

# REPORT

## Employment Research in Brief: An Annotated Bibliography

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Michelle Carson

Sarah Jordon

Danielle Tyree

Alexander Fones

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U.S. Department of Labor  
Employment and Training Administration  
Office of Policy Development and Research  
Rm. N-5641, 200 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Project Officer: Gloria Salas-Kos  
Contract Number: DOLQ121A21886

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**Submitted by:**

Safal Partners  
19019 Windsor Crest Drive  
Houston, TX 74094  
Telephone: (713) 955-2727  
Project Director: Michelle Carson

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## Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Definitions of Frequently Used Acronyms.....	2
TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM STUDIES.....	5
Population-Specific Programs .....	5
Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs.....	5
Justice-Involved Individuals .....	6
Military Personnel, Veterans, and Military Spouses .....	12
Older Workers .....	13
Workers with Disabilities .....	14
Youth Programs .....	17
Other Populations .....	28
Approaches to Workforce Development.....	33
Integrated Workforce System .....	33
Approaches to Industry and Sector Training .....	41
Self-Employment Training.....	49
Transitional Employment.....	53
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE .....	55
Reemployment Services.....	55
Alternative UI Payment Schemes.....	59
Other UI Publications.....	62
WORKFORCE RESEARCH .....	65
Labor Market Studies .....	65
Workforce Research Capacity and Methods .....	71
INDEX OF REFERENCES.....	74

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## INTRODUCTION

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The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) sponsor numerous research studies, evaluations, pilots, and demonstrations on a broad range of topics relevant to the agency’s mission. This annotated bibliography follows the Bos et al. (2017) “Employment Research in Brief: An Annotated Bibliography of ETA- and CEO-Sponsored Studies 2012–2016.” This annotated bibliography provides abstracts of employment research published on the ETA’s [Research Publication Database](#) or CEO’s research page from July 2016 through August 2020. The publications include primary research, evaluation, and demonstration reports, as well as policy recommendations and other types of analyses. 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, CEO, Mathematica Policy Research, or Safal Partners.

A 2012 annotated bibliography (Mastri et al.) contained 135 studies, and the 2017 annotated bibliography (Bos et al.) included 74 studies. The current annotated bibliography contains the citations and abstracts of 73 ETA- and CEO-sponsored publications. Each abstract provides a brief overview of the intervention studied, the type of research, data sources, analytical methods, and findings. Each abstract also contains a citation followed by a clickable hyperlink that takes 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 links directly to the PDF document retrieved on CEO’s website, <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/CompletedStudies.htm>.

This bibliography is organized according to the same broad program areas used in the previous annotated bibliography of studies ETA and CEO released between January 2012 and August 2020.<sup>1</sup> The three broad program areas contain Training and Employment Program studies, Unemployment Insurance (UI) studies, and Workforce Research studies. Within these three program areas, the abstracts are organized by more specific subtopics. Under Training and Employment Program studies, both population-specific studies and workforce development approaches studies are described. Reemployment services, alternative UI payment schemes, and other UI publications are considered under UI studies. Workforce Research studies include labor market studies and workforce research capacity and methods.

Publications related to more than one program area 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. Readers interested in a particular program area can use the Bookmarks feature to navigate directly to that section of the document’s electronic version. Within each subtopic, summaries appear by the year of initial publication and, within years, alphabetically by the first author’s last name.

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<sup>1</sup>References to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 were updated to reflect its being superseded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

## Definitions of Frequently Used Acronyms

The annotated bibliography includes frequently used acronyms, which are defined and briefly described below. For more information on these topics, readers are encouraged to visit ETA's website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta>.

- AJC** American Job Center. AJCs, also known as one-stop centers, are locations where job seekers can access services from multiple programs, including in-person or online training, career counseling, and other employment- and training-related services.
- CEO** Chief Evaluation Office. CEO is an independent evaluation office within DOL; it works with other offices and agencies throughout DOL to develop and implement evaluations.
- 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.
- 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.
- REA** Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment. REA was a voluntary program that supported states to address the reemployment needs of UI claimants and prevent and detect improper benefit payments.
- RESEA** Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment. RESEA replaced REA. Permanently authorized through an amendment to the Social Security Act in 2018, the RESEA includes formula-based funding and requirements to increase the use and availability of evidence-based reemployment interventions and strategies. RESEA intends to (1) reduce UI duration through improved employment outcomes; (2) strengthen UI program integrity; (3) promote alignment with the vision of the WIOA; and (4) serve as an entry point to other workforce system partners.
- UI** Unemployment Insurance. UI is a Federal-state partnership that offers temporary wage replacement to involuntarily unemployed individuals.
- 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.
- WIOA** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WIOA, which superseded WIA, is the current authorizing legislation for the public workforce investment system. Title I of WIOA 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 Job Corps. WIOA establishes a nationwide network of AJCs, through which job seekers can access employment, training, and education programs.



## **Definitions of Types of Research**

The annotated bibliography uses the same system for classifying research methodologies as the ETA-sponsored Workforce System Strategies website at <https://strategies.workforcegps.org/>. These are the criteria for inclusion in each of the categories:

**Characterization/Quantification Analyses** primarily analyzes distinct characteristics of a group or groups to determine if changes have occurred, such as demographic reports that describe changes in a population, services, or activities over time.

**Cost Analyses**, which focus on cost, could be an analysis of costs incurred, a comparison of costs and benefits, cost-effectiveness, or a return-on-investment analysis.

**Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials)** are impact analyses based on comparing a treatment group and a control or comparison group that was randomly selected.

**How-to Guides** clearly indicate steps, recommendations, guidance, or frameworks that can be used by others planning for implementation of similar activities or services.

**Implementation/Process Analyses** examine a program to determine if services are being delivered to the intended recipients, identify any emerging feasibility or management problems, or measure progress made toward implementing changes or new provisions. In a mature, stable program with a well-defined model, process evaluations also determine if program resources are being used efficiently or why a program may no longer be obtaining the desired level of outcomes.

**Literature Reviews** compile and sometimes synthesize the findings of other studies to establish a knowledge base that can help focus evaluation questions on knowledge gaps, identify design and data collection options used in the past, and provide important context for research questions.

**Methodological Studies** are reviews of existing methodological approaches and recommendations for future methodological approaches.

**Non-Experimental Impact Analyses** are impact analyses based on comparing a treatment group and comparison groups that were not randomly selected.

**Outcome/Performance Analyses** determine if the desired program outcomes are obtained, identify any unintended side effects produced, or determine how outcomes differ across program approaches, component providers, or recipient subgroups.

**Program/Policy Analyses** draw on multiple sources of research on a program or policy to identify potential options that might address a problem and then compare those options to inform or choose the most effective, efficient, and feasible one. The analyses may describe the policy or program, explain how it was developed or implemented, and include a prescriptive element on the policy or program direction on a specific issue.

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## **TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM STUDIES**

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In this area, studies related to specific populations and those related to workforce development approaches are described in two sections. Due to the depth of information, the first section on population-specific programs includes seven subsections: adult and dislocated worker programs; programs for justice-involved individuals; programs for military personnel, veterans, and military spouses; older worker programs; programs for workers with disabilities; youth programs; and other populations.

### **Population-Specific Programs**

#### **Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs**

##### **“Comparing Job Training Impact Estimates Using Survey and Administrative Data”**

Mastri, Annalisa, Dana Rotz, and Elias S. Hanno. “Comparing Job Training Impact Estimates Using Survey and Administrative Data.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/WIA-comparing-impacts.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Methodological Study

##### **ABSTRACT:**

This report analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the data sources commonly used in the production of impact estimates for evaluations of workforce development programs. Information from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Gold Standard Evaluation provided a comparison of the merits of three data sources used to evaluate the impact of services provided by comparing earning levels and impact estimates. The three data sources utilized were: (1) evaluation-administered survey data for the study sample; (2) administrative data from the Administration for Children and Families’ National Directory of New Hires (NDNH), which is a national repository of employment, unemployment insurance, and quarterly wage information; and (3) administrative tax data collected by the Internal Revenue Service.

