota

South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Title I Adult Program Increasing Access to Priority Populations**

The Title I Adult program serves eligible adults with barriers to the workforce. The program continued its focus on strategic service delivery and partnership development in PY22. Through a comprehensive assessment of strengths, barriers, and goals, an individualized employment plan is developed with each participant. This plan may include training, wraparound financial support, and direct linkage with partner agencies or community organizations to leverage multiple resources to assist each participant in reaching their goals.

As of July 1, 2020, Title I Adult funds are reserved for those who are low-income, on public assistance, are basic skills deficient, have a disability, are ex-offenders, or are high school dropouts with a priority for those identifying as low income, receiving public assistance or who are basic skills deficient. During PY22, 72.7 percent of participants in the Title I Adult program met Priority of Service. This increase of 12.0 percent is a positive result of training to identify Basic Skills Deficient and policy changes implemented midway through the program year. While the goal of 75 percent was just out of reach, the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) has surpassed the 50.1 percent requirement and is encouraged that policy adjustments are producing the anticipated results.

In partnership with the Department of Corrections, nine incarcerated women graduated with a certificate in Precision Machining from Lake Area Technical College in Spring 2022. The curriculum was offered at the Women's Center for Opportunity on the campus of the South Dakota Women's Prison. These efforts expanded to three additional locations in the 2022–2023 school year.

As a result of the expansion, incarcerated individuals attended classes at Western Dakota Technical College, Southeast Technical College, and Regional Technical Education Center. The opportunity for students to attend classes on campus has been a powerful steppingstone toward life after prison. The Construction Technology certificate offered at Western Dakota Technical College incorporated a work-based learning component where students completed a paid internship with Scull Construction in Rapid City.

At each location, DLR Employment Specialists provided ongoing support and case management to incarcerated participants. Employment Specialists assisted participants in creating résumés and cover letters, as well as providing mock interviews and

organizing job fairs to connect students with potential employers. In partnership with non-profits such as the St. Francis House, DLR ensures participants have plain, weather-appropriate, clothes to protect their dignity.

Services continue post-release until the participant no longer needs the additional support. The Case Manager assists in securing post-release housing and arranges interviews for employment. Upon release, the case management relationship continues as the employment specialist assists the participant in navigating workforce reintegration. Examples of this reintegration assistance are not limited to but include items such as direct linkage to other service providers in the community, discussing work-time accommodations related to required post-release treatment or classes with their employer, etc.

### **Title II Adult Education and Literacy**

As the pass-through State agency for the WIOA Title II program, DLR has long been committed to serving adults who are most in need of literacy services. These individuals may perform at lower educational levels (below the 9.0 grade level equivalency) and generally demonstrate a need for reading, writing, and math skills to obtain or retain employment. Demographics served include adults who are low-income or have minimal literacy skills, learners with disabilities, single parents, displaced or dislocated workers, adults with limited English proficiency, unemployed and underemployed persons, young adults, offenders in correctional institutions, and ex-offenders.

Improving the literacy, numeracy, and oracy skills of the State's workforce leads directly to a stronger economy. The instruction, activities, and services provided by the AEL programs promote family literacy, obtainment of a high school diploma equivalency, employment, and self-sufficiency. Local AEL providers also assist South Dakota's immigrants, secondary migrants, former refugees, and other adult English language learners with their efforts toward achieving linguistic, economic, and civic integration.

In PY22, WIOA Title I again supported AEL's (Adult Education and Literacy) Distance Education Special Project as an allowable employment and training activity under WIOA Section 134(a)(3)(A)(viii)(II)(dd). In its seventh year, the statewide Distance Education Program continued to be delivered by Cornerstones Career Learning Center, one of the Agency's longtime Title II sub-recipients. The program project served 154 students across four participating AEL programs and a South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) Local Job Service Office. Distance students evidenced 3,459 total contact hours utilizing Northstar Digital Literacy and Essential Education's GED Academy. Student retention and engagement were promoted through one-on-one coaching, dedicated goal-setting activities, and monthly study challenges. The Distance Education Special Project continues to provide a convenient and flexible study path to allow students to achieve their educational goals on their own terms.

During PY22, staff continued to reinforce the co-enrollment of eligible AEL Participants with WIOA Title I Adult/Youth programs. Additionally, efforts were made to support the use of SharePoint Dashboards and folders for tandem case management and data quality assurance. PY22 also saw the return of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between local AEL Providers and their respective DLR Job Service Office(s). These MOUs articulate and formalize protocols related to referrals, services, and case management. As a result, in PY20, Title II reported 5.57 percent Co-Enrollment for WIOA Participants on the Statewide Performance Report; in PY21, Title II reported 11.64 percent Co-Enrollment. However, in PY22, Title II reported 17.04 percent Co-Enrollment. The improved tracking, reporting, partnerships, joint control, and shared commitment likely deserve commendation.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

- National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC®)
- Family First Initiative + Bring Your 'A' Game
- SDWorks
- Title I Youth + Career Launch
- Out-of-State Recruitment
- Digital Opportunity

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

In January 2022, DLR introduced a new service delivery model geared towards WIOA Title I Adult participants who were pursuing their GED credential called Participants Reaching Employment Potential (PREP). PREP is a combined effort between DLR Title I Adult program and Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Providers that implemented a joint employment and education plan with financial support designed to mitigate barriers and promote progress towards obtaining a GED.

The State reviewed 59 Title I Adult participants, 10 PREP, and 49 non-PREP participants, to determine if the PREP service delivery model provided better outcomes. All participants were co-enrolled in Title I Adult and WIOA Title II AEL programs and exited Title I between January 4, 2022, and June 30, 2022. This cohort provides three-quarters of the data. This data is not intended to speak to the effectiveness of the Title II Adult Education program but to compare the effectiveness of providing structured services, including financial services and collaborative training plans.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

When comparing PREP to non-PREP participants, employment data revealed similar employment outcomes for the First and Third Quarters After Exit with both seeing a slight decrease in employment outcomes in the Second Quarter After Exit. Breaking down the employment comparison even further provided similar results. Female PREP participants appear to have better median earnings in the First Quarter After Exit compared to female non-PREP participants. However, this levels out in the Third Quarter After Exit. Male PREP participants have better median earnings than their non-PREP counterparts for all three quarters reviewed.

A difference is noted when reviewing measurable skills gains (MSG) and credential rates for both groups. To date, the PREP participants have measurable skills gain rate and credential rate of 70 percent, whereas the non-PREP group had 48.9 percent and 36.7 percent, respectively. Further analysis indicated similar MSG and credential rates for both groups.

While the sample size is small, South Dakota is excited to continue to evaluate the results of this coordinated service delivery model.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State's Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) Title I Youth program has benefited from two approved waivers:

- WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(a) and 20 CFR 681.410—Out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure waiver.
- 20 CFR 681.550—Individual Training Account (ITA) usage for in-school youth (ISY) waiver.

### *Strategies*

#### **OSY expenditure waiver**

This waiver allows DLR to expend up to 50 percent of youth funding on in-school youth (ISY). With this waiver in place, DLR has enhanced its partnership with the South Dakota Department of Education and individual school districts throughout the state. Opportunities to connect with industry and local employers enable youth participants to take ownership of their future and arrive at the most informed decision for their path forward.

#### **ITA usage for ISY waiver**

This waiver allows DLR to operate their ISY program in alignment with its OSY program. This eases implementation in a small state where staff works on multiple programs; it reduces confusion for South Dakota's partners and increases participation.

### *Impact on Performance*

#### **OSY expenditure waiver**

- Increase Career Exploration services to youth regardless of their educational status  
Career exploration services include job shadows, provision of labor market information, and leadership development services. With the approval of this waiver in PY18, there have been significant gains in the number of career exploration services provided to youth in the state—except for PY20 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. During PY22, there was substantial growth in the number of career and training services provided to youth, from 565 in PY21 to 1,157 in PY22.
- Increase Work-Based Learning services to youth despite their education status  
This includes work experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and job shadows. The State's low

employment numbers make businesses increasingly interested in building student relationships. This waiver allows DLR to offer services to all youth participants equally, resulting in a sizable increase in the number of work-based learning services offered to youth in South Dakotan communities. DLR continues to grow the number of work-based learning services increasing the number provided to youth from 237 in PY21 to 331 in PY22.

- Enhance partnerships with schools and businesses to increase youth apprenticeship opportunities  
While slightly down from last year, the launch of the Pathway Partnership initiative has created opportunities for those ages 16–24 to take part in apprenticeships.

#### **ITA usage for ISY waiver**

- Increase enrollment in South Dakota’s WIOA Title I Youth program.
- Increase post-secondary options for disadvantaged ISY.

### **Success Stories**

#### *Career Launch – Aiden*

Aiden came to DLR in the Fall of 2021 as a referral from a WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy partner, the Career Learning Center of the Black Hills (CLCBH). Aiden was 18 and had dropped out of school after his junior year. Aiden benefited from the PREP partnership by earning financial incentives while he studied for his GED and support services to pay for the GED exams. After enrollment in Career Launch, Aiden earned his GED in just under a month. He was also able to earn incentives for completing his GED and the Educational Functioning Level he gained in Math. In addition to his GED, Aiden earned a platinum National Career Readiness Certificate.

With his GED in hand, Aiden’s employment goal was to become an electrician. Due to limited work history, his Employment Specialists connected him with a paid work experience (WEX) with a local electrician. Support services were utilized to assist Aiden with work boots and a drug test required to start this WEX. Aiden gained both soft and technical skills through this experience. While he enjoyed the field, he was more interested in welding.

With the financial assistance of Career Launch and a community partner, Workforce Connections Program, Aiden enrolled in Great Plains Welding Academy. Through close supervision from his instructor, Aiden earned eight nationally recognized welder qualifications and completed the training in 3.5 months. Aiden has accepted employment as a welder through a contract from Ellsworth Airforce Base and is eager to utilize his new skills.

#### *Career Launch + TANF + SNAP E&T – Nattlie*

Nattlie’s journey with the DLR began in October of 2021 when she came in to apply for TANF due to work restrictions her current employer was not able to accommodate. As a single mom with three children and a fourth on the way, she struggled to know



what her next steps were. Nattlie's DLR Employment Specialist Amanda asked a lot of questions and laid out several options for her consideration. Nattlie decided to participate in the Career Launch PREP program. Despite childcare, housing, medical, and other barriers that arose, Nattlie earned her GED before her baby was born.

During her maternity leave, Nattlie and Amanda had discussions about what she wanted to do moving forward. Nattlie chose to continue her education with hopes for a brighter and more stable future. Despite the nerves, Nattlie was able to secure daycare for her three youngest children and started the Financial Services program at Lake Area Technical College (LATC). The Career Launch program was able to assist with tuition, the cost of books, and the computer needed for school. Nattlie passed her first year with flying colors and remarks from her instructors such as "She is a great student—wish there were more like her." and "She is a hard worker and is determined to do well."

The next decision for Nattlie was how she was going to handle an ongoing legal situation that required her to catch up on child support. After an Integrated Resource Team meeting with Amanda, Nattlie, and an LATC instructor, it was determined Nattlie could benefit from a paid work experience allowing her to earn income to repay her child support, gain knowledge and experience in the accounting field, and complete her internship requirements for her degree. Nattlie began a work experience as an Accounting Assistant making \$17 per hour with plans to pay as much toward child support as she can.

Nattlie is expected to graduate in December. Despite the obstacles and challenges, Nattlie has paved her own path to success through persistence, accountability, and determination.

### *Trade Adjustment Assistance + Dislocated Worker*

David received assistance through Wagner-Peyser, the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program after losing employment due to a business closure. The TAA program provided David support through a DLR Employment Specialist, career assessments, and financial assistance with tuition, fees, books, supplies, remedial training, and living costs through Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) payments while in training.

"My name is David, and I want to share my success story—a testament to resilience and the pursuit of dreams. Several years ago, I faced a major setback when the company I worked for, Littelfuse, closed the plant I was employed at and relocated its operations to Mexico. The closure left many of us without jobs, uncertain about our futures. However, I refused to let adversity define me. Instead, I saw it as an opportunity for growth and embarked on a journey that would ultimately lead me to where I am today.

Driven by my passion for technology, I made the decision to further my education in computer science and IT. I enrolled at Western Dakota Technical College, dedicating myself to acquiring knowledge and honing my skills. Through hard work and perseverance, I successfully obtained an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, specializing in computer science and IT technician. It was a challenging but rewarding experience that equipped me with a solid foundation in my field.

Armed with my newfound knowledge and qualifications, I was determined to forge ahead in my career. I sought opportunities that aligned with my aspirations and values. Thankfully, my efforts paid off when I landed a job at an innovative technology company known for its cutting-edge solutions. Joining their team not only allowed me to put my skills into practice but also provided an environment that fostered growth, learning, and personal development.”

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Program Year 2022 Annual Narrative Report](#). South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation.

*Links*

South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation

## Tennessee

Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Tennessee Alliance for Economic Mobility (TAEM)**

TAEM, a public-private partnership of 32 partners across seven counties in Middle Tennessee, will demonstrate and evaluate a new way forward for the State 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 AJCs.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Virtual American Job Center (VAJC)**

The 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 VAJC 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 AJC. 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 AJC 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 five and half minutes. This tool saves them time and quickly connects them with a staff member who can further assist them with their needs.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **RESEA**

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) is working with The Policy and 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.

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).

TDLWD proposes 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.

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 the State'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 jobseekers and businesses.

#### **Core Objectives**

1. Understand the State'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.

#### **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 department 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 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.

### **Additional Activities**

- UTCIS Board Excellence Certification Program

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

In PY22, the State had two WIOA waivers approved:

- Waiver associated with the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).
- Waiver to allow WIOA Individual Training Accounts (ITA) for in-school-youth (ISY).

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver associated with the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local formula youth funds on OSY**

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.

#### **Waiver to allow WIOA ITA for ISY**

The Youth program received a 50/50 waiver from DOL to be able to serve OSY and ISY at the same percentage.

### *Impact on Performance*

#### **Waiver associated with the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local formula youth funds on OSY**

This waiver allowed local areas to consider their demographic needs and provide direct resources to ISY 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 percent.

#### **Waiver to allow WIOA ITA for ISY**

Without this waiver, the Youth program would have to serve 75 percent OSY and 25 percent ISY.

## **Success Stories**

### *Dislocated Worker – Mike*

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.

### *POWER Youth Program – Ajani*

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. 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.

### *WIOA Adult – Lacy*

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 services, 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.

### *WIOA Adult – Brian*

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.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

(Dec. 2023). [Program Year 2022 WIOA Annual Report](#). Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development.

*Links*

Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development



## Texas

### Texas Workforce Commission

#### Use of State Funds

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) uses Governor's Reserve statewide funding in conjunction with TANF funds, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act state leadership funding, and other funding, where feasible and appropriate, to encourage innovation in workforce areas through grants to Boards, institutions of higher education (IHEs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and other eligible entities. TWC prioritizes programs that assist specific populations and initiatives, including veterans, youth, and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs.

The following activities were undertaken in whole or in part with WIOA funds reserved by the Governor.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Texas Talent Connection**

The Texas Governor's Texas Talent Connection Grant provided more than \$5.9 million to support innovative education and workforce skills training programs that lead to successful employment placements, increased wages, and job retention, in addition to serving workforce populations with special needs.

Leveraging their \$350,000 award, Workforce Solutions Tarrant County continued year two of the 21st Century—Customers Embracing New Technology Upon Reentry program. The program serves reentering citizens by providing technology-based training that focuses on digital literacy to aid in job search, job placement, and financial management. Based on the needs of each participant, the appropriate combination of services are provided. Workforce Solutions Tarrant County will also consider providing training in one of the area's eight high-demand, high-paying industries that represent more than 25 occupations offering industry-recognized, portable credentials.

Additionally, Workforce Solutions of Southeast Texas used their award of more than \$350,000 for the Southeast Texas Internship and Externship Training Initiative, which provides opportunity youth, ages 18–24, with eight-week paid internships in their field of study. The Teacher Externship initiative afforded 60 teachers the opportunity to partner with employers and training institutions that are aligned to the area's high-growth, high-demand industries: petrochemical, maritime, health care/medical, and manufacturing. The experience enhanced their understanding of industry trends.

