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REPORT

Employment Research in Brief: An Annotated Bibliography of ETA- and CEO-Sponsored Studies 2012–2016

March 17, 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank Gloria Salas-Kos and Micah Watson from the Department of Labor for their thoughtful comments during this document's creation. Emily Sama-Miller provided helpful suggestions on content and organization. We would also like to thank Maria Myers and Amanda Bernhardt for their careful editing, Dorothy Bellow for producing the document, and Margaret Hallisey for making it 508-compliant.

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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) sponsors numerous research studies, evaluations, and pilots and demonstrations on a broad range of topics relevant to the agency's mission. This annotated bibliography provides abstracts of impact and other systematic analyses funded by ETA and published on ETA's Research Publication Database (ETA Database) or DOL's Chief Evaluation Office research page (CEO page) from 2012 through June 2016, as selected by researchers from Mathematica Policy Research (Mathematica) with guidance from ETA staff. The summarized publications include research, evaluation, and demonstration reports, as well as other papers and sets of policy recommendations. Each abstract provides a brief overview of the intervention studied, the type of research, data sources, analytical methods, and findings. These publications were not reviewed for quality or strength of design, and their inclusion in this bibliography does not imply any endorsement of their design, methods, or content by ETA or Mathematica.

How to Use the Annotated Bibliography

The annotated bibliography contains the citations and abstracts of 70 ETA- and CEO-sponsored publications. Each abstract contains a citation followed by a clickable hyperlink that will either take the reader to the publication's web page on the ETA online research database, <http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/>, where the full text is easily accessible, or link directly to the PDF document retrieved from the CEO web page, <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/CompletedStudies.htm>.

This bibliography is organized by topic and, within some topics, by more specific sub-topic headings. Publications related to more than one topic are summarized in the section where they are most relevant. For publications that do not cover a specific program area or grant program, the annotated bibliography classifies them according to the most relevant topic area and describes the logic for its inclusion in the topic summary. Readers interested in a particular topic can use the Bookmarks feature to navigate directly to that section of the document's electronic version.

The bibliography sections are presented in decreasing order of number of publications. At the beginning of each topic or subtopic section, an introductory paragraph provides a description of the topic or subtopic and an overview of the publications summarized in that section. Summaries appear in the order set forth by the section's overview.

Definitions of Frequently Used Acronyms

The annotated bibliography includes some frequently used acronyms, which are defined and briefly described below. For more information on many of these topics, readers are encouraged to visit ETA's web site at <http://www.doleta.gov>.

- AJC** American Job Centers. AJCs, also known as one-stop centers, are locations where jobseekers can access services from multiple programs, including (in-person or online) training, career counseling, and other employment and training-related services.
- ARRA** American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. ARRA was a stimulus package of approximately \$750 billion enacted in response to the Great Recession, a portion of which was used for employment and training programs administered by the Department of Labor. ARRA's employment and training grants' primary objective was to increase jobs through increased funding to formula programs and competitive grants focused on job training and placement in emerging industries, particularly energy efficiency/renewable energy industries.
- DOL** U.S. Department of Labor. DOL is a Federal department consisting of numerous regulatory, enforcement and grant-making agencies committed to promoting the welfare of American workers, job seekers, and retirees; improving working conditions; and ensuring work-related benefits and rights.
- ES** Employment Service. ES, provided by states under the Wagner-Peyser Act (Title III of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and later the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)), include labor exchange services, job search assistance, and help with résumés and cover letters. ES is often delivered alongside unemployment insurance (UI) and other WIA/WIOA services.
- ETA** Employment and Training Administration. ETA is the DOL agency responsible for administering the UI and WIA/WIOA programs; it provides formula and competitive grants to state workforce agencies and other parties and provides policy guidance and technical assistance to the public workforce system and its partners.
- STEM** Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Recognizing that STEM fields have become increasingly central to U.S. economic competitiveness and growth, ETA funds several programs and grants to prepare the workforce for careers in STEM fields.
- TAA** Trade Adjustment Assistance. TAA is a Federal program that provides income support, training, and related services to workers who have been negatively affected by foreign trade.
- UI** Unemployment Insurance. UI is a Federal-state partnership that offers temporary wage replacement to individuals who are involuntarily unemployed.
- WIA** Workforce Investment Act of 1998. WIA was the authorizing legislation for the workforce investment system, and has been superseded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WIA offered core services (e.g., job search assistance), intensive

services (e.g., assessments), and training, which was provided through the use of individual training accounts.

WIOA Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WIOA, which superseded WIA, is the current authorizing legislation for the public workforce investment system. Title I authorizes formula programs for low-income adults, dislocated workers, and disadvantaged youth, as well as national programs such as the Indian and Native American Program, the National Farmworker Jobs Program, YouthBuild, and JobCorps. It establishes a nationwide network of American Job Centers, through which jobseekers can access multiple employment, training, and education programs.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

This section contains summaries of publications on programs that operated under the auspices of WIA. WIA programming included services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth, as well as programs to respond to mass layoffs. In 2014, Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which supersedes WIA. WIOA seeks to connect job seekers with employment, education, training, and support services and help employers keep pace with the global economy by matching skilled workers to jobs. Studies about this more recent policy were not yet available at the time this annotated bibliography was developed. The studies in this section are broadly grouped into the following categories according to the program within WIA: Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, Waivers, Youth Programs, and Other WIA-Related Programs.

WIA distinguished between three levels of services for adults and dislocated workers: core services (e.g., job search assistance), intensive services (e.g., assessments), and training, which was provided through the use of individual training accounts. The Dislocated Worker program served unemployed or soon-to-be unemployed individuals meeting a variety of criteria, while the Adult program served unemployed and employed adults who could benefit from job services to establish or maintain self-sufficiency. This section includes two publications from the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Gold Standard Evaluation. Mastri et al. (2015) described the implementation of the rigorous Gold Standard Evaluation at 28 sites across the country and Rosenberg et al. (2015) described services provided to veterans at AJCs involved in the Gold Standard Evaluation and presented employment results. As part of a separate evaluation, Maxwell et al. (2012) used administrative data to assess the characteristics and labor market outcomes of women who participated in the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program.

Although WIA services included national-level requirements, states could apply for waivers that allowed flexibility in how they allocated resources or what types of services they provided. Three publications from an evaluation of these waivers presented findings on waiver implementation from interviews with 20 state administrators and 12 local site visits (Rowe et al. 2012; Rowe, Berk and Ziegler 2012; and Sattar et al. 2012).

WIA also included funding for services targeted specifically toward youth. Wiegand et al. (2015) presented findings from a randomized controlled trial of the YouthBuild program, which provides academic services, vocational training, leadership programs, and other services to out of school youth. Benus et al. (2014) identified and analyzed best practices across sites implementing the Job Corps program, which was targeted to unemployed and undereducated youth ages 16 through 24. Speanburg et al. (2013) described findings from a study on the services provided to youth with disabilities through local workforce investment boards (LWIBs).

Four other studies addressed other WIA programs. Maxwell et al. (2014) investigated how four programs (ES, WIA Adult Program, Indian and Native American Program (INAP), and National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)) served specific groups facing employment barriers. One study investigated differences between job clubs implemented by faith- and community-based organizations and those operated by publicly-funded workforce agencies (Trutko et al. 2014). Clary et al. (2013) studied grantee practices under the NFJP and Salzman et al. (2012) described Rapid Response services provided under WIA.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

“Evaluating National Ongoing Programs: Implementing the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Gold Standard Evaluation”

Mastri, Annalisa, Sheena McConnell, Linda Rosenberg, Peter Schochet, Dana Rotz, et al. “Evaluating National Ongoing Programs: Implementing the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Gold Standard Evaluation.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2572&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The Adult Program and the Dislocated Worker Program, authorized under WIA (followed by WIOA), were two of the nation’s largest publicly funded employment and training programs. DOL funded the first experimental evaluation of these programs, called the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Gold Standard Evaluation. The evaluation was a multi-year longitudinal study of individuals seeking employment-related assistance, through either the Adult or Dislocated Worker Programs from 2011 through early 2013, in 28 randomly selected Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) across the continental United States. The central goal of this evaluation was to produce rigorous estimates of the effectiveness of the programs nationally rather than the effectiveness of the programs as they were operated in a subset of LWIAs.

This report described the steps the evaluation team and staff in the 28 participating LWIAs took to implement and monitor the random assignment evaluation. It provided an overview of the WIA Gold Standard Evaluation; described the process for selecting and recruiting LWIAs for the study; and highlighted the resources required to work with local areas to implement study procedures for executing random assignment. In addition, authors summarized lessons learned for both policy makers and designers of evaluations of future national, ongoing programs.

“Providing Services to Veterans Through the Public Workforce System: Descriptive Findings from WIA Gold Standard Evaluation: Volume I and Volume II”

Rosenberg, Linda, Mark Strayer, Stephanie Boraas, Brittany English, and Deanna Khemani. “Providing Services to Veterans Through the Public Workforce System: Descriptive Findings from WIA Gold Standard Evaluation: Volume I and Volume II.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2569&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials)

ABSTRACT: As thousands of military veterans return from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom and seek to enter the civilian labor market, providing them with effective employment and training services is becoming increasingly important. These returning veterans have developed skills and experience in the military that employers outside of the military may not fully understand. Many veterans also have service-related physical and mental health disabilities that create employment barriers. Through support provided by the public workforce system in AJCs, returning and long-term veterans can receive assistance in overcoming barriers to obtaining civilian jobs and in translating their skills for these jobs.

This was the first report from the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Gold Standard Evaluation. Most study participants were randomly selected to receive additional services or not. The Jobs for Veterans Act included a directive to provide priority of service to veterans. Therefore, veterans were excluded from random assignment and were served as if there was no study in progress. The evaluation team gathered detailed qualitative and quantitative data on employment services provided to veterans in the 28 LWIAs participating in the evaluation. Given the evaluation’s design, the findings presented in the report were representative of services provided through local AJCs nationwide.

The information was gathered during site visits and extensive interviews with state and local staff and from veterans themselves during focus group discussions. The report described the characteristics of the veterans who accessed services at AJCs, the services they received, and their employment outcomes after receiving those services. The results presented are relevant for understanding the types of employment and training resources provided to veterans by more than a dozen workforce system partners. Although the delivery of services to veterans was guided mainly by federal policy, approaches to veterans’ service delivery varied across the LWIAs participating in the WIA Gold Standard Evaluation.

“How Are Women Served by the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs? Findings from Administrative Data”

Maxwell, Nan, Heinrich Hock, Natalya Verbitsky-Savitz, and Davin Reed. “How Are Women Served by the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs? Findings from Administrative Data.” Oakland, CA: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/How_Are_Women_Served_by_the_WIA_Adult_and_Dislocated_Worker_Programs/FINAL_REPORT_women_served_via_adult_dislocated_worker_programs.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: WIA employment and training programs, administered by DOL, have served more than 8 million customers with a budget exceeding \$2.9 billion dollars. DOL provides funding to states and local areas that deliver a variety of services through a network of nearly 3,000 AJCs. DOL encourages AJCs to customize their services for adults and dislocated workers whose needs are not met by the AJC’s core offerings; however, WIA did not provide specialized programs for women even though, as a group, they earn less than men and face higher barriers to employment.

This study assessed the experiences of female participants leaving the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program in 2009 using administrative data from two publicly available datasets regarding the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. Findings included the characteristics, barriers to employment, service receipt, and short-term labor market outcomes of these women. The report also explored the gender differences in each of these domains and how service receipt and outcomes varied with local characteristics.

The study used descriptive statistical techniques including linear regression analysis to provide insight into the female experience in both WIA programs and the labor market. At the time of entry into the Adult and Dislocated Workers Program, a majority of female participants faced employment barriers, and women as a whole were more likely than their male counterparts to face employment barriers such as low income and single parenthood. The report indicated that women were more likely than men to receive training and supportive services, and women facing employment barriers prior to program entry received more extensive WIA services than women who did not face employment barriers.

There were large gender differences in the types of occupational skills training the customers received. Over half of the males but only about one in 15 females entered training in mechanical and transportation-related occupations. Women, however, were more likely to pursue training in managerial, administrative, professional or technical jobs; in sales, clerical, and administrative support jobs; and in service jobs. In the first year following WIA program completion, the majority of males and females became employed; however, gender gaps in earnings during this first year were substantial: females earned less than their male counterparts leaving the Adult program (14 percent) and the Dislocated Worker program (21 percent).

Waivers

“Evaluation of Waivers Granted Under WIA Final Report”

Rowe, Gretchen, Brittany English, Cassandra Pickens-Jewell, Samina Sattar, and Jessica Ziegler. “Evaluation of Waivers Granted Under WIA Final Report.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_publicListingDetails&pub_id=2496&mp=y&start=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The program services provided by state and local WIA agencies were bound by many statutory and regulatory requirements that applied uniformly across the country. Due to state and local area differences, WIA allowed states to apply for waivers of WIA regulations, providing greater flexibility in serving the specific needs of local populations. These waivers could have affected how resources were allocated or the types of employment and training services available to various groups.

In 2008 through 2010, DOL approved more than 750 state-requested waivers of statutory and regulatory requirements. To learn more about the implementation and possible effects of waiver implementation, ETA commissioned an evaluation of selected waivers approved in Program Years 2008 through 2010. The evaluation included two interim reports and one final report. Drawing from the two interim reports and additional analysis, this final report is a stand-alone document that encapsulates the entire study, summarizing the findings from all phases of data collection. The report contained a broad analysis of information collected by phone interviews from 20 state administrators, and supplemented by 12 local site visits.

Respondents indicated that the locally focused waiver process enhanced communication between states and local areas. Implementing the waivers also provided local areas with the ability to serve more clients, become more efficient, strengthen connections with employers, and serve youth in meaningful ways. Overall, staff from local areas reportedly felt that the waivers enhanced their ability to use a “demand-driven” service strategy and to tailor services to the needs of their jobseeker customers. The report also included lessons learned from the waiver implementation process such as the need to streamline the waiver request process and waiver-related paperwork requirements and the need to share information and guidance on waivers and their potential uses as well as the benefits of approving waivers for longer periods of time.

“Evaluation of Waivers Granted Under WIA: Findings from Interviews with 20 States Final Interim Report”

Rowe, Gretchen, Jillian Berk, and Jessica Ziegler. “Evaluation of Waivers Granted Under WIA: Findings from Interviews with 20 States: Final Interim Report.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2494&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

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Respondents agreed that having access to the waivers provided important flexibility that allowed local areas to use a “demand-driven” service strategy. While all parties identified this enhanced flexibility as a major benefit, various state and local area respondents also described other successes of waiver implementation including (1) strengthening connections with employers; (2) increasing employer-based training; (3) improving youth performance outcomes; and (4) enhancing the relationship between the state and local areas. Although state and local areas saw many benefits arising from the waivers, they also described the following challenges: (1) lengthy waiver application process; (2) uncertainty about waiver renewal; (3) dependency on a waiver that may end; (4) narrowing scope of acceptable waivers; and (5) tension between flexibility and DOL implementation guidance.

“Evaluation of Waivers Granted Under WIA: Profiles of 12 Sites Final Interim Report”

Sattar, Samina, Gretchen Rowe, Brittany English, Ji-Hyeun Kwon-Min, Rachel Machta, et al.
“Evaluation of Waivers Granted Under WIA: Profiles of 12 Sites Final Interim Report.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2495&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

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In 2008 through 2010, DOL approved more than 750 state-requested waivers of statutory and regulatory requirements. To learn more about the implementation and possible effects of waiver implementation, ETA commissioned an evaluation of selected waivers approved in Program Years 2008 through 2010. The study included two interim reports and one final report. This second interim report focused on profiles of the 12 local areas visited and provided descriptive information about their waiver use. The profiles combined data collected from state officials about the waiver application and implementation process with information collected on site during discussions with local area staff, employers, and training providers.