Although there were unique advantages and disadvantages to each of the three data sources, the overall conclusion was the same across the different data sets: WIA-funded intensive services were effective at improving customers’ earnings. However, there were differences between survey and administrative data, with administrative data impacts tending to be smaller. This finding is consistent with previous findings. It is important to note that the usefulness of each data source largely depends on the research questions posed, populations studied, and the study context.

The key findings from this study were:

1. Survey-reported earnings in a job exceeded those in the NDNH for the same job early in the follow-up period
2. Survey respondents tended to underreport the number of jobs held early in the follow-up period
3. Many survey respondents worked in jobs that NDNH administrative data does not capture. For example, NDNH administrative data does not include informal work, day labor, self-employment, independent contracting, or alternative work arrangements.

The analysis indicates an over-reporting of earnings in each job occurred on the survey because of recall error, which is forgetting or misremembering information. Additionally, self-employment and contract work, which are not captured by NDNH data, drove up earnings.

It is important to note that both surveys and administrative data have strengths and weaknesses when used to assess employment and earnings outcomes for research purposes. Because of this, the authors posit that when selecting data sources for research purposes, caution should be taken when using a sole source, as there are limitations to any data set, which will impact findings and interpretations of the data.

## **Justice-Involved Individuals**

### **“Process Study of the U.S. Department of Labor’s ‘Pay for Success’ Pilots in Two States: Development of the Grant Applications and Initial Implementation”**

Abt Associates. “Process Study of the U.S. Department of Labor’s ‘Pay for Success’ Pilots in Two States: Development of the Grant Applications and Initial Implementation.” Bethesda, MD: Author, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2016-06\\_Process-Study-of-the-U.S.-Department-of-Labor's-\(Accessible%20PDF\).pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2016-06_Process-Study-of-the-U.S.-Department-of-Labor's-(Accessible%20PDF).pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses and Cost Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report is the first of two from a process study of DOL's two pilot projects testing a Pay for Success (PFS) financing model. The report explores the early planning and operational experiences of the two projects (in Massachusetts and New York), each receiving four-year grants of approximately \$12 million from DOL in 2013. Both projects focus on serving formerly incarcerated individuals and are intended to reduce participants' recidivism and improve their employment outcomes. Both use a PFS model that involves: private for-profit and philanthropic investors who pay the costs of delivering the intervention; an intermediary organization that developed and manages the project; a "payor" (in this case, state government agencies) that will reimburse investors and provide them with potentially significant returns if specific outcomes are met or exceeded; a rigorous random assignment evaluation (as required by DOL) to determine those outcomes; a service provider to deliver the interventions; and an independent validator to verify the outcomes. Payouts to investors are based on the relative reduction of days in prison and increases in employment and earnings for participants, as compared to control group members. Both pilots have similar but distinct approaches for specifying under what circumstances and when payouts will be made to investors.

The report examines how projects developed working partnerships and management structures, secured private and philanthropic capital and financing mechanisms, established the service intervention, set up the evaluation design, and established outcome measures, outcome targets, and payment amounts. Data sources include in-person interviews with the key partners in each PFS pilot, as well as reviews of grantee documentation and performance data that was reported to DOL.

Preliminary observations of respondents focused on the value of support from high-level state leadership; the need for extensively educating partners about technically complex concepts and design issues related to the random assignment evaluation and payouts; the need for carefully structured and detailed contracts, as well as for strong management and communications processes; the value of a diverse funding base including philanthropic involvement; the difficulties in determining how to measure the outcomes of the service interventions and the potential budgetary savings associated with them; and the challenges associated with establishing outcome targets that trigger payments to investors.

**“Implementation of the Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release (LEAP) Grants: Developing American Job Centers in Jails”**

Bellotti, Jeanne, Samina Sattar, Alix Gould-Werth, Jillian Berk, Ivette Gutierrez, et al. “Implementation of the Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release (LEAP) Grants: Developing American Job Centers in Jails.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP2018-05%20LEAP-Final-Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP2018-05%20LEAP-Final-Report.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2648>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

The Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release (LEAP) pilots created jail-based American Job Centers (AJCs) to support the successful reentry of participants and directly link them to community-based AJCs upon release. This report discusses the findings of a 36-month evaluation that examined the early-start up and implementation of 20 LEAP pilots. Through site visits, phone interviews, focus groups, and the grantees' quarterly performance reports, the evaluation examined the LEAP pilots' approaches to providing services before and after incarceration at all 20 sites.

The LEAP initiative demonstrated the feasibility of offering AJC services in a jail setting. The report highlights several key findings related to program implementation in this new setting. Close collaboration between workforce agencies and the jails was part of the successful implementation. The jail environment shaped the physical spaces for services and schedules of jail-based AJCs. Sites highlighted the need to remain flexible to adapt to changing jail conditions. Grantee performance reports indicated that most participants remained engaged while in jail and were work-ready at the time of release. Despite connecting pre-release with participants, sites struggled to engage participants after release. In most sites, grantees required partnerships with more specialized service providers to deal with the significant challenges facing the reentry population. Nearly 40 percent of participants found unsubsidized employment or participated in post-secondary education, occupational skills training, or a registered apprenticeship in their first quarter after release. Of participants who had reached one year after release, 20 percent were rearrested for a new crime or were reincarcerated because their parole or probation was revoked.

## **“LEAP Issue Brief Compendium: Delivering Workforce Services to Justice-Involved Job Seekers Before and After Release”**

Gould-Werth, Alix, Samina Sattar, Jennifer Henderson-Frakes, Hannah Betesh, Mika Clark, et al. “LEAP Issue Brief Compendium: Delivering Workforce Services to Justice-Involved Job Seekers Before and After Release.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP2018-05%20LEAP-Compendium.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP2018-05%20LEAP-Compendium.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2648>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

### **ABSTRACT:**

In 2015, DOL awarded grants to 20 local workforce investment boards in 13 states for the Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release (LEAP) program. The grants piloted the creation of jail-based AJCs with direct linkages to community-based AJCs, with overarching goals to increase participants’ work readiness at the time of release, increase employment after release, and reduce recidivism. Through site visits, phone interviews, focus groups, and the grantees’ quarterly performance reports, the evaluation examined the LEAP pilots’ approaches to providing services before and after incarceration at all 20 sites. The evaluation examined the early start-up and implementation of the pilots, producing a series of 10 issue briefs.

- “Bridging Workforce and Corrections Cultures” describes the steps the LEAP grantees took to establish partnerships with their justice system colleagues, including the challenges associated with working across the two distinct cultures and the strategies used to facilitate the partnerships.
- “Internet Access for Pre-Release Job Search Training” focuses on the logistics of providing Internet access within jail walls, including planning for installation, budgeting for equipment and installation costs, and adapting programming to fit the restrictions on Internet access in the jail.
- “Structuring Employment-Based Services Within Jail Spaces and Schedules” describes how grantees integrated the jail-based AJC services with existing programming and operations in the jail, discussing issues such as staff and inmate movement, restrictions on allowable supplies, daily head counts, and policies regarding the mixing of inmates.
- “Staffing Jail-Based American Job Centers” describes the challenges LEAP grantees encountered in identifying and hiring qualified staff and how they overcome these challenges by engaging partners and remaining flexible with staffing decisions.
- “Expediting the Launch of Service Provision” examines the steps LEAP grantees took to launch services quickly, such as holding structured, in-person meetings and sharing relevant data about the jail facility and inmate population; and the role partnerships played in the launch, such as the development of relationships with jail insiders.
- “Providing Services in a Jail-Based American Job Center” describes the services provided before release and how jail-based AJC staff assessed inmates’ needs and goals, prepared employment and service plans, and delivered services to address participants’ barriers before their release.
- ““An Opportunity for a Reset’: The Experiences of Jail-Based American Job Center Customers Before and After Release” uses data from participant focus groups to describe participants’ experiences before and after release, their impressions of the staff they encountered, and their suggestions for improvement.
- “Case Management Models for Pre- and Post-Release Employment Services” presents approaches to dividing staff roles across pre- and post-release services, including efforts to smooth the transition by bringing community-based staff into the jail and facilitating communication across staff.
- “Data Management for Pre- and Post-Release Workforce Services” discusses strategies used to create systems and track data on participants and services in a corrections setting and the challenges in accessing the Internet, corrections data systems, and post-release outcomes.
- “Engaging Participants in Workforce Services after Release from Jail” describes how grantees linked participants to services in the community immediately after release, where participants were served and by whom, the challenges participants faced regarding engaging in services, and strategies staff used to address those challenges. Staff used monetary incentives, transportation assistance, and help to obtain identification and support for other needs to facilitate engagement in post-release services.