##### **High-Demand Job Training Program**

TWC supports collaborations between Boards and economic development corporations (EDCs) to provide high-demand occupational job training in workforce areas. This program supports Boards' partnerships with local EDCs to leverage local economic development sales taxes for high-demand job training. Boards collaborate with local EDCs and match their local economic development sales tax funds to jointly support the provision of such training.

In PY22, TWC awarded grants totaling \$1,950,639 to 18 Boards. Funds provided through these grants were used to enhance training, support services, and skills assessments and to expand capacity by purchasing necessary equipment and supplies. These grants have improved immediate training opportunities for 2,618 participants and will continue to serve Texans and help them fill future in-demand jobs.

### **Innovative Academies**

This program establishes a relationship between TWC and the Texas Education Agency regarding the coordination and development of the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) and Industry Cluster Innovative Academy (ICIA) programs. Funds support innovative partnerships among schools, employers, and colleges to provide opportunities for students to acquire skills, certifications, and credentials in high-demand occupations in key industry clusters while allowing them to earn college credit toward an associate degree or an articulated agreement toward a bachelor's degree.

In PY22, TWC awarded grants totaling \$3 million to Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) and College and Career Readiness School Model (CCRSM) P-TECH schools. The grants allowed students to have a smooth transitional experience to postsecondary education and the workforce. P-TECH models give students the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while simultaneously earning industry certifications. This includes Levels 1 and 2 certificates, and/or an associate degree to complete by the sixth anniversary of a student's first day of high school. This is at no cost to the student and includes enhanced training, support services, and skills assessments to expand capacity by purchasing necessary equipment and supplies.

The P-TECH grants have given opportunities to 34 school districts, with 2,148 senior graduate participants. The credentials attained include 718 associate degrees, 240 certificates, and 364 IBC.

### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Military and Veterans Support Initiatives**

- College Credit for Heroes (CCH)
- CCH Phase 9 Capacity Building and Sustainability Program
- Hiring Red, White & You (HRWY)
- Veterans Workforce Outreach Initiative
- Veterans Network
- Military Family Support Program
- We Hire Vets Campaign

*Other State Funds Activities*

- Upskill Texas
- Externship for Teachers
- Youth Initiatives
- Texas Interns Unite!
- Texas Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Grant
- Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 133
- Ending the Middle Skills Gap

**Evaluations***Activities and Methodology*

The Texas workforce system's success depends on effectively serving its customer groups, engaging its employees (including TWC, Boards, and other workforce partners), and understanding its data. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) leverages relevant data and transforms it into actionable information to advance the workforce system's overall efficiency and value. TWC relies on a variety of analytical and statistical techniques to conduct evaluations, including quasi-experimental techniques and randomized controlled trials (RCTs). Although not as conclusive as RCTs, TWC frequently uses quasi-experimental study designs because they balance rigor with the ability to implement process changes and new initiatives quickly. Additionally, TWC is exploring how machine learning can identify strengths and weaknesses in its programs and suggest enhancements. To translate evaluation results into systemic improvements and to measure success, TWC has used a blend of Six Sigma, Lean, and Theory of Constraints methodologies for a continuous improvement model called Rapid Process Improvement (RPI). RPI has been used to evaluate dozens of system processes, identify opportunities for improvement, and test the results of implemented changes.

*Continuous Improvement*

Over the last four years, TWC has further expanded its continuous improvement model to move beyond Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) by designing a new methodology called Business Transformation (BT). The primary distinction between RPI and BT is the nature of the problem that is being targeted for improvement. RPI seeks to improve quality and efficiency in business processes, while BT is designed to uncover and address the root causes of system-level issues and limitations. BT tends to be used to address broader problems that consist of multiple processes. BT's goal is not only to improve efficiency and quality but also to provide a strategic rethinking of entire business approaches, priorities, and value systems associated with core business functions. To conduct program evaluations, TWC collaborates with Boards, partners, and academic researchers on

evaluations and participates in federal studies, such as the Workforce Investment Act Gold Standard Study. TWC proactively engages with the Secretaries of Labor and Education on studies that further the research priorities of TWC, Boards, and partners. Additionally, TWC believes that the webinars and regional calls held by DOL, and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) provide a valuable avenue to coordinate work and share results between the states and the departments. TWC also plays an active role in the Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR) community and shares results and best practices with other community members.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The Texas workforce system and its customers have benefited from DOL-ETA's authority to waive certain statutory and regulatory provisions. These waivers have provided the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and boards with the flexibility to be more innovative and efficient in delivering workforce services.

On September 20, 2022, DOL-ETA approved two WIOA waivers for PY22 and PY23 (July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2024):

- Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).
- Waiver of the performance requirements at WIOA Section 116(c) to allow the State to modify the performance measures used to negotiate LWDB performance.

On February 2, 2023, DOL-ETA approved a third waiver for PY22 and PY23:

- Waiver of the reallocation provisions at WIOA Sections 128(c)(3) and 133(c)(3) to allow the state workforce development board to develop different criteria than required by statute for the reallocation of recaptured funds among local workforce areas.

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver to allow WIOA ITAs for ISY**

This waiver removes the requirement under the WIOA rule at 20 CFR Section 681.550 that limits the use of ITAs for youth participants to out-of-school youth (OSY) ages 16–24. This allows TWC to extend the use of ITAs to ISY ages 16–21, thus permitting boards to serve ISY in the workforce area while maintaining priority of service for OSY. Boards exercising this waiver have used ITAs to fund training for ISY enrolled in programs such as welding, nursing, HVAC, emergency medical technician, and accounting.

**Waiver to allow the State to modify the performance measures used to negotiate LWDB performance (Local performance accountability flexibility)**

This limited waiver from WIOA Section 116(c) pertaining to local performance accountability measures for Subtitle B provides TWC with greater flexibility when contracting performance measures with boards. Through the application of this waiver, TWC will increase the integration of services to customers, evaluate boards more effectively—promoting accountability—and provide boards with flexibility in implementing workforce solutions offices services. This waiver provides TWC with continued administrative relief that will remove barriers to co-enrollment and promote a more integrated case management system across multiple programs.

**Waiver of the reallocation provisions to allow the state workforce development board to develop different criteria than required by statute for the reallocation of recaptured funds among local workforce areas**

Addressing the provisions of WIOA Section 128(c)(3) and Section 133(c) and 20 CFR Section 683.140 regarding reallocation of WIOA funds among local areas, this waiver grants TWC flexibility in redistributing funds that have been voluntarily de-obligated. This waiver gives TWC the discretion to consider additional factors in determining LWDA eligibility for reallocation of recaptured funds.

*Impact on Performance***Waiver to allow WIOA ITAs for ISY**

In PY22, 47 percent of ISY enrolled in post-secondary training programs used ITAs to fund training. Boards view this waiver as an excellent opportunity to promote apprenticeship programs and the application of pre-apprenticeship standards, with a focus on non-traditional industries and occupations. This waiver also helps ISY living in rural workforce areas overcome the unique economic and employment challenges facing rural and often remote Texas communities.

**Success Stories***Dislocated Worker Grant*

A military spouse was laid off from their job after working with a company for 20 years. Through the grant's funding and with the guidance from Workforce Solutions Office staff, the spouse secured a full-time position as a military talent specialist, earning 90,000 a year.

*Local Workforce Solutions Office Success Stories*

- A justice-involved Individual obtained a GED and enrolled in a Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) program. With the support of Workforce Solutions Panhandle, the Individual completed the CMA program, ultimately becoming a Registered Nurse (RN). The Individual attributed this successful outcome to the crucial financial assistance and foundational skills

provided by Workforce Solutions Panhandle. The Individual is now employed as a Nurse Education Success Coach at a local community college, advocating for student success and retention.

- As a Customer's career came to an end in the pipeline industry, they sought assistance from Workforce Solutions East Texas. After attending a RESEA appointment, the Customer learned about the many services offered by Workforce Solutions East Texas. Through co-enrollment in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, the Customer began an OJT program as a restoration and auto body Repair Worker, where the Customer continues to work on a career path that allows them to do something they are passionate about.
- An OSY was interested in obtaining a welding certification. A Career Counselor at Workforce Solutions Lower Rio Valley talked to the Customer about the benefits of the WIOA Youth program and support services to address financial barriers. After receiving a certificate of completion for a structural maintenance welder program, the Customer continued his pursuits and earned a welding license. The Customer is now employed full-time and earns \$20 per hour.
- With the long-term goal of working in the health care field, an OSY enrolled in the Workforce Solutions NextGen Youth program at Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast. The program helps youth earn their GED and gain on-the-job experience, in addition to providing job readiness and job search assistance. In a short-term work experience placement, the Customer gained valuable health care knowledge and skills to assist with future employment in the industry. The Customer completed a medical assistant course, passed the national certification exam, and is now employed full-time in a leading orthopedic practice.
- A Customer with a disability sought assistance obtaining paid work experience, with the goal of receiving permanent employment. Workforce Solutions Panhandle assisted the Customer to obtain paid work experience with a local employer. During the paid work experience, the Customer's supervisor was pleased with their work performance. The employer wanted to offer permanent employment but did not have the budget to hire, so the paid work experience was extended. The Customer was ultimately hired as a full-time employee.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[Program Year 2022 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Annual Report Titles I and II](#). Texas Workforce Commission.

*Links*

Texas Workforce Commission

## Utah

### Department of Workforce Services

#### Use of State Funds

Workforce Services supports many statewide activities. For example, statewide activity funds are used to disseminate the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and promote information on program services, accessibility, employer services and success stories highlighting effective service delivery strategies. Funding was also used to conduct research and evaluation, customer surveys, program outreach and provide technical assistance to One-Stop partners to meet the goals of Utah's WIOA Plan. Other funded activities include supporting the SWDB, professional development opportunities for staff, monitoring services and administrative costs, such as finance.

The funds spent on the statewide activities have directly and indirectly impacted program performance. For example, Utah's quality control process includes a team of specialized reviewers called the performance review team. This team conducts monthly reviews of WIOA cases. The first type of review involves eligibility criteria. This review ensures that only eligible individuals move forward to enrollment in a WIOA funded program. These reviews help Workforce Services reduce findings from audits performed by the state auditor's office. The second type of review is a monthly random selection of up to 10 percent of all WIOA cases. These reviews are used to monitor adherence to policies and provide targeted individualized training for staff.

Utah's AJC partners and staff receive training on the partner referral system, which is another statewide activity. The system supports AJCs' ability to refer individuals to partners and track outcomes. The partner referral system is designed for partners of local AJCs, including all WIOA core and required partners and additional partners as defined by each local office. All staff can access information sheets for each partner program or service that display the partner's name and description, services provided, eligibility criteria, referral process and contact information. The partner referral system supports "warm hand-off" referrals by ensuring individuals receive information about the referrals they are given. The referrals are accepted by a partner and can be tracked. Partners can update their information in the system and offices are encouraged to use the outcomes recorded in the system to continually improve the referral process. On-site community liaisons in each office facilitate use of the system and provide support to partners located outside the office.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

During PY22, Workforce Services focused on increasing veteran employment services to all veterans, military service members and spouses statewide by providing individual case management and post-employment services. Workforce Services offers priority of service and targeted services for veterans and their spouses, assisting them with ways to quickly and efficiently

navigate the job market and find employment that aligns with their military experience. Workforce Services provides individualized career services, online tools and job development services tailored for veterans.

The Utah Patriot Partnership program recognizes employers that have pledged to hire or employ qualified veterans over qualified non-veterans. During PY22 Workforce Services updated Utah Patriot Partnership program materials and worked to increase employer participation.

### **Re-entry Partnerships**

Workforce Services partners with the Utah County Jail, non-profit organization Building Beginnings and local employers to support on-the-job training placements for offenders upon release. Through a pre-release program, staff provide in-jail workshops and conduct information sessions to identify potential customers for program enrollment and job placement. Those incarcerated for drug offenses are connected to Building Beginnings, which offers transitional housing and drug treatment programs and employment. Through this partnership, there have been career placements in HVAC, construction and manufacturing occupations, using both subsidized on-the-job training and direct placement through basic career services. By coordinating and integrating services, this relationship meets the employment needs of the jobseeker and local employers.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

- Staff Development
- Workshops
- Virtual Job Fairs
- WIOA Youth Partnerships

## **Evaluations**

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Work Success Study**

Workforce Services participated in a national study, NextGen Evaluation, sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation within the Administration of Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate Utah's Work Success program through March 2022.

In addition to the evaluation of the Work Success program and documenting the most effective components of the coaching, design and implementation, Mathematica Policy Research will include a cost analysis of the program. Outcomes from the study include measures of success in:

- Obtaining and retaining employment



- Career advancement
- Earnings
- Receipt of TANF and other measures of self-sufficiency
- Other indicators in personal and family well-being
- Improvement of self-regulation

Findings on Work Success will be provided in a series of reports from Mathematica beginning Fall of 2022 and produced on a rolling basis through 2024.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **WIOA Services Evaluation**

Workforce Services continued to implement projects developed because of the WIOA Evaluation finalized in spring of 2020.

Workforce Services program staff, in collaboration with local area managers, developed an action plan to build on successful program implementation behaviors and recommended program improvements. The action plan began implementation during PY20 and included strategies, informed by the evaluation, to increase quality case management, especially for youth. During the Spring of 2023, a Request for Proposals was released to contract with an experienced trainer to provide training and tools to youth counselors reinforcing motivational interviewing techniques, trauma informed case management, career coaching and effective ways to mentor youth. Workforce Services is working with the awarded provider to schedule training in Fall of 2023.

During PY22, Workforce Services contracted with the Social Research Institute at the University of Utah to complete a data analysis of WIOA sponsored customers to determine if the training programs they participated in had a positive impact. For each program, these questions were addressed:

1. What were the completion rates and employment rates?
2. Are there common programs or providers with success or failure rates?

This evaluation will continue to be reviewed during PY23.

#### **Work Success**

Work Success is currently being streamlined to better serve a rapidly changing market and fulfill the needs of all Utah jobseekers.

### *Reports*

#### **WIOA Services Evaluation Report**

The evaluation found that 17 percent of youth customers not currently receiving mental health treatment felt that they needed assistance. During the last program year, Workforce Services braided funding and started having internal licensed clinical

therapists provide mental health services to WIOA enrolled customers. Workforce Services continues to provide this valuable service and is exploring other opportunities to support youth and adult mental health services in Utah including offering mental health workshops to youth.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY) ages 18–24.

### *Strategies*

The waiver is used to assist ISY in maintaining focus on education and exploring career options that require post-secondary education. Having more youth interested and engaged in education leading to credential attainment allows the State to increase its supply of workers to in-demand industries and occupations. Workforce Services has been monitoring its progress in implementing the waiver to ensure the State complies with waiver goals and meets measurable programmatic outcomes.

### *Impact on Performance*

Workforce Services is exceeding the requirements for out-of-school youth (OSY) spending. By the end of PY22, 93.87 percent of WIOA Youth funds were spent on OSY and only 6.13 percent on ISY. A quarterly breakdown of ISY versus OSY expenditures indicates that OSY expenditures significantly exceeded the expenditure goal of 75 percent in each quarter.

The State maintains its ISY enrollments at a level that has supported the above indicated increase in OSY expenditures. At the end of PY22, only 130 of youth served (12.42%) were ISY, and a quarterly breakdown of enrollments shows a shift towards enrolling more OSY, as agreed upon in the waiver.

Out of the 130 ISY served in PY22, 29 youth were working toward obtaining a post-secondary credential. The remaining ISY were working on completing secondary school requirements with the intent to eventually enroll in post-secondary education. Six ISY attained a post-secondary credential and, so far, two have obtained employment. The youth who started post-secondary training and did not complete it still benefited from their exposure to post-secondary education and gained additional marketable skills. Out of nine ISY who did not graduate, five obtained employment (55.56%).

Workforce Services has maintained its partnership with John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and administered the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program by serving ISY who are preparing for post-secondary education. This federally funded program is designed to assist foster care youth, or youth who have aged out of foster care, with support needed to complete post-secondary education and obtain employment. Since most foster care youth are ISY, the waiver enables Workforce Services to serve this at-risk population and positively impact their ability to earn post-secondary credentials, enter the workforce and become contributing members of society. During PY22, the State served 56 ETV youth and four of them

successfully completed the program and earned a credential. Additionally, 65 percent of ETV youth had their ETV enrollment closed due to income.