Several themes emerged from discussions with the 12 sites:

- Most sites used a similar framework for the waiver request and approval process.
- Employers were generally positive about the benefits afforded to them by waivers.
- Excessive paperwork for customized training subsidies and on-the-job training reimbursements deterred potential employers from working with the local areas.
- The requirement for layoff aversion made it difficult to utilize the local and statewide incumbent worker training waivers extensively.
- Budget constraints limited the strategic use of waivers.
- Local staff would have appreciated more information and guidance on waivers and their potential uses.

Youth Programs

“Adapting to Local Context: Findings from the YouthBuild Evaluation Implementation Study”

Wiegand, Andrew, Michelle Manno, Sengsouvanh (Sukey) Leshnick, Louisa Treskon, Christian Geckeler, et al. “Adapting to Local Context: Findings from the YouthBuild Evaluation Implementation Study.” New York, NY: MDRC, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_publicListingDetails&pub_id=2551&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: This study presented program implementation findings from the national evaluation of YouthBuild, a program providing a mix of academics, vocational training, leadership development, community service, and other activities to high school dropouts who were facing an array of challenges to educational and employment success. YouthBuild distinguishes itself from many other programs serving young people because of a culture that emphasizes youth development and leadership, capitalizing on participants’ strengths and empowering participants to take responsibility for their lives. Primary funders of YouthBuild programs include DOL, the Corporation for National and Community Service, private foundations, and states and localities.

The evaluation was launched in 2010, and used a random assignment design to examine the impacts of YouthBuild as implemented by 75 programs nationwide. For the evaluation, eligible applicants in the 75 sites were randomly assigned either to a program group, which was eligible to participate in YouthBuild, or to a control group, which was not eligible to participate. A second report, scheduled for release in 2017, will present program impacts on the study group 12 and 30 months after random assignment. A third report, scheduled for release in 2018, will present program impacts 48 months after random assignment. The evaluation is funded by DOL, with initial support from the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The findings presented in this report provided an overview of how the YouthBuild programs in this study varied in organizational characteristics, services, and approaches to serving young people. They provided the background necessary to understand results from the impact and cost-effectiveness studies, which are to be completed in the future. Researchers also identified several ways in which the programs in this study varied, including their fidelity to the YouthBuild model, which may help to explain any differences in impacts observed across programs.

“Job Corps Process Study Final Report”

Benus, Jacob, Terry Johnson, Micheal P. Kirsch, Morgan Sacchetti Barnes, Mary Kay Dugan, et al. “Job Corps Process Study.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2014.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2538&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: Job Corps is a comprehensive program designed to assist eligible unemployed and undereducated youth ages 16 through 24 who can benefit from intensive education and training services to become more employable, responsible, and productive citizens.

This 30-month-long process study of Job Corps explored and identified center-level practices that are associated with center performance outcomes. Through examination of center level practices and policies, this study identified best practices across centers and assessed how these best practices may be related to center performance. Center practices in the following domains were examined: (1) general center management; (2) academic training practices; (3) Career Technical Training (CTT) practices; (4) student life and development; (5) staff dynamics and culture; (6) center corporate operator oversight; and (7) community and partner relations. A variety of data collection and analytical activities were used and included: (1) conducting interviews with Job Corps management; (2) conducting site visits to selected Job Corps centers; and (3) administering a survey to all Job Corps center directors.

Some of the best practices identified by the study included:

- Directors at high-performing centers ranked staff goal setting for reaching positive student outcomes as the most influential element in improving center performance, while directors at low-performing centers indicated that compliance with Job Corps policies was the most influential.
- High-performing centers were more likely to use student-oriented methods to address student academic performance issues (e.g., Individual Education Programs, alternative learning opportunities based on student needs, tutoring) than low-performing centers, which reported using more instructor- or system-based methods (e.g., instructor training, student incentives).
- High-performing centers applied a wider range of strategies to retain non-residential students than low-performing centers, including using a staff-student mentorship program, using a progressive behavior management system, and holding meetings to address students at risk of becoming Absent Without Leave.
- High-performing centers provided incentive payments based on center Outcomes Measurement System performance to all types of staff to a much greater extent than did low-performing centers.

“Services for Youth With Disabilities Provided Under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act: Results From a Survey of Local Workforce Investment Boards”

Speanburg, Katie, Randall Juras, Amar Patel, and Glen Schneider. “Services for Youth With Disabilities Provided Under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act: Results From a Survey of Local Workforce Investment Boards.” Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates Inc., 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2555&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: The road to employment and economic self-sufficiency is considerably steeper for youth who face some type of physical, sensory, cognitive, mental health, or other disability than for youth who do not. DOL is actively addressing the needs and interests of individuals with disabilities through policy guidance, research, staffing and program support as well as technical assistance and training. DOL conducted a study to examine the public workforce system’s current efforts to serve youth with disabilities. The study, the first of its kind, profiled the implementation of various practices intended to support this effort and identified factors that may pose barriers to the provision of targeted services. Additionally, the study provided recommendations to help shape future programs, policies, technical assistance and research initiatives related to serving youth with disabilities.

The cornerstone of this research was a survey of representatives from LWIBs on a range of topics related to serving youth with disabilities. Sixty-nine percent of the LWIB executive directors or designees completed an online survey. This report summarized the survey results. In addition to gathering general perspectives and challenges inherent in serving youth with disabilities, the analyses examined the extent to which LWIBs:

- used customized assessments to identify participant needs and develop service plans;
- provided training to build staff capacity to better serve this population;
- expanded their resource base through partnerships and combining funding streams;
- actively targeted the out-of-school population of youth with disabilities; and
- provided employment and community service opportunities.

The survey revealed that a minority of LWIBs proactively sought to serve youth with disabilities. The report suggested that while targeting and resource allocation decisions remained local responsibilities, DOL could provide encouragement, support, and incentives to influence these decisions, such as: seeking greater insight into the size and mix of the youth with disabilities population; maintaining flexibility in establishing performance standards; sustaining efforts to build staff capacity around both basic and advanced topics regarding serving those with disabilities; and adopting a broader perspective on youth with disabilities and their barriers to accessing LWIB services.

Other Publications Related to WIA

“Understanding Adult Subpopulations Served by Workforce Investment Programs”

Maxwell, Nan, Priyanka Anand, and Caroline Massad Francis. “Understanding Adult Subpopulations Served by Workforce Investment Programs.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2014.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/UnderstandingAdultSubpopulationsServedbyWorkforceInvestmentPrograms.pdf>

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: WIA and ES provide job seekers with a variety of services. Many of their programs serve different population groups, including those considered in this study: Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, Indian and Native Americans, and migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW). DOL commissioned this study to better understand how four programs serve these groups. These four programs are the (1) ES, (2) WIA Adult Program, (3) Indian and Native American Program (INAP), and (4) National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). The ES and WIA Adult Program both serve a general, broad population. The INAP (which serves Indian and Native Americans and Native Hawaiians) and NFJP (which serves MSFW) are more specialized.

Using administrative data, this study described the characteristics, services received, and short-term labor market outcomes of adult Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, Indian and Native American, and MSFW customers leaving the four aforementioned workforce investment programs in 2011. The study showed that the specialized programs play a distinctive role in the workforce investment system. They serve segments of the subpopulations with above-average employment barriers and provide services that differ from programs targeting the general population.

The study found that within the ES and Adult Program, members of the subpopulations received different services and that the subpopulations studied had less favorable outcomes, in general, than other populations leaving the ES and Adult Program. Multivariate regression suggested that customer and local area characteristics largely explain the differences in services received and in post-participation employment and earnings.

“Formative Evaluation of Job Clubs Operated by Faith- and Community-Based Organizations”

Trutko, John, Carolyn O'Brien, Stephen Wandner, and Burt Barnow. “Formative Evaluation of Job Clubs Operated By Faith- and Community-Based Organizations: Findings from Site Visits and Options For Future Evaluation.” Arlington, VA and Washington, DC: Capital Research Corporation and George Washington University, 2014.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/reports/Job_Clubs_Evaluation-Final_Report-May.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: The public workforce system and faith- and community-based organizations (FBOs/CBOs) rely on job search support groups (or “job clubs”) to enhance worker readiness and employability and to provide ongoing job search assistance to unemployed and underemployed individuals. In 2012, DOL’s CEO commissioned an assessment of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs.

Conducted over a 20-month period, this evaluation included (1) a literature review; (2) an “environmental scan” consisting of key stakeholder telephone interviews and site visits in six municipalities; and (3) an exploration of potential designs for future rigorous evaluation of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. The assessment aimed to systematically describe the key characteristics of job clubs sponsored by faith- and community-based organizations and explain how FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs differ from clubs operated by publicly-funded workforce agencies (such as AJCs).

Findings from telephone interviews and site visits indicated that job clubs operated by FBOs, CBOs, and public workforce agencies are alike in that they (1) emphasize networking during the job search, (2) offer ongoing peer support, and (3) provide basic instruction for the job search process. Key differences included staffing patterns and available resources for program operations and services. Paid professional staff lead public agency job clubs and are supported by the workshops, activities, and other services typically available through AJCs. By contrast, volunteers plan, manage, and facilitate all aspects of the FBO/CBO job clubs with limited budgets or no funding at all, frequently utilizing meeting space provided free-of-charge by the sponsoring church or community organization.

Public sector sponsored job clubs also differ from FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs in that they have been rigorously evaluated through randomized controlled trial evaluations. No such studies have been conducted of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs. Several factors are likely to present substantial challenges in conducting experimental and non-experimental evaluations of FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs: (1) FBO/CBO-sponsored job clubs rarely collect in-depth information on participants, activities, and outcomes; (2) many FBOs/CBOs do not maintain automated management information systems; and (3) FBOs/CBOs are generally opposed to participating in evaluations that involve random assignment, which for most FBOs/CBOs would mean turning away job seekers who could have been served.

“Evaluation of the National Farmworker Jobs Program: Final Report”

Clary, Elizabeth, Jonathan Ladinsky, Megan Hague Angus, and Alexander Millar. “Evaluation of the National Farmworker Jobs Program: Final Report.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2515&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: In July 2010, ETA commissioned an evaluation study of the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). The study had three main components: (1) case studies of NFJP grantees; (2) a cross-site analysis of NFJP administrative data to shed light on clients’ use of services and factors that contribute to performance measures; and (3) development of a final report that described both the key challenges grantees face and promising practices they have implemented.

The evaluation was designed to learn the breadth of grantee practices and how to improve program policies and services, focusing on six key research topics: (1) area context; (2) program services; (3) partnerships and AJCs; (4) performance measures and outcomes; (5) recordkeeping of services; and (6) technical assistance.

Key findings from the evaluation, and the implications of those findings, included the following:

- Although many of the challenges facing NFJP grantees are endemic to all job training and job-search support programs, they are compounded by other issues that are specific to serving farmworkers, such as a lack of work experience outside of farm work, limited educational achievement, and lack of adequate language skills needed to perform well in most workplaces.
- Grantees’ strategies for serving the farmworker population included seeking out partnerships that complement in-house services to fully address the needs of farmworkers, stretching NFJP resources by leveraging other funding sources to provide services, co-locating with partners to increase farmworkers’ access to a range of services, making training programs financially plausible for farmworkers, and using training programs that meet multiple needs at once.
- Four specific areas of development that might help grantees better serve farmworkers through NFJP included (1) assistance in creating specialized education and training programs; (2) technical assistance for job-development and placement activities; (3) improved partnerships between grantees and AJCs; and (4) improvements in data collection and recordkeeping systems to enhance grantees’ ability to track service receipt and outcomes.

“Rapid Response under WIA: An Evaluation of Management, Services, and Financing”

Salzman, Jeffrey, Melissa Mack, Sandra Harvey, and Wally Abrazaldo. “Rapid Response under WIA: An Evaluation of Management, Services, and Financing.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2512&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses and Cost Analyses

ABSTRACT: This study examined the Rapid Response function (mandated under WIA) to provide assistance to individual workers, companies and communities in the event of plant closures and worker layoffs. Multiple aspects of Rapid Response were discussed including 1) organization, staffing, and management; 2) services provided to workers, employers, and communities; and 3) patterns in expenditures. The report appendices presented examples of innovative Rapid Response activities and a review of the literature on Rapid Response activities from the late 1980s to 2008. Data for the report were collected in 2007 and 2008 through site visits, telephone interviews, a national survey of Rapid Response coordinators, and financial reports.

Rapid Response activities included intelligence gathering on layoffs; services to workers through initial meetings, placement assistance, and access to unemployment benefits and other workforce programs; services to employers; and creating temporary infrastructure for providing services (such as on-site centers).

Key findings in the report included:

- Rapid Response actions were done quickly, as contact was made with employers within a day or two of notice and initial meetings held with workers within 13 days.
- The duration of Rapid Response interventions varied widely, from one week to eight weeks or longer.
- There was strong collaboration among state teams and local agencies and among state workforce programs.
- There were few attempts at averting layoffs because most employers had already made strategic decisions to close facilities based on economic factors over which Rapid Response teams had little or no influence.
- A few states attempted to improve outreach and services to employers with such strategies as developing partnerships with, for example, outplacement firms and Chambers of Commerce.
- In about half the states, organized labor played an important role.
- Expenditures were volatile within individual states over the study period as funding fluctuated with the changes in the dislocated worker set-aside.

TRAINING PROGRAMS OTHER THAN WIA

This section contains publications related to training programs and grants other than WIA. One of these studies reviews a training strategy, while the others evaluated specific training programs.

- Holzer (2015) described sector-based training strategies generally, with a focus on the challenges of expanding sector-based training programs.
- The remaining studies assessed specific training programs.
 - Heller et al. reported results from an evaluation the One Summer Plus program, a public summer jobs program for high school-age youth in Chicago's high-violence schools;
 - Gan et al. (2013) described the use of Technology-Based Learning (TBL) at state and local levels and Maxwell et al. (2013) estimated the education and labor market outcomes of participants in programs implemented under the TBL Initiative;
 - Koller et al. (2013) presented a guidebook on mentoring developed as part of the Young Parents Demonstration Program to provide guidance to local workforce programs and agencies offering services to young parents;
 - Reed et al. (2012) conducted effectiveness and cost-benefit analyses of Registered Apprenticeship (RA);
 - Quinterno (2012) described the role of local North Carolina State Employment Service offices and the evolution of North Carolina's service model during the Great Recession;
 - Kogan et al. (2012) conducted an implementation evaluation of the STEM Initiative targeted towards disadvantaged youth and dislocated workers;
 - Scully-Russ (2012) described the experiences of two Energy Training Partnership Grant recipients and provided a review of the career pathway model;
 - Shen et al. (2012) studied ARRA-funded training programs in green jobs and health care in both the interim and final reports; and
 - Eyster et al. (2012) examined the implementation of community and technical college programs involved in the Community-Based Job Training Grant program.

“Sector-Based Training Strategies: The Challenges of Matching Workers and Their Skills to Well-Paying Jobs”

Holzer, Harry J. “Sector-Based Training Strategies: The Challenges of Matching Workers and Their Skills to Well-Paying Jobs.” Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY: https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Future_of_work_sector_based_training_strategies.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Policy Analysis

ABSTRACT: Job-driven or sector-based training actively seeks to match workers skills with the skills demanded by employers in the labor market. This paper, prepared for the Symposium on the Changing Structure of Work at DOL, reviewed the literature on sector-based training strategies. The author specifically addressed why policy makers and labor market program practitioners turned to these strategies to meet the skill needs of workers and employers.

The author noted that sector-based training targets economic sectors that meet the following criteria: (1) overall employment has grown and will likely continue to grow; (2) employers seek moderately skilled employees; (3) to obtain workers with the necessary skills, employers are open to assistance with both hiring and training; and (4) the jobs offered pay well enough for workers to escape poverty. Following a description of the evolution of demand-driven strategies, the author concluded that the combination of vocal employer concerns, consistency with economic development strategies, and strong evidence of successful impacts has propelled demand-driven strategies to the forefront of the workforce development field.