**“Developing Pathways to Justice and Emergency Services Careers for At-Risk Youth: A Formative Evaluation”**

Geckeler, Christian, and Laura Pryor. “Developing Pathways to Justice and Emergency Services Careers for At-Risk Youth: A Formative Evaluation.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

[https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/Developing%20Pathways%20to%20Justice%20and%20Emergency%20Services%20Careers%20for%20At-Risk%20Youth%20-%20A%20Formative%20Evaluation.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/Developing%20Pathways%20to%20Justice%20and%20Emergency%20Services%20Careers%20for%20At-Risk%20Youth%20-%20A%20Formative%20Evaluation.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2623>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

In 2016, DOL funded a grant initiative that supported education and workforce development services for youth with juvenile records. Specifically, the Pathways to Justice Careers (PJC) initiative awarded 13 grants in two rounds. These programs featured partnerships with community-based educational entities, the public workforce system, and justice and emergency service providers. Grants focused on workforce system strategies (i.e., access and entry into careers in justice or emergency services for at-risk and court-involved youth).

ETA also funded an evaluation to document and identify promising practices from the grantee's experiences that yielded three issue briefs, a resource guide on young adult diversion programs, and a case study on operating a vocational training program at a juvenile correctional facility. The PJC issue brief identifies challenges grantees encountered implementing their programs, lessons learned, and key findings. Key findings include grantees experiencing barriers in building new programs within a short timeframe, the importance of developing partnerships between employers and participants, and initial youth mistrust of providers yet the potential to develop meaningful relationships over time.

### **“Profile of Face Forward Grantees”**

Henderson-Frakes, Jennifer, Hannah Diaz, Johanna Lacoë, and Lindsey Reed-Feinberg. “Expunging Records, Opening Doors: A Profile of Face Forward Grantees’ Expungement Services.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

[https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/Expunging%20Records,%20Opening%20Doors%20-%20A%20Profile%20of%20Face%20Forward%20Grantees'%20Expungement%20Services.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/Expunging%20Records,%20Opening%20Doors%20-%20A%20Profile%20of%20Face%20Forward%20Grantees'%20Expungement%20Services.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2623>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/ Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

DOL funded a grant program that supported records expungement and diversion services for youth with juvenile records. Specifically, the Face Forward initiative awarded 54 grants in three rounds. These programs featured partnerships with community-based educational entities, the public workforce system, and justice and emergency service providers. Grants focused on helping at-risk and court-involved youth enter careers and with issues of record expungement or diversion services to give youth a fresh start.

ETA also funded an evaluation to document and identify promising practices from the grantee's experiences that yielded three issue briefs on expunging records, diversion services and career pathways for at-risk youth, a resource guide on young adult diversion programs, and a case study on operating a vocational training program at a juvenile correctional facility. The resource guide focuses on designing and improving a diversion program for young adults in the adult criminal justice system.

The issue briefs and case study identify challenges grantees encountered implementing their programs, lessons learned, and key findings. A key finding from the Face Forward issue brief is that, according to grantees, youth tend to have little understanding of how their juvenile records might affect their future employment prospects or the cost and effort involved in expunging their records. Grantee staff indicated that achieving this understanding would mean educating youth and families about the process and available services. Since state policy requirements made it challenging for grantees to fully assist youth with expungement services in the two-year grant period, grantees expunged few juvenile records and refocused instead on preparing to do so after program participation.



## **“Supporting Reentry Employment and Success: A Summary of the Evidence for Adults and Young Adults”**

Lacoe, Johanna, and Hannah Betesh. “Supporting Reentry Employment and Success: A Summary of the Evidence for Adults and Young Adults.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research. 2019.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP2019-11%20REO%20Supporting%20Reentry%20Employment%20RB090319.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP2019-11%20REO%20Supporting%20Reentry%20Employment%20RB090319.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Review

### **ABSTRACT:**

Employment is a potential source of stability and opportunity for Americans trying to better their lives after involvement with the criminal justice system. However, the path to employment can be difficult for individuals who were involved with the justice system, and the challenges differ depending on the individual’s age. Adults often enter the justice system with barriers to employment and struggle to reconnect to the labor market after their release from incarceration due to such factors as limited basic skills and soft skills, employers’ reluctance to hire people with criminal records, and difficulty retaining stable employment because of unstable housing, lack of adequate transportation, or mental health problems. Young adults (ages 18 to 24) are developmentally different from adults; therefore, programs that improve outcomes for adults may need to be tailored to address the specific needs of young adults before they show comparable results. Disruptions in education due to court involvement early in the lives of young adults can derail future employment opportunities without appropriate interventions. Both populations need support in connecting to employment after justice system involvement. This issue brief maps the evidence and remaining gaps in the knowledge base on interventions for these groups ahead of a national evaluation of employment-focused reentry programs serving justice-involved adults and young adults.

The brief reviews research on employment, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), and case management models for justice-involved adults and young adults and finds:

- Most prior studies of adult employment reentry programs do not consistently show effects due to variations in program models, implementation quality, and study designs.
- Reentry programs specifically tailored to young adults often include job training or employment support, but evidence of employment impacts is limited.
- CBT interventions reduce recidivism for justice-involved adults but impacts on young adults and employment outcomes are unknown.

## **Military Personnel, Veterans, and Military Spouses**

### **“Formative Evaluation of the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP): Findings from Literature Review, Site Visits, Analysis of Program Administrative Data, and Options for Future Evaluation”**

Trutko, John, Carolyn O'Brien, Alexander Trutko, Burt Barnow, Joyce Kaiser, et al. “Formative Evaluation of the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP): Findings from Literature Review, Site Visits, Analyses of Program Administrative Data, and Options for Future Evaluation.” Rockville, MD: Avar Consulting, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Formative\\_Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Homeless\\_Veterans\\_Reintegration\\_Program\\_Report.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Formative_Evaluation_of_the_Homeless_Veterans_Reintegration_Program_Report.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Reviews; Implementation/Process Analyses; and Outcome/Performance Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

The Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) provides services to assist in reintegrating veterans experiencing homelessness into meaningful employment. This formative evaluation documents the types of services and supports HVRP grantees offer, identifies potentially promising practices or models, conducts statistical analysis of HVRP administrative data collected by the grantees, and provides alternative potential approaches for future experimental and non-experimental evaluation of HVRP. Study findings are based on a literature review, site visits to 12 HVRP grantees, and analyses of HVRP administrative data.

Study results indicate that HVRP grantees emphasize the importance of partnering with other service providers and establishing community collaborations to bring together the varied resources required to provide employment and other services to help veterans experiencing homelessness achieve long-term self-sufficiency. HVRP grantees emphasize job readiness training, job placement services, limited funding of short-term training, case management, and provision of other supportive services. At the same time, HVRP grantees typically reach out to partners for more substantive and costly services, including the provision of longer-term education and training (sometimes leading to certification and degrees), subsidized transitional or permanent housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment, child care, and a host of other supports. Grantees also stress the need for careful screening and assessment of veterans experiencing homelessness during the intake process to ensure that new recruits are suitable and ready to benefit from the menu of services provided with HVRP funding.

The report assesses data collection and reporting requirements for the HVRP program and provides suggestions on how requirements might be improved. It also explores a variety of approaches for conducting an impact evaluation of the HVRP program, including weighing challenges, costs, and potential benefits, and a range of experimental and non-experimental designs.