The waiver also positively impacted education providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as they were not required to go through procurement in addition to completing the list requirements. This encourages providers to continue to be on the ETPL, benefiting both ISY and OSY. Utah continues to certify the education providers and monitor their performance.

## Success Stories

### *SNAP Education and Training – Ron*

Ron was referred to the SNAP Education and Training program in April 2023. During his first meeting with his Employment Counselor, they discussed his interests, experiences, and qualifications. She provided him with support, encouragement, and resources such as bonding, where to obtain a free cell phone, how to apply for the Career and Education program, a virtual job fair opportunity and housing options. Ron applied and was approved for WIOA Adult services and was issued funds to pay for his rental deposit, first month rent, fuel, and meals. He attended the Virtual Job Fair, connected with the Salt Lake City police department, and networked with their recruiters. He applied for a dispatcher position, completed the assessment tests, and had two interviews. He was offered the position and a starting wage of \$22.59 an hour, which will increase to \$32.00 an hour after he completes their training program. Ron sent an email to his Employment Counselor saying,

“Thank you sincerely, your help throughout this time has been absolutely invaluable to me. I am eternally grateful for all of the help and resources you have given me. You have helped me find hope in a time where I had thought I had lost it. The state is very lucky to have a social worker with your passion for the job and the people you work with, and I want you to know you are appreciated.”

### *Job Corps Student – Alex*

Alex completed the automotive technician program at the Clearfield Job Corps. Workforce Services partnered with Job Corp to help Alex obtain an internship as an Automotive technician. After completing his internship, he was offered a full-time position with a Toyota dealership as an automotive technician and mechanic. Due to the extensive training that he received while attending Job Corps, and the work experience he attained, Alex was offered a higher starting wage than the dealership typically offers.

### *WIOA Adult*

A Customer referred to Workforce Services from a community partner, Building Beginnings, applied for WIOA for job search assistance and bonding services. The Customer had several barriers to employment, such as transportation, lack of employment history, dental issues, and a history of substance use. The WIOA Counselor partnered with Vocational Rehabilitation to help the

Customer overcome his barriers, including helping him get dentures. They assisted him in attaining an on-the-job training opportunity. The Customer succeeded in his employment goals and is now fully employed and supporting himself financially.

#### *WIOA Youth – Kelsey*

When 21-year-old Kelsey came to Workforce Services she was at a low point in her life and looking for a better future. She had held several food services jobs, but wanted to pursue a career in the dental field. She enrolled in WIOA, and her employment counselor helped her find an internship with the Moab Free Health Clinic, where she trained to be a Dental Assistant. She gained experience with x-rays, preparing service trays, running the autoclave, and assisting both the hygienist and the dentist during procedures. Her immediate supervisor is a dental hygienist who works for a Moab dental practice, but also volunteers at the free clinic. Toward the end of Kelsey's internship, she applied for a dental assistant position at the same practice where her mentor works. She worked with her employment counselor and mentor to prepare for the interview and was offered a job. Kelsey is ecstatic about her new career.

#### *WIOA Adult – Amanda*

When Amanda applied for WIOA, it had been more than 15 years since her last job, due to being a stay-at-home wife and mother. She was nervous about getting back into the job market but needed to increase her income due to the rising costs of groceries and fuel. Amanda's employment counselor helped her identify her transferable skills, which included managing her home and baking for her family. The counselor helped her find an on-the-job training opportunity at Toni's bakery, where she could utilize those skills. She was so successful performing her job duties, she earned a promotion to assistant manager and a two-dollar-an-hour raise. Amanda feels her work-related accomplishments have increased her self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as helping to stabilize her family's financial situation.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

[\*WIOA Annual Report Program Year 2022\*](#). Department of Workforce Services.

Vogel-Ferguson, M.B. (Jan. 2020). [\*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: Evaluation Report\*](#). Social Research Institute, College of Social Work - University of Utah.

#### *Links*

Department of Workforce Services

## Vermont

Vermont Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **Procurement For New CRM (Ongoing)**

The State completed a request for information (RFI) and request for proposal (RFP) process during PY21 to solicit proposals from vendors who could improve the Vermont Department of Labor's (VDOL) information management system, including its case and customer management system, job board, financial tracking system, and information display platform. The State's Reserve funds aided in the identification of system requirements and the articulation of an improved future state for the VDOL's management information system. This system will disseminate information about eligible and non-eligible training providers, work-based learning, and training experiences. These include registered apprenticeship opportunities, best practices in employer recruitment, hiring, and retention. Additionally, it includes toolkits for employers and training providers to ensure accessibility, both physical and programmatic, for individuals with disabilities.

There have been many challenges related to the early work with the selected vendor, and the state-wide flooding ultimately put a hold on the project. During PY22, VDOL used the State's Reserve funds to support the required activities, including monitoring and oversight of Title I activities, operation of a fiscal accountability system, and supporting industry and sector partnerships. VDOL also used Reserve Funds for allowable employment and training activities such as the administration of Title I programs, development of strategies to meet employer needs and strategies to meet needs of individuals with barriers to employment, coordination of programs and services among One-Stop partners serving youth and mature workers and supporting the delivery of career services in the One-Stop delivery system—particularly for unemployed individuals.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State had no waivers in place during PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## **Success Stories**

### *WIOA Youth*

“For the last 12 months, I have been working with a youth client who was referred by HCRS. The client disclosed she suffered from severe anxiety and multiple barriers and did not successfully complete her high school diploma. She participated in two separate work experiences where she was able to improve her soft skills and self-confidence. During the work experiences, she determined a career pathway of Salesforce for Administration purposes. This occupation would allow her to work independently and potentially at home. Through direct supports of WIOA, HCRS and HireAbility, she developed the courage to attend Vermont Adult Learning where she eventually earned her GED.”

### *WIOA Adult – Jessica*

Jessica is a 33-year-old single mom who was referred to the WIOA program by her reach up case manager. Jessica was a recipient of 3 Squares (TANF) and disclosed that because of her anxiety, it was difficult for her to sustain employment. Jessica’s work experience consisted of cashiering. This client’s goal was to gain work experience and eventual employment in the administrative field with a local non-profit. Jessica started out with a work experience with Adult Basic Education working 20 hours a week where she began her career pathway exploration as an administrative assistant.

Jessica also expressed interest in some self-directed online learning through [a regional CTE center] and enrolled in the “Admin Assistant Bundle” with the local career center. A natural progression from a work experience to an on-the-job training (OJT) occurred.

The client achieved the certificates associated with the Admin Assistant Bundle, Microsoft Office Suite and enrolled in the QuickBooks course to advance her skills more. Jessica was co-enrolled with WIOA, HireAbility, and ICAN where she leveraged funding from all three and case management support. Jessica successfully completed her OJT and now receives follow up services from WIOA.

#### *WIOA Adult – Abass*

Abass is a 46-year-old man who approached the Vermont Department of Labor in November of 2022 after receiving a scholarship from Department of Transportation (DOT) to be used toward his Commercial Driver’s training classes. He and his wife made a modest income both working in retail jobs, but he was motivated as a new American and aspired to do more to support his family. He reports that he has always enjoyed driving and has been passionate about commercial driving for years. Abass still needed just over \$3,000 to be able to afford tuition at Pro Driver Training. He diligently studied the commercial driving manual and earned his Commercial Driver License (CDL) permit and passed his DOT physical independently as he prepared for training. He took on odd jobs to build up his savings so along with his wife’s income, he could afford to not work during training and focus all his energy on learning.

He enrolled in the WIOA program in March of 2023, began behind-the-wheel CDL driver training in April of 2023 and successfully completed his CDL.

Abass’ focus was always on becoming a safe driver no matter the situation. He mentioned that some days he would come home from training exhausted, but it was worth it to master safe backing skills and feeling comfortable and confident behind the wheel. He was excited to work with Pro Driver Training and Vermont Department of Labor as he began to look for work and intends to return to work quickly in his new industry.

#### *Dislocated Worker – Karen*

Karen lost her job in August 2022 as the result of a permanent plant closure. She had worked in the plant for over 10 years. Her employer, Entergy, was the owner and operator of Vermont Yankee located in Vernon, VT. In December of 2014, the power plant was shut down and Entergy began a process of decommissioning. Karen continued to work as a Senior Administrative Assistant for Entergy for the Nuclear Decommissioning Organization. After the last site was closed, Karen was notified that her job would be ending on the last day of August 2022.

A Dislocated Worker in need of skills training, Karen applied for WIOA in the fall of 2022. She was enrolled in October 2022. She entered Occupational Skills training (non-ETPL)—a Paralegal Certificate Program with Boston University—November 1, 2022. Karen successfully completed her skills training in February 2023 and received a Certificate in Paralegal Studies from B.U.’s Center for Professional Education.

Karen is currently employed with The Green Mountain Higher Education Consortium, a collaborative endeavor of three Vermont Colleges: Champlain College, Middlebury College, and Saint Michael's College. Karen is on salary in the Payroll Department at GMHEC. She started her position in June 2023. Karen has expressed her thanks to the Vermont Department of Labor for the support she received through the WIOA Program.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

(Dec. 2023). [WIOA PY2022 Annual Narrative Outline](#). Vermont Department of Labor

*Links*

Vermont Department of Labor



## Virginia

### Virginia Career Works

#### Use of State Funds

##### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **VEC Workforce Transformation**

To optimize workforce readiness for the Commonwealth's current and future jobs, the Commonwealth seeks to improve how workforce development programs are managed, delivered, and measured to better equip Virginians with the skills they need, elevate their experience of getting and remaining employed, and increase their earning power. Expended \$1,089,325.

##### **Network2Work Pilot**

The Network2Work framework aligns the three networks that are essential for creating pathways to jobs and careers offering family-sustaining wages: the employer network, the jobseeker network, and the provider network. Four pilot communities include Charlottesville Region, Shenandoah Valley, Southeastern Virginia, and Richmond Region. Expended \$133,319.

##### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Workforce Innovation Grant**

These funds will support innovative service delivery approaches. Funds will be targeted on getting individuals back into the workforce in economically distressed areas of the Commonwealth that have an unemployment rate higher than the statewide rate and a poverty rate higher than the statewide rate. Expended \$136,108.

##### **Wagner-Peyser**

Ten percent of the Wagner-Peyer Act funds allotted to the Commonwealth are reserved for use by the Governor. These funds are identified and reported to DOL quarterly. The affiliated activities are tracked by job service staff time allocated to each identified group, grant, or program.

The 10 percent Set-Aside funds were used for employment services to employers and jobseekers who fell within high priority categories. These categories included:

- Jobseekers looking for opportunities within in-demand occupations such as construction, IT fields, government, healthcare, and transportation, etc.
- Services to UI claimants to assist them with getting back to work. These services included job service, counseling, intake, and other activities.
- Services to employers who fall within priority industry sectors, including, but not limited to, manufacturing, agriculture, cyber security, energy, healthcare, logistics, tourism, advanced manufacturing, and big data.

*Other State Funds Activities***VOEE Virginia Skills Initiative**

Develop an Alumni Career Data Set and a Virginia Supply Side Skills Data Set. Expended \$897,824.

**VDOE Work Based Learning Network**

Meet the Commonwealth's workforce needs of tomorrow by providing access to work-based learning opportunities through the development and implementation of the VWBLN. The purpose of this MOU is to expand opportunities for secondary students to experience work-based learning not only in their locality but also throughout their region and the Commonwealth. The initiative will establish a virtual connector between students and real-world business opportunities. The partnership will provide Work-Based Learning experiences in Virginia's high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand workforce career sectors. Expended \$573,157.

**SW Virginia Childcare Support**

With seed funding provided by the Commonwealth, United Way of Southwest Virginia in partnership with the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board and the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board will address regional challenges with Ready SWVA, a multimillion-dollar initiative to increase labor participation by addressing access to childcare. Expended \$146,191.

**CTE High School Innovation**

The Career Technical Education High School Innovation Grant is a two-year planning grant to develop and expand opportunities for secondary students to earn post-secondary credentials and a high school diploma simultaneously. The initiative will support partnerships between a local school division, post-secondary institutions, business and industry, and workforce and economic development entities. Students will be provided with a sequence of courses that start in grade nine and culminate in the attainment of a high school diploma and associate degree in up to five years. The initiative will include authentic work experience, mentorships and internships designed to prepare students for a career in an identified career pathway. Expended \$289,047.

**AJC Security**

Provides funding to support security personnel at comprehensive AJCs and AJCs that have a Virginia Employment commission physical presence. Expended \$292,042.

**HR Strong**

WIOA State Set-Aside funds are being provided over an 18-month period for advanced training in shipbuilding, ship repair, offshore wind, and skilled trades workforce development in Hampton Roads in support of increased Navy ship construction, repair, modernization, and maintenance programs, the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project, and Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel expansion project. Project ended June 30, 2023. Expended \$601,469.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Workforce Development System**

In December 2021, the Commonwealth completed an evaluation of its workforce development system. Several recommendations for implementation were issued for 2022 to 2025 including:

- Establish centralized decision-making authority over workforce system.
- Address the need for critical wraparound services.
- Provide dedicated funding for business services.
- Reduce workforce system barriers and increase collaboration opportunities.

In September 2022, the Governor’s Office and Virginia Secretary of Labor examined these four key recommendations and embarked on a major initiative to optimize the entire Virginia workforce development program. The goal was to create a single, dynamic, nation-leading workforce ecosystem hub that proactively connects talent capabilities across all Commonwealth sectors and regions with industry demand. The aligned workforce development system will effectively streamline capabilities and resources with one goal in mind: a transformed and transformational system that works for all Virginians.

- Balance centralized strategy with regional flexibility.
- Standardize goals, metrics, performance incentives, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Design a centralized hub for service seekers and streamline workforce policy and efficiently gathering, analyzing, and sharing data.

The transformation efforts to date resulted in the creation of the Department of Workforce Development Advancement (DWDA). The agency is centered around developing a stronger workforce ecosystem that delivers best-in-class services to Virginians and employers to foster a stronger Virginia economy.

The mission of DWDA is to create, sustain, and retain a viable workforce that can support current and future business and industry while recognizing the unique regional needs and capabilities of the Commonwealth through public-private partnerships and robust data and infrastructure investment, which results in standard measures and program accountability.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Workforce Development System**

The future of workforce development in Virginia is very bright and will be characterized or reflected in several ways including:

- New and impactful investment into industry and business.

- Increased earning power and financial security for Virginia employees.
- Virginians that are well equipped with in-demand knowledge and skills.
- Sustained program accountability with universal success metrics.
- Employers that are empowered to connect with Virginians with the talent and skills needed to fill positions.
- Opportunities created for all Virginians, no matter their zip code.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## **Waivers**

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State did not receive any waivers for PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## **Success Stories**

### *Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) – Karen*

Karen is a 72-year professional with over 20 years of experience in communications, data analysis and customer service. She's been employed in various settings in the past including a hospital, grocery chain and major telephone company. Karen was last employed in 2007 before joining the Northern Virginia Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in November 2022.

She had ongoing health concerns but was ready to find part-time employment and needed support with her job search. During the initial meeting with Karen, it was visible that she was experiencing a low mood and told the Northern Virginia SCSEP case manager that she was “depressed and can't see light at the end of the tunnel” related to finding employment. The SCSEP team worked with her closely to set her employment goals on her initial IEP and registered her for a free LinkedIn Learning license.

Karen began taking LinkedIn Learning online courses to update her computer skills right away. The SCSEP team saw a positive change in her confidence levels as she had a set schedule and was meeting her goals. She earned certificates of completion through LinkedIn Learning, which she was very proud of and as were the SCSEP staff. She also started applying for jobs again, as she gained more confidence in herself.

Once a new CSA opportunity opened at the Fairfax County Public Assistance and Employment Services Information Center, SCSEP staff placed her at that work site to continue her growth and use skills she learned through LinkedIn Learning and the Virginia Career Works workshops.

Karen was excited to use her newly developed computer skills and assist visitors during her SCSEP worksite training. The opportunity gave her a newfound hope in being employed again.