The author detailed the major challenges to expanding sector-based strategies while maintaining their quality. These challenges included the notion that only workers with strong basic skills and employability were likely to benefit from these strategies; the likely tradeoffs between short- and long-term impacts and between general and more specific training; the difficulties of replicating and scaling the best models; and uncertain future labor demand.

The paper concluded with several policy recommendations in light of the challenges sector-based strategies face, including the need to link K–12 education to career technical education.

“Summer Jobs Reduce Violence Among Disadvantaged Youth”

Heller, Sara B. “Summer Jobs Reduce Violence Among Disadvantaged Youth.” *Science*, vol. 346, issue 6214, 2014, pp. 1219–1223.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

<https://sites.sas.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/hellersa/files/science-2014-heller-1219-23.pdf>

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials)

ABSTRACT: One Summer Plus (OSP) is a public summer jobs program that offers high school-age youth in Chicago’s high-violence schools eight weeks of part-time summer employment at Illinois’ minimum wage. In addition, OSP pairs participating youth with job mentors who help them learn to be successful employees and navigate barriers to employment. The study’s objective was to examine the impact of OSP on educational and criminal justice outcomes.

Students from 13 high schools were recruited for the study and randomly assigned to one of two treatment groups or to a control group. Students in the jobs-only treatment group were offered 25 hours per week of paid employment; students in the jobs plus social-emotional learning (SEL) treatment group were offered 15 hours of paid employment and 10 hours of SEL weekly. SEL is based on cognitive behavioral theory principles, and involves teaching youth to understand and manage the aspects of their thoughts, emotions, and behavior that might interfere with employment. Students in the control group were excluded from the program but free to pursue other opportunities.

The author estimated the program’s impact on academic and criminal justice outcomes using Chicago Public Schools administrative data and Chicago Police Department arrest records. The primary outcomes of interest were arrest-related outcomes (violent crime, property crime, drug crime, and other crime arrests), number of violent victimizations, attendance at school, and grade point average in the school year following program participation.

The study found that students in the OSP program had significantly fewer arrests for violent crimes in the 16 months following random assignment, compared with students in the control group (5 arrests per 100 youth compared with 9 arrests per 100 youth, equivalent to a 43 percent reduction). The program had no statistically significant impact on the other criminal justice or education outcomes examined.

“Exploring the Role and Adoption of Technology-based Training and Employment Services”

Gan, Katherine N., Glen Schneider, Eleanor L Harvill, and Nicole Brooke. “Exploring the Role and Adoption of Technology-based Training and Employment Services.” Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates Inc., 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2575&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: The dramatic evolution of computer and communications technology, coupled with an ever-increasing emphasis on cost-effectiveness, underscores the potential of TBL, or e-learning, in the public workforce system. ETA launched a national initiative in 2008 to systematically explore the role and adoption of TBL within the public workforce system. While several demonstration grants funded under the TBL Initiative had examined the structure and outcomes of specific training programs, comparatively little was known about the emphasis on TBL at the state policy level or its systematic adoption and use at the local level by AJCs and other providers of workforce services.

In 2011, ETA commissioned surveys to collect descriptive information about the use of TBL at the state and local levels of the public workforce system and provide a report on the findings from these surveys. The two surveys were administered during an eight-week period in spring 2013. A total of 47 state surveys and 399 local surveys with Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) executive directors were completed by respondents, respectively.

The final report provided a description of state workforce agencies' (SWAs) efforts to promote and support TBL, as well as actual adoption and use of TBL at the local level in providing WIA services. These include WIA Title I core, intensive, and training services, and WIA Title II educational services. While the analysis of the survey results suggested that state and local stakeholders have embraced the value and potential of TBL, there were issues such as infrastructure costs to the providers and the technological literacy of some workforce participants that might defer or impede utilization of TBL. The researchers suggested that ETA continue to offer both the insight and support needed for state decision-makers and LWDBs to make informed decisions about where and when to invest in TBL. This research was the first to systematically describe the policy and environmental context that shapes TBL adoption and patterns of actual use.

“Evaluation of Programs Funded by Technology-Based Learning (TBL) Grants”

Maxwell, Nan, Samina Sattar, Dana Rotz, and Kate Dunham. “Evaluation of Programs Funded by Technology-Based Learning (TBL) Grants.” Oakland, CA: Mathematica Policy Research and Social Policy Research Associates, 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2573&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses and Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: The potential for TBL to increase the number of trained workers in high-growth, high-demand occupations led ETA to launch the TBL Initiative in 2006 and provide \$10 million in funding to 20 grantees in 16 states to develop and implement TBL projects from 2009 to 2012. The study used grantee administrative data on participants and survey data from participants to describe individuals in these programs, their program satisfaction, and their education and labor market outcomes.

Results suggested that the TBL programs offered served a diverse set of participants, built learning communities to support them, had high levels of program satisfaction, and produced positive education and employment outcomes. Programs provided participants with flexibility by allowing them to combine their building of workplace skills with other aspects of their lives, which was a key motivator for choosing a technology-based format rather than a traditional classroom format. Additionally, programs appeared to provide adequate support to participants for using the technology needed to undertake and complete programs and to balance the individualization of courses with their desire to be part of a larger learning community.

The study found, however, that challenges remained in recruiting participants and structuring programs. Students in the average TBL program fit the typical gender, race, and age profile for students in online programs throughout the country, suggesting that the TBL programs did not necessarily serve low-skilled and unemployed populations. In addition, the study found that programs might benefit from a greater focus on student outcomes—less than half of survey respondents felt that the knowledge they acquired in their TBL training program would help them advance in their career.

“Mentoring Youth and Young Parents: A Guidebook for Programs Helping Youth and Young Parents Navigate a Pathway to Self-Sufficiency”

Koller, Vinz, Chandra Larsen, Maya Thornell-Sandifor, Christian Rummell, Eric Engles, et al.
“Mentoring Youth and Young Parents: A Guidebook for Programs Helping Youth and Young Parents Navigate a Pathway to Self-Sufficiency.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2536&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: How-to Guides

ABSTRACT: A growing body of research indicates that supportive relationships with adults can help youth achieve positive outcomes in academics, social settings, career development, health, and safety. However, many youth, including those who are young parents, lack such support and have few opportunities for developing positive relationships with older adults or other significant role models.

ETA developed the Young Parents Demonstration Project (YPD) to explore the value of mentoring in improving the employment and training outcomes of low-income young parents. In 2011, ETA awarded more than \$5 million in grants to four local nonprofit organizations to provide intensive mentoring services to low-income parents (both mothers and fathers, and expectant parents ages 16 through 24) participating in workforce development programs. This Mentoring Guidebook was based in part on the experiences of the four grantees.

The Mentoring Guidebook, developed in part to enhance the YPD, offered user-friendly guidance for local workforce programs and agencies for building a solid foundation for the program, designing an effective program, designing the mechanics of mentoring, running the program, and ensuring continuous improvement and impact.

“An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States”

Reed, Debbie, Albert Yung-Hsu Liu, Rebecca Kleinman, Annalisa Matri, Davin Reed, et al. “An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2490&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses and Cost Analyses

ABSTRACT: Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is administered by ETA’s Office of Apprenticeship in conjunction with State Apprenticeship Agencies. RA provides apprentices with on-the-job training, related technical instruction, incremental wage increases as skills are attained, and, upon completion, nationally recognized certification in their chosen career area. Apprenticeship programs range from one to six years and are offered in approximately 1,000 occupations. RA programs are delivered by sponsors—employers, employer associations, and labor management organizations. Sponsors cover training costs, wages, costs of managing the program, and costs associated with time spent by senior employees to mentor and train apprentices. In return, sponsors receive a supply of highly-trained, well-qualified workers.

ETA commissioned an effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis of RA. The study assessed the effectiveness of RA with regard to the earnings and net benefits received by apprentices and examined the social costs and benefits of RA in 10 states, selected to vary in program features and labor market outcomes: Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Additionally, the study examined the barriers that women face in RA and the best practices for promoting their success.

The study found that RA participants had substantially higher earnings than did nonparticipants. The social benefits of the RA program appear to be much larger than the social costs. Over the career of an individual apprentice, the estimated social benefits of RA exceed the social costs by more than \$49,000. In addition, the study reported that women made up only 9 percent of new apprentices in the 2010 cohort. Women are much less likely than men to enroll in the traditional skilled trades and, when they do, they are less likely than men to complete RA. The women interviewed see their participation in RA as a pathway to career advancement and higher pay. Those interviewed expressed positive views of RA and suggested strategies to enhance the success of women in RA such as targeted outreach and information, support for basic skills development, child care assistance, further efforts to combat harassment, and facilitating peer support.

“The Employment Service in Rural North Carolina: Insights from the ‘Great Recession’”

Quinterno, John. “The Employment Service in Rural North Carolina: Insights from the ‘Great Recession.’” Chapel Hill, NC: South by North Strategies, Ltd, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2492&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Program/Policy Analyses

ABSTRACT: Established in 1935, the North Carolina State Employment Service (ES) provides publicly-funded labor exchange services to all interested workers—both those with and without jobs—and to all interested firms in North Carolina. Services are delivered remotely and through a network of 90 local offices. In addition to providing labor exchange services, the ES, a division of the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina (ESC), manages unemployment insurance claims at the local level, administers the “work test” required of insurance claimants, and serves as a mandated partner in the state’s network of JobLink Career Centers.

This study explored the role of local ES offices in rural communities during the Great Recession (2007 through 2010). The study examined six distinct hypotheses quantitatively and qualitatively: (1) rural residents, particularly the rural unemployed, are a hard-to-serve population; (2) most individuals establish ties to the public workforce investment system through the ES; (3) compared to their urban counterparts, rural residents prefer in-person services; (4) because rural residents prefer in-person services, the existence of local offices boosts enrollment rates in related public workforce programs relative to those in metro areas; (5) rural residents who use local ES offices develop deeper ties to the public workforce investment system; and (6) local ES offices compensate for the “thin” workforce networks in many communities.

Specifically, the project documented the evolution of North Carolina’s service model, analyzed administrative data pertaining to service usage, and solicited stakeholder perspectives through semi-structured interviews. The study concluded by offering program recommendations and suggesting avenues for future inquiry. In particular, the ES and ESC might consider reexamining the current arrangement of the local office network and whether it is currently over-represented in rural areas. Further, the ES and ESC might consider adopting a regional approach to rural service delivery over a one-size-fits-all rural service strategy. Additional research into state-level differences in the organization of labor exchange services could help address programmatic gaps that have troubled the workforce investment system for some time.

“Evaluation of the STEM Initiative: Final Report”

Kogan, Deborah, Brandon Nicholson, Jill Leufgen, Michael Midling and Miloney Thakrar. “Evaluation of the STEM Initiative: Final Report.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2530&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: STEM fields have become increasingly central to U.S. economic competitiveness and growth. ETA announced the STEM Initiative in 2008 as part of a broader ETA STEM action agenda. The initiative aimed to attract and prepare disadvantaged youth and dislocated workers for STEM-related careers while simultaneously enhancing regional employer competitiveness.

DOL commissioned an implementation evaluation of the STEM Initiative from 2009 to 2012. The evaluation drew on existing data and conducted primary data collection to study the implementation and operation of programs and services, strategic partnerships, and project outputs. The study included a qualitative component (site visits and telephone conversations with STEM project managers) and a quantitative component (analysis of grantee-collected data).

The findings of this study included the following:

- Four of the five projects attempted to serve both dislocated workers and disadvantaged youth. Especially after the economic downturn, providing services to in-school youth to encourage them to seek career pathways in STEM fields over the long-term seemed, in many cases, to be a better investment than trying to work with adults who wanted rapid employment in STEM occupations in a very difficult job market. Because each group required very different kinds of services, some managers reported that their efforts were stretched thin trying to serve both groups well.
- The STEM grantees developed strategic partnerships to strengthen both overall project designs and the design and delivery of services to participants. Grantees learned that it was important to involve top-level staff, build partnerships with educational institutions, and develop effective strategies to involve representatives from the business community in the targeted sectors.
- Grantees found that many dislocated workers who sought services from the STEM projects were in financial distress. They were behind on paying their bills, in danger of losing their homes, and unable to support their families. Consequently, they were hesitant to enroll in long-term training programs even when such training might have improved their long-term employment prospects. Projects responded to dislocated workers’ apprehension about finding new employment by broadening the occupations in which they offered training that would help laid-off STEM workers find new jobs.

“Green Jobs and Career Pathways: An Arranged Marriage in Service to a 21st-Century Workforce Development System”

Scully-Russ, Ellen. “Green Jobs and Career Pathways: An Arranged Marriage in Service to a 21st-Century Workforce Development System.” Washington, DC: The Center for the Study of Learning at the George Washington University, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2493&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Program/Policy Analyses

ABSTRACT: This qualitative study examined the early start-up experiences of two ETA energy training partnership grant recipients, Vermont Green and Renewable Northwest (ReNW) of Oregon, in applying different career pathways models. The author explored the proposition that green job career pathways would modernize the education system and build new opportunity structures into the labor market. The report began with a review of the literature on green jobs, exploring how green jobs are defined, the dynamics of the green jobs labor market, and the debates and implications for government policy and intervention into the green economy.

The study also included a historical review of the career pathways model and an analysis of the literature on how the model is used by practitioners to improve education and job training programs and develop new curricula, skills certifications, and credentials. The paper also discusses findings from the study’s two grant recipients about applying the career pathways model to prepare workers for green jobs. For each grant studied, the paper also explained how the early start-up of each partnership was affected by the context of each case; whether and how stakeholders experienced a need to make systemic changes; and the numerous challenges each faced.

The findings from the two case studies were both consistent with and at odds with propositions about green jobs career pathways in the literature and provide lessons for policy and practice. For instance, consistent with the literature, it was the experience of both the Vermont Green and ReNW grantees that green jobs require skills in short supply and offer meaningful work with advancement opportunities. At the same time, the experiences of these two specific grants contradicted the notion that green jobs have low barriers to entry or that there are shortages of workers in the core industries that are becoming green. In another case, the experiences of both Vermont Green and ReNW supported the conclusion that the green industry can be unstable, creating an uncertainty in the number of workers and types of skills needed.

“Green Jobs and Health Care Implementation Study: Final Report”

Shen, Ted, Carolyn Corea, Alan Dodkowitz, and Steve Garasky. “Green Jobs and Health Care Implementation Study: Final Report.” Columbia, MD: Impaq International, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2511&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: In July 2010, ETA commissioned an implementation evaluation of four grant programs awarded in early 2010 under ARRA: Energy Training Partnerships, Pathways Out of Poverty, State Energy Sector Partnership and Training, and Health Care Sector and Other High Growth and Emerging Industries. Collectively, these grants to a total of 152 grantees are known as the ARRA High Growth and Emerging Industries training grants.

The goal of this two-year implementation evaluation was to develop an in-depth understanding of key differences and similarities across the four ARRA-funded training grant programs and across grantees, and identify promising practices and lessons learned from these grants. The study’s primary objectives were to (1) understand in-depth the implementation of the 152 grants, and (2) explore the extent to which grantees used promising practices that could be replicated in future programs. To address these objectives, the study examined (1) the economic and community context in which each program operated, (2) the service delivery strategy and components of the program, (3) partnerships with employers and other organizations, and (4) program management and sustainability. Sources of data included interviews with key stakeholders during site visits to 36 selected grantees, focus groups with program participants, observations of program activities, and a web-based survey of grant administrators.