## **Older Workers**

### **“Labor Market and DOL-Funded Employment Assistance for Older Workers: Statistical Analysis Report”**

Nanda, Neha, Yang Chen, Luke Patterson, Jessica Smith, and James Moore. “Labor Market and DOL-Funded Employment Assistance for Older Workers: Statistical Analysis Report.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Labor Market and DOL Funded Employment Assistance for Older Workers.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Labor_Market_and_DOL_Funded_Employment_Assistance_for_Older_Workers.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

As the baby boomer generation moves toward retirement age, a chief concern facing U.S. policymakers is how to accommodate this demographic shift. For DOL and other agencies, the employment, earnings, and other workforce dynamics of older workers are of particular concern. Older workers differ from younger workers in that they face the challenge of supporting themselves in retirement, a prospect made more difficult by the Great Recession of 2008–2009. This report shows that older workers’ labor market behavior and fortunes were markedly different five years after the Great Recession ended.

This report uses the Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) for the period 2005 through 2015. The CPS is a monthly, nationally representative survey that collects information from 50,000 households on labor force characteristics. This rich, nationally representative source of data enables an examination of the dynamics of older workers in the labor market in recent years, including trends in labor force participation, earnings, and income, by both age and gender.

The key findings reveal different patterns for workers over age 62 (the earliest eligible age to draw down Social Security retirement benefits) versus those aged 40 to 49 (which the authors chose as the most appropriate prime age comparison cohort). Workers over 62 increased their labor force participation rates, postponed retirement, and earned more after the Great Recession than before it. In contrast, workers aged 40–49 and 50–61 had stagnant or lower labor force participation rates and earnings after the Great Recession than before.

## **Workers with Disabilities**

### **“Evaluating the Accessibility of American Job Centers for People with Disabilities: Final Report”**

Chamberlain, Anne, Aaron Heuser, Amy Kracker Selzer, Kay Magill, Maxwell Matite, et al. “Evaluating the Accessibility of American Job Centers for People with Disabilities: Final Report.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/AJC-Accessibility-Study.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This study measures the accessibility of AJCs for people with disabilities. The bulk of previous research on AJC accessibility involved case studies or limited surveys focused on specific issues. Prior to this study, there had been no comprehensive survey of AJCs. In addition, most earlier studies focused on compliance checklists rather than using a broader concept of accessibility focused on usability.

Data collection for this study included a web-based survey and data from in-person site visits to assess the level of AJC accessibility for people with disabilities. The web-based survey was administered to the estimated 2,453 comprehensive and affiliate AJCs. In-person data collection visits were then conducted at 100 randomly selected AJCs. The site visits focused on the same accessibility topics as those included in the survey. In addition, the authors conducted nine focus groups with people with disabilities as part of the in-person data collection visits.

In this study, degree of accessibility is defined as whether a person with a disability can meaningfully receive, participate in, and benefit from services offered by the AJC system. In measuring accessibility, the study focuses on three domains found in the Workforce Investment Act/Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIA/WIOA) requirements: physical accessibility, which refers to the extent to which facilities are designed, constructed, or altered so that they are accessible and usable by people with disabilities; communications accessibility, which refers to the extent to which center staff or partner agencies are able to communicate with people with disabilities as effectively as with others; and programmatic accessibility, which refers to the extent to which people with disabilities have access to the full range of services available to all AJC customers regardless of disability.

The findings of the study indicate that almost two-thirds of AJCs were “not fully accessible,” implying that at least some people with disabilities could not meaningfully participate in and benefit from services to the same extent as those without disabilities in each domain of accessibility. However, almost every AJC was at least partially accessible. Almost all centers are physically accessible, most are communications accessible, and close to half are programmatically accessible. The authors suggest that federal support could help AJCs improve their programmatic accessibility by encouraging AJCs to train staff how to better serve people with disabilities, recruit people with disabilities for staff positions, provide benefits counseling, collaborate to maximize the scope and fit of services, and involve people with disabilities in accessibility work.

**“State Exchange on Employment and Disability (SEED) Evaluation”**

Coffey Consulting and American Institutes for Research. “State Exchange on Employment and Disability (SEED) Evaluation.” Bethesda, MD: Coffey Consulting, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/SEED-Interim-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses and Program/Policy Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

In June 2015, DOL’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) launched the State Exchange Employment and Disability (SEED) initiative. SEED aims to advance policies at the state and local level that promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This paper is an interim report on the formative evaluation of the SEED initiative. The report uses data collected between September 2015 and February 2017 on observations of policy adoption by legislators and on the materials and infrastructure put in place by SEED to promote adoption.

SEED has had three primary outcomes at this stage of the initiative.

1. SEED has established partnerships with three intermediaries. SEED continues to engage stakeholders and make this largely a legislator-driven process. ODEP has begun to build the capacity of intermediaries to aid members on disability employment issues, and the intermediaries will provide technical assistance to states to build capacity.
2. SEED assembled a national task force that included legislators as the leadership, committee chairs, and members, as well as experts to advise the group from relevant government and private organizations.
3. SEED has established shared policy options between ODEP and the intermediaries, developed a national policy framework, and included individuals’ personal stories in national task force meetings.

The evaluation team continues to collect interviews, surveys, and other related data to assess awareness, knowledge, and behavior changes. Results from these ongoing data collection efforts will be discussed in the final report.

## **“Demonstration and Evaluation of Community College Interventions for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities”**

Bennici, Frank, Maeve Gearing, William Frey, Lindsay Giesen, and Jarnee Riley. “Demonstration and Evaluation of Community College Interventions for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities.” Rockville, MD: Westat, 2020.

### **HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

[https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/ODEP\\_PathwaystoCareersFinal%20Report\\_December2020.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/ODEP_PathwaystoCareersFinal%20Report_December2020.pdf)

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

### **ABSTRACT:**

The Pathways to Careers: Community Colleges for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities demonstration project (Pathways) funded efforts at two community colleges to increase their capacity to provide inclusive integrated education and career development and training services to young adults with disabilities. The overarching goal was to enhance the policies and services designed to increase the enrollment and completion of community college programs among students with disabilities. Each project included several major components: outreach and recruitment activities, provision of academic and career counseling and support services (including opportunities for work-based learning), incorporation of Universal Design for Learning, and other technology and accessibility components. This report presents findings of the Pathways evaluation consisting of an implementation study and a descriptive outcomes study. The implementation study, based on repeated visits to grantees and interviews with project staff and partners, documents the extent of institutional change at two colleges and assesses the fidelity of the implemented projects to the intended project model. The descriptive outcomes study documents project outputs and participant outcomes using interviews and community college records of Pathways participants and project operations and performance.

The implementation evaluation found that the colleges made some programmatic, policy, and systemic institutional changes. One of the community colleges devoted substantial effort to building college-level capacity and experienced significant institutional change because of the grant. The other community college emphasized increasing their capacity to provide comprehensive student services, and many staff believed that this direct service provision would end if they were unable to secure outside sources of funding. However, the project supported other institutional changes at that college, such as the adoption of a Universal Design for Learning policy. With respect to fidelity of implementation, the evaluation found that, for the most part, that the actual operational models are comparable to the intended models.

The outcomes study found that more than half of participants surveyed said the project was “very closely aligned” with personal career goals. The evidence on meeting academic target goals is mixed. Enrollment numbers were low, but retention and persistence rates varied. Participants in both colleges maintained at least a C grade overall. Both colleges provided services and activities to increase student engagement, self-advocacy, self-determination, and self-disclosure.

Key lessons learned for implementing programs to improve outcomes for students with disabilities included: planning for varying levels of college readiness, engaging students and faculty, building social support, garnering college-level support, and incorporating existing college staff into project services.

## Youth Programs

### Job Corps

#### “Estimating Job Corps Cost Per Enrollee and Cost Per Graduate”

Liu, Albert, Clayton Perry, Robbie Skinner, and Scott Cody. “Estimating Job Corps Cost Per Enrollee and Cost Per Graduate.” Arlington, VA: Insight Policy Research, 2017.

#### HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/JCCS%20Final%20Report%2020200612.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Methodological Study

#### ABSTRACT:

Job Corps is the nation's largest residential education and job training program for at-risk youth. The program provides training to approximately 60,000 participants each year. This report examines various methodologies for estimating the cost per enrollee and cost per graduate to help inform the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) calculations for the Job Corps program Annual Report.