On May 19, 2023, Karen sent SCSEP staff a message, excited to share that she has been offered employment at The Fresh Market as a Front-End Cashier, 25–40 hours per week earning \$15 per hour. She wrote to the SCSEP Team:

“I wish to thank you for the privilege of being in this wonderful program – I can’t begin to tell you how much this program and working at the info desk has meant to me and done for me. I came alive, and you gave me hope and confidence! Thank you for everything!”

The Northern Virginia SCSEP was overjoyed that she found employment. Even more, Karen left the Northern Virginia SCSEP program on a much higher note than when she came in at enrollment. She continues to enjoy her job at The Fresh Market.

#### *WIOA Adult*

A WIOA Title I Adult Client was let go from her staffing agency in December 2022 due to the agency no longer providing services to the logistics employer. The Client was enrolled in the WIOA program and connected to another employer hiring for assembly. Due to the client having some experience in manufacturing in her work history, she was selected to participate in the OJT program with WIOA and the employer. The Client started her position on February 8, 2023, under OJT earning \$15.75 per hour, which was a 105 percent increase her previous wages. After working for a month, the Client was promoted with an increase in wages to \$22.46 per hour. As of October 1, 2023, the Client received another increase in wages bringing her new salary to \$24.63 per hour, which is an annual salary of over \$50,000. The current wages are 164 percent higher than the logistics employer.

#### *WIOA Adult*

A WIOA Title I Adult Client was enrolled in a program while she was employed as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). The Client is a single mother of two children receiving public assistance. She was seeking to increase her skills so she could obtain a higher wage. The Client’s wage at time of enrollment was \$13.52 per hour, which is an annual salary of just over \$28,000. The Client completed the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program and was selected as valedictorian of her graduating class. The Client

passed the state board exam, obtained her license, and returned to her previous employer with an increase in wages to \$31 per hour, which is an annual salary of over \$64,000. The Client now earns 229.29 percent more than before her LPN training.

### *WIOA Adult*

A Client initially sought assistance from WIOA, meeting the program's criteria for priority of service by receiving public assistance. Unemployment and language barriers were significant challenges for this client. With the help of ACE, the Client successfully completed the required courses, paving the way for the Client's enrollment in the Dental Assistant training program through MedCerts. The Adult Career Navigator worked closely with the client, supporting the client in passing the Dental Assistant state board exam. Though the Client's first attempt was unsuccessful, she persevered, studied diligently, retook the exam, and earned her Dental Assistant credential. The Career Navigator also provided guidance in completing workshops. As a result, the Client is now employed as a Dental Assistant in Altavista, VA. The Client is receiving great satisfaction from her work and is excited about gaining valuable experience in her current role.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

[\*Virginia Annual Report, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Program Year 2022\*](#). Virginia Career Works.

Burke, J., et al (Dec. 2021). [\*Evaluation of the Commonwealth of Virginia Federally-Funded Workforce System\*](#). Report to the Virginia Board of Workforce Development. VCU Performance Management Group - L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University.

#### *Links*

Virginia Career Works

## Washington

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
Washington State Employment Security Department  
Washington's Local Workforce Development Boards

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Career Connect Washington**

The Career Connect Washington Task Force, composed of leaders from business, labor, government, non-profits, and education, concluded that Washington lacked systemic support to scale its career connected learning programs. A process to develop a strategic plan and policy recommendations followed. The plan was transformed into legislation following a groundswell of support from every region of Washington. The legislation passed in April 2019, along with significant funding to begin implementation.

The CCW partnership built a statewide coalition of regional networks, program builders, sector leaders, career-connected learning coordinators within the K–12 system, and industry champions; a program endorsement process; and a grant program to expand earn-and-learn opportunities for Washington's young people. Best practices and partnerships established during the WIOA-funded Career Connect Prototype projects (described in previous annual reports) informed the legislation and local strategy.

Program builders create, manage, and scale specific career-connected learning programs. To date, 118 unique program builder proposals have been funded. During PY22, at the direction of Governor Inslee, 31 proposals were funded using \$4.6 million of WIOA Title I Statewide activity funds. These programs will provide access to training, credentials, and career opportunities for populations with barriers to employment in the advanced manufacturing, agriculture, automotive, construction, health care, hospitality, information technology, maritime, and life sciences sectors.

Industry and philanthropic leaders from the private sector provide critical feedback on CCW work. This helps ensure that industry voices are represented throughout the system.

During PY22, ESD staff worked with CCW leaders and personnel from the Washington Student Achievement Council, the WTB, and the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries on federal grant applications to expand the impact of the CCW system. The U.S. Department of Commerce awarded \$23.5 million of Good Jobs Challenge funds to the Washington Student Achievement Council to support sector based CCW program expansion. DOL awarded \$5.6 million of Apprenticeship Building America funds to ESD to develop new registered apprenticeship and apprenticeship preparation programs. Implementation of both projects will begin in PY23.

*Adult Priority Service***Economic Security for All (EcSA)**

EcSA is a poverty reduction program that aims to help participants, namely those experiencing poverty, reach economic self-sufficiency. EcSA prioritizes services for people experiencing homelessness, people of color and rural communities. It launched in 2019 in four pilot areas across the state with support of the Governor's Poverty Reduction Work Group (PRWG), multiple state agencies, and LWDBs. In 2021, Governor Inslee expanded EcSA to seven more regions. In 2022, state general funds were dedicated to the program giving additional local flexibility and making EcSA a statewide program.

EcSA brings multiple programs together at the local level to help people move out of poverty. EcSA partners with Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and focuses on serving participants that qualify for SNAP benefits and people at risk of experiencing poverty. It began by listening to people who have experienced or are currently experiencing poverty in Washington. Direct participant feedback captured through surveys, listening sessions and conversations with career specialists is used to improve local programs.

- Promising developments since July 2021,
  - Addressing homelessness
  - University of Washington self-sufficiency calculator
  - Breaking down silos

The Governor dedicated additional WIOA statewide activity funds to continue expanding EcSA, and the state legislature dedicated over \$10 million per year in state general funds to expand it. EcSA is on track to help more than 3,839 households meet or exceed their self-sufficiency goals by March 2025.

- Significant performance milestones
  - EcSA exceeded all statewide enrollment, training, and self-sufficiency goals.
  - Helped 606 people reach self-sufficiency, with a median annualized income of \$42,390.
  - EcSA is helping 1,171 people statewide achieve and maintain self-sufficiency. 85 percent of them had annual incomes below \$9,860 when they enrolled.
  - Total cost for the most recent single year was \$8,878,113, including federal and state funding.

*Other State Funds Activities*

Not applicable.



## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Net Impact Study**

The net impact and cost-benefit evaluation of the State's workforce development system is conducted every four years by the Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTB), as per its statute. The study uses a control group approach to evaluate workforce training participants' outcomes. Prior studies were contracted out to third parties at considerable expense, but the most recent one was done in-house and completed in 2021.

#### **Workforce Training Results (WTR)**

This is an annual evaluation of the State's workforce development system, which consists of studying outcomes of participants from 12 workforce development programs, using a standard set of performance measures. The evaluation uses a data comparison approach to answer this question: Are training programs providing participants with opportunities and positive outcomes? The report describes the demographics and employment outcomes of each population and participant. The evaluation includes representative programs from all four WIOA Titles. The Workforce Training Results report also includes measures such as hourly wage and hours worked.

#### **Employment Security Department (ESD)**

ESD's Program Evaluation Team within the Data Architecture, Transformation, and Analytics division (DATA) division has completed, or is conducting several program evaluations and research projects:

- RESEA Evaluation
- Agricultural and seasonal workforce services (ASWS) customer experience study
- Other ESD program evaluations and research projects
  - Opioid Disaster Relief Dislocated Worker Grant evaluation.
  - Impact evaluation of increasing the minimum weekly benefit amount.
  - Economic Security for All (EcSA) evaluation summary.

These programs overlap with WIOA, because WIOA program participants tend to frequently benefit from these program services.

### *Continuous Improvement*

#### **Workforce System Matrix**

Some of the work of the net impact study feeds into WTB's Workforce System Matrix. For example, the program ROI is updated and used in this product.

## Reports

### Net Impact Study Final Report

The findings of this study inform—in direct quantitative terms—the attributable economic impact of various workforce development programs. More frequent and consistent evaluation of these programs will help economic recovery and future workforce development planning efforts.

All programs evaluated in this study have positive earnings and employment impact directly attributed to program participation for individuals on average within three years of program exit. Other influencing factors, such as race, education, employment history, and prior earnings, are held constant. The remaining net impact is due to program participation itself. Using the net impact findings, it is then possible to use average program costs per person and calculate a program's cost-benefit.

Most programs achieve a measurable positive taxpayer return on investment, with programs breaking even within that same three-year observation period. However, there are several important considerations. For example, many of a program's benefits are unobserved or intangible. Increased personal satisfaction, social justice, civic engagement, crime reduction, public health, and economic multiplier effects are linked to public investments in education and training. Public costs, such as the consumption of welfare benefits, may also be reduced following program participation, which is not accounted for in this study, except for UI and Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income for Vocational Rehabilitation program participants.

### Workforce Training Results (WTR)

The State produced Workforce Training Results reports for the following programs:

- Programs for adults, including community and technical college, job preparatory training, private career schools, apprenticeship, and a state-funded worker retraining program at community and technical colleges and WIOA Dislocated Worker services.
- Programs serving adults with barriers to employment including adult basic education, WIOA Adult services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Services for the Blind and TANF WorkFirst.
- Programs serving youth, including secondary career and technical education and WIOA youth services.

### Opioid Disaster Relief Grant Net Impact Report

It finds that the augmented services offered through the Opioid program improve career outcomes for recipients more than if they had received WIOA Dislocated Worker Grant services.

### Other Reports

- (Jan. 2022). Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council – Opioid Disaster Relief Grant Net Impact Evaluation Report
- (Dec. 2022). Impact of increasing the minimum weekly benefit amount

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State is not in receipt of any WIOA waivers.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *Economic Security for All (EcSA) (SkillSource Regional Workforce Board) – Domenico*

Domenico immigrated as a refugee from Venezuela to the United States in 2018. “I didn’t even know the language,” Domenico said. Through hard work and dedication, Domenico earned his nursing assistant certification through Wenatchee Valley College (WVC) in December of that year, followed by his high school diploma through the Transitional Studies program in December 2019. He was referred to SkillSource by WVC for funding assistance after being accepted into the nursing program in fall 2021. SkillSource assisted Domenico that first year with tuition, books, testing fees and other needed supplies as well as a career and training counselor to help him navigate his career and training journey. He qualified for state EcSA funding during his second year, making him eligible for incentive payments, tuition, and other support to successfully complete his associate degree in nursing and associate of arts degree with a 4.0 GPA in June 2023. Furthermore, he was nominated for the WVC President’s Medal, awarded for academic achievement, leadership, and service.

At the graduation ceremony on June 16, 2023, not only did he finally receive his nursing degree, but was also announced as the President’s Medal winner. He remarked, “Graduating from the nursing program feels like a dream come true. And yesterday, with immense pride, I walked across that stage and received the President’s Medal and my diploma. What an incredible honor (even I am surprised).” Domenico started working at Confluence Health Hospital Central Campus in July 2023 as an RN resident in the intensive care unit, filling a vital position in that unit.

### *EcSA (Future Workforce Alliance) – Michael*

Michael is a Ukrainian refugee who was connected to a Case Manager in March 2023. He was struggling to find employment due to limited English skills and a medical condition. The Case Manager enrolled Michael in the EcSA grant and began counseling him to overcome his barriers to employment. They defined his goals of working as a carpenter, his previous job in Ukraine for

over 30 years, and identified potential employers. The Case Manager created an English résumé on behalf of Michael and assisted him in sending applications to local businesses. Due to Michael's friendliness and impressive knowledge of carpentry, he was able to make excellent impressions on multiple employers and accepted a position in April 2023. With his new employment, he has achieved 187 percent of his self-sufficiency level.

*WIOA Title IB/TAA (Future Workforce Alliance) – Dartur*

Dartur was co-enrolled into WIOA Title IB in January 2023 after being laid off from their Network Administrator job in February 2021, and co-enrolled with the TAA program between April 2021 to May 2023. They received support from their WIOA Employment Specialist with their job search, résumé reviews and funding for TradeCraft training. They also received support services for transportation, hygiene supplies, and medical equipment so they could attend and successfully complete training. They obtained employment as a Network Engineer in May 2023 making \$35 an hour for 40 hours per week.

*WIOA Adult (South Central Workforce) – Sarah*

A low-income single mother, Sarah dreamed of becoming a mobile crane operator. She researched the occupation and found training within driving distance of her home in the Columbia River Gorge but could not afford school. Through WIOA, Sarah received tuition assistance, money to buy the required work boots and gloves, and gas vouchers to help Sarah make the 1.5-hour trip to school and back. Thanks to this wrap-around support, Sarah completed mobile crane operator school and passed her written exams. She was hired full-time by Everett Ship Repair at \$26.06 per hour, which will increase to \$28.55 once she is fully licensed.

*WIOA Adult (South Central Workforce) – Levi*

A single father, Levi had just completed his first quarter in the Welding Program at Perry Technical Institute when he realized he was not going to be able to make ends meet despite receiving basic food benefits to support himself and his son. A full-time student, Levi had limited time to work, and his prior involvement with the justice system made finding suitable employment difficult. Gas prices were on the rise and on top of this, Perry required specific tools. Levi connected with People For People and was enrolled in the WIOA Adult program. WIOA purchased the necessary tools, provided gas money, and much-needed tuition assistance allowing Levi to use a portion of his student loans to meet daily living expenses. Thanks to ongoing financial support, encouragement and counseling, Levi successfully graduated from Perry and is now employed as a professional welder earning \$23 per hour.

*WIOA Dislocated Worker (South Central Workforce) – Stacey*

Stacey had a long career in food service managing a local pub for years. During the pandemic, the 47-year-old was laid off. She connected with People For People and was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program. Through career counseling, Stacey realized she had developed solid skills and strong leadership talent but lacked computer skills needed to pursue employment in

administrative roles. She completed a short-term computer software course, and after months of job searching, she obtained an on-the-job training opportunity with a local food bank where she put her new skills to practice, built new ones, and gained confidence and expertise in common software and administrative tasks. The food bank has since hired her full-time and Stacey has a new career.

### *Wagner-Peyser – Tom*

“Although I did not get an interview for any of the six WA state roles (WorkSource and ESD) I have applied for... I’m very grateful and appreciate the opportunities to learn and apply your learning concepts from the workshops and our one-on-one interactions. Now, more great news. I have found a new job with a bigger firm, doing what I love (working with people and accounting). Having prepped for my interviews using your concepts, the interview flowed more naturally (less transactional). When I was asked about salary, I told them ‘I love being an AR SME and working with people so much, that I’ll do it for free... But if you need a number, then...’ I gave them a middle range. Within one hour after the in-person interview (with seven people), they offered the job with maximum salary (exceeding my previous employers). Thank you, Jefferey, for impacting my life with [sic] such a positive way! I wish you continued happiness, good health, and success.”

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

- Dula, C. (Apr. 2021). [\*The 2021 Net Impact and Cost-Benefit Evaluation of Washington State’s Workforce Development Programs\*](#).
- [\*Workforce System Matrix\*](#)

Washington Employment Security Department

- Huang, X., & Klein, M. (Jan. 2022). [\*Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council – Opioid Disaster Relief Grant Net Impact Evaluation Report\*](#).
- Klein, M., et al (Dec. 2022). [\*Impact of Increasing the Minimum Weekly Benefit Amount\*](#).

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Washington State Employment Security Department, & Washington’s Local Workforce Development Boards (Dec. 2023). [\*Washington State WIOA Annual Performance Narrative PY2022\*](#).

#### *Links*

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

- [Workforce Training Results](#)

Washington State Employment Security Department

Washington's Local Workforce Development Boards

## West Virginia

WorkForce West Virginia

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Career Engagement Pilot**

In January of 2023, WorkForce WV implemented “Career Engagement,” a pilot program to provide individualized services to a selected number of RESEA participants. After the completion of an RESEA appointment, these participants received weekly contact from an assigned WorkForce staff to follow up on RESEA goals, follow up on job or partner referrals, make additional referrals for employment or supportive services and anything else the individual may need.