This final report presented implementation findings from each of the four grant programs. Conclusions, promising practices, and lessons learned for future grant programs were provided across all four programs. For example, some grantees had specific individuals assigned to manage the grant and facilitate the administration of several facets of the program, an approach seen by many as a promising practice. Another promising practice was the ability to link participants with the right types of certificates or credentials as a result of the communication and partnerships between the programs and the employers. Some of the lessons learned include recognizing the need to align grant-training goals with state/local initiatives to improve efficiency and reduce duplication across a range of implementation aspects, including program design, and communicating program concepts to stakeholders.

“Green Jobs and Health Care Implementation Study: Interim Report”

Shen, Ted, Eileen Poe-Yamagata, Alan Dodkowitz, Nick Bill, Kassim Mbwana, Lisa Johnson, and Stephanie Davison. “Green Jobs and Health Care Implementation Study: Interim Report.” Columbia, MD: Impaq International, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2486&mp=y&start=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: The ARRA of 2009 provided funding for skills training in green jobs and healthcare jobs via four Solicitations for Grant Applications (SGAs): (1) Healthcare and Other High Growth and Emerging Industries; (2) Pathways Out of Poverty; (3) State Energy Sector Partnerships and Training; and (4) Energy Training Partnerships. In early 2010, 152 grantees were awarded an average of \$4 to \$5 million for two- or three-year grants.

This interim report is a descriptive analysis of eight of these 152 grantee sites and included an overview of the grants program with overall statistics for the four SGAs. It provided a summary of the major themes emerging from the site visits and focus groups conducted to date in eight sites.

Some recommendations listed by the interviewees during the site visits include:

- Building on strong prior partnerships with relevant stakeholder organizations in creating a quality training program.
- Engaging employers and industry groups in designing training program curricula relevant to employer needs.
- Drawing on existing, well-established training curricula to make efficient use of proven training materials.

Interviewees also provided some lessons learned:

- Labor market information (LMI) is useful to the extent that it is perceived by grantee staff as reliable, relevant, and up to date.
- Aligning programs with state or Federal energy policies or programs that do not come to fruition may make it more difficult to reach targets for program outcomes.
- Weaker than expected demand for labor in the training program occupations may reduce job placement rates among program graduates.

“Implementation Evaluation of the Community-Based Job Training Grant (CBJTG) Program: Final Report”

Eyster, Lauren, Teresa Derrick-Mills, John Trutko, Jessica Compto, Alexandra Stanczyk, et al. “Implementation Evaluation of the Community-Based Job Training Grant (CBJTG) Program: Final Report.” Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Center on Labor, Human Services and Population, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2513&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: In an increasingly global and competitive economy, many U.S. workers seek to gain new skills or upgrade their current ones if they are to be successful in the labor market. At the same time, businesses, especially those in high-growth industries, face challenges recruiting, hiring, and retaining a skilled workforce. Community and technical colleges are uniquely positioned to develop a skilled local or regional labor force, but they often lack the capacity to respond to the needs of local industry.

The Community-Based Job Training Grant (CBJTG) program, administered by ETA, was intended to address a critical capacity shortage at community and technical colleges to train workers for high-growth occupations to help strengthen an industry’s regional competitiveness. ETA provided CBJTG funding for 279 initiatives in 49 states in 2005 through 2009, through four rounds of competitive funding; between 68 and 72 grants were awarded per year.

This implementation evaluation of CBJTG initiatives drew on data collected through a survey of individuals at grant organizations and institutions, a review of grant documents, and site visits to 11 grant initiatives at eight grant locations. This final report provided a comprehensive picture of the different CBJTG-funded initiatives gathered through those multiple data sources and discussed innovations developed, implementation successes and challenges, and trends and patterns across projects. For example, the study found that nearly all of the survey respondents indicated that their grant-funded initiative addressed an insufficient supply of workers with particular occupational skills and credentials, and most identified a need to remedy the challenge of low education and skill levels in their communities. In addition, the survey and case study findings showed that the grant organizations saw their greatest accomplishments as the creation of state-of-the-art training facilities, strengthened and new partnerships lasting beyond the grant, the ability to serve an increased number of students, the development of pipelines of new workers to the industry, and the creation of sustainable career pathways.

SERVICES TO MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS, AND MILITARY SPOUSES

This section contains studies of programs providing services specifically to military personnel and veterans. Some of the studies assessed specific programs designed to improve the transition of exiting military personnel into civilian employment.

- Dunker et al. (2015) and Simon et al. (2015) presented findings from the Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration, in which states developed strategies to accelerate licensing and certification procedures and improve the transition from military occupations to similar civilian occupations.
- Boraas and Roemer (2016) assessed the implementation of grants administered to states under the Army Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service Members (UCX) Claimants' Initiative to identify innovative reemployment strategies for veterans.
- Thompson et al. (2015) compared employment outcomes and service receipt among three groups: veterans participating in the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG), veterans not receiving JVSG services, and non-veterans.
- Boraas et al. (2013) assessed the implementation of the priority of service (POS) provision of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA), while Trutko et al. (2013) evaluated the workshop curriculum provided to exiting service members through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP).

Several other publications did not assess a specific program but rather summarized literature or data related to veterans.

- One study provided a statistical profile of women veterans in the United States, as compared to male veterans and women and male non-veterans (Nanda et al. 2016).
- Another report, a literature review on homeless veterans, focused specifically on identifying homelessness risk factors and identifying promising strategies for helping homeless veterans obtain employment (Woolsey and Naumann 2015).
- Finally, one study commissioned by the VOW to Hire Heroes provided an updated crosswalk mapping military skills to civilian jobs (Solutions for Information Design 2011).

Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration

"The Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration Interim Report"

Dunker, Amanda, Brent Parton, and Martin Simon. "Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration: Interim Report." National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2566&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses and Cost Analyses

ABSTRACT: DOL commissioned an 18-month Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration that began with a competitive process to select six states to participate: Illinois, Iowa, Nevada, Minnesota, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Each participating state selected up to three high-demand occupations on which to focus their licensing and credentialing strategies that corresponded with one of the three pre-selected military occupational specialties: medic, police, and truck driver.

This interim report described the findings that emerged from the authors' direct engagement with states. Details included a review of implementation processes and strategies to accelerate pathways from high-volume military occupations (medics, law enforcement and commercial drivers) to similar civilian occupations. The first four sections of the report provided a comprehensive picture of demonstration activities and offered a common framework with lessons learned for states interested in replicating similar processes and strategies. The fifth section described the demonstration's cost study approach.

The key interim findings related to designing and implementing accelerated pathways for military to civilian occupations, and to gathering, understanding, and assessing the data available to guide the process. The demonstration states' experiences suggested that efforts to accelerate licensing and certification of veterans were subject to a range of state- and occupation-specific complexities. However, the broad outline of the process to design effective strategies was similar for each state: (1) examine equivalencies and gaps between civilian and military occupations, (2) identify an appropriate process for filling any state- or occupation- specific gaps, and (3) equip veterans with professional credentials that are easily understood by civilian employers. The report presented an interim framework that outlined the common steps demonstration states took to design and implement strategies to accelerate the licensing and certification of veterans. Also noteworthy was that the need for and use of data about each state's veteran populations was present at all stages of the demonstration.

“Veterans’ Licensing and Certification Demonstration - A Summary of State Experiences, Preliminary Findings, and Cost Estimates: Final Report”

Simon, Martin, Amanda Dunker, Alisha Powell, Elise Shanbacker, and Brent Parton. “Veterans’ Licensing and Certification Demonstration - A Summary of State Experiences, Preliminary Findings, and Cost Estimates: Final Report.” Washington, DC: National Governors Association, Center for Best Practices, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2578&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The Veterans’ Licensing and Certification Demonstration consisted of state agency partnerships in six states (Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Nevada, Virginia, and Wisconsin) to identify licensure equivalencies between military and civilian occupations, and address the gaps between military occupations and civilian occupational requirements. Under the demonstration, the states attempted to accelerate occupation licensing pathways for veterans in three military occupational specialties (medic, police, and truck driver). The selected military occupational specialties were aligned to six relevant high-demand civilian occupations: emergency medical technicians/paramedics, licensed practical nurses, police patrol officers, bus and truck drivers, registered nurses, and physical therapy assistants.

This final report summarized the six states’ experiences with implementing the demonstration, identified preliminary findings related to strategies to overcome gaps and barriers, and described cost savings estimates for certain Federal programs that provide employment services to veterans. The final report had two key sections: a blueprint for accelerating veterans’ licensing and certification and the cost study. The demonstration and the report were funded by ETA on behalf of DOL Veterans’ Employment and Training Service.

Other Programs for Veterans

“Exploring Reemployment Strategies for Army Veterans: Implementation of State Pilots”

Boraas, Stephanie, and Grace Roemer. “Exploring Reemployment Strategies for Army Veterans: Implementation of State Pilots.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/ArmyUCX_ImplementReport_Final.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The UCX Claimants’ Initiative provides income support during the transition period when former active duty, reserve, or National Guard members search for work. It is supported by funds transferred from the appropriate military branch to the Unemployment Trust Fund. The goals of the Army UCX Claimants’ Initiative are to (1) create strong collaborative partnerships among the UI system, the public workforce system, and the three components of the Army (active, Reserve, and National Guard); (2) improve data sharing to better understand UCX claimants and their outreach and service needs; and (3) increase outreach, exposure to jobs, and reemployment strategies for UCX claimants.

The U.S. Army and DOL collaborated to further the goals of the Army UCX Claimants’ Initiative by funding grants to four states (Georgia, Illinois, North Carolina, and Texas) to identify innovative reemployment strategies for veterans and develop inter-agency partnerships. The four states proposed pilot projects and data sharing improvements to be implemented between July 2012 and June 2015 with \$750,000 in federal grant funding.

The final evaluation design included: (1) an implementation analysis (the focus of this report), (2) an outcomes analysis for the Georgia grantee, and (3) an analysis of the feasibility of data linking based on an innovative data-sharing project between Georgia and the Army. Researchers used qualitative methods to address questions related to implementation, identify factors that shaped implementation experiences, and draw lessons that the grantee states and others can use to inform future approaches.

This implementation report identified common structural challenges including legal and security issues surrounding data sharing and an inability to sustain partnerships over time. Staffing issues within organizations, including unsuitable staff appointments and high turnover, presented problems for employers. Finally, the innovative grant design allowed states to select what issues to address and creatively design their own projects; however, states were not accustomed to this level of discretion and thus varied in their ability to maximize use of grant funds. The report also identified promising practices and recommendations for further piloting and evaluation.

“Veteran and Non-Veteran Job Seekers Exploratory Analysis of Services and Outcomes for Customers of Federally-Funded Employment Services”

Thompson, Shane, Natalie Hinton, Laura Hoesly, and Lauren Scott. “Veteran and Non-Veteran Job Seekers Exploratory Analysis of Services and Outcomes for Customers of Federally-Funded Employment Services.” Washington, DC: Summit LLC, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/VeteranNon-VeteranJobSeekers.pdf>

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: DOL’s Wagner-Peyser (W-P) Employment Service and Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) Program are programs delivered in AJCs that provide a range of services, such as job search assistance, job referrals, and job placement. All programs delivered in AJCs provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses of veterans for employment, training, and placement services (serving these groups before other non-veteran clients).

This investigation contrasted the experiences of three groups who participated in federally-funded employment services: JVSG veterans, non-JVSG veterans, and non-veterans. The study examined employment rates, earnings, duration in employment services, and how quickly customers received staff-assisted services. Researchers compared outcomes across groups defined by gender, age, and military separation status.

The data used in the study encompassed nine quarters, from January 2011 through March 2013 and contained over 28 million unique customer enrollments. ETA tracked job seeker data, as collected by states from quarter to quarter while customers were enrolled in employment services and for three quarters after they exited. Previous analyses of these data focused on the overall differences in outcomes between populations without controlling for demographic characteristics of the groups. This analysis improved upon those simple comparisons by using regression analysis to account for any differences in gender, age, race, education, and disability status that may have existed between the study groups.

Results of the analysis suggested that the JVSG veterans exhibited higher rates of employment and higher earnings after exiting the program compared to non-JVSG veterans and non-veterans. JVSG veterans also exhibited smaller gender wage gaps than both non-JVSG veterans and non-veterans. JVSG veterans generally received staff-assisted services more quickly than non-veterans did, which may be an indicator of success for priority of service legislation.

“Assessment of the Workforce System’s Implementation of the Veterans’ Priority of Service Provision of the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002: Final Report”

Boraas, Stephanie, Grace Roemer, and Katie Bodenlos. “Assessment of the Workforce System’s Implementation of the Veterans’ Priority of Service Provision of the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002: Final Report.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2527&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: As the number of service members returning from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom increased, providing employment and training services for veterans became an increasingly important policy focus. DOL provides priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses before other non-veteran clients. POS was included as a required provision of the JVA of 2002.

In July 2011, ETA commissioned a study to assess the implementation of the priority of service provision of JVA and examine the status of current priority of service implementation efforts. The central question underlying this study was whether the guidance that DOL provided to the workforce development system was sufficient and effective in implementing priority of service. Specific areas of interest included (1) identification of methods used for determining eligibility of veterans and spouses for priority of service; (2) priority of service procedures after veterans and eligible spouses are identified; and (3) service provision under priority of service. This study was based on site visits and telephone discussions with AJC staff, discussions with veterans’ service organization representatives, and focus groups with veterans and eligible spouses of veterans.

One of the key findings from the report was that some AJC staff relied more on state or locally developed guidance on priority of service than on Federal guidance. However, Federal guidance has been useful in providing context to changes occurring in priority of service and leading to the creation of state and local level guidance. Another finding was that veterans who were separated from active duty military service more than two or three years ago were not aware of priority of service as much as those who were recently separated. Similarly, first-time customers also had low awareness of priority of service. To address low awareness and increased participation, all sites reported taking veterans and eligible spouses at their word about their status and providing priority of service on that basis until the veterans attempted to enroll in some kind of activity beyond core services.

“Formative Evaluation of the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshop: Findings From Observational Visits; Analysis of Customer Satisfaction Survey; and Options for Future Evaluation of TAP”

Trutko, John, Carolyn O’Brien, Burt Barnow, David Balducchi, Dave Darling, et al. “Formative Evaluation of the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshop: Findings From Observational Visits; Analysis of Customer Satisfaction Survey; and Options for Future Evaluation of TAP.” Capital Research Corporation, Inc., George Washington University, and Avar Consulting, Inc., 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Formative%20Evaluation%20of%20VETS%20TAP/FINAL_REPORT_formative_evaluation_vets_tap.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: In 2012, DOL commissioned a formative evaluation of the redesigned TAP curriculum being piloted at the Employment Workshops at 11 selected military bases. The TAP is a five-day workshop covering stress management, budgeting, financial planning, Military Occupational Classification (MOC) crosswalk to civilian jobs, and veterans’ benefits. The purpose of this formative evaluation effort was to determine whether the redesigned TAP curriculum provided exiting service members with the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition into civilian employment.

This report was broken into three main sections. Section I provided a synthesis of findings from three observational visits of the revised three-day TAP Employment Workshop. Overall, these exploratory visits found that facilitators at the three sites demonstrated fidelity in the delivery of all sections of the curriculum as set forth in the Facilitator Guide. Section II of this report provided analyses of a customer satisfaction survey collected from TAP Employment Workshop participants. The survey results suggested a high level of satisfaction with the TAP Employment Workshop among workshop attendees, with only slight differences in satisfaction levels across questions, service branches, facilities, or separation status (retirees versus separatees). Section III of this report examined potential approaches for formally evaluating the TAP Employment workshops, including discussions of potential experimental and non-experimental impact evaluation approaches and a process/implementation evaluation effort.

Other Publications Related to Veterans

“Women Veteran Economic and Employment Characteristics”

Nanda, Neha, Sandeep Shetty, Samuel Ampaabeng, Teerachat Techapaisarnjaroenkij, Luke Patterson, et al. “Women Veteran Economic and Employment Characteristics.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2016.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/WomenVeteranEconomicandEmploymentCharacteristics.pdf>

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: This report profiled the demographic and employment characteristics of women veterans and compared these characteristics to those of male veterans, women non-veterans, and male non-veterans. Using data from the Census Bureau, the demographic profile included an examination of women veteran age distribution, educational attainment, distribution by marital status, and spouse characteristics. The employment characteristics explored included labor force status, type of employment, occupation, industry, and earnings.