Under WIOA, ETA is required to report performance measures for Job Corps as a whole and for individual centers, outreach and admissions providers, and career transition services providers. The two performance measures are: 1) the cost per enrollee, which is to be calculated as the ratio of the total budget to the number of enrollees; and 2) the cost per graduate, which is to be calculated as the ratio of the total budget to the number of graduates. Although the high-level descriptions of these measures are straightforward, calculating them is challenging. The data used to calculate the measures come from multiple sources that track costs and participants for reporting and accounting purposes that may not be tied to WIOA. As a result, any methodology to calculate the costs requires a set of explicit assumptions and justifications for those assumptions. ETA was interested in identifying methodologies that leveraged available data to calculate average costs that were transparent and accurate. ETA was interested in using the information to improve its calculation of costs for the Job Corps program as part of the ETA Program Year (PY) 2017 Annual Report. There was also interest in understanding how data collection could be improved to provide better estimates in the future.

The study found that:

- After identifying six types of methodologies for calculating average costs per enrollee and per graduate, the report's proposed PY 2017 methodology found that the average cost per enrollee was \$34,301, and the average cost per graduate was \$57,312. This methodology reflected four principles: (1) met legislative requirements; (2) resulted in accurate estimates; (3) provided transparency to Congress and the public; and (4) required low computational resources.
- Alternative methodologies led to different cost estimates and had various advantages and disadvantages.
- Opportunities to improve estimates in subsequent iterations of the annual report include additional research on: (1) data collection methods, and (2) the program's definition of "enrollees" and "graduates."

### **“The External Review of Job Corps: An Evidence Scan Report”**

Berk, Jillian, Linda Rosenberg, Lindsay Cattell, Johanna Lacoë, Lindsay Fox, et al. “The External Review of Job Corps: An Evidence Scan Report.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/JC-EvidenceScan.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Reviews

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report provided a broad, high-level summary of the current research across key topics that could be used to modernize and reform Job Corps. Each report chapter used a theme to connect multiple topics and describe the literature that supports them. This included descriptions of the theory of change, summaries of existing publicly and privately run programs that could relate to Job Corps, and any evidence of their effectiveness. In total, over 25 topics were presented. Part I of the report focused on topics related to the youth experience in Job Corps, and Part II considered program organization models. The researchers selected the topics based in part on discussions with national Job Corps staff and subject matter experts on Job Corps and similar programs. While several topics may be implemented already to some extent in Job Corps Centers, they are included to provide a comprehensive review of the current Job Corps relevant literature.

The topics were further divided into the following sections:

1. Engaging Disconnected Youth
2. Creating a Safe and Supportive Environment
3. Preparing Youth for Careers
4. Organizing Youth Services
5. Optimal Location of Job Corps Centers
6. Approaches to Program Innovation
7. Alternative Arrangements for Delivering Job Corps Services

The authors posed five factors that should be considered across all the approaches in the report, which include: (1) the outcomes that are expected to change; (2) the theory underlying the approach(es); (3) the duration and intensity of implementation; (4) the resources necessary to implement the approach with fidelity; and (5) the strength of the evidence base.

Additionally, if potential improvements are pursued, the authors suggest that conducting a pilot phase in one or multiple centers prior to full implementation could be useful. Their reasons for this recommendation are that (a) a pilot would allow for addressing implementation challenges and identifying refinements, and (b) a pilot phase could allow insight into whether the timing is right for an evaluation.



### **“The Use of Technology-Based Learning for Basic Skills in Job Corps”**

Epstein, Zachary, Porsha Cropper, Asaph Glosser, David Robinson, Lily Rosenthal, et al. “The Use of Technology-Based Learning for Basic Skills in Job Corps.” Rockville, MD, and Alexandria, VA: Abt Associates and MEF Associates, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2020-07\\_TBL\\_Report-2\\_Use\\_of\\_TBL\\_for\\_Basic\\_Skills\\_in\\_Job\\_Corps.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2020-07_TBL_Report-2_Use_of_TBL_for_Basic_Skills_in_Job_Corps.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2631>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report discussed the use of technology-based learning (TBL)—i.e., educational technology or digital learning—for raising reading and math skills of students in the Job Corps, a residential academic and occupational training program offering an intensive set of services and supports to disadvantaged youth. Job Corps services are delivered in over 100 centers by provider organizations. The centers typically have rolling admissions of students who have different academic skills at entry, including a portion of students with significant deficiencies in reading and math skills. Remediation is thus an essential step in preparing students to pursue occupational training and improve their employability and self-sufficiency.

The report systematically documented and analyzed the use of TBL for basic skills remediation on-site at Job Corps Centers in 2017. The report discussed the prevalence of TBL use, types of software used, perceptions as to TBL's effectiveness, as well as challenges, barriers, and best practices for TBL, as identified by the instructors, managers, and directors. The data for the study was from three sources: (1) a web-based survey administered to every Job Corps Center around the country, (2) semi-structured interviews with Job Corps Center directors, academic managers, and staff at seven sites, and (3) focus groups conducted with students at those same seven sites.

The report found that a majority of Job Corps Centers (86 percent) used TBL resources for remediation of reading and math skills. Centers' use of these resources varied, and challenges included software security requirements and limited Internet connectivity and bandwidth. A small share of centers reported challenges associated with instructors' and students' technological literacy and general capacity to use TBL. Most center directors reported that TBL resources could be as effective or more effective than traditional methods for remediation of reading and math skills. Staff and students' views on TBL were mostly positive. Many students found that TBL was more engaging, particularly when it involved competitive learning games and allowed them to work at their own pace. Still, at each center, at least one student reported a preference for the traditional classroom environment, often because TBL instruction seemed isolating and unfamiliar. Overall, the report confirmed that TBL was able to provide students with a platform for personalized and independent learning, adapted to individual skill levels, and at the same time, provide information on progress in skill attainment to instructors.

### **“The External Review of Job Corps: Directions for Future Research”**

Lee, Joanne, Peter Z. Schochet, and Jillian Berk, “The External Review of Job Corps: Directions for Future Research.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Institute, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/JC-Evaluation-Design-Options.pdf>

**HYPERLINKS TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/JC-EvidenceScan.pdf>; <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/JC-EvidenceScan-Highlights.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** How-to Guides

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report, completed as part of the external review of Job Corps, provides a high-level summary of evaluation design options for the first four research questions covered by the [evidence scan](#), which relate to the provision of youth services. The intended audience for this report is people who are knowledgeable about Job Corps, have some familiarity with evaluation methods, and have an interest in evaluating whether potential innovations improve participant outcomes.

In the first section, the authors provide an overview of the evaluation process, including considerations for selecting the research questions and interventions to evaluate. In considering designs for evaluation, the report offers options on implementing an intervention, services that a comparison group will receive, the staff and youth to target for the study, the unit of assignment for the intervention, the feasibility of random assignment, the evaluation’s needs for sample size, and data sources for outcomes. Example questions include: What problem will the intervention solve? Is the expected contrast stark enough to generate impacts the evaluation can detect? How will individuals be identified for the intervention? Should the unit of assignment be the Job Corps Center or a more disaggregated level? Could the intervention be randomly assigned in the Job Corps context? Does relevant data exist to use for statistical power calculations? Is it possible to measure outcomes with the same level of fidelity for both the intervention and comparison groups?

In the subsequent four sections, the authors present examples of interventions and design options for each research question identified in the evidence scan. Each section begins by showing examples of promising interventions and practices. Subsequently, each section describes the considerations for evaluation designs before presenting the potential design option(s) most relevant for these practices. Each section concludes with a discussion of outcomes and data sources that could be used to identify successful interventions. The last section summarizes design options for future research on Job Corps.

### **“National Job Corps Study: 20-Year Follow-Up Study Using Tax Data”**

Schochet, Peter Z. “National Job Corps Study: 20-Year Follow-Up Study Using Tax Data.” Princeton, N.J.: Mathematica Policy Research. 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP2019-13%20Job-Corps-IRS-Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP2019-13%20Job-Corps-IRS-Report.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2658>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

Job Corps is a national education and training program for at-risk youth between the ages of 16 and 24. Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), the program provides vocational, academic, health, and supportive services, primarily in a residential setting at Job Corps Centers. The program’s objective is to help disconnected youth become more responsible, employable, and productive citizens. Between 1993 and 2004, DOL sponsored the National Job Corps Study to examine the program’s effectiveness as it operated in the mid-1990s. The impact evaluation used an experimental design in which all eligible program applicants nationwide between late 1994 and early 1996 were randomly assigned to a program group that could enroll in Job Corps or to a control group that could not (but who could enroll in other available programs in their communities). The original evaluation examined outcomes through 2001, and a later follow-up study examined longer-term earnings impacts using tax data through 2004, roughly nine years after random assignment.