#### **Veterans Digital Self Assessments**

The State Veterans Coordinator in partnership with federal partners developed a pilot program for Veterans Digital Self Assessments. This includes reducing the workload of Wagner Peyser staff and serving all WEV veterans fairly with the option to meet with DVOPS virtually, as well as migrating to a paperless process.

WorkForce WV has transitioned six local offices into Employment Service offices. These offices focus on providing employment services instead of being assigned unemployment claims to process. Although staff in these offices are trained in both employment services and unemployment, they focus their time and resources on providing more direct services to both jobseekers and employers.

#### **No Wrong Door**

At the request of the Governor’s Workforce Resiliency Office, Kanawha County began collaborating to help develop and pilot the State’s “No Wrong Door” common referral system that will be implemented in 2024.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

Closing out PY22, Workforce Development System (WDS) partners considered the following information as one way to evaluate activities; performance accountability measured the following indicators from respective core programs:

- Jobseekers receiving services in required quarters.
- Jobseekers receiving referrals to partner services in required quarters.
- Customers placed in employment in required quarters.
- Employer contact made in required quarters.
- Median earnings of customers placed in employment.
- Credential attainment.
- Measurable skill gains.

Having established baseline numbers early on, and now with the benefit of having at least two years' worth of data collected, reports can be compiled and analyzed to make necessary enhancements to program and service delivery. WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) implemented a customizable “point-menu” system awarding points based on the degree of intensity and value of the workforce services provided. Services earning high points clearly reflect deeper relationships with employers and activities resulting in longer-term relationships. Coupled with the [customer satisfaction] survey, the State’s WDS partners are better equipped to discuss and make the educated decisions necessary to meet the goals outlined in the Combined State Plan.

### **West Virginia 2022 Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC)**

In August 2022, WFWV applied to participate in the West Virginia 2022 EvalPLC. The team members will include Title I, II, III, and IV representatives. In January 2023, WV’s EvalPLC Team attended three sessions of peer learning cohorts; met three times with their coach; and met internally twice. Overall, activities discussed: Evaluation Readiness and Design Assessments, Funding Strategies, and model types. The State met with MassHire to discuss evaluations and after consulting with their Coach, MassHire appears to be a good resource for WV’s capstone project. By March 2023, WFWV attended and presented during Session 5: State Reflections and Future Plans. WFWV’s presentation consisted of the following:

- “What have you learned through the EvalPLC process?  
Strengths-knowing we are not alone in our situation and there are resources available to assist our state and its workforce development agencies. Challenges-Sustaining momentum going forward, within and across programs, to maintain and further enhance collaboration across programs at the state, regional, and local level.



- Where you started, and using the assessments as a map of where you went  
We have gained knowledge about evaluation in general and also learned from other states as to what has worked and what may be challenges when conducting an evaluation and/or implementing significant change to the system. Capstone Project-Assessing the impact of rebranding and its effectiveness in informing frontline staff and potential consumers (jobseekers and employers) about available services through the WV workforce development system.
- Next steps for your state in research and evaluation of workforce development programs and services
  - Basic evaluation action plans - Develop an assessment instrument, likely an online survey, to gauge the knowledge of staff (at all levels) about programs outside their own. After the rebranding, the same/similar assessment will be provided to the same individuals to determine any knowledge gains and where any areas of improvement may need to occur (geographically and program-specific).
  - Approach for next 6–12 months - Develop and conduct the assessment described above. Roll out the rebranding and its various awareness components. Assess the impact of the rebranding on staff knowledge about partner programs. Our objective is to develop a research plan that will help us to assess the impact of our rebranding initiative on participant outcomes, particularly on the co-enrollment of our participants. This plan will also allow us to evaluate staff knowledge of services provided by all partner agencies and will further foster the closer collaboration of partner agencies.
- Bigger picture: How we see our state moving forward on research and evaluation over the next 1, 2, and 3 years-The WV workforce development system will continue to enhance its evaluation capabilities and grow the scope of evaluations to ensure compliance with the Combined State Plan ICR. Continuing to engage in the community of practice-We will continue to utilize the support and technical assistance available, particularly from other states that have conducted similar evaluations.”

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

The State did not have a waiver in place for at least this reporting year.

*Strategies*

Not applicable.

*Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

**Success Stories***Senior Veteran – T.W.*

Participant T.W., a retired Veteran and proud grandmother of two grandchildren that she has custody of, found herself struggling with unemployment and transportation issues in April 2022. Little did she know that the Kanawha County AJC (KCAJC) would become the turning point in her life, providing her with the resources and support needed to reclaim her independence and embark on a path towards a brighter future. T.W. was previously employed as a private Caregiver through In-Home Senior Services. After being laid off, she was left unemployed and uncertain about her future. Through a conversation with WV Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS), T.W. was provided with information about the KCAJC. She hoped that they could offer some assistance and guidance, but what she encountered was beyond her expectations.

T.W. was introduced to Mr. Austin who greeted her warmly and listened attentively to her story. He understood her unique challenges and was committed to providing her with the support she needed. Mr. Austin brought the Program Manager of WDBKC and the Preston County Senior Services into the office to discuss T.W.'s situation. Preston County Senior Services was asked to enroll T.W. into their program. After enrolling her, he saw her potential and immediately offered her employment. T.W. was hired as a Receptionist through the Title V Senior Services program, and she began working the next day.

Recognizing that securing stable housing was crucial for T.W.'s success, the Program Manager connected her with a WIOA Career Planner for housing support. T.W. was able to secure affordable housing in a safe neighborhood, providing her and her grandchildren with the stability needed. To address T.W.'s transportation challenges, the KCAJC helped her explore various options. Through Jobs & Hope WV transition agents, she was informed of transportation assistance programs and introduced to Good News Mountaineer Garage that provides vehicles to those in need. After evaluating her needs, T.W. was able to acquire a reliable vehicle, which significantly improved her mobility and access to work and essential services.

As she thrived in her role and continuously displayed a positive attitude, T.W. was offered a temporary trainee position as an Office Assistant with the opportunity for full-time employment with Region III WDB. This job also provided room for professional development and a supportive work environment. Through a collaboration of partnerships with the WV DRS, Human Resource Development Foundation, Inc., WV Bureau of Senior Services, the Region III WDB, UniCare, and Jobs & Hope WV, T.W.'s story is a testament to the power of the KCAJC and the dedication of its staff. Through their comprehensive services, T.W. not only found employment but also gained stable housing and reliable transportation, paving the way for a brighter future. Her success

story serves as an inspiration for other individuals facing similar challenges, showing them that with the right support and resources, they too can overcome adversity.

### *WIOA Adult*

A Customer completed all eligibility and assignments for the WIOA Adult funds and was accepted into the Mountwest CTC Paramedic training. The Customer was employed as an EMT with Roane County Emergency Services and wanted to further her career. After completing the classroom portion of the training, they completed the practical portion, then sat for the National Registry of Emergency Medical Services (NREMT) Certification examination but was unsuccessful. She continued to work as an AEMT while studying for the retest. She passed the Paramedic certification on October 30, 2023. She will be able to continue to serve her community in Roane County.

### *WIOA Adult – Ms. Arp*

Ms. Arp visited the Weirton AJC on June 7, 2021, and was provided with an orientation to WIOA programs, services, etc. Ms. Arp informed One-Stop staff that she was a single mother and was very close to exhausting her unemployment benefits. Ms. Arp had only been receiving \$78.00 per week in unemployment benefits and was also relying on SNAP and Medicaid assistance. She was not receiving any child support and realized she needed to secure a good job if she wanted to provide a better life for herself and her daughter. Ms. Arp was interested in attending the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) Program at the John D. Rockefeller (JDR) Center in Hancock County. She had previously worked as a State Tested Nursing Assistant (STNA), but she was only earning minimum wage and did not receive any benefits. Ms. Arp returned to the Weirton AJC for a scheduled appointment with her Customer Career Planner; completing the required testing and was determined eligible for WIOA. Subsequently, Ms. Arp was approved for participation in the region's ITA program. She started the LPN Program at the JDR Center on August 2, 2021; successfully completing training in May 2022. Ms. Arp received her LPN licensure in August 2022. She secured a full-time job as an LPN on May 31, 2022, at the Country Club in Steubenville, Ohio making \$27.00 per hour with full benefits. Ms. Arp loves her new career and is now able to provide a better life for her and her daughter.

### *WIOA Adult Pre-Apprenticeship Program*

"I am a single mother, a domestic abuse survivor, a mediator and most importantly a woman of faith and loves Christ. I found out about the WIOA program in 2023 walking into the DHHR, seeing a poster hanging up on the wall while I was standing in line waiting my turn to turn in my paperwork to keep receiving my SNAP and medical benefits. I was already working as a CNA at the time through Family Service next to Fairmont College. I wanted to better my future by learning the basics of construction and so I wanted to be part of West Virginia Women's Work Pre-Apprenticeship program. I really enjoyed learning carpentry, masonry, electrical, plumbing and how to operate a forklift and working with other women in the same program. So there's no such thing as a man's job, women can do the same work ethics as men. You can do anything you put your mind to. I am currently certified and working for Morning Star Express LLC doing maintenance work for the church and also doing maintenance jobs around in Fairmont, WV. It's a blessing being part of

West Virginia Women's Works program – they were very supportive and attentive to our needs. I recommend WIOA and this program to other young women that have dreams, because if it wasn't for them I could never afford or been able to complete this program without the help of WIOA program. Thanks so much to all involved in making this happen for the less fortunate because without you we wouldn't be able to further our education. You guys are a true blessing in disguise."

#### *WIOA Youth – K.*

K. is a single mother. While enrolled in the Youth Ready program she obtained a Customer Service Certificate and Practical Nursing Diploma from Randolph Technical Center. She also completed the Phlebotomy Technician program through MedCerts and obtained a Phlebotomy Technician Certificate through the National Health Career Association. She obtained full-time employment at Davis Medical Center on September 19, 2022, as a Lab Assistant starting at \$13.01 per hour plus benefits. She currently works in the outpatient lab, where she loves working with patients, and she has now done over 300 sticks.

#### **For more information, visit:**

##### *Report*

WorkForce West Virginia (Dec. 2023). [Annual Report Narrative on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to the United States Department of Labor - Program Year 2022.](#)

##### *Links*

WorkForce West Virginia

## Wisconsin

Department of Workforce Development

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Wisconsin DWD Partnerships to Support Justice-Involved Jobseekers**

DWD takes pride in its collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) to engage individuals in their care before they are released, and to connect them with DWD jobseeker services after release. DWD equally values its partnerships with the 11 local Workforce Development Boards (WDB) and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), which help make engaging with and training justice-involved individuals possible.

At the foundation of DWD's work with DOC, local WDBs, and WTCS are the job labs DWD maintains in DOC facilities. These job labs function similarly to the job centers DWD operates in communities around the state. The state recognized the need to place additional focus on reaching harder-to-serve populations to meet employers' workforce needs. Among the targeted groups, DWD identified the need to engage justice-involved individuals in advance of their release from DOC care to re-establish connections to the workforce, so these individuals are best prepared to return to their communities.

DWD identified and implemented several strategies for preparing justice-involved individuals for employment upon release, including:

- Development of pre-apprenticeship programming in correctional institutions.
- Incorporation of employment/training programs in juvenile justice institutions.
- Expansion of registered apprenticeship opportunities within correctional institutions.
- Development of strategies to increase employer education and awareness of hiring justice-involved individuals.
- Increasing employer collaboration with apprenticeships, workforce training, and placements of justice-involved individuals.
- Creation of job labs within DOC facilities to provide job readiness, career assessment, and job service programming for soon-to-be-released justice-involved individuals.

DWD opened its first job lab at Oakhill Correctional Institution in 2018. Since then, DWD has opened 10 more job labs in DOC facilities around the state. Ten of the job labs are classroom-style rooms within correctional facilities and one, at New Lisbon

Correctional Institution, is a mobile lab. In 2023, DWD and DOC continue to partner on innovative solutions and partnerships. This includes additional collaboration between the two agencies to create job labs at local probation and parole offices throughout Wisconsin, as well as new partnerships with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for two new job labs at the Wisconsin Resource Center in Oshkosh.

### *Other State Funds Activities*

During PY22, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) continued to administer Gov. Evers' Workforce Solutions Initiative. This investment of over \$150 million in American Rescue Plan Act-State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA-SLFRF) funding has resulted in the following:

- **Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI)**  
WAI is a \$20 million investment in work-based learning and/or wage-subsidized occupational skills training for individuals who experienced negative economic impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds were awarded to each of Wisconsin's 11 local WDBs. Since its inception on October 1, 2021, this program has seen significant co-enrollment with WIOA Title I programs. DWD's Division of Employment and Training (DET) is using this pilot project to collect data on increased participant success when receiving wage-replacement supportive services while engaged in training. This innovative pilot ensures participant success by providing wage replacement subsidies to individuals engaged in work-based or classroom learning opportunities. The project realizes greater flexibility than more traditional workforce funding and offers opportunities for co-enrollment and braided funding. To date, the Worker Advancement Initiative has served over 3,500 individuals statewide.
- **Workforce Innovation Grants (WIG)**  
This grant program is a \$130 million investment in a wide range of innovative strategies to address local workforce and economic concerns. These grants support 27 unique projects addressing shortages of workers in healthcare, childcare, education, advanced manufacturing, skilled trades, and more. Additionally, these grants support projects addressing housing shortages and transportation solutions for low-income workers; access to affordable and high-quality childcare for workers; and entrepreneurial skills training. To date, these projects have made a positive impact on over 27,000 individuals, including occupational skills training for more than 2,000 individuals, support for the construction of seven occupational skills training centers, and safe and reliable workforce transportation for over 3,000 workers.
- **The Worker Connection (WC) Program**  
This program is a \$10 million investment in workforce system navigation assistance and outreach to populations that are disconnected from workforce services. The program has realized early successes in connecting individuals with myriad workforce services and helping them to navigate the various types of assistance available to them. The program has more than 2,200 participants.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Comprehensive Employment Planning Toolkit (CEPT) Evaluation**

The CEPT Employment Plan pilot is a joint effort by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD)'s Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG), TAA, and WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs to use the same electronic employment plan tool developed in the Comprehensive Employment Planning Toolkit (CEPT) application available through the Division of Employment and Training's Application (DET APPs) portal. The CEPT includes the following tools: Employment Plan, Action Steps List, Self-sufficiency, Budget, Community Resources Search, and links 15 to career exploration and Labor Market Information (LMI) data through WisConomy. This evaluation aims to answer the following research question: "Does CEPT improve employment planning, participation in action steps, and use of self-sufficiency, budget, community, career exploration, and LMI resources?"

From July 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, staff working in Workforce Development Areas (WDAs) 5, 6, 7, and 9 on the TAA, JVSG, and Title I programs piloted the use of the CEPT. In late December 2022, a survey was administered to career planners and job center service participants (primarily WIOA Title I programs). Forty-two career planners responded, providing quantitative data with qualitative context on their use and impressions of the tools. One hundred fifteen job center participants responded to a separate survey with quantitative data on the use of the different tools and their perceived effectiveness. Results from career planner and customer feedback have identified areas of needed improvement of the tool—some of which have already been implemented—and areas where additional training and/or adjusted guidelines will be useful to career planners. After the survey analysis is completed in Q2 PY23, the results will be augmented with administrative data on performance metrics for the CEPT users to understand the impact of the tool. Results will influence the final policy and function of CEPT once the CEPT has been updated. Based on these findings, training will be created and provided to career planners. The findings and recommendations arising from the evaluation will be shared in a report hosted on the WDIS website and through a webinar advertised to Title I program staff, partners, and leadership.

#### **Other Evaluation Activities**

- Assessing Effectiveness of Services
- Support to Communities Evaluation
- Worker Connection Evaluation
- Career Pathways Advancement Evaluation
- Labor market information research and reports
- RESEA Evaluation

- Title IV Evaluation
- WIOA Title II Action Research

### *Continuous Improvement*

The Data Stewards and Evaluation and Research Workgroups, comprised of members 14 from all WIOA core partners, established the following workplan for moving forward over the next four years with evaluation of WIOA programs:

1. With partner and stakeholder feedback, develop and prioritize learning questions and evidence gathering through a four-year learning agenda and annual evidence plan.
2. Use all four methods of evidence-gathering, including foundational fact-finding, performance measurement, policy analysis, and evaluation.
3. Create data-based continuous improvement loops through qualitative customer and staff feedback loops and quantitative dashboards.
4. Use research and evaluation, data steward, and performance advisory meetings to learn from partner evaluations and to partner on evaluation across WIOA partners.
5. Conduct evidence-gathering through internal resources and external partnerships.