Key findings from the report included (1) veterans were predominantly white, and a higher percentage of women veterans were African-American relative to the female non-veteran population; (2) veterans were more highly educated than non-veterans and women veterans were more educated than their male counterparts; (3) the proportion of women veterans that were employed was not statistically different from that of women non-veterans and male veterans; (4) similar to women non-veterans, the primary reason for women veterans not being in the labor force was to take care of their home or family; and (5) veteran status was associated with higher earnings for both women and men.

The profile on women veterans presented in this report does not include causal analysis. The authors suggested that a rigorous, causal analysis using econometric methods was necessary for better understanding the wage differentials found in their research.

“A Review of the Literature Related to Homeless Veteran Reintegration: Final Report”

Woolsey, Lindsey, and Madeline Naumann. “A Review of the Literature Related to Homeless Veteran Reintegration: Final Report.” Rockville, MD: Avar Consulting, Inc., 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/A_Review_of_the_Literature_Related_to_Homeless_Veteran_Reintegration.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Literature Review

ABSTRACT: DOL’s CEO and the Veterans’ Employment and Training Services (VETS) requested a literature review in support of a 2015 assessment of DOL’s Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Program. This review synthesizes evidence from studies and reports related to homeless veterans, published by the end of 2014 and with a central focus on identifying the risk factors for homelessness among veterans. The review’s secondary aim was to identify the promising practices in services and training that help ensure homeless veterans successfully reintegrate into meaningful employment. The nature of the literature and past studies related to homelessness among veterans was mostly qualitative, with few rigorous quantitative studies demonstrating causal relationships either between risk factors and homelessness, or between program interventions and states of homelessness. This inventory of literature focused on identifying the risk factors associated with veteran homelessness, providing a foundation for future research that can better establish cause-and-effect relationships.

The literature on homelessness among veterans found a set of risk factors, some of which were common among the broader homeless population and others that were unique to veterans. Veterans and non-veterans shared the common risk factors associated with homelessness, such as childhood instability, mental illness, substance abuse, insufficient social supports as adults, and low or unstable income. Veterans, however, brought with them a set of additional factors that appeared to compound or exacerbate the risk for homelessness, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and for women veterans, an increased risk of PTSD related to Military Sexual Trauma (MST). Beyond individual risk factors, structural issues also appeared to contribute to the persistence of homelessness among veterans, including lack of access to stable housing and employment opportunities. Studies showed that services that combine transitional housing support with employment and training opportunities led to promising outcomes for homeless veterans over the longer term. Further, the literature provided insight into how veteran assistance programs effectively braided these services for homeless veterans, by navigating incongruent eligibility criteria, sequencing of service requirements, and funding mechanisms.

“PILOT STUDY Translating Military Skills to Civilian Employment”

Solutions for Information Design, LLC. “PILOT STUDY Translating Military Skills to Civilian Employment.” Washington DC: Solutions for Information Design, LLC, 2011.¹

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2550&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: This study to match skills developed by members of the Armed Forces to the qualifications required for private sector positions was required by Public Law 112-56, Title II, VOW to Hire Heroes, Sec. 222. The starting point for the study was an existing crosswalk developed and maintained by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) that matches military to civilian occupations. There were nearly 1,500 military occupation classification (MOC) codes across the four main branches of the service, but this study was conducted as a pilot focused on a subset of 68 occupations, specifically selected to cover the greatest number of active duty and separating service members. The 68 MOC included the top 10 occupations in each major service branch, and collectively accounted for 57 percent of all enlisted service members. The study included 12 combat arms positions not previously matched to any civilian occupations in the existing DMDC crosswalk.

The primary result of this research was a more detailed analysis of the matches of military skills to civilian jobs. The study described the methodology used to enhance the existing military to civilian crosswalk by looking at (1) specific embedded skill sets; (2) related military training curricula; and (3) work experience associated with pay grade or rank, in order to identify a broader set of related civilian occupations. This analysis was based on access provided by the Department of Defense to specific military job descriptions and training curricula and communications with subject matter experts within the training commands.

The source crosswalk from DMDC mapped the 68 occupations to 100 civilian occupations, an average of 1.5 civilian occupations per MOC. The enhanced crosswalk from this study mapped those same 68 MOCs to 962 civilian occupations—an average of 14 civilian occupations for each military occupation studied. The resulting crosswalk not only increased the number of matches, it further enhanced the crosswalk matches by identifying several additional variables: (1) whether the MOC to civilian linkage was direct or skill-related; (2) the typical minimum military pay grade that would qualify for the specific civilian occupation; and (3) an indicator of the likelihood of transitioning to a given civilian occupation after a single term of service in the military occupation (called the attainability rating).

¹ This study, although published in 2011, was included in the Annotated Bibliography because the release date according to the ETA Database was September 2014.

POPULATION-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

ETA supports a number of programs targeted toward specific populations of workers. This section contains studies related to some of these programs.

Studies in the first sub-section examined programs designed to help formerly incarcerated adults reintegrate into society. Reentry programs can include services such as job training, job search assistance, and mentoring.

- The section includes two reports from the randomized controlled trial evaluation of the Re-Integration of Ex-Offenders program—one that documented two-year impacts (Wiegand et al. 2015) and one that summarized implementation findings (Leshnick et al. 2012).
- In addition, the section includes the interim and final reports from an evaluation of the Newark Prisoner Re-entry Initiative Replication (Dunham et al. 2011; Leufgen et al. 2012).

The second sub-section summarizes three studies relating to the labor market experiences of older workers, defined as workers who are age 55 and above.

- Ozturk et al. (2013) examined the effects of job displacement on the wealth holdings of older workers.
- Kogan et al. (2012) assessed the implementation and outcomes of a program providing subsidized minimum-wage, part-time community service jobs to low-income older persons.
- Finally, two reports presented interim and final findings from an evaluation of grants administered through the Aging Worker Initiative (Kogan et al. 2012; Kogan et al. 2013).

Target populations in the remaining studies included women and children (Gibbs 2013–2014), Medicaid recipients (Gooptu et al. 2013–2014), and agricultural workers (Martin 2008).

Justice-Involved Individuals

“The Evaluation of the Re-Integration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) Program: Two-Year Impact Report”

Wiegand, Andrew, Jesse Sussell, Erin Valentine, and Brittany Henderson. “The Evaluation of the Re-Integration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) Program: Two-Year Impact Report.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2568&mp=y&start=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials)

ABSTRACT: The Reintegration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) project began in 2005 as a joint initiative of ETA, the Department of Justice (DOJ), and several other federal agencies. The programs funded under RExO primarily provided three main types of services to ex-offenders: mentoring, which most often took the form of group mentoring, but also included one-on-one mentoring and other activities; employment services, including work readiness training, job training, job placement, job clubs, transitional employment, and post-placement follow-up; and case management and supportive services.

In 2009, ETA commissioned a three-year random assignment evaluation of the RExO project. This two-year impact report summarized the initial impacts of the RExO program on offender outcomes in four areas: service receipt, labor market success, recidivism, and other outcomes. The results were based on outcomes for these individuals in the two-year period after they enrolled into the study. Two sources of data provided outcome information for this analysis: (1) a telephone survey that asked about a range of items, including service receipt, labor market outcomes, recidivism, health and mental health, substance abuse, housing, and child support issues, and (2) administrative data that provided state and local criminal engagement information.

A final impact report focused on impacts in the three-year period following random assignment into the study.

“Evaluation of the Re-Integration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) Program: Interim Report”

Leshnick, Sengsouvanh, Christian Geckeler, Andrew Wiegand, Brandon Nicholson, and Kimberly Foley. “Evaluation of the Re-Integration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) Program: Interim Report.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2489&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The Reintegration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) initiative was launched in 2005 as a joint initiative by ETA and the DOJ. RExO was designed to strengthen urban communities heavily affected by the challenges associated with high numbers of prisoners seeking to re-enter their communities when their sentences ended.

In June 2009, ETA commissioned a random assignment impact evaluation of the 24 RExO grantees that had been in operation for more than three years. A critical component of this evaluation was an implementation study, which included two rounds of site visits to each of the 24 RExO grantees and alternative providers in their communities.

This report summarized the key findings from this implementation study including findings on the community context and general structure of the RExO grantees; their recruitment, intake and enrollment strategies; the RA process itself; the services RExO grantees and their partners provided; the specific partnerships in place to provide services; and the services available through alternative providers (to which comparison group members were referred) in the 24 communities. The report provided some context for the impact analysis by presenting information about the labor market situation in the 24 communities in which programs operated, and the major barriers facing ex-offenders.

“Evaluation of the Newark Prisoner Re-entry Initiative Replication Project Interim Report”

Dunham, Kate, Charles Lea, Jennifer Henderson-Frakes, and Sandra Harvey. “Evaluation of the Newark Prisoner Re-entry Initiative Replication Project Interim Report.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2011.

“The Evaluation of the Newark Prisoner Re-entry Initiative Replication Project Final Report”

Leufgen, Jillianne, Charles Lea, Brandon Nicholson, Anna Rubin, and Kate Dunham. “The Evaluation of the Newark Prisoner Re-entry Initiative Replication Project Final Report.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2548&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: These reports examined the implementation of and results from the Newark Prisoner Re-entry Initiative replication (NPRIR). The Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) model was designed to help ex-offenders make successful transitions to paid employment. It involved intensive case management, job search, job placement, and two distinctive features: mentoring and the use of faith-based and community organizations to deliver services. With an ETA grant and a \$2 million match from the Nicholson Foundation, the City of Newark used local service providers and collaborated with state and local partners to provide services to over 1,400 ex-offenders. The interim report described the six organizations that received funding, the services provided, collaboration with other agencies, administrative challenges, and clients’ initial experiences. The final report provided detailed information on project services, partnerships, management, and leadership as well as quantitative information on participants and their outcomes.

Researchers collected qualitative data through three rounds of site visits and telephone calls, while quantitative data on participant outcomes were collected from the PRI and state databases. The quantitative data analysis explored patterns among participants and services in the NPRIR and compared them to those in other PRI demonstration projects.

Consistent with the PRI model, the primary services NPRIR participants received were case management, workforce preparation, and mentoring. With one exception, all providers offered mentoring, but most was provided on a group (not a one-on-one) basis. Education and training activities (e.g., GED preparation, occupational skills training, and unpaid work experience) were offered to some participants. Overall, NPRIR project participants were able to achieve similar or better outcomes than participants in a prior Newark PRI project despite a worsened labor market. Sixty-two percent of participants were placed in unsubsidized employment. On average, NPRIR participants earned \$9.13 per hour in their first employment placements. Approximately 29 percent of participants recidivated; most were arrested for a new crime rather than for a violation of community supervision.

Older Workers

“Effect of Job Loss on Wealth Accumulation of Older Workers”

Ozturk, Gulgun Bayaz and William T. Gallo. “Effect of Job Loss on Wealth Accumulation of Older Workers.” New York: Hunter College, 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Wealth_Effects_of_Job_Loss_on_Older_Workers/FINAL_REPORT_wealth_effects_job_loss_of_older_workers.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: Even though adverse consequences of job loss on earnings and employment have been extensively studied, research on the wealth effects of job loss is limited. However, it is the level of wealth holdings that ultimately influences people’s decisions on consumption and retirement. Therefore, wealth holdings provide a better assessment of someone’s resource constraints than earnings and employment.

This study examined the impact of job displacement on the wealth holdings of older workers. The study used data from all ten waves of the Health and Retirement Study (from 1992 through 2010) to estimate the portion of wealth changes attributed to job displacement. The study also controlled for other important factors such as health, insurance, and marital status of the individuals. Given that the study observed lower wealth balances as a result of job displacement, the authors questioned to what extent a late-life career disruption affects the adequacy of wealth during retirement.

Findings showed that late-life career disruption leads to substantial reductions in wealth balances. A typical worker experiences a persistent reduction in his/her wealth balances, which stabilizes at a rate of 8 percent six or more years post job loss. Wealth shocks of this magnitude during the years leading up to retirement may jeopardize wealth adequacy during retirement. In the study’s assessment of wealth adequacy, findings showed that 11.2 percent of the displaced survey respondents were “near poverty” as opposed to 7.8 percent of the not displaced participants.

“Evaluation of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP): Process and Outcomes Study Final Report”

Kogan, Deborah, Hannah Betesh, Marian Negoita, Jeffrey Salzman, Laura Paulen, et al. “Evaluation of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP): Process and Outcomes Study Final Report.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates and Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2497&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses and Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provides subsidized minimum-wage, part-time community service jobs to low-income persons age 55 or older who have poor employment prospects. Throughout its history, SCSEP has served unemployed older workers in both urban and rural areas who possess serious employment barriers such as low levels of formal education, physical and mental disabilities, limited English language and literacy skills, and obsolete skill sets. In addition, the participants also may face discrimination in the job market due to the negative stereotypes of older workers held by some employers. SCSEP aims to (1) foster and promote part-time training opportunities in community service activities, (2) promote individual economic self-sufficiency, and (3) increase the number of older persons who enter unsubsidized employment in the public and private sectors.

In Program Year (PY) 2007, ETA commissioned a comprehensive evaluation of the SCSEP. The evaluation had two parts: (1) a quantitative study that analyzed existing administrative data and customer satisfaction survey data for PY 2009 and 2010, and (2) a process study based on interviews with national SCSEP grantees and case-study site visits to 29 local projects during PY 2011.

The final report summarized the results from these evaluation activities. Study authors identified the following set of practices as those most likely to be effective at increasing the level of unsubsidized employment outcomes: (1) arrange for skills training in addition to the community service assignment; (2) provide job search training and assistance directly; and (3) increase access to AJC services by either co-locating staff members at AJCs or specifically arranging for participants to use core services. The evaluation also suggested that employment outcomes reflect only one aspect of the program’s objectives, which also include increasing the overall quality of life of low-income elders who are having difficulty meeting their financial needs. Thus, to realize the program’s multiple goals, local projects should draw on the potential of SCSEP services to help participants realize their potential for unsubsidized employment, while also promoting other factors important for a high quality of life.

“The Evaluation of the Aging Worker Initiative (AWI) Interim Report”

Kogan, Deborah, Deanna Khemani, Tyler Moazed, and Michelle Derr. “The Evaluation of the Aging Worker Initiative (AWI) Interim Report.” Washington, DC: Social Policy Research Associates and Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

“Evaluation of the Aging Worker Initiative Final Report”

Kogan, Deborah, Deanna Khemani, Tyler Moazed, Jill Leufgen, Elizabeth Laird, et al. “Evaluation of the Aging Worker Initiative Final Report.” Washington, DC: Social Policy Research Associates and Mathematica Policy Research, 2013.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2514&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: These reports describe key aspects of the Aging Worker Initiative (AWI), developed by ETA in response to the rising percentage of older workers in the labor force and the potential need for the workforce system to address their needs. AWI involved grants of about \$1 million each, awarded competitively in the summer of 2009 to 10 local organizations in the United States, to develop new strategies for serving workers 55 years of age and older. The projects were required to involve employers, the workforce system, and educational providers as partners; focus on high-growth jobs; and provide data for reporting and evaluation purposes.

The AWI evaluation began in June 2009 and used qualitative data from two rounds of telephone calls and site visits and quantitative participant data (collected by grantees). Grantees found that participants who enrolled in occupational training were reluctant to participate in training longer than two or three months and were interested in getting jobs as quickly as possible to meet their financial needs. Many participants were intimidated by attending training in a community college classroom with primarily younger students and several grantees altered or adjusted the training to meet the needs and goals of participants.