This follow-up study assesses longer-term employment-related impacts of Job Corps using tax records through 2015, about 20 years after random assignment. The 20-year follow-up study addressed the following research questions:

- Twenty years after random assignment, what were the impacts of Job Corps on participants’ annual employment and earnings overall and by age group?
- What were the impacts on types of employment (hourly wage and salaried employment, contractor employment, and self-employment); the receipt of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits; and spouse employment? Did the program have an effect on tax filings, liabilities, and balances due?

The 20-year results largely mimic the results from the nine-year study using the tax data. The study finds evidence that the positive program effects persisted—but did not grow—for the 20- to 24-year-olds. Furthermore, the older program group earned more, on average, than the older control group throughout the period, although their earnings gain in 2015 is not statistically significant. However, as with the nine-year study, the study finds no evidence of long-term program effects on employment and earnings overall or for the 16- to 19-year-olds in years 10 to 20. The study findings do not change previous conclusions from the benefit-cost analysis. Specifically, the longer-term results support the findings that (1) for all participants, program benefits to society were smaller than program costs; (2) the program was cost-effective for the 20- to 24-year-olds; and (3) benefits exceeded costs from the perspective of program participants.

### **“YouthBuild Evaluation”**

Wiegand, Andrew, Cynthia Miller, Danielle Cummings, David Long, and Megan Millenky. “Youth Build Evaluation.” Washington, DC: MRDC. 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2018-01\\_Youth\\_Build\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2018-01_Youth_Build_Evaluation.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

YouthBuild is a program for 16- to 24-year-olds who have dropped out of high school, are at risk of failing to reach key educational milestones, and face additional barriers to success. Those barriers include involvement with the juvenile or adult justice and/or foster care systems, having a disability, having an incarcerated parent, being low-income, or being a member of a migrant family. The program is a nonresidential, community-based alternative education program that provides a mix of academics, construction-related or other vocational training, leadership development, community service, and other activities to young people facing an array of challenges to educational and employment success. Seventy-five programs awarded YouthBuild funding in 2011 participated in the evaluation. Of those, 58 were funded by DOL, and 17 were funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Nearly 4,000 youth recruited to these programs between 2011 and early 2013 participated in the evaluation. Those randomly assigned to the program group were engaged in program activities for 6 to 12 months. Those randomly assigned to the control group could not participate in YouthBuild for a period of two years.

This report presents key findings four years after random assignment into the study:

- YouthBuild increased the receipt of high school equivalency credentials by 14 percentage points by the 30-month point, although some differences diminished by 48 months.
- YouthBuild increased enrollment in college by almost nine percentage points, mainly during the first two years. Effects on college enrollment were larger for programs with strong postsecondary education services. The program had a minimal effect on degree receipt. However, almost 30 percent of those enrolled in the study had not even completed 10th grade when they enrolled in the study.
- YouthBuild increased self-reported employment rates, wages, and earnings but did not increase employment as measured with administrative records. This discrepancy could be because some self-employment, informal, or intermittent work is not included in administrative data. In addition, most program graduates were placed in construction jobs, and finding construction-related employment was challenging following the Great Recession, which overlapped the evaluation period.
- YouthBuild increased civic engagement, primarily via participation in YouthBuild services. It had few effects on other measures of positive youth development.
- YouthBuild had few effects on involvement with the criminal justice system.

## Other Youth Programs

### “Opportunities Youth Demonstration and Evaluation Outcomes Evaluation: Findings from Pilot Sites in Baltimore and Boston”

Koball, Heather, Alan Dodkowitz, Colleen Schlecht, and Shannon Guiltinan. “Opportunities Youth Demonstration and Evaluation Outcomes Evaluation: Findings from Pilot Sites in Baltimore and Boston.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

[https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Opportunity\\_Youth\\_Evaluation\\_Report.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Opportunity_Youth_Evaluation_Report.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Outcome/Performance Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

DOL funded the Opportunities Youth project to develop, pilot, and evaluate innovative interventions that aim to improve long-term employment outcomes for opportunity youth, a group defined as young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who are not in school, are at risk of dropping out of school, or are unemployed.

This report describes findings from pilot programs in Baltimore and Boston. The goals of the evaluation were to determine whether the pilot programs could be successfully implemented, whether rigorous impact evaluations could be implemented within the pilot programs, and whether the pilot programs showed promise for moving participants toward steady, well-paid employment.

In Baltimore, the pilot consisted of an intensive education program that aimed for participants to obtain general educational development (GED) certification, a certified nursing assistant (CNA) certification, and a job in health care. The program was small (25 students) and lacked sufficient eligible students to create a control group through random assignment. Seventy-five percent of program completers received a GED. Sixty percent of those who completed the program received the CNA certification. Twenty-eight percent found employment in the health care field.

The pilot program in Boston provided enrolled community college students with career navigators who helped them overcome barriers to completing education and offered an employer specialist to support their job search. Although the evaluation team randomly assigned eligible students to either be offered the program or not, only 25 percent of the eligible students assigned to the treatment group participated in the program. The authors found that program participants were no more likely to transfer or complete a degree or certification than the group that was not offered the program. However, they caution that the lack of impact cannot be confidently attributed to the program because participants may not have been representative of the full treatment group.

**“Urban Employment for Youth and Young Adults Demonstration Grants Implementation Evaluation”**  
2M Research Services. “Urban Employment for Youth and Young Adults Demonstration Grants Implementation Evaluation.” Arlington, TX: 2M Research Services, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/DOL-Urban-Youth-Final-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

This report presents findings from an implementation study of the Urban Employment Demonstration Grants for Youth and Young Adults. In 2015, ETA awarded two-year grants for projects to meet the workforce needs of disconnected youth and young adults (ages 16–29) in seven U.S. cities with high unemployment, crime, and poverty rates and low high school graduation rates: Baltimore, Maryland; Camden, New Jersey; Detroit, Michigan; Houston, Texas; Long Beach, California; North Charleston, South Carolina; and St. Louis, Missouri. The project’s focus was to provide an opportunity for innovation by using the grant funds to enhance existing activities or develop new programs; sites did not have a uniform program model to implement or test.

DOL’s CEO funded an implementation evaluation of the seven grants to document the way programs were implemented, perceived challenges and successes, and emerging lessons. The evaluation examined the processes of implementing the demonstration programs over a period of approximately 12 months, from January 2016 to January 2017. The evaluation collected data from a series of site visits, semi-structured conversations with the programs’ principal leaders, observations, and data on enrollment and job placement provided by the programs. The evaluation had these key findings:

- In most sites, grantees had preexisting relationships with their core partners for program implementation.
- Six of the seven sites built new models for providing workforce development services and added elements and services not typically available to disconnected youth.
- Sites offered a mix of soft skills, resume assistance, adult education services, occupational training, and supportive services.
- All sites perceived recruitment and engagement of youth as a challenge.
- Though programs used a variety of approaches to develop relationships with employers, they described this as one of the most challenging aspects of implementation.

**“An Introduction to the World of Work: A Study of the Implementation and Impacts of New York City’s Summer Youth Employment Program”**

Valentine, Erin Jacobs, Chloe Anderson, Farhana Hossain, and Rebecca Unterman. “An Introduction to the World of Work: A Study of the Implementation and Impacts of New York City’s Summer Youth Employment Program.” New York, NY: MDRC, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/SYEP-Full-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials) and Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

This report examines the impacts of New York City’s Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)—the nation’s largest summer youth jobs program—on young people’s education, employment, and earnings. The evaluation includes a sample of nearly 265,000 young people who applied for SYEP for the first time between 2006 and 2010. The analysis uses an experimental design that relies on SYEP’s randomized lottery application system and draws on interviews, focus groups, and a survey of service providers to describe SYEP’s implementation and the experiences of its participants.