DWD continues to use existing methods of evaluation such as annual compliance program and fiscal monitoring of local WBDs, data validation, and performance evaluation. WIOA programs are partnering with the CWI to establish performance metrics for ongoing performance monitoring and to provide a feedback loop for continuous improvement.

### **Additional Activities**

- Evidence-based policy and decision-making collaboration
- Coleridge Democratize Our Data Challenge Reports

### **The DWD Workforce Data Integration System (WDIS) Website**

Includes its current learning agenda and evidence plan.

### **Labor Market Information Research Reports**

Provides median earnings by demographic from the American Community Survey (ACS) both statewide and by county.

### **Other Reports**

- The Rehabilitation Counseling and Educators Journal
- RESEA Evaluation Report



- Workforce Co-enrollment Report
- Wisconsin's Title II Partners Report

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

The State has the following approved waivers, which were initially approved by DOL on December 31, 2020, and extended on June 6, 2022, with the approval of Wisconsin's PY22–PY23 WIOA State Plan modification:

- Waiver allowing the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY), ages 16–24.
- Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all Governor's Reserve and local area formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver allowing the use of ITAs for ISY**

ETA approved the State's request to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 16–24 through the end of PY23. In addition to OSY, the State may use ITAs for ISY, ages 16–21. Please note, that ETA aligned the ISY age for ITAs with the minimum age for working.

#### **Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all Governor's Reserve and local area formula youth funds on OSY**

ETA approved the state's request to waive the requirement that the state expend 75 percent of the Governor's Reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY through the end of PY23. The State may lower the expenditure requirement of the Governor's Reserve and local area youth fund expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY.

### *Impact on Performance*

No information provided for this section.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

Department of Workforce Development. [\*Wisconsin WIOA Annual Report – Program Year 2022\*](#).

[Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Journal](#)

[Population and Co-enrollment Reports](#)

*Links*

Department of Workforce Development

- [Workforce Data Integration System \(WDIS\)](#)
- [Population and Co-enrollment Dashboard](#)
- [Skill Explorer](#)
- [Wisconsin Career Pathways](#)
- [WisConomy](#)

## Wyoming

Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

### Use of State Funds

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council invested portions of the Governor's 15 percent allotment into the workforce system through several projects brought to the council's attention. Some of these projects included workforce center staff training, non-cloth office chairs for clients to sit in, grants to sector partnerships, a grant to a youth organization to reach out to a large number of youths regarding career pathways and WIOA in the state, and a large investment into Wyoming's new MIS.

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

##### **Wyoming Grown Program**

Wyoming's population has slightly increased, but the state still has more job opportunities and economic growth than the population to fill those needs. The Wyoming Grown program is one of those initiatives utilized to reach out to potential employees. It is vital in promoting Wyoming's opportunities to the new mobile workforce. With its open spaces and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities, Wyoming provides the perfect backdrop to capitalize on this national trend.

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

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

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Department of Family Services Partnership (DFS)**

DWS and DFS continue to work together to provide a holistic approach to serving individuals with the long-term goal of self-sustainable employment. The Wyoming Workforce Centers provide universal access to all jobseekers through "basic career services" and emphasize providing targeted services to "individuals with barriers to employment," which includes low-income individuals. Low-income individuals, including individuals participating in the SNAP, are given priority of service when it comes to receiving higher-intensity services like "individualized career services" or training from the WIOA Adult program.

Since the WIOA Title I Adult program focuses on low-income individuals, DWS and DFS have monthly meetings to discuss strategies and approaches to providing streamlined services and increase co-enrollments. These strategies embody a “Coaching for Success” philosophy, which include the following:

- Team approach to case management.
- Funding streams and how to braid funds between TANF and WIOA programs.
- Colors Personality Assessments and how our personality impacts our relationships.
- Communication—Unconscious Biases and Managing Emotions.
- Coaching skills using several coaching methods.

DFS and DWS partner together to create self-sufficient, responsible, and successful individuals through the TANF Work Program known in Wyoming as the Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities (POWER) Work program. Using DFS federal TANF funds, POWER allows Wyoming parents with barriers to employment to earn cash assistance through an employment-focused, pay-after-performance TANF work program administered by DWS. The individuals who enroll in POWER also meet the eligibility requirements of WIOA. As a result, POWER participants are co-enrolled in the WIOA Adult program when appropriate to meet the needs of each participant best.

The Wyoming Child Support Program (CSP), in partnership with DWS, established the Work Initiative Network (WIN) program to improve earning outcomes for Non-Custodial Parents (NCPs). The program used coaching and a case management approach that increases the participants’ capacity to move toward permanent unsubsidized employment so they can make reliable child support payments, which improves the financial well-being of both custodial and noncustodial parents and their children. DWS WIN Case Managers refer eligible participants to the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs when appropriate to best meet the needs of each individual participant.

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

During the Federal Fiscal Year 2023, DFS served the following:

- POWER – Served approximately 1,040 individuals. This includes adults and children within POWER families.
- WIN – 30 participants.
- DADs – 51 participants were served in pre-program and program activities.

*Other State Funds Activities*

- “Yes, WIOA Can!” Initiative
- Workforce Development Training Fund (WDTF)

**Evaluations***Activities and Methodology*

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC) has conducted four strategic planning sessions to identify measurable areas for the 2024 State Plan. The Council has contracted with Northern Illinois University to provide the evaluation component for WIOA Title I. The evaluation has not been completed as of the writing of the document but should be done soon.

*Continuous Improvement*

The One-Stop System in Wyoming continued to seek innovative and cost-effective procedures and delivery of services throughout PY22. Wyoming utilized One-Stop Center certifications, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) committee meetings, WorkforceGPS webinars, and discussions with other states when evaluating best practices. During PY22, DWS continues to be in the process of implementing the following:

- All 18 workforce centers are utilizing an electronic tracking system for walk-in traffic. The data collected is being reviewed and modified based on feedback received from clients and workforce center staff. The next phase will be to determine how to utilize the data to make informed decisions that will strengthen the services provided. Wyoming provided more training opportunities to all Workforce Center staff.
- Through completing the One-Stop certifications, more educational materials are shared with all staff on the WIOA programs and required partnerships.
- The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Team attended the annual NASWA conference virtually.
- DWS continues to conduct program-specific meetings and all-staff virtual Meetings with all Wyoming workforce center staff. These meetings have provided the platform for general information sharing and cross-training opportunities.
- The Wyoming Workforce Centers implemented an Employee of the Month program to help with staff retention. The recognition program is peer-based utilizing DWS core values. The department recognizes the importance of staff as a departmental strength and a major resource in achieving departmental objectives. The employee recognition program is intended to acknowledge the superior contribution and achievement of staff in meeting the department’s mission and vision. It is also intended to promote and encourage a positive climate wherein staff members feel appreciated for their service and affirmed in their employment with DWS as a career of choice.

- During this program year, DWS Center Managers and One-Stop Program Managers completed the Dare to Lead development program. This program was created by Brene Brown and was designed to help the DWS team cultivate courage-based leadership skills and create a culture of courage, trust, and resilience.

### *Reports*

The Research and Planning Division of DWS provides:

- A monthly Trends publication
- 2023 Wyoming Workforce Annual Report
- A series of Labor Market Information webinar videos
- Commuting patterns
- Current employment statistics

### **Waivers**

#### *Waiver Implemented*

The State currently does not have any active WIOA waivers.

#### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

#### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

### **Success Stories**

#### *RESEA – Brian*

Brian was a RESEA referral. He had worked for over 20 years as a seasonal worker at Western Sugar when he attended his first RESEA appointment. At Brian's first appointment, he indicated that he did not know what type of services he could receive at the workforce center, and he expressed being tired of having a seasonal job and wanted assistance finding permanent employment.

Brian began to receive the following services:

- **Assessment of Skills and Employment Needs** - The RESEA Workforce Specialist reviewed Brian's skills, employment history, and job preferences.
- **Job Search Assistance** - Brian received assistance with his W@W registration, professional résumé, and completion of application to complete his required UI job search requirements.
- **Career Counseling** - Together, Brian and his Workforce Specialist created his employment goal and developed a plan to achieve it.

Brian was most focused on obtaining year-round employment as a laborer. He was able to achieve this goal. Brian indicated that the RESEA appointments helped him gain confidence, which helped him to apply for a position he never felt he would meet the qualifications for.

Brian obtained a full-time position at TDS. This is a permanent, year-round position. With the assistance of the RESEA program, Brian only received eight weeks of Unemployment Insurance benefits.

#### *WIOA Adult Participant and DADS (TANF) Program Co-enrollment – Geoffrey*

In July 2022, Geoffrey was a 32-year-old single custodial father of four children who was unemployed and experiencing multiple barriers to employment. He was referred to the DADs Making a Difference program by the POWER TANF Work Program case manager and was selected to begin the program in August 2022.

During his enrollment with the DADS program, Geoffrey received various services, including parenting classes, healthy relationships, financial literacy, goal setting, resource development, OSHA-30, and First Aid/CPR certification, and more. He also received counseling services through the DADs Program Counselor, as well as participated in several community service activities. Along with life skills training, Geoffrey attended truck driver training through Sage Technical Services.

At this time, he was also co-enrolled in the WIOA Adult program to receive additional employment and support services. He was later referred to Vocational Rehabilitation for specialized services for reemployment assistance. Geoffrey completed all programs and graduated from the DADs program with his Class A Commercial Driver's License in October 2022. Geoffrey was offered a job with the City of Cheyenne as a Field Technician beginning January 2023 and remains happily employed as of this date.

#### *WIOA Adult Participant, WP Participant, and DVR Co-enrollment – Bobbi*

The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) was working with Bobbi, an older (60-year-old), justice-involved individual when they made the referral to the WIOA Program. The workforce center staff attended a joint meeting with the DVR Counselor and Bobbi. Bobbi was the sole provider for her family and was receiving Social Security Disability Insurance benefits, but she believed she could return to work and obtain new skills. Bobbi was enrolled in the WIOA Adult program. Through the comprehensive assessment, DVR and the workforce center staff created a shared individual service plan. The plan identified a holistic approach to services where both programs braided funds to assist Bobbi.

Bobbi started college at Eastern Wyoming Community College as she only needed a few remaining classes to complete her AAS degree in Business Administration. Both programs (DVR and WIOA) assisted with this activity. DVR covered some additional barriers identified, and WIOA covered parts of Bobbi's post-secondary expenses. Bobbi also began to receive basic career services, including work readiness opportunities (résumé writing tips and tricks, interviewing techniques, and a mock interview), job searching, counseling and guidance, and support services. Bobbi is enrolled in her last semester and continues to do well with the support of DVR and the WIOA Adult program.

#### *WIOA Adult Participant, WP Participant, and JVSG Program Participant Co-enrollment – Eric*

Eric was a homeless veteran recently released from the county jail. He had been incarcerated for the past 18 months. Eric served in the U.S. Air Force for over a decade, from 1977–1988, before being honorably discharged and transitioning into a civilian career as a Commercial Driver License (CDL) driver.

During his period of incarceration, Eric lost all personal documentation, including his phone, social security card, driver's license, and birth certificate. With the aid of the WIOA program, DWS was able to obtain certified copies of these documents and helped Eric to reinstate his CDL with the State of Wyoming successfully. Through a needs assessment, Eric and his Workforce Specialist were able to identify other services he needed to be able to obtain and maintain employment. Some of these services included but were not limited to, an eye exam, purchasing glasses, assisting Eric with the fees for his DOT physical, minutes on his cell phone, bus passes, and interview clothing. Additionally, Eric's Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Workforce Specialist helped him achieve stable housing and employability resources (professional résumé and mock interviews.) Eric is now interviewing with trucking companies and is on his way to attaining self-sufficiency in the CDL industry.

### **For more information, visit:**

#### *Reports*

Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

- [Wyoming Annual Narrative Report Program Year 2022.](#)
- Bullard, D., et al. [2023 Wyoming Workforce Annual Report.](#)
- Kofoed, A. (June 2020). [An Introduction to Colorado-Wyoming Commuting Patterns](#) in "2020 Wyoming Workforce Annual Report, Chapter 9: Commuting".

#### *Links*

Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

[Wyoming Labor Force Trends](#)



[Current Employment Statistics](#)

[Labor Market Information webinar videos](#)

## American Samoa

Department of Human Resources - Employment & Training Division

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

#### **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**

The Territory hosts its SYEP for individuals ages 14–24; this is the biggest activity that is also strongly supported by the Governor's Reserve. The WIOA number of participants for Summer 2023 is 150. Over the years, this SYEP has enabled and equipped the youth population to pursue their field of interest or a career path. In the last three years, enrollment for the Summer Youth Employment program has ranged from 500 to 1,000 participants. The program incorporates hands-on training with Employers of the government, private and for-profit organizations, as well as the semi-autonomous organizations in the learning paid/non-paid experience. The buy-ins from Employers have been exponential as this is an avenue that is utilized to properly assess jobseekers for the hard-to-find positions that are needed in their agencies or establishments.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

In reference to the Territory's Conditionally Approved State Plan Modification, it was agreed upon that amongst the AS WIOA—alongside its core partners: Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and the Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning (AELEL) program—agreed to report on any ETA waivers. However, there are none available during this reporting period.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *WIOA Youth – Leann*

“[...] It came to a point where I realized that the most valuable lessons are learned through experience rather than reading or being told about them. Overall, as I'm still learning and gradually growing, my advice for the upcoming participants is to manifest quietly and pace yourself. Always aim for perfection even when it's not. Stay committed to what you really want and push yourself past your limits, because really, there is no limit. Be willing to give yourself that fire of a mindset that'll not only help you on [sic] the long run, but also during tough situations. In life, everything is just noise, you choose how you want to live in this world. Never think your dreams are too big or too small, speak it into existence and it'll surely come to you and in all that you do, never forget to put God first.”

### *Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) 2022 – Charity*

“Joining SYEP this year gave me a different perspective of the work force in a different field. I come from a family of educators, and I feel like I have been in education my whole life. So, working for DHSS Childcare program gave me a fresh outlook in a different field. Lessons learned from the field are punctuality (come to work on time), consistency, collaboration, following protocol, patience, hard work and more. These were lessons learned from the division I worked with and the people I worked with. I am not a person of many words but working here helped me find my voice and be able to work with others.”

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[\*American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act \(AS WIOA\): Annual Narrative Report.\*](#)

*Links*

Department of Human Resources - Employment & Training Division

## Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

CNMI Department of Labor – Workforce Investment Agency

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

- Rotary Club of Saipan monthly membership meeting.
- Professional Development with Core Partner, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Of the 15 percent of the Governor's Set-Aside, five percent is reserved for costs of administration of the Title I WIOA programs. The remaining ten percent is used for associated expenditures in continuous improvement activities, pilot programs such as the development of pre-apprenticeship programs, dissemination of information through websites and information systems on the training services such as the ETPL, performance, supportive services, etc. This includes participation in career fairs, joint partner outreaches, financial aid clinics, and industry specific membership meetings that fostered great connections with both jobseekers and employers.

These engagements have led to the recruitment of participants and lead to new and returning training partnerships. A collaborative approach in providing joint outreach with one of their core partners, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has created more accessibility to participants with barriers, better communication regarding mutual consumers and leveraging of resources.

Outreach or exhibits at training provider scholarship clinics has also provided opportunities for financially strapped individuals to get one-on-one assistance with applications, navigation of the scholarship process and access to support services from the program. These outreach events create a supportive environment where financially challenged individuals can receive personalized guidance, answer specific questions, and receive valuable insights tailored to their unique circumstances. The one-on-one assistance goes beyond mere information dissemination; it demystifies the process by creating a clearer understanding of eligibility criteria, requirements, and the overall scholarship landscape. In essence, these outreaches and exhibits become catalysts for breaking down financial barriers to education by providing direct, hands-on support to those who need it the most.