The AWI projects also tested enhanced case management and job readiness services such as the use of “older worker specialists” or “navigators” to help older workers access services; workshops to rebuild self-confidence and knowledge of the current job market; and revamped job search skills training and job clubs designed for older workers. Grantees also created short-term training in introductory computer skills and workplace literacy training, as well as internships. The AWI projects served just under 4,000 older workers, 85 percent of whom were either unemployed or anticipated being unemployed. At the time that grantees provided participant data in the spring of 2012, most of the projects were still ongoing and about half of exited participants had obtained unsubsidized employment and most were working full-time. The study also found that younger participants had better outcomes than older participants.

Other Populations

“A Matter of Time? Impact of Statewide Full-day Kindergarten Expansions on Later Academic Skills and Maternal Employment”

Gibbs, Chloe R. “A Matter of Time? Impact of Statewide Full-day Kindergarten Expansions on Later Academic Skills and Maternal Employment.” Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 2013–2014.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/2013-2014-scholar-programs/2013-2014_DOL_Scholars_Paper_Series_Gibbs_Chapter.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Non-Experimental Impact Analyses

ABSTRACT: The Indiana General Assembly significantly increased state grant funds from \$8.5 million in the 2006–07 school year to \$33.5 million in the 2007–08 school year to provide full-day kindergarten. This legislation sought to improve access to and availability of full-day kindergarten statewide with grants targeted directly to school districts and funding amounts determined based on kindergarten enrollment. This policy change corresponded to increases in provision and enrollment across the state from the 2006–07 school year to the 2007–08 school year.

Capitalizing on the varied implementation of full-day kindergarten across schools and counties, this study investigated the impact of full-day kindergarten on first and third grade academic skills at the school level and on women’s employment at the county level.

The study utilized triple-difference estimators to assess the impact of the full-day kindergarten legislation on academic skills and women’s employment. The analysis leveraged cross-time, cross-cohort, and cross-geography variation in exposure to full-day kindergarten to assess the effect of the statewide reform.

Findings suggested that increases in full-day kindergarten provision had no school-level effects on later academic performance, but were associated with greater female labor force participation at the time of kindergarten expansion.

“Early Effects of the 2010 Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansion on Labor Market Outcomes”

Gooptu, Angshuman, Asako S. Moriya, and Kosali Simon. “Early Effects of the 2010 Affordable Care Act on Labor Market Outcome.” Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 2013–2014.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/2013-2014-scholar-programs/2013-2014_DOL_Scholars_Paper_Series_Gooptu_Chapter.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010 expanded the number of people with health insurance through many features including those that encouraged employer-sponsored insurance (ESI). However, the predominant ways the ACA expanded insurance options were not tied to one’s own employment, but rather occurred through Medicaid expansion, subsidized Marketplace insurance plans, and coverage for young adults through parental employer policies. Before ACA, Medicaid eligibility for childless low-income adults (and less so for parents) was extremely limited. The ACA initially intended to expand Medicaid to all non-elderly Americans with household incomes less than 138 percent of the federal poverty level. In June 2012 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the ACA’s Medicaid expansion to be unconstitutionally coercive of states’ rights, resulting in a state-by-state variation in Medicaid expansion for 2014.

This study tested for early labor market effects of the 2014 ACA Medicaid expansion on “job-lock,” a phenomenon in which individuals are less likely to move to preferred jobs because of the traditional tie between employment and health insurance. An expansion of health insurance options not tied to employment could increase job turnover among newly eligible low-income populations, enabling them to move to preferred jobs (measured here as higher wage jobs).

The study used a differences-in-differences strategy, comparing rates of job turnover and wages from the Current Population Survey (CPS) Basic Monthly data, after the policy implementation relative to the outcomes before the implementation, among the treatment group (low-educated populations in Medicaid expansion states) relative to the control group (similar individuals in non-expansion states).

The study found no statistically significant evidence that the ACA Medicaid expansion increased job turnover rates or affected wages. However, the study authors cautioned that these were early results, and the use of CPS Basic Monthly data offered large samples and timely access but were limited because they do not contain health insurance information. Instead, the study used education as a proxy for Medicaid eligibility, and thus, measurement error may have affected results.

“Evaluation of the H-2A Alien Labor Certification Process and the U.S. Farm Labor Market”

Martin, Phillip. “Evaluation of the H-2A Alien Labor Certification Process and the U.S. Farm Labor Market.” Silver Spring, MD: KRA Corporation, 2008.²

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2498&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Program/Policy Analyses

ABSTRACT: The H-2A program allows U.S. farm employers to request certification from DOL to have foreign workers admitted “temporarily to the United States to perform agricultural labor...of a temporary or seasonal nature.” ETA commissioned this evaluation for the purpose of identifying options for streamlining the H-2A program and estimating the future supply and demand of farm labor. The evaluation entailed analysis of administrative and statistical data, a review of government and research reports, and interviews with Office of Foreign Labor Certification, State Workforce Agency and National Processing Center staff, and others with significant knowledge of the H-2A program. The report, which included an appendix of state farm labor profiles, identified three major options for streamlining the H-2A program: (1) make H-2A application forms electronic to expedite accurate certifications and improve enforcement, (2) rate employers using an ABC system to encourage self-policing, and (3) reconsider current recruitment procedures.

The report noted that models that were developed in the 1960s to explain the links between farm and nonfarm labor markets are no longer able to reliably explain levels of farmworker employment. The study’s review of labor practices in selected labor-intensive commodities suggested that the demand for hand labor in each had likely peaked, but the reasons for expecting fewer farmworkers in the future varied by commodity. The author suggested that DOL could stay abreast of farm labor changes by supporting case-study research.

² This study, although published in 2008, was included in the Annotated Bibliography because the release date according to the ETA Database was January, 2013.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE

The TAA program, established first in 1962 and amended and expanded with the 2002 Trade Act and the 2009 ARRA, is a Federal program that provides compensation, reemployment services, and training to eligible workers who have experienced a trade-related job loss. In fiscal year 2015, 47,335 participants received TAA services of which about 54 percent received training.

Most of the studies in this section were conducted as part of the TAA program evaluation:

- One study described the characteristics of trainees participating in the TAA program (Berk 2012a).
- Schochet et al. (2012), Berk and Schochet (2012), and Berk (2012b) estimated impacts of TAA on employment and earnings outcomes, while Dolfin and Schochet (2012) reported findings from a benefit-cost analysis of TAA.
- Two papers provided “practices from the field”: one reviewed workforce system integration and case management practices at multiple sites under the TAA program (Geckeler 2012) while the other report focused on outreach and recruitment practices used by state workforce agencies (Salzman 2012).
- One report reviewed major findings from multiple publications on the evaluation of the TAA program under the 2002 amendments (D’Amico and Schochet 2012).
- Another study described how states and AJCs implemented the changes required by the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act (TGAAA), which amended the TAA by expanding eligibility and training options and mandating case management services (D’Amico et al. 2012).

“Characteristics of Trainees and Training Programs in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under the 2002 Amendments”

Berk, Jillian. “Characteristics of Trainees and Training Programs in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under the 2002 Amendments.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2510&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: This report, one of a series of papers from the TAA program evaluation, described demographic and other characteristics of all trainees in the TAA program under the 2002 amendments, as well as information on the duration, occupational focus, costs, and providers of TAA-funded training and education. Data for the report was obtained from a 2008/2009 survey conducted with TAA participants, most of whom had lost their jobs in 2005 and 2006. There were 2,226 participants who completed interviews, of whom 65 percent pursued training.

Among these trainees, 86.2 percent said their main motivation for training was to prepare for a new career, while 8.9 percent wanted to use training to upgrade skills in their current occupation. Among all trainees, 82.4 percent were pursuing only occupational skills training, 5.5 percent were combining such training with general education, and 17.7 percent pursued general education only.

For participants in TAA-funded training programs (who comprised 46 percent of all participants and 69 percent of all trainees), the most common occupations they were preparing for were in health care support, administrative support, installation, maintenance, and repair. Community colleges were the biggest providers of both general education and occupational skills training. The median cost of programs was \$5,923 while the average was almost \$8,500, indicating that a small number were much more expensive than others. About a third of respondents were still in training at the time of the survey, but among those no longer enrolled, 86 percent said they had completed their program and 93 percent of these completers reported they had received a certificate or a degree.

“Estimated Impacts for Participants in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program under the 2002 Amendments”

Schochet, Peter Z., Ronald D’Amico, Jillian Berk, Sarah Dolfin, and Nathan Wozny. “Estimated Impacts for Participants in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program under the 2002 Amendments” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates and Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

“Impact Estimates Regarding Non-Participants in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under the 2002 Amendments”

Berk, Jillian and Peter Z. Schochet. “Impact Estimates Regarding Non-Participants in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under the 2002 Amendments” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates and Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2505&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Non-Experimental Analyses

ABSTRACT: These two reports from the TAA program evaluation provided impact estimates, for both participants and nonparticipants, of the TAA program under the 2002 amendments. Detailed information on the research design, statistical methods, data sources, sampling, and survey response rates can be found in the Methodological Notes Regarding the Impact Analysis, which are also included with the reports.

The impact study involved a quasi-experimental comparison group design, because workers eligible for TAA could not be denied benefits and services. The study used two treatment groups: participants and nonparticipants (i.e., workers who were eligible for TAA but did not receive significant services and benefits from the program). Each treatment group had its own matched comparison group of UI claimants who lost their jobs in manufacturing firms around the same time (mostly in 2005 and 2006) in 26 states. Data used in the impact analysis was primarily from the initial and follow-up surveys of both treatment and comparison groups. “Nearest neighbor” propensity score matching was used to initially match comparison group members to members in each treatment group. “Kernel matching” was then used to “rematch” (i.e., statistically adjust) the treatment and comparison groups, based on information collected in the initial survey.

Researchers provided estimated impacts in the reports on (1) the receipt of re-employment and training services, (2) employment and earnings, (3) characteristics of jobs (including hourly wages and health benefits), and (4) health and family status.

“Practices from the Field for Improving Case Management and Increasing Workforce System Integration in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program”

Geckeler, Christian. “Practices from the Field for Improving Case Management and Increasing Workforce System Integration in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2507&mp=y&st art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: This briefing paper, one in a series produced as part of the TAA program evaluation, highlights efforts taken by 12 selected states and 14 local workforce investment areas to improve the quality of case management services provided to TAA customers. Many of these efforts were intertwined with attempts to better coordinate and link various programs, and thus workforce system integration is also a key focus in this report. Data came primarily from interviews with TAA coordinators, other state-level staff, local administrators, and frontline staff.

The paper reported that while case management was not defined in TAA legislation, law at the time did require states to provide (or offer) multiple “employment and case management services,” such as comprehensive and specialized assessment, career counseling, individual employment plan development, job search assistance, and information on training programs, financial aid, labor market trends, job vacancies, skill requirements, child care, transportation, and needs-related payments. ETA guidance clarified that employment and case management services must be offered to all participants and must be documented. Law also required that states spend at least five percent of their total TAA allocation on such services and, if funds were insufficient, state agencies must provide services through other Federal programs.

The report also identified attributes of effective case management for TAA customers, and described strategies, organized in four broad categories, for improving TAA case management services. These strategies included (1) improving case managers’ skills and knowledge through training, feedback, and improved hiring practices; (2) coordination and system integration with other workforce programs; (3) rethinking case managers’ roles and responsibilities; and (4) redesigning management information systems. The report offered specific examples of activities undertaken by the 12 states and 14 local workforce investment areas (within those states) from which data were collected, as well as additional resources for practitioners interested in improving TAA case management.

“Practices from the Field in Outreach to Employers and Participants in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program”

Salzman, Jeffrey. “Practices from the Field in Outreach to Employers and Participants in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2508&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: This report described practices used by state workforce agencies to contact and educate workers, employers, and partner organizations about TAA and, in some cases, to persuade key actors to participate in the program. TAA provides an array of services and income support benefits in order to help workers find suitable re-employment. Accessing services and benefits in TAA involves multiple steps, many actors, and specific deadlines. The report suggested that outreach has the potential to improve petition-filing, program enrollment, and retention in services.

The practices discussed in this paper include mining administrative data to find dislocations or certified workers; use of a website, hotline, and brochures; involving partner organizations in service planning; town hall meetings with workers and communities; centralized technical assistance for petition filing; use of labor organizations; peer counseling; social networking; and enhanced intake and tracking processes.

The analyses found that three general attributes seemed to characterize stronger outreach efforts: rigor in application of the practice, accountability for results, and the use of partnerships. The report also discussed the challenges states faced in improving and expanding outreach: the need for better analysis of the problems outreach can address, the need for data and evaluation of the efficacy of various practices, and problems created by more restrictive Federal data security requirements, which may hamper states in using third parties to conduct outreach to eligible individuals.

The study was primarily descriptive. It was based on information acquired as part of the fifth round of data collection for the process study in the larger TAA evaluation.

“The Benefits and Costs of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under the 2002 Amendments”

Dolfin, Sarah, and Peter Z Schochet. “The Benefits and Costs of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under the 2002 Amendments.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY: https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2013_09.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Cost Analyses

ABSTRACT: The TAA program aims to help trade-impacted workers obtain reemployment at a suitable wage by providing training and temporary income support, among other services. This report presents the findings of a benefit-cost analysis of the TAA program as it operated under the 2002 amendments. The analysis compared estimated benefits in dollar values to estimated costs, using estimates from the impact analysis of the program conducted as part of a comprehensive evaluation of the TAA program. Given TAA’s focus on training and reemployment, one of the most important potential benefits measured was the increased output of participants as quantified by their total compensation (earnings and fringe benefits). Other benefits included reduced use of training and reemployment services not funded by TAA and reduced receipt of UI and public assistance benefits. Costs of TAA were measured as program outlays for Trade Readjustment Allowances, training, relocation and other allowances, Health Coverage Tax Credits, wage supplements for re-employed older workers, and administration. Subtracting the costs from the benefits provided a measure of the 2002 TAA net benefits.

Net benefits per participant were found to be negative from all perspectives examined: that of society as whole, participants only, or society except for participants. These results were driven by the long period during which participants were in the TAA program and not working. Also, when participants returned to work, their hourly wages were substantially lower than their matched comparisons. Researchers also found, however, that if TAA made even a relatively modest contribution to the ease of enacting free-trade policies, the program’s benefits could outweigh its costs.

“The Evaluation of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program: A Synthesis of Major Findings”

D’Amico, Ronald, and Peter Z. Schochet. “The Evaluation of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program: A Synthesis of Major Findings.” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates and Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2502&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Literature Reviews

ABSTRACT: This report summarized major findings from more than a dozen separate publications of the TAA program evaluation. The evaluation, commissioned by ETA (which is responsible for administration of the TAA program) was designed to document key administrative practices and assess the effectiveness of the TAA program under the 2002 amendments. Data from multiple sources were used including two telephone surveys of TAA participants and a statistically matched comparison group; administrative data; and data from site visits conducted in 34 states and more than 100 local offices. The report covered implementation of the 2002 and 2009 amendments; linkages with other programs, outreach, case management, characteristics of those eligible for TAA; characteristics of trainees and training programs; estimated impacts of the 2002 program; factors affecting trainee outcomes; and benefits and costs of the 2002 program.

“Understanding the Employment Outcomes of Trainees in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under The 2002 Amendments”

Berk, Jillian. “Understanding the Employment Outcomes of Trainees in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Under The 2002 Amendments.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012b.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2506&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Non-Experimental Impact Analyses

ABSTRACT: This report presented suggestive evidence on aspects of TAA-funded training (under the 2002 amendments) that were associated with better outcomes for participants. The analysis was based on telephone survey data from a nationally representative sample of TAA participants from 26 states, most of whom lost their jobs in 2005 and 2006. The evaluation overall found that the 2002 TAA program led to increases in the receipt of education and training and the attainment of educational credentials, relative to a statistically matched comparison group of UI claimants, and that employment and earnings impacts were more favorable for participants who received TAA-funded training than for those who received income support without such training.