The impact analysis shows that SYEP had large impacts on young people’s employment and earnings during the summer for which they applied. Those who won places in SYEP through a randomized lottery were 54 percentage points more likely to be employed (72 versus 18 percent) and earned \$580 more during that summer, on average, than those who did not place in SYEP. Although SYEP achieved its goal of increasing employment for New York City’s young people, the program had a negligible effect on education, employment, or earnings beyond the initial summer.

The implementation analysis reveals that SYEP’s large scale shaped its implementation and participants’ experiences. SYEP’s structure of identifying, screening, and making job placements for 50,000 young people each summer requires year-round planning and coordination. The scale of SYEP’s operation hinders its ability to provide meaningful, skill-building experiences to each participant. Therefore, the quality of SYEP work experiences can vary widely, even within the same job sector and industry.

**“Building College and Career Pathways for High School Students: Youth CareerConnect”**

Maxwell, Nan, Jeanne Bellotti, Peter Schochet, Paul Burkander, Emilyn Whitesell, et al. “Building College and Career Pathways for High School Students: Youth CareerConnect.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2019.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/YCC\\_impact\\_report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/YCC_impact_report.pdf)

**HYPERLINKS TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2624>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

In 2014, DOL created the Youth CareerConnect (YCC) program, a high-school-based program aimed at improving young adults' college and career readiness. DOL awarded \$107 million in four-year grants to 24 applicants who planned to bring together a group of community partners—including local education agencies, institutions of higher education, employers, the workforce development system, and support service organizations—to tailor YCC to their local employment market. YCC programs include a career focus in a high-growth H-1B industry, employer partnerships and engagement, integrated academic and career curricula, work-based learning and exposure to the world of work, individualized career and academic counseling, small learning communities, and professional development.

The study found that the program had a small impact on several outcomes related to educational attainment and employment, with improvements in school attendance, credit accumulation, and English language arts proficiency for program participants. However, the program had no effect on algebra progression. The YCC program may have had a greater impact on students starting the program in later years, as they might have received a higher dosage of services compared to earlier cohorts. No consistent pattern emerged across subgroups based on their prior academic achievement and did not have a low-income status.



### **“Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth (P3) National Evaluation”**

Rosenberg, Linda, M.C. Bradley, Armando Yanez, Alexandra Stanczyk, Elizabeth Brown, et al. “National Evaluation of the Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth (P3): Summary of the Evaluation’s Reports and Findings.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2021.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

[https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/currentstudies/Performance\\_Partnership\\_Pilots\\_for\\_Disconnected\\_Youth\\_National\\_Evaluation](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/currentstudies/Performance_Partnership_Pilots_for_Disconnected_Youth_National_Evaluation)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

The goal of the study was to identify and document the extent to which the Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth (P3) initiative increased coordination across federal agencies and programs to allow local communities the flexibilities they need to support disconnected youth. To promote a more integrated system of federal, state, local, and tribal services for disconnected youth, Congress authorized the P3 initiative under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. It allowed grantee organizations and their partners, together called “pilots,” to waive regulations, such as spending and administrative requirements, and gain coordinated access to the discretionary funds of five federal agencies.

The study produced several reports and papers that document the implementation of the P3 program, from early implementation to efforts to sustain systems change. The study found that all pilots brought together multiple partners across different youth-serving agencies, including health providers, housing agencies, education providers, and workforce agencies. Of the 13 pilots with approved federal waivers, ten reported using at least one waiver in three general ways: to serve a broader population of youth, to serve a focal population of youth flexibly, or to reduce administrative burden. Three pilots reported not needing their granted waivers to implement their services.

The implementation study identified three service approaches.

- Case management. Youth received individualized case management to help them navigate and connect to community resources.
- Case management plus services. Youth received individualized case management and participated in or received the same set of services designed for P3 youth.
- Program service model. Youth participated in the same set of activities specific to P3 to achieve common goals related to education or employment.

Though many pilots prioritized offering enhanced services, others focused on enacting systems change and developing system-wide approaches, like strategic plans and integrated data systems. The evaluators synthesized local evaluation findings and found that all but one local evaluation yielded causal evidence supporting effects of P3 interventions, and half of the intervention types demonstrated evidence of improved youth outcomes. The evaluation team found that additional guidance and technical assistance in focused areas could support efforts to capitalize on allowed flexibilities and prepare for systems change.

## Other Populations

### “Promising Practices for Increasing Diversity Among First Responders”

Miller, Abby, Sue Clery, Samantha Richardson, Amelia Topper, Stephanie Cronen, et al. “Promising Practices for Increasing Diversity Among First Responders.” Bethesda, MD and Washington, DC: Coffey Consulting and American Institutes for Research, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/FirstResponders\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/FirstResponders_Full_Report.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Reviews and Implementation/Process Analyses

#### ABSTRACT:

First responders—including law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency management service (EMS) personnel—serve a crucial role in the safety and well-being of communities around the country. Public citizens and officials have placed a renewed focus on improving first responder agencies’ relations with their local communities by ensuring that first responders reflect the populations they serve. This report is an exploratory study to identify promising practices that first responder agencies and organizations can leverage to increase the diversity of their workforces.

The authors conducted a detailed review of the published first responder and human resources literature and media to identify promising practices within the employment pipeline—recruitment, selection, training, retention, and advancement—that first responder agencies or supporting organizations use to increase workforce diversity. The study team visited a purposive sample of five sites identified as having well-established diversity efforts to gather more in-depth, contextualized information about the promising practices implemented and their potential, both achieved and anticipated, for increasing the diversity of their local first responder workforce.

Overall, the findings indicated that the sites employ a range of promising practices across the recruitment and hiring process. The authors identified common themes across the sites related to organizational and leadership support, recruiting diversity, retaining diversity, and challenges.

- All five sites displayed aspects of a diverse organizational culture, including a diverse leadership and an emphasis on diversity as a priority.
- Promising recruitment practices include population-specific liaisons, partnerships with colleges and high schools, and financial incentives for language skills.
- Retention practices included frequent opportunities for promotion and movement within the agency, financial incentives for language skills, and a welcoming environment for underrepresented populations.
- Key challenges appeared specific to the profession. For police, a major challenge is filling the approximately 200-300 openings each year, while for fire, the challenge appeared to be competition for limited openings.

The study suggests that agencies must work towards institutionalizing their goal to strive for and support diversity and inclusion to be successful.

## “U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau Strategic Community Outreach Study: Overview Report”

Nexight Group. “U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau Strategic Community Outreach Study: Overview Report.” Silver Spring, MD: Nexight Group, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/WB-Community-Engagement-Overview-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses and Program/Policy Analyses

### **ABSTRACT:**

DOL’s Women’s Bureau works toward reducing barriers that inhibit or prevent women’s access to—and retention in—better jobs and ensuring women’s fair treatment in the workplace. To achieve these goals, the Women’s Bureau employs a range of approaches. One of which is conducting community engagement activities to raise awareness of working women’s issues and encourage policies that benefit and support working women. Based on facilitated meetings and individual interviews with both national and regional office staff conducted from November 2016 through January 2017, this report presents a high-level look at the community engagement project approach and analysis and presents options that the Women’s Bureau may consider for future exploration.

Findings from this exploratory study include:

- Topic areas are prioritized in the yearly DOL operating plan and may change based on the priorities of an administration. However, the topic areas that the Women’s Bureau most frequently engages in include equal pay, apprenticeship, paid leave, nontraditional occupations, workers’ rights, and older workers. Given the similarities in audiences and desired outcomes for apprenticeship and nontraditional occupations, the Women’s Bureau may consider combining these measures.
- Three intended outcomes of the Women’s Bureau’s community engagement efforts align with specific topic areas or goals. These intended outcomes help crystallize the desired outcome for a specific target area and audience.
- Women’s Bureau staff in each region report engaging in various community engagement activities that group into one of six community engagement strategies. Staff may use these strategies to better share promising practices across regions, prioritize activities within specific regions, and strengthen the line of sight from a specific community engagement activity to the intended audience and outcome.
- Several external factors outside of the Women’s Bureau’s control influence progress toward achieving the Women’s Bureau’s community engagement outcomes. In addition, there is a range of inputs that can help shape community engagement activities. Both factors are considered in planning, implementing, responding to, and reporting on the Women’s Bureau’s regional community engagement activities.
- The Women’s Bureau targets specific audiences with an immediate outcome in mind. Designing and analyzing community engagement activities for distinct audiences helps identify the most promising type of activity for that audience and strengthens the ability of the Women’s Bureau to measure progress toward desired outcomes.
- The Women’s Bureau frequently engages with partners. Building and maintaining relationships with potential partners helps the Women’s Bureau maximize resources at the local level and amplify the impact of a community engagement activity by reaching a wider audience.