Customized presentations for industry specific organizations have developed increased understanding of workforce development opportunities, tailored training strategies, and proactive approaches to their dynamic challenges and needs. For PY22, the

Commonwealth actively engaged in a total of 71 events, which significantly influenced participant recruitment, the establishment of returning work-based training partnerships, and the onboarding of new training providers.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **Evaluation Study**

The University of Guam's Public Administration Graduate Program Saipan Cohort, in collaboration with the CNMI's State Workforce Development Board and the WIOA Title I program administrator, has initiated an evaluation study under the WIOA Title I program. Mandated by WIOA, this study assesses the efficiency and impact of Title I Core program activities to optimize federal funds. Focused on continuous improvement, the evaluation specifically examines the effectiveness of WIOA business services in influencing employment hiring and retention, especially within work-based training programs.

The study evaluates the WIOA business customer base during PY21 in Saipan, Rota, and Tinian. It covers all Title I programs, including Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

An evaluation of WIOA's Title I core program activities is crucial to measure federal funding efficiency and effectiveness for continuous improvement. The impact study assesses the effectiveness of WIOA Business Services, comparing the impacts on employment hiring and retention between employers engaging in work-based training programs and those not receiving WIOA services. A supplemental survey gauges awareness of WIOA services and explores potential partnerships for building a skilled workforce and reducing turnover. This comprehensive approach provides insights into the broader impact and potential enhancements of the WIOA Title I program activities.

The survey was distributed to WIOA training providers and businesses that attended WIOA outreach presentations.

### *Continuous Improvement*

The study provided the following recommendations:

- If there are no personnel onboard the WIOA agency to conduct the survey, the identified budget could be used to contract a certified, unbiased third-party consultant to design, conduct, analyze and present the data to the governing board or party of the WIOA program.
- Throughout the process of contacting the training providers, the cohort observed that some participants did not recognize they were part of the program. The cohort is unsure of how this could be possible, but to help mitigate confusion or miscommunication, the cohort respectfully recommends conducting regular check-ins with registered participants of the program to see how services are being provided and to open lines of communication between the WIOA agency and the training participants. This will also allow for more feedback from both parties on how they can improve services.

- The cohort is not familiar with the budget constraints of the program or that any exists; however, the cohort respectfully recommends conducting public outreach activities to increase awareness within the community specifically, the business community, so that they are made visible to employers who need financial employment assistance to help with their day-to-day operations with their businesses.
- The cohort recommends a possible rebranding of the agency to keep up with the times in an effort to stay relevant within the Commonwealth.
- The cohort also respectfully recommends that WIOA put together a living workbook subject to ongoing revision that will list and detail the different types of training available for those seeking assistance from the WIOA program. This could easily be done by requesting from various training providers a summary of what types of training trainees may expect if they were to participate in the WIOA program under their organization/company. This will offer insight into what types of services may be made available and paint a clearer picture of what exactly the trainee will be trained in when signing up for that company.
- Likewise, the WIOA program coordinators can be provided access to the types of training each organization offers to conduct better placement increasing program satisfaction between trainee and trainer.
- Evaluations are often an overlooked process in an organization. Oftentimes, evaluations help save an organization when key repeated factors of failure and even success are brought to light. Evaluations are what help an organization improve services and is what can make or break the success of a program.
- WIOA can identify a budget to conduct evaluations on performance and output keeping in mind that the survey should be tailored to obtain a general feel on program satisfaction.
- And finally, the cohort recommends maintaining current data within the WIOA program to keep the information as accurate as possible. This is especially important during audit processes and in ensuring that the correct information is provided to those conducting oversight on the program for compliance. Maintenance of accurate data is also important to maintain the efficacy of the program so that maximum output of performance is realized during the duration of the existence of the WIOA program.

### *Reports*

The study provided the following conclusion:

“The WIOA program benefits both industry professionals as well as individuals who are looking to join the workforce. This study provided significant findings including data to assist in providing information to better support the program as a whole. In a professional capacity, training providers will be able to identify the different skill sets necessary for each specific job function in their company. Upon assessment of the needs regarding positions and job placement in their company, training providers will have a better understanding of what type of individuals with particular skills could be

the best fit for that position. Once an individual has been identified for a position, trainers will be able to help them succeed in the position by offering hands-on training to hopefully employ the trainee to a more permanent role within the company.”

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

No waivers were requested by the Commonwealth’s Department of Labor Workforce Investment Agency for PY22.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *Youth – David*

“I was a little anxious to be in a new setting when I began this WIOA program with Priority Care, but I was also eager to advance in the career I wanted. This program was a huge assistance for me because before I knew about WIOA, I was interested in the DFEMS Fire Academy, which had to be canceled due to tragic circumstances. With the WIOA program, I was able to advance my knowledge, abilities, and experience as an EMT while pursuing the field I am passionate about. Being a fast-paced sailing course, the training was challenging to begin with, but we are grateful for the curriculum and instructors. This course gave me the knowledge I needed to become an EMT.”

### *Adult – Justice*

“During my first month in training, I ran into several challenges, such as having to arrive early and learning the typical routes taken to our patient’s homes. However, after my first and second months, I started to manage my time more effectively and I began memorizing the routes to our patients. I started looking more into medical fields after training to become more knowledgeable about medicine. Although I first struggled, I can now claim that the training has helped me mature and learn more about the medical industry while also helping me comprehend my job better. I’ve already attended two emergency calls during my training, which has also helped me gain new perspectives in life. The WIOA program has helped me in numerous ways, especially as someone just starting a career after high school.”



*Youth – Steve*

“My abilities as an emergency medical technician have improved so far in this work. I now understand the various components of our body and how they function. I’m grateful that I had the opportunity to participate in the WIOA program since it helped me land this job. It had a profound effect on my life and improved who I am as a person and as a father. I wasn’t doing anything before this program, to be honest. I was simply looking for a solid, stable career when the WIOA program helped me locate one.”

*Adult – Estefania*

“I first began my journey as an Administrative Assistant trainee within the Department of Fire and EMS under the WIOA Program. I received training services such as clerical duties that involved filing of documents, assisting clients within the intake office, understanding the roles and duties within the chain of command, assisted with the routing of documents for travel and time keeping for EMS personnel, learned about the data processing specifically for EMS and provided additional assistance pertaining to my duties as an Administrative Assistant within the EMS office when needed. Since the transition from being a WIOA-Trainee within the Department of Fire and EMS, I have gained several skills and acquired a great deal of knowledge within the last seven months. In addition, I was afforded the opportunity to travel alongside several other EMSC personnel to the state of Nevada, namely Reno, to meet with and understand the vital roles that our EMSC key partners play within the EMSC state partnership program. Lastly, I would like to thank my caseworker’s Donyale Deleon Guerrero and Jackie Castro and the rest of the WIA team for their services and hard work that contributed to my success within the Department of Fire and EMS.”

*Youth – Jessie Rae*

“I am currently a Clerk II at the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical services. Overall, my experience in the work field has been remarkable. If it weren’t for being a WIOA-Trainee in the beginning, I would have never made it this far with becoming a Civil Service employee here at the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services. Since the process of being transitioned, I am confident to say that I have gained many skills and experiences that benefit me now and in the near future. I was able to attend different trainings and gain knowledge about different topics such as etiquette, leadership teamwork, communicating, etc. Those which I am putting to practice every day. Although the work field could be overwhelming at times, but I have met wonderful people throughout this journey who encourage and motivate me to be better than I was yesterday. I am grateful that I was given this opportunity, especially at this young age and straight out of high school. I continue to look forward to see what the Department brings me.”

*Dislocated Worker Grant – Frances*

Frances transitioned immediately to permanent employment with the Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Agrighan as a Community Outreach Worker after the successful completion of the program. She was receiving services under the DWG COVID-19 for

temporary employment from August 16, 2022, to March 31, 2023. She continues her work serving the community of Tinian in emergency management preparedness and aiding in other community events and is appreciative of the WIOA program in the opportunities that she was able to avail of at the time.

#### *Dislocated Worker Grant – Clara*

Clara participated as a Disaster Relief Employee under the DWG COVID-19 assigned to the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force. During this quarter exit, she was able to secure employment at Marianas Medical Center as a full-time front desk assistant starting on April 25, 2023, as a result to her successful work experience as a COVID-19 Logistics and Humanitarian Support Assistant in aiding recovery efforts, maintaining COVID-19 data of outbreak increases and positive cases through community and travel surveillance, and assisting quarantined facilities.

#### **For more information, visit:**

##### *Reports*

[WIOA Annual Statewide Narrative Performance Report PY 2022](#). CNMI Workforce Investment Agency and CNMI Department of Labor.

##### *Links*

CNMI Department of Labor – Workforce Investment Agency

## Guam

Guam Department of Labor

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

##### **Guam Community College (GCC) Ship Repair Boot Camp**

The Guam Community College (GCC) held a graduation ceremony on August 29, 2022, for 17 individuals who received certificates under the Ship Repair Boot Camp training. These graduates were provided with education and training opportunities with workforce partners like the Guam Department of Labor (GDOL). The collaboration between GCC and GDOL continues for those jobseekers who are unemployed or underemployed to begin their careers as entry-level employees. These graduates will be offered jobs with the ship repair facility, the Guam Shipyard, who is an active Guam registered apprenticeship sponsor. The graduates were given training in work ethics, welding, plumbing, pipe fitting, CPR, first aid, OSHA-10, and Work Keys for the duration of the 13-week training program. Work ethics was explained as working with essentials such as attitude, work attendance, appearance, ambition, and accountability and how these are very important for employment and career goals. The boot camp at GCC was developed in partnership with the GDOL, Guam Shipyard and Seafix. GCC was a former vocational technical high school that started with education for trades training and programs and has since expanded into career and technical education and has become Guam's leader in workforce development as a community college.

##### **GCC to Start Construction Boot Camp IV**

In February 2023, a cohort of 20 participants were in training that was “a fast track” in the construction industry through GCC Construction Boot Camp IV. The period for the boot camp was slated to be three months and upon successful completion, those enrolled were to earn certificates will have them considered for a job in the construction industry. The group in the boot camp construction training were also allowed to earn additional certifications in work ethics, Work Keys, OSHA-10, and Heartsavers/CPR/First Aid training. A local business, Black Construction, offered employment to participants successfully completing the boot camp. The Construction Boot Camp is one of 19 pre-apprenticeship programs now offered. GCC last held a Construction Boot Camp in February 2022. A total of nine participants attended and completed the Construction Boot Camp III courses. Training included courses such as Electricity Level 1, Introduction to Carpentry, and Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Level 1. The graduates received certifications for completing the training for Basic First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation. The training program is free and interested applicants are encouraged to fill out the online application and meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Underemployed or unemployed.

- Must have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Must be able to work in the United States.
- Must submit police and court clearances.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

##### **American Job Center Open to Employers**

On October 17, 2022, GDOL announced it has opened its doors with the AJC to encourage businesses to utilize the AJC Training Room and its resources for those who would like to hold training sessions or host job fairs. These businesses can avail themselves of the AJC programs and services to fill job vacancies.

## **Evaluations**

#### *Activities and Methodology*

The Guam Department of Labor (GDOL) has yet to complete the survey evaluation project that was prepared in 2022 but continues assessing and evaluating WIOA programs and partner programs for requirements with programs at the AJC to meet performance goals. Although the Territory has suffered from economic disasters, the pandemic, and most recently, a typhoon that devastated the island on May 24, 2023, the Department remains committed to working diligently with the WIOA partners for Title II and Title IV, the Guam Community College (GCC) and DISID Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

#### *Continuous Improvement*

The AJC staff have proven their efforts to meet these new percentages with the core WIOA programs. The GDOL through the AJC strives to provide the best assistance to all jobseekers and employers including individuals with barriers to employment and individuals with disabilities. Ongoing improvement of services and programs are pursued with the AJC workforce system of services and programs by evaluating participants with the Territory's data-driven policies.

The Territory conducts the evaluation and research project on activities under WIOA core programs with the GDOL and such an ongoing project will be coordinated with and designed in conjunction with the Guam Workforce Development Board (GWDB). The Department will be responsible for administering all respective core programs under WIOA. GDOL will continue to work with required program partners for Title II with GCC and Title IV with DISID/DVR.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

No information provided for this section.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

### *WIOA Island wide Job Fair*

Prior to the typhoon devastating Guam, the current administration with GDOL hosted an island wide job fair on Friday July 1, 2022, the start of PY22. It was held at one of the hotel resorts for all individuals to apply for jobs readily available from hundreds of employers eager to hire qualified and eligible applicants with businesses to restore economic wealth with renewed workforce development. The job fair was held to accommodate all sorts of jobseekers to find jobs readily available with employers from different industries all gathered and collaborated at the job fair.

More than 2,000 residents seeking work attended the Island Wide Job Fair hosted by GDOL in collaboration with the Office of the Governor on Friday, July 1, 2022, at the RIHGA Royal Laguna Resort. This is the most wide-ranging job fair since 2007 with abundant job opportunities available with employers on-site. Hundreds of people filled the hotel ballroom and outer corridors, busy completing applications for the more than 500 job opportunities available from 90 employers across industries such as construction, food and beverage services, military, retail, finance, hotel and lodging, telecommunications and more. The job fair was an opportunity to help families become more secure and gives recent high school and college graduates a way to enter the workforce.

### *University of Guam (UoG) Holding Job Fair*

The UoG Career Development Office held a job fair on Friday, April 28, 2023, at the University's Calvo Field House. GDOL case managers with the AJC were present at the job fair with the table set-up to showcase what the AJC does for jobseekers. Over 50 employers from different segments of the private sector registered for the job fair. The public was invited.

### *GDOL 2023 Youth Summer Program*

GDOL started implementing the PY22 in-school youth (ISY) Summer Employment Program in April 2023. The program commenced on Monday June 19, 2023, with the high school students enrolled to begin their summer jobs in the private sector. The first group engaged in employment experience with private sector employers while the second group of youth participants attended a four-day employment workshop conducted by one of the Department's eligible training providers, Pacific Human Resource Services (PHRS). The program period was for six weeks (June 19 to July 28, 2023) and the youth participants were informed they will be working with various employers for work experience. The first cohort completed the 2023 Workplace and Internship Readiness training in April and the second cohort of Guam's high school students successfully completed the same training in June 2023 to prepare them for the summer ISY Employment Program with the GDOL. With both groups now trained, the 76 high school juniors and seniors experienced the real world of work for the duration of the summer program with the private sector employers. The objective of the training was for a commitment of working 32-hour work weeks to provide the students with components such as workplace readiness, workplace ethics, dress code, communication skills and developing occupational skills training while employed during the ISY summer employment program. The two cohorts of students for PY22 who met eligibility requirements were prepared for the ISY employment program after completing the required training needed for employment and work skills. Over 120 students applied with 76 chosen as qualified for the summer employment training. Eligible students must be enrolled in the 11th or 12th grade, between the ages of 14 and 21, and meet other criteria. All 76 high school juniors and seniors began their six weeks of paid employment with employers aligned to their interests in the types of occupations available. The Department's commitment in preparing their youth is to have them be aware of the WIOA Youth program available at the AJC that provides the youth with paid work experience and training on workplace readiness to help them succeed. The students also received training on résumé writing. All students completed their training for the PY22 program.

#### **For more information, visit:**

##### *Reports*

[PY2022 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: Annual Report Narrative](#). Guam Department of Labor

##### *Links*

Guam Department of Labor

## Palau

State Workforce Development Board  
Palau WIOA Office/American Job Center

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

On June 22, 2021, the President of the Republic of Palau, Surangel Whipps, Jr., closed the Palau WIOA Office, and through his Executive Order (EO) No. 453, the President re-appointed new members for the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) and the LWDB. The SWDB is made up of nine members. The members consist of:

- The President/his designee representing the Office of the President,
- A representative of President of the Senate,
- A representative of House of Delegates,
- The President and the Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce,
- The Chair of the Palau National Scholarship Board,
- The Chair of the Foreign Investment Board,
- The Minister of Finance, and
- The Minister of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism, and Development.

The purpose of the SWDB is to effectuate the requirements of U.S. Public Law 113-128 and supervise the LWDB in its efforts to facilitate job creation and training programs and promote the hiring and retention of Palauan citizens in coordination with national and state entities. The LWDB consisted of 11 members who represented community stakeholders from the private and public sectors of the Republic of Palau.