Specifically, the analysis, which controlled for multiple factors, suggested that early training entry was associated with better labor market outcomes four years after job loss, though there was no clear relationship between the length of a training program and employment outcomes. Receiving a degree or certificate was associated with more weeks worked for both male and female trainees. Also, trainees who found employment in their training field had better employment outcomes than trainees employed in other occupations. In addition, trainees who received career assessments were more likely to be employed in their training field. For female (but not male) trainees, some occupational fields (such as for health care professionals) were strongly associated with better labor market outcomes.

“The Evaluation of the Implementation of the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act (TGAAA)”

D’Amico, Ronald, Deanna Khemani, and Christian Geckler. “The Evaluation of the Implementation of the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act (TGAAA).” Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2509&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: This study focused on how state and local workforce offices implemented key provisions of the TGAAA, which was enacted in February 2009. TGAAA amended the TAA program by expanding eligibility to include service workers (in addition to manufacturing workers), broadening training options, enhancing Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), expanding eligibility for wage subsidies for older workers, and mandating (and funding) case management services. The data on which the report is chiefly based were compiled during multi-day site visits in late 2009 through spring of 2010 in 14 states and 28 local AJCs (two in each state) where TAA services were being delivered. During the visits, interviews were conducted with TAA and TRA state coordinators, WIA and ES program heads, TAA fiscal and management information system staff, local office managers, and TAA, ES, and WIA frontline staff.

The report described how the changes TGAAA made to the TAA program were implemented and the challenges encountered by the respondents. The new program was viewed as potentially very advantageous to workers affected by trade dislocation and implementation was seen as being relatively smooth overall. However, respondents noted some problems related to the staffing of the new case management services and the difficulty of transitioning to a program with new benefits and eligibility rules. Additionally, factors external to the program—particularly the economic downturn and the institution of emergency and extended UI benefits—significantly delayed or impeded workers’ utilization of some services.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

UI is a Federal-state partnership that offers temporary wage replacement to individuals who are involuntarily unemployed. Regular UI benefits are available for up to 26 weeks. During periods of recession or high unemployment, temporary Federal benefits and Federal-state Extended Benefits (EB) programs have been implemented to increase the duration of coverage.

This section contains papers on various aspects of the UI program, including studies on its role, funding, and use. The section is divided into studies related to the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act of 2008 (EUC08) program, those related to ARRA provisions, and publications related to other aspects of UI.

- Two studies covered topics related to the EUC08 and EB programs instituted during the Great Recession (Hock et al. 2016; Needels et al. 2015).
- Two studies assessed provisions of ARRA. Mastri et al. (2016) evaluated the efficiency and effectiveness of the unemployment compensation provisions while Barnow et al. (2012) provided information on the workforce development and UI provisions.

Other studies related to UI included a report describing the data collection procedures used in a longitudinal study of UI recipients in California (Santos et al. 2016); a study describing the characteristics and opinions of employers participating in the Short-Time Compensation program (Balducci et al. 2015); and an evaluation of the impact of eliminating the Work Search Requirement on the employment outcomes and benefit receipt of UI claimants in Washington (Lachowska et al. 2013–2014).

The Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act of 2008

“Additional Unemployment Compensation Benefits During the Great Recession: Recipients and Their Post-Claim Outcomes”

Hock, Heinrich, Walter Nicholson, Karen Needels, Joanne Lee, and Priyanka Anand. “Additional Unemployment Compensation Benefits During the Great Recession: Recipients and Their Post-Claim Outcomes.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY: https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/ARRA_UC_Rept_Addtl_Benefits_GR.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: Expansions to the unemployment compensation (UC) system followed the onset of the Great Recession. Before the recession, eligible workers losing a job could collect up to 26 weeks of UI benefits in most states. Near the end of 2009, up to 99 weeks were available in high-unemployment states through the UI program, the EUC08 program, and the EB program.

The report examined the expansions to the UC system and addressed two main sets of research questions: (1) Who collected EUC08/EB benefits and how did they fare?; and (2) How was the availability of additional UC benefits—both additional weeks of benefits and additional dollars per week—related to recipients’ outcomes?

The main analysis used administrative and survey data on 2,122 recipients in 12 states who began receiving UI benefits between January 2008 and September 2009. Forty-five percent of UI recipients in the sample collected EUC08/EB benefits, particularly those from groups that historically faced employment barriers. The study found that each additional week of available benefits was associated with an increase of 0.08 to 0.17 weeks in the length of initial joblessness, and reductions of 0.14 to 0.53 weeks in the total time employed over the three years following the recipients’ initial UI claim. The authors cautioned that their results cannot be interpreted as causal but should be considered in combination with findings from other studies to understand the link between additional benefits and joblessness durations.

“Implementation of the EUC08 Reemployment Services and Reemployment Eligibility Assessments Program: Findings from Nine States”

Needels, Karen, Ima Perez-Johnson, and Adam Dunn. “Implementation of the EUC08 Reemployment Services and Reemployment Eligibility Assessments Program: Findings from Nine States.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY: [https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/RESREA_report_revised_clean_20150325\(2015_0630\).pdf](https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/RESREA_report_revised_clean_20150325(2015_0630).pdf)

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: Legislation such as EUC08 provided benefits to long-term unemployed workers in response to the Great Recession that began in December 2007. The EUC08 program included up to four separate and successive tiers of emergency unemployment benefits for people who exhausted their regular UI benefits. Later, the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 required states to provide Reemployment Services and Reemployment and Eligibility Assessments (RES/REAs) to particular EUC08 benefit claimants. The program sought to promote improved access to reemployment assistance services among EUC08 claimants and increased scrutiny of eligibility for benefits. The program included (1) an orientation to an AJC, (2) labor market and career information, (3) individual skills assessments, and (4) a review of eligibility for EUC08 benefits based on participants’ work search activities.

This report presented findings from an implementation study of the EUC08 RES/REA program in nine purposively selected states. Researchers sought to identify effective strategies and practices for implementing the program at scale that federal, state, and local administrators could consider in the future for similar programs. The study team interviewed state and local staff to examine how the study states designed their programs, the strategies used to foster participation in services and overcome challenges with program administration, and lessons learned.

The study presented key findings regarding how participating states designed and delivered services, including:

- Study states relied mostly on in-person versus remote (over-the-phone or electronic) introductions to and delivery of EUC08 RES/REA services.
- Study states differed in whether they allowed claimants to complete the mandated services in a single AJC visit or over two AJC visits.
- Frontline staff perceived that EUC08 claimants benefited from interactions with other long-term unemployment claimants through a group service format.
- State and frontline staff reported that they engaged EUC08 claimants in a number of additional services beyond the four mandatory RES/REA program activities.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

“States’ Decisions to Adopt Unemployment Compensation Provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act”

Mastri, Annalisa, Wayne Vroman, Karen Needels, and Walter Nicholson. “States’ Decisions to Adopt Unemployment Compensation Provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/UCP_State_Decisions_to_Adopt.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The federal policy response to the recession that began in late 2007 included substantial changes to the UC system, which is administered as a partnership between states and the federal government. The most comprehensive piece of legislation affecting the UC system was ARRA. In June 2010, DOL commissioned the Evaluation of the UC Provisions of ARRA to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the UC provisions.

One component of the evaluation, which was the focus of this report, was to learn about states’ decisions to adopt six optional UC-related provisions of ARRA for which the federal government provided monetary incentives: the total unemployment rate trigger for the EB program and five modernization provisions. The five provisions were called modernization provisions because they were mechanisms by which states’ UI programs could be adapted to be more responsive to the needs of unemployed workers, given changes in the labor market and technological capabilities over time.

To conduct the analysis, the researchers used two types of data: (1) responses to a survey administered to UI directors (or their designees) within the 50 states and the District of Columbia and (2) publicly available national and state data.

Unlike other components of the ARRA legislation that were implemented uniformly by all states, states varied in their responses to the incentives tied to the six optional UC-related provisions. This report described which factors were important to states when they decided to adopt provisions, and explained why some states did not adopt the provisions and accept the available incentives. Overall, the results of the study indicated that increased federal financing and the use of incentive funds encouraged the adoption of the UC-related provisions of the ARRA.

“Implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Workforce Development and Unemployment Insurance Provisions Final Report”

Barnow, Burt, Jing Cai, Yvette Chocolaad, Randall Eberts, Richard Hobbie, et al. “Implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Workforce Development and Unemployment Insurance Provisions Final Report.” Washington, DC: Center for Employment Security Education and Research and National Association of State Workforce Agencies, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2523&mp=y&st art=21&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: ARRA provided the workforce system with a large increase in resources to expand capacity, improve its structure, and provide additional economic support and services in response to the Great Recession. DOL programs were a major part of ARRA. At the time of the bill’s passage in 2009, DOL ARRA funding was estimated at \$66 billion, ranking third among Federal agencies. Actual DOL funding was greater than the early estimates suggest, however, both because the recession was deeper and longer than anticipated and in larger part because the UI provisions were extended numerous times in subsequent recession-era legislation.

ARRA added \$2.1 billion (an increase of about 77 percent) to DOL’s appropriations in program year 2009, to provide additional job search assistance, training, and other workforce services to eligible dislocated workers, disadvantaged adults, and other jobseekers. The ARRA investment in UI benefits and UI system improvements was much larger than the investment in workforce services. At the time of passage of ARRA, UI outlays were estimated at \$45 billion, but final estimates of UI outlays grew to \$200 billion taking into account subsequent UI benefit extensions.

In the spring of 2009, ETA awarded a grant to the National Association of State Workforce Agencies/Center for Employment Security Education and Research (NASWA/CESER) to support and expand its efforts to document the actions of the public workforce system under ARRA. The purpose of this study was to provide intelligence to state and local workforce organizations on the situation then facing state workforce development agencies and programs, and the steps taken by states (and local workforce investment areas) to meet the challenges of ARRA implementation and the economic downturn. It also provided critically important information to policymakers and administrators about the implementation of the ARRA workforce development and UI provisions, and identified potential needs for additional federal and state policies. This evidence was intended to inform future state decisions in policy formation and program improvements.

This was a comprehensive narrative report on the Public Workforce System’s implementation of ARRA. It followed an interim report, which summarized five surveys of states conducted by NASWA/CESER and the first round of site visits to 20 states.

Other Publications Related to Unemployment Insurance

“The 2015 Longitudinal Survey of Unemployment Insurance Recipients-California Pilot: Survey Methodology Report”

Santos, Betsy, Alicia Leonard, and Frank Potter. “The 2015 Longitudinal Survey of Unemployment Insurance Recipients-California Pilot: Survey Methodology Report.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/2015LSUISurveyMethodologyRpt_final.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The UI program—which provides temporary income support to unemployed individuals (as determined by state law)—was designed to reduce financial hardships for unemployed workers, assist with reemployment, and mitigate the negative effects of unemployment on the economy as a whole. DOL commissioned the Longitudinal Survey of Unemployment Insurance Recipients (LSUI) to understand (1) the extent to which UI benefits reduced recipients’ financial hardships; (2) the ways in which job search and reemployment expectations changed during and after benefit collection; and (3) participants’ satisfaction with the program. The longitudinal design of the survey allowed for measurement of recipients’ behavior and satisfaction throughout the benefit period.

In 2015, Mathematica conducted the LSUI with UI recipients in the Los Angeles metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and a collection of smaller MSAs in California’s Central Valley. The LSUI involved two 25-minute surveys, administered by web and computer-assisted telephone interviewing, about nine months apart. The first survey occurred during the beginning of benefit collection (Weeks 6 through 15) and the second survey shortly after benefit exhaustion (Weeks 27 through 39). The surveys aimed to provide insight into six main topic areas: (1) adequacy of UI benefits, (2) reemployment expectations, (3) job search, (4) total UI benefit usage, (5) employment outcomes, and (6) participant satisfaction at two distinct points in time in the benefit collection period.

This survey methodology report summarized the data collection procedures used in the LSUI and described questionnaire design, state recruitment procedures, sample design, instrument programming, data collection, sample disposition categories, survey completion rate, data processing, and weighting and nonresponse adjustment.

“Employer Views about the Short-Time Compensation Program: A Survey and Analysis in Four States: Final Report”

Balducchi, David, Stephen Wandner, Annelies Goger, Zachary Miller, Sandeep Shetty, et al. “Employer Views about the Short-Time Compensation Program: A Survey and Analysis in Four States: Final Report.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, LLC, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2579&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: ETA commissioned a study of employer views about the Short-Time Compensation (STC) Program. STC, also known as work-sharing or shared-work, is an alternative to layoffs that preserves jobs and trained workforces during disruptions to a firm’s regular business activity. Under STC the employer reduces the hours of work of employees in an affected unit rather than laying off some employees, while others continue to work full-time. This study investigated the characteristics of employers and their awareness of, participation in, and perceptions of the STC program. The study included a survey of employers in Kansas, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and Washington; site visits to state workforce agencies; an analysis of administrative data; and a comprehensive literature review.

In May through October 2014 researchers surveyed 2,415 employers in the four states: 77 percent were STC employers (1,869) and 23 percent were non-STC employers (546). The states were strategically selected based on criteria including geographical diversity, data availability, and length of experience with STC. The sample generally included participating and non-participating employers registered in UI administrative records during the study period of 2008 through 2013.

Overall, STC employer respondents reported that they were very satisfied with their state’s program. Many employers appreciated STC because it was instrumental in retaining highly skilled workers. In this regard, employers generally viewed STC as a win-win solution for employees and employers. In all four study states, more than 80 percent of STC employers said that they were either “somewhat” or “very likely” to use the program in the future.

However, the report explained that some barriers still existed for increasing awareness and broader use of the STC program. First, employers’ familiarity with STC remained low and use historically has been confined to mainly larger employers and mostly in the manufacturing industry. Second, there appeared to be some lack of employer awareness of the costs associated with STC use.

“The Effects of Eliminating the Work Search Requirement on Job Match Quality and Other Long-Term Employment Outcomes”

Lachowska, Marta, Merve Meral, and Stephen A. Woodbury. “The Effects of Eliminating the Work Search Requirement on Job Match Quality and Other Long-Term Employment Outcomes.” W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2013–2014.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/2013-2014-scholar-programs/2013-2014_DOL_Scholars_Paper_Series_Lachowska_Chapter.pdf

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials)

ABSTRACT: The work search requirement (WSR) for UI recipients has been a central part of UI in the United States since the system began in the 1930s. To be eligible for UI benefits, a claimant typically needs to provide record of an adequate work history and must have lost his or her job through lack of work and no fault of their own. To remain eligible, the worker must be “able, available, and searching” for work—that is, they must satisfy the WSR.

Researchers used data from the 1986–87 Washington Alternative Work Search (WAWS) experiment merged with nine years of follow-up administrative wage records. In the WAWS experiment, all eligible UI claimants at the Tacoma Employment Service Center between July 1986 and August 1987 were randomly assigned to a control group, which imposed a standard WSR, or to an exception reporting (ER) treatment group, which effectively eliminated the WSR. Using these data, the authors estimated the causal effects of eliminating the UI WSR on duration of nonemployment, tenure with first post-claim employer, number of post-claim employers, long-term earnings, employment, and hours worked.

For UI claimants as a whole, the findings indicated that eliminating the WSR had little influence, either positive or negative, on long-term post-claim outcomes. In contrast, for permanent job losers (unemployed persons who involuntarily lost their jobs and began looking for work), there was strong evidence that eliminating the WSR had a negative effect on employment outcomes, resulting in a longer time to reemployment, lower earnings, and a shorter duration of tenure with first post-claim employer. For non-permanent job losers—those on a temporary layoff, quits, and contract or seasonal workers—eliminating the WSR had no impact on employment outcomes. The results for claimants who were not permanent job losers implied that the WSR plays an important role in mitigating claimant moral hazard—without the WSR, these claimants would draw more UI benefits, but would not ultimately have improved employment outcomes.

The authors concluded that, in addition to countering the incentive for UI claimants to reduce their job search effort and take longer to become reemployed, the WSR is an important policy for improving the long-term employment outcomes of permanent job losers.

LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

Studies in this section describe programs and grants aiming to improve the availability and quality of LMI.

- Five studies provided findings related to State LMI Improvement grants (Laird et al. 2012a; Berk et al. 2012; Laird et al. 2012b; Hague and Berk 2012; and English and Herz 2012).
- Davis et al. (2014) assessed the current state of Consumer Report Card Systems in states with and without Workforce Data Quality Initiative grants, while Anderberg (2012) described the emergence of real-time and detailed labor market information and its implication for program and policy creation.

State LMI Improvement Grants

“Investing in Labor–Market Information (LMI): A Summary of the State LMI Improvement Grants Final Report”

Laird, Elizabeth, Jillian Berk, and Brittany English. “Investing in Labor–Market Information (LMI): A Summary of the State LMI Improvement Grants Final Report.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2500&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: In December 2009, DOL awarded approximately \$50 million in State LMI Improvement grants to 24 individual SWAs and 6 consortia of SWAs. Grantees used these LMI grants, which ranged from approximately \$750,000 to \$4 million, to improve LMI collection, analysis, and dissemination, and enhance the labor-exchange function in states. Each SWA or consortium was required to form multiple partnerships to help facilitate efforts to improve LMI in the state. Grantees’ activities included efforts to understand green jobs, connect workers to jobs, and enhance LMI labor exchange infrastructure for jobs and careers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries. Grantees’ activities were expected to benefit job seekers, businesses, educational institutions, and the overall economy in their states or regions.

In September 2010, ETA commissioned an evaluation of the extent to which the State LMI Improvement grant program was achieving its goals. Researchers sought to broadly document the activities of all 30 grantees, provide a detailed description of the activities and partnerships of a subset of grantees, and identify grantees’ challenges and promising practices. The study included a summary report of the grantee activities, a final report, and three LMI practitioner briefs.

This summary report was based on a review of grantees’ statements of work, quarterly progress reports, and information gathered from in-depth site visits with the nine grantees. The report summarized information about these grantees’ goals, definitions of green jobs, partners and stakeholders, activities, products, and dissemination strategies for the 30 LMI grantees. Grantees experienced challenges due to the short grant length and administration issues, as well as the evolving definition of green jobs. At the same time, they leveraged the LMI grants to enhance organizational capacity, develop a better understanding of the green economy, and disseminate findings to users, ultimately moving LMI forward at state and national levels.

“Investing in Labor–Market Information (LMI): Insights from the Recovery Act LMI Grants Final Report”

Berk, Jillian, Diane Herz, Elizabeth Laird, Megan Hague Angus, Brittany English, et al. “Investing in Labor–Market Information (LMI): Insights from the Recovery Act LMI Grants Final Report.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2499&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: In December 2009, DOL awarded approximately \$50 million in State LMI Improvement grants to SWAs to collect, analyze, and disseminate LMI, and enhance the labor-exchange function in states. Grantees’ activities included efforts to understand green jobs, connect workers to jobs, and enhance LMI labor exchange infrastructure for jobs and careers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries.

In September 2010, ETA commissioned an evaluation of the extent to which the State LMI Improvement grant program was achieving its goals. The study included a summary report of the grantee activities, a final report, and three LMI practitioner briefs.

This final report provided an in-depth description of the experiences of nine grantees. The study presented lessons that may provide useful information for future efforts and complements the Grantee Summary Report. The findings included challenges the grantees experienced due to the short grant length, implementation issues, as well as the evolving definition of green jobs. The report also explained how grantees leveraged the LMI grants to enhance organizational capacity, develop a better understanding of the green economy, and disseminate findings to users, ultimately moving LMI forward at state and national levels.

“Practitioner Briefs for the Evaluation of the Labor Market Information (LMI) Improvement Grants”

Laird, Elizabeth, Brittany English, and Jillian Berk. “Using Real-Time LMI To Explore Green Jobs.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

Hague Angus, Megan, and Jillian Berk. “Disseminating Labor Market Information: Insights from the State LMI Improvement Grants.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

English, Brittany, and Diane Herz. “Strategic Partnering to Advance LMI: Insights from the State LMI Improvement Grants.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2501&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Program/Policy Analyses

ABSTRACT: In December 2009, DOL awarded approximately \$50 million in State LMI Improvement grants to SWAs to collect, analyze, and disseminate LMI, and enhance the labor-exchange function in states. Grantees’ activities included efforts to understand green jobs, connect workers to jobs, and enhance LMI labor exchange infrastructure for jobs and careers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries.

In September 2010, ETA commissioned an evaluation of the extent to which the State LMI Improvement grant program was achieving its goals. The study included a summary report of the grantee activities, a final report, and three LMI practitioner briefs, which were included with these reports.

Using Real-Time LMI to Explore Green Jobs provided lessons learned from the grantees’ experiences using LMI available on a real-time basis when compared with information that had been vetted in some form. The lessons included being cautious when using real-time LMI and combining such information with traditional data to ensure a higher level of reliability. While the brief drew on experiences and lessons from all of the LMI grantees, it focused on the work of the Northeast Consortium.

Disseminating Labor Market Information: Insights from the State LMI Improvement Grants used the experiences of the LMI grantees to offer some strategies to consider when planning future LMI dissemination efforts. While the LMI grantees were particularly focused on disseminating information on green jobs, the lessons learned are more broadly applicable.

Strategic Partnering to Advance LMI: Insights from the State LMI Improvement Grants was intended to serve as a reference for LMI practitioners and others when considering future partnerships. It described elements of strategic partnering to advance labor market information.

Other Publications Related to Labor Market Information

“Using Workforce Data Quality Initiative Databases to Develop and Improve Consumer Report Card Systems”

Davis, Scott, Louis Jacobson, and Stephen Wandner. “Using Workforce Data Quality Initiative Databases to Develop and Improve Consumer Report Card Systems.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2014.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

<http://www.impaqint.com/sites/default/files/project-reports/IMPAQScorecardsReport.pdf>

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: Consumer Report Card Systems (CRCS) are state systems for calculating program outcomes based on labor market data (for instance, employment, retention, and earnings) for people participating in education/training programs. CRCS data is accessible on an easy-to-use website and offers the potential to improve the choices that prospective education/training participants make, which may result in improved employment and earnings outcomes for trainees. Thus they also play an important role in emphasizing participant choice within WIA.

DOL launched the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) in 2010. WDQI awards grants to assist states in creating or improving data warehouses for linking individual-level education data to state workforce data. These types of data linkages can be used in many ways, including as the foundation of CRCS.

This report had three main objectives: (1) to understand the relationship between the WDQI and state efforts to develop and improve CRCS, (2) to assess the degree to which states without existing CRCS are prepared to implement them with their existing data infrastructure, and (3) to identify how DOL can support the implementation of CRCS. The report examined information from a variety of sources including, but not limited to internet searches of state websites; telephone interviews with state staff, researchers, and federal project officers overseeing WDQI grants; WDQI quarterly progress reports; and Data Quality Campaign survey data.

The study proposed two broad recommendations for how DOL can support widespread implementation of CRCS:

- Fund additional WDQI grants focused on the development of CRCS and work with the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information among states that have created, or are working to create, CRCS.
- Provide other incentives for states to develop CRCS and work with ED to systematically publicize the value of CRCS to state-level policymakers.

“Job Content and Skill Requirements in an Era of Accelerated Diffusion of Innovation: Modeling Skills at the Detailed Work Activity (DWA) Level for Operational Decision Support”

Anderberg, Marc. “Job Content and Skill Requirements in an Era of Accelerated Diffusion of Innovation: Modeling Skills at the Detailed Work Activity (DWA) Level for Operational Decision Support.” Waxahachie, TX: SkillsNET Foundation, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2491&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Program/Policy Analyses

ABSTRACT: Meaningful labor market intelligence is key to developing relevant education, employment, and training programs supported by the publicly-funded workforce development system. This paper outlined developments in an evidence-driven approach to talent management and delivery that responds to employer-identified evolving and emerging skill requirements. The approach is built around research on the dynamics of supply and demand for knowledge, skills, and abilities at the detailed work activity (DWA) level. DWAs are the discrete and precise activities required of and critical to an occupation. Analysis of DWAs provides a bridge between macro-level data (e.g., on economic growth, unemployment rates, etc.) and micro-level decision-making (e.g., individual career exploration, job search, etc.).

The study found that, previously, most of the standardized labor market intelligence used in the public workforce system was built around longitudinal sample surveys and administrative records. But inherent shortcomings in traditional macro-level data (such as outdated data and aggregated, abstract levels of data) limited their usefulness in decision support at the individual level, which requires more granular and higher resolution analysis of employment demand, supply, and flow.

The report outlined how more powerful (and affordable) automation tools are being developed and refined for accessing labor supply and demand data in real time and for conducting analyses to better align placement (i.e., for more effective use of the current stock of human capital). The study found that several states and workforce investment board regions had already piloted these tools and techniques, and more will likely quickly adopt best practices in real time labor market data collection, micro-analysis, and evidence-based decision support. In addition, the report indicated that very detailed, real-time labor supply and demand data could be added to, rather than replace, longitudinal surveys and administrative records currently used to help frame macro-policy formation and workforce program administration.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This section includes studies of two ETA grant programs designed to promote regional economic development.

- The first study presented early implementation findings from an evaluation of the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge (JIAC) and Advanced Manufacturing (AM) JIAC grants (Hague Angus et al. 2015).
- The next two studies assessed the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative, which provided funding to consortia in economically-challenged regions to develop strategies for improving workforce development programs and industry growth in the region (Hollenbeck et al. 2012; Almandsmith et al. 2016).

“Evaluation of the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge Grants: Interim Findings on Multiagency Collaboration and Cluster Progress”

Hague Angus, Megan, Jeanne Bellotti, Kevin Hollenbeck, and Brittany English. “Evaluation of the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge Grants: Interim Findings on Multiagency Collaboration and Cluster Progress.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2015.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2574&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Implementation/Process Analyses

ABSTRACT: The JIAC and AM JIAC grants include two rounds of grants and are funded by a total of five Federal agencies: ETA; the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration; the U.S. Small Business Administration; the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership; and the U.S. Department of Energy. In August 2013, ETA commissioned a process evaluation on the implementation of the JIAC and AM JIAC grants.

This interim report presented early findings on the implementation of the JIAC and AM JIAC grants through summer 2014. It identified the extent and nature of the Federal partner collaboration, provided an overview of the clusters and proposed activities, discussed the Federal perspective on progress, and summarized preliminary participant data using data from quarterly progress reports. The report also described the selection criteria used to identify the clusters for the evaluation site visits proposed in 2015 and the data sources used to select the sites.

Early findings from the report included:

- Multiagency collaboration roles were viewed as distinctive among the number of Federal partners involved. While the Federal funding opportunities (FFO) were unique and challenging, Federal staff respondents viewed the FFO development as successful collaborative efforts.
- Regional industry clusters included a range of multiple county initiatives across urban, suburban, and rural areas. While the AM JIAC grants exclusively focused on advanced manufacturing, the JIAC grants supported common industry sectors, such as renewable energy and information technology.
- Federal agency perceptions indicated that many of the regional clusters were making progress toward both ETA and non-ETA goals.
- ETA-funded education and training activities including supportive services were available for eligible jobseekers. As of June 30, 2014, both the JIAC and AM JIAC grant projects had served slightly more than 3,500 participants.

“Partners, Networks, and the Economic Context for Generation II and III WIRED Grants: The Second Interim Report of the Evaluation of Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Generations II and III”

Hollenbeck, Kevin, Nancy Hewat, Jeff Kaplow, Monica Long, Nancy McCrohan, et al. “Partners, Networks, and the Economic Context for Generation II and III WIRED Grants: The Second Interim Report of the Evaluation of Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Generations II and III.” Lansing, MI: Public Policy Associates, Inc. and W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2012.

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2517&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Characterization/Quantification Analyses

ABSTRACT: The Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative involved three rounds (or “generations”) of ETA grants that were intended to stimulate transformational change in the economies and workforce programs in regional areas. Using WIRED funds, conveners and partners in grant-defined “regions” were charged with identifying a regional identity, creating a vision for regional workforce skill development and industry growth, and implementing specific strategies to achieve those visions. Important related objectives for WIRED projects were the creation of strong collaborative networks among project partners and the transformation of the public workforce and education systems.

This second interim report presented data on all 26 Generation II and III WIRED grantees and covered three broad areas: 1) WIRED partners’ backgrounds, organizational roles, and perceptions about collaboration and progress under their grant; 2) the strength of social networks and the level of awareness of WIRED activities across regions; and 3) labor force and economic characteristics in each region individually and as compared to the United States as a whole. The evaluators collected data through a survey of individual stakeholders and from existing economic, labor force, demographic and education data. Because of lags in the availability of the data, the information was limited to a period roughly representing the initial or early-stage implementation of the WIRED grants.

The WIRED partner survey results indicated that the Generation II and III regions engaged a broad representation of organizations and included a strong business presence. Those who were involved considered it to be a productive collaboration. Respondents felt that the initiative had begun to have positive outcomes in their regions. Social network data showed considerable dispersion and complexity in the regional networks. In addition, analyses of external, secondary socioeconomic and labor market data showed that Generation II and III regions were not relatively advantaged and, on average, had lower educational attainment and higher concentrations of manufacturing employment than the nation as a whole. Over 2007 and 2008, regions with collaborations tended to create more jobs, but also lost more employment, and on net, lost more jobs than their comparison regions.

“Transforming Regional Economies: Challenges and Accomplishments – Final Report of the Evaluation of Generation 1 Workforce Innovation Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Grants”

Almandsmith, Sherry, Mary Walshok, Kay Magill, Linda Toms Barker, Pamela Surko, et al.
“Transforming Regional Economies: Challenges and Accomplishments – Final Report of the Evaluation of Generation I Workforce Innovation Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Grants.” Oakland, CA: Berkeley Policy Associates and University of California at San Diego/Extension, 2011.³

HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_puListingDetails&pub_id=2583&mp=y&st_art=1&sort=7

TYPE OF RESEARCH: Outcome/Performance Analyses

ABSTRACT: In the first “generation” of the WIRED Initiative, each regional consortium received \$15 million to transform their regional economies and public systems for workforce development. Eligible regions were economically vulnerable because of global trade, natural disaster, or dependence on a single industry. There were eventually two other generations of grants. The key premises of the WIRED Initiative were that (1) STEM skills are vitally important to innovation, to new and emerging products and industries, and to global competitiveness; (2) the locus of economic competitiveness is intensely regional; and (3) improving current and future workers’ skills is critical to regional economic growth and requires major alterations to workforce training and educational institutions.

The evaluation began in October 2006 and aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the grants and “transformations,” if any, in regional economic and workforce systems. The evaluation focused on three critical aspects of the Generation I projects: (1) partnership, collaboration, and identity-building; (2) specific organizational and programmatic strategies and their outcomes; and (3) progress toward sustainable regional transformations.

Data sources included documents, site visits, a survey of partner organizations in each region, quantitative data from grantee reports and the WIA Standardized Record Data database, and existing data sets on regional economic conditions and other factors just before and near the end of grant implementation. There were significant discrepancies between the sources of data, and very significant problems with the data quality and consistency across the grants. However, the data overall showed that, among other findings, over 84 percent of those who had enrolled in WIRED education or training program had completed training, but only 20 percent of all Generation I WIRED participants were reported to have obtained jobs in their target industries.

³ This study, although published in 2011, was included in the Annotated Bibliography because the release date according to the ETA Database was December 2015.

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