The members represented the following private and public agencies:

- Palau Livestock Association (PLA),
- Palau Taiwan Farmers Association (PTFA),
- Palau Aquaculture Alliance (PAA),
- Palau Chamber of Commerce (PCC),
- Palau Community Action Agency (PCAA),
- Division of Youth and Career Development (DYCD) through the Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism, & Development (MHRCDT),
- Palau Tourism and Hospitality School of Excellence (PHTSE) through Palau Community College (PCC),
- Division of Finance and Accounting through Ministry of Finance (MOF),
- Belau Boater's Association (BOA),
- Bureau of Human Resources through the Ministry of Human Resource, Culture, Tourism & Development (MHRCTD), and
- The Ministry of Finance (MOF).

The purpose for the LWDB was to manage the program staff and ensure sufficient training to implement the requirements of U.S. Public Law 113-128; to keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports under U.S. Federal law and permit the tracing of funds to a level of expenditure adequate to ensure that the funds have not been spent unlawfully; to maintain records and reports of general performance; and to maintain standardized records that can be reviewed for consistency and compliance with U.S Federal law.

After analyzing the effectiveness of the previous EO (No. 453), President Surangel Whipps, Jr., amended the EO reconstituting the board membership of the State and Local Workforce Boards to comply with WIOA. On September 29, 2023, the President signed the amended EO No. 485. The amended EO added a new member to the SWDB, the Minister of Education (MOE). SWDB now has 10 members. The EO also amended the membership of the Local Board to include the Youth, Media, and Communications Coordinator from the Division of Youth and Career Development from MHRCTD, the Dean of Continuing Education of the Palau Community College (PCC), the Director of the Bureau of National Treasury from MOF, the Director of the Bureau of Development from MHRCTD, the Director of Palau Visitors Authority, the Executive Director/designee from Northern Reef Fisheries Cooperative, a representative from the Bealu Offshore Fisher Incorporated, and the Director of the Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction from MOE. EO No.485 removed the following from the LWDB: Director of Human Resource – MHRCTD, the Chief of the Division of Youth and Career Development, and the Director of Palau Tourism and Hospitality School of Excellence from PCC. LWDB now has 15 members, which includes the Director of Palau WIOA Office.



## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

No information provided for this section.

### *Strategies*

Not applicable.

### *Impact on Performance*

Not applicable.

## Success Stories

No information provided for this section.

## For more information, visit:

### *Reports*

[PY 2023 Annual Narrative Report](#). Local Workforce Development Board and Palau WIOA Office/American Job Center.

### *Links*

State Workforce Development Board

Palau WIOA Office/American Job Center

## Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Workforce Development Program  
Department of Economic Development and Commerce

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

#### **Job Fairs**

During PY22, the Employment Service Division (DSE) offered assistance to job fairs organized by the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources (PR DLHR), governmental agencies, veteran organizations, and non-governmental organizations. In PY22, DSE actively engaged in 64 job fair activities across the Island, offering comprehensive employment and placement services. The fairs served different purposes depending on the community they were targeting. DSE partnered with the National Guard Fairs and the American Legion of Puerto Rico to collaborate on specific events. Additionally, DSE participated in residential fairs aimed at assisting low-income individuals living in public housing to find employment opportunities. Furthermore, DSE has a collaborative agreement with the Puerto Rico Police to provide job opportunities in communities with high crime rates. Lastly, DSE offers its services at fairs for inmates upon their request.

#### **Hardwick Tactical (Work-Based Training (WBT) Initiative)**

This is a non-profit company created in operating in Delaware and Puerto Rico. Hardwick Tactical specializes in strategic uniform manufacturing projects for the U.S. Department of Defense. They have 85 employees who are part of targeted populations, including people with disabilities, ex-convicts, and veterans. A total of \$592,610.33 funds were delegated to train and certify these 44 apprentices as sewing machine operators under RAP.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

In the Work-Based Training (WBT) Initiative, facilitated through Governor's Reserve delegation contracts, Puerto Rico prioritizes on-the-job learning (OJL) with related instruction (IR) within the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP). This approach, endorsed by public policy, is supported by a DOL-approved waiver, enabling up to 90 percent reimbursement for OJT. This strategy, implemented with employers to train new and incumbent workers, aims to create 57 new jobs, prevent the layoff of nine incumbent workers, and ensure nationally recognized certifications for all participants.

1. Puerto Rico Film Academy, Inc. - Is a non-profit organization dedicated to artistic events production. The organization wanted to recruit and train its first employees under the Registered Apprenticeship Program in the following occupations: one Lead

writer, six screen writers and two office managers. A total of \$428,199.51 funds were delegated to train and certify these nine apprentices.

2. Dulzura Borincana - Is a company founded in 1998, it has 34 employees and are currently launching their new products, introducing new processes and technology; and is in the process of expanding their operations outside Puerto Rico. A total of \$437,843.25 were delegated to retrain nine incumbent workers and four new workers to be certified under the Registered Apprenticeship Program in the following occupations: cooks, distribution and warehousing, office manager, and industrial manufacturing technician.
3. Politécnico Amigó - Is a non-profit organization, that offers an educational vocational training program for adolescents and dropouts and/or at-risk youth between the ages of 16 and 21. A total of \$513,000.00 funds were delegated to provide services to 50 school dropouts or at-risk youth who are in school to obtain a credential in one of the following occupations: beauty apprentice, pet grooming, barber apprentice, computer assembly and repair, computer course, electrician apprentice, and refrigeration and air conditioning apprentice technician.

## Evaluations

### *Activities and Methodology*

#### **RESEA Program Evaluation**

The RESEA program evaluation was requested by the new statute in 2021, and the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources published a Request for Proposal. The Policy Research Group was chosen to conduct the evaluation, and in March 2023, a contract agreement was signed to begin the impact evaluation. Weekly meetings have been held since then to define the scope of the evaluation, including an assessment of the current RESEA programs and their relation to the UI program. The impact evaluation project will span four years.

### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

## Waivers

### *Waiver Implemented*

The Commonwealth has three approved waivers until June 30, 2024:

- Waiver to increase on-the-job training (OJT) employer reimbursement by up to 90 percent.
- Waiver of the requirement under WIOA 129(A)(4), and 20 CFR 681.410 that states and local areas must expend a minimum of 75 percent OSY formula funds.
- Waiver to WIOA Section 134(A) to use of funds reserved by the Governor to provide statewide rapid response activities, including disaster relief employment to affected areas (WIOA Section 134(A) statewide employment and training activities).

### *Strategies*

#### **Waiver to increase OJT employer reimbursement by up to 90 percent**

The state board implemented public policy prioritizing OJT activity for companies committed to the registered apprenticeship program (RAP). This waiver allows businesses in Puerto Rico to adapt swiftly to technological and market changes by enhancing their ability to expand and remain competitive through cost-effective OJT options tailored to their specific development goals. The reduced match requirement, especially beneficial for new startups and small- to medium-sized businesses, presents an attractive and financially feasible incentive, expanding opportunities to utilize the OJT model for hiring and training new workers. From an economic development perspective, the increase in both the quantity and quality of the labor force stimulates Puerto Rico's economic competence and competitiveness.

#### **Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas must expend a minimum of 75 percent OSY formula funds**

This waiver will be valid until June 30, 2024. The Commonwealth continues its efforts to provide employment and education services for OSY. Given the economic growth the island is currently experiencing, it is imperative to promote the holistic development of youth to enhance their economic self-sufficiency, thereby addressing barriers to employment and access to education for both OSY and in-school youth (ISY) populations.

#### **Waiver to use of funds reserved by the Governor to provide statewide rapid response activities, including disaster relief employment to affected areas**

DOL approved a waiver to allow flexibility in the use of funds reserved by the Governor of Puerto Rico to provide statewide rapid response activities to instead provide statewide employment and training activities, including disaster relief employment to affected areas.

### *Impact on Performance*

#### **Waiver to increase OJT employer reimbursement by up to 90 percent**

This waiver, in effect until June 30, 2024, has proven instrumental in aiding LWDA's to attract new employers to the workforce system. For example, during PY22, 14 LWDA's utilized this waiver, engaging 171 employers and 1,568 employees, including 953 adults and 615 dislocated workers. The total expenditure amounted to \$9,239,516. The waiver significantly contributed to increased participation from both employees and employers, illustrating highly satisfactory performance by LWDA's.

LWDAs that benefited most from the waiver, based on expenditure information, include North Central (\$2,218,758), San Juan (\$1,836,160), and Southeast (\$1,042,524). Considering Puerto Rico's labor and business sector context, the impact of the waiver extends to enhancing opportunities for job skills improvement, job creation, and business sustainability across various economic regions. As indicated by data provided by the LWDAs, Puerto Rico anticipates increased participation from employers, adults, dislocated workers, and youth, along with increased fund investment for PY23.

**Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas must expend a minimum of 75 percent OSY formula funds**

The approval of waivers in previous years significantly influenced the increased participation of ISY. The seven local areas that utilized the waiver collectively reported expenditures totaling \$2.6 million during PY22. North Central LWDA reported the highest expenditures, while La Montaña reported the largest number of participants. Additionally, the participating LWDAs continued to deliver services to OSY, and the data indicates that the provision of OSY services did not decline. In simpler terms, the number of OSY is approximately equal to ISY, with 1,543 OSY and 1,826 ISY.

**Waiver to use of funds reserved by the Governor to provide statewide rapid response activities, including disaster relief employment to affected areas**

Under this waiver, the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development and Commerce (DEDC) allocated state funds to local areas for the creation of temporary jobs following Hurricane Fiona's impact in September 2022. Additionally, work experiences for OSY related to the emergency were developed. Temporary jobs were created to assist municipalities with recovery and humanitarian aid in areas impacted by the hurricane. The jobs activities were carried out through 12 local areas to address emergency needs, including cleaning, disinfecting common areas, debris collection, assistance in distributing essential materials, food collection and disposal, safety protocol guidance, support for emergency management-related call centers, and disaster-related information requests. A total of 775 participants were impacted, with an investment of \$4,160,258.26.

## Success Stories

### *Out-of-School Youth*

Caguas/Guayama recognized an OSY from Trujillo Alto who excelled in various services received at the AJC, including work experience, leadership, labor market information, and secondary skills training. Currently he is studying Barbering and Styling at National University College (NUC) in Carolina and aims to establish a business after graduation.

In Manatí/Dorado, an 18-year-old migrant from the mainland U.S. moved to Puerto Rico without completing secondary school but demonstrated determination. After completing Alternative High School Services, through an ITA Account, she is pursuing an Associate Degree in Nursing Sciences with a focus on excellence.

In Caguas/Guayama, a former business owner was forced to close her cafeteria due to COVID-19. She received financial education, pre-vocational services, workforce preparation, and coaching. After a work experience opportunity related to COVID-19, she secured a regular job, followed by an individual training account in Office Systems. Graduating with honors, she successfully transitioned to a new career path.

*Dislocated Worker – Henry*

A 60-year-old Dislocated Worker from Mayaguez aspired to teach sign language to the audio-impaired population. His motivation is that he has noticed that a lot of companies do not have interpreters and this population cannot receive assisted service, required by federal laws, targeting people with disabilities. After completing a sign language course, he applied for a position with Sorenson as an interpreter. The follow-up revealed he was working at Ramón E. Rodríguez Díaz Elementary School, fulfilling his goal. He expressed interest in participating in an advanced-level sign language course.

*Veteran Success Stories*

One veteran successfully secured a position in the manufacturing industry, specifically in technical roles like Test Technician, where they were responsible for testing computer boards at Collins Aerospace in Santa Isabel. Additionally, another veteran was employed as a Security Guard by a federal contractor that had a contract with the Puerto Rico National Guard. The DVOP successfully secured employment for a veteran as a Military Store Clerk in Fort Buchanan, Guaynabo. Additionally, another veteran was hired as a supervisor at Wendy's Restaurant in Humacao, earning an annual salary of \$30,000.

Furthermore, three veterans were able to find meaningful employment with salaries ranging from \$24,000 to \$47,000. Seventeen veterans were referred from the Referral Connection for Transitioning Service Member or Spouse program, originating from U.S. military bases in the USA, Germany, and local military duty stations. These veterans sought a connection with the Puerto Rico JVSG Program to receive employment assistance. Efforts have been made during PY23 to hire the remaining vacant positions in the JVSG program, which currently has: 1) DVOP and 2) LVER positions available as of the date of this report.

**For more information, visit:***Reports*

Conexión Laboral (Dec. 2023). [PR WIOA Annual Report PY 2022](#). Department of Economic Development and Commerce.

*Links*

Puerto Rico Workforce Development Program

Department of Economic Development and Commerce/  
[Departamento de Desarrollo Económico y Comercio \(DDEC\)](#)

## U.S. Virgin Islands

U.S. Virgin Islands Workforce Development Board

### Use of State Funds

#### *Good Jobs Initiative*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Adult Priority Service*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Other State Funds Activities*

Not applicable.

### Evaluations

#### *Activities and Methodology*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Continuous Improvement*

No information provided for this section.

#### *Reports*

No information provided for this section.

### Waivers

#### *Waiver Implemented*

Waiver of WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720(b) to increase on-the-job training (OJT) employer reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.



*Strategies*

No information provided for this section.

*Impact on Performance*

No information provided for this section.

**Success Stories***Adult*

A Transitioning Service Member visited the One-Stop Center on March 1, 2023. An initial assessment was done, and she informed her case manager she was interested in a Dental Assistant position. She had recently completed the course and was studying to take the test. The hands-on experience would help her with her testing. Her VIEWS profile was updated, and referrals were made to several positions within her skill set including a Dental Assistant position within a local doctor's office. On March 13, 2023, her Case Manager contacted her via telephone to follow up on referrals made. There was no contact from the four employers, so another two referrals were made for administrative positions. On April 11, her case manager was notified that she had interviewed and started working at said doctor's office as his Dental Assistant. Presently, the client has moved to Texas where she took and passed her clinical exam; she is now a Licensed Dental Assistant awaiting to start a position in Fort Hood as a Civilian Dental Hygienist.

*Career Fair*

"I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again for granting us the opportunity to participate in the Career Fair held in May. The event was truly remarkable, and we were able to connect with several promising candidates. We received several applications, out of which interviews were scheduled with five individuals. Regrettably, only two of them attended the interviews. However, I am pleased to inform you that one of the candidates was hired as a direct care worker at our Ginger Thomas Residence. The staff warmly welcomed him, and we have high expectations for his contributions to the team. Once again, I extend my heartfelt thanks for your outstanding work in organizing such a successful event."

*Career Days*

"Our One-Stop Operator successfully orchestrated Tomorrow's Workforce Today: The Future Is Now UVI Career Days. Several sessions were pre-recorded at the University of the Virgin Islands with St. Croix Educational Complex drama students, VIWIB, Miss UVI, and our Training Facilitator. A UVI journalism student interviewed Governor Albert Bryan Jr. The two discussed workforce development, job opportunities for young Virgin Islanders, and the governor's own career path. The recordings are part of the collaborative efforts between VIDOL, GVI, and UVI towards aligning the shared

workforce vision of the territory of preparing our local workforce and supporting current workers despite disruptions and barriers. The objective being increased awareness, offering services, attracting talent, and building mutually beneficial connections between community allies, core Government agency partners and the business community.”

*Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment Program – Ms. Garcia*

“Ms. Garcia came to the program seeking employment in advanced nursing. Previously, she was employed with Delgiaco Medical Center, LLC., in the same field from March to June 2023. After she entered the RESEA program, Ms. Garcia was given resources such as the YES form, O\*Net, and Career One-Stop. Ms. Garcia used the resources as a guide in her job-hunting activities. She was then hired on a voluntary basis by East End Clinic as Nurse. She used many of the suggestions from job source tool guides. She is now about to start full-time employment with the Department of Health as a nurse practitioner next month.”

**For more information, visit:**

*Reports*

[2023 VI State Workforce Development Board Annual Statewide Performance Report](#). VI Workforce Development Board.

*Links*

U.S. Virgin Islands Workforce Development Board  
Healthcare Career Advancement Program



# **WIOA ANNUAL STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE REPORT NARRATIVE**

**QUICK VIEW: PROGRAM YEAR 2022**