### **“Feasibility Study and Evaluation of Non-Traditional Occupation Demonstrations”**

Nanda, Neha, Carolyn Corea, Luke Patterson, Eileen Po Yamagata, Paul Mian, et al. “Feasibility Study and Evaluation of Non-Traditional Occupation Demonstrations: Final Evaluation Report.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2019-04\\_NTO\\_Study\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2019-04_NTO_Study_Final_Report.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2618>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

Initiated in June 2013, the “Feasibility Study and Evaluation of Non-Traditional Occupation Demonstrations” project sought evidence-based strategies to increase employment opportunities in occupations where specific populations and subpopulations are traditionally underrepresented (non-traditional occupations, or NTOs). NTOs for women generally offer higher wages and more opportunities for advancement compared to traditionally female-dominated occupations. The overall purpose of the NTO study was to (1) identify barriers to NTOs and promising strategies for addressing those barriers, (2) design and implement a demonstration of a promising strategy, and (3) evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy implemented under the demonstration.

Three reports were developed under this study. A literature review identifies prior research and studies that identify barriers to NTO entry and retention for women and strategies that aim to address these barriers. The interim report describes the steps taken to identify, design, and implement a demonstration project and associated evaluation. The final report summarizes the project intervention, evaluation design, baseline and intervention characteristics, and program impacts and includes study implications and recommendations.

The intervention used multi-pronged outreach designed to reduce misperceptions, increase awareness, and encourage women to enter NTOs. The impact study evaluated recruitment materials with two American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) grantees. The two grantees, South Seattle Community College and New Mexico Community College, used the recruitment materials to randomize jobseekers into groups that receive themed or non-themed messages, and the evaluation compared the differential effect of themed and non-themed messages on short-term outcomes.

The impact study found statistically significant positive effects on measures that captured short-term actions toward applying to an NTO training program. In South Seattle, which focused on construction and advanced manufacturing, the study found significant positive impacts on whether participants clicked on a link in an email and completed an interest form. However, in New Mexico, which focused on information technology, the evaluation team found a statistically significant negative impact on whether participants opened the email. It is noteworthy that, at this phase of the intervention, the job seekers had only been exposed to the email subject lines.

### **“Young Parents Demonstration Reports”**

Trutko, John, Lauren Eyster, Tracy Vericker, Carolyn O'Brien, Burt Barnow, et al. “Young Parents Demonstration Program: Rounds I and II Grantee Implementation and Impact Results.” Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 2018.

Trutko, John, Lauren Eyster, Tracy Vericker, Carolyn O'Brien, Alex Trutko, et al. “Young Parents Demonstration Program: Round III Grantee Implementation and Impact Results.” Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 2018.

Trutko, John, Lauren Eyster, Tracy Vericker, Carolyn O'Brien, Alex Trutko, et al. “Brief on the Impact Findings from the Young Parents Demonstration Evaluation.” Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 2019.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDIES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2619>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses; Impact Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

The Young Parents Demonstration (YPD) was a federal initiative to test the effectiveness of providing enhanced services to young parents and expectant parents ages 16 to 24 and determine whether such services improved their educational and employment outcomes. ETA awarded 17 grants in three rounds between June 2009 (13 Round I and II grantees) and June 2011 (4 Round III grantees), and the grants ended in December 2012 and December 2015, respectively. As part of the YPD, grantees were required to implement a differential experimental research design. Treatment group members received an additional level of service beyond the base level of services provided to the control group. The treatment interventions varied across grantees; some provided mentoring services, and others provided guided employment, education, training, and related supports. More than 3,700 young and expectant parents were randomly assigned to treatment and control groups.

The YPD evaluation reports present impact results on employment and earnings outcomes resulting from the enhanced services provided to participants. The reports also present key findings and lessons learned from the implementation analysis, which describes the characteristics of the participants served and the base and enhanced services provided. An issue brief synthesizes impact results across the two evaluation reports and includes exploratory analyses made possible by matching participant data with National Directory of New Hires wage records obtained in February 2018 for the Round I and II grantees. The reports identify lessons learned in structuring future approaches for at-risk youth demonstrations.

Overall, impact study results indicated that YPD treatment group services had no long-term observable and measurable impacts on employment and earnings. Additionally, no measurable impacts were observed on a considerable range of exploratory outcomes for treatment group participants, including quarterly employment and earnings, educational attainment, welfare receipt, marriage and family composition, and housing and food security.

## **“The Role of the Workforce System in Addressing the Opioid Crisis: A Review of the Literature”**

Vine, Michaela, Colleen Staats, Crystal Blyler, and Jillian Berk. “The Role of the Workforce System in Addressing the Opioid Crisis: A Review of the Literature.” Washington, DC: Mathematica, 2020.

### **HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

[https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/WorkforceOpioids\\_LitReview\\_508.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/WorkforceOpioids_LitReview_508.pdf)

### **HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:**

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/currentstudies/National-Health-Emergency-Demonstration-Grants-to-Address-the-Opioid-Crisis>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Reviews

### **ABSTRACT:**

The opioid crisis has reached an unprecedented level in the United States, with more than 130 people dying each day from opioid-related drug overdoses. Successful employment and recovery from opioid and other substance use disorders are linked in important ways. Employment can be a motivator for entering and adhering to treatment, and treatment can help improve work attendance and competency at work. The U.S. Department of Labor has been actively supporting efforts to address the opioid crisis by providing funds to public workforce agencies through the National Health Emergency (NHE) Dislocated Worker Grants, both for demonstration projects and disaster recovery.

This literature review was conducted as part of an evaluation of the NHE demonstration grants. It summarized evidence on three topics related to the intersection of employment and the opioid crisis: (1) effective and promising practices for providing employment services to people with opioid use disorder; (2) employer best practices for preventing negative effects of opioid use disorder in the workplace and creating recovery-friendly workplaces; and (3) key considerations for developing the health care workforce that is addressing the opioid crisis.

Key observations include:

- Common features of models that have shown signs of promise for people with substance use disorders include the integration or concurrent provision of employment services and treatment services, the delivery of interventions by trained staff with specific knowledge and skills, and intensive interventions that are “high touch.”
- Engagement in employment-related activities can be used in “contingency management” approaches either as a reward for desired behaviors or a positive activity that triggers other rewards.
- When implementing workplace-based interventions, employers should consider the nature and types of job-related risks and recognize that opioid misuse varies by industry.
- Workplace prevention initiatives and employee assistance programs have several benefits for employers. Additionally, several states have models and criteria for designating workplaces as “recovery friendly.”
- There is a critical shortage of behavioral health workers. The workforce system can play an important role in directing people into the field, supporting additional training of existing health care workers, and collaborating with partners to increase the availability of training. Possibly promising approaches include using distance education and nontraditional providers to expand the workforce.

The evaluation team also produced a resource guide focused on employment supports for people in recovery, employer needs, and the development of the behavioral health workforce.

## **Approaches to Workforce Development**

The second section of Training and Employment Programs covers studies on approaches to workforce development. In this section are four subsections: integrated workforce systems, industry and sector training approaches, self-employment training, and transitional employment.

### **Integrated Workforce System**

#### **American Job Centers**

##### **“Study of the American Job Center Customer Experience: Summary Report”**

Chamberlain, Anne, Clancy Bertane, Jessica Cadima, Matthew Darling, Andreana Kenrick, et al. “Study of the American Job Center Customer Experience: Summary Report.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, LLC, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Customer-Experience-Summary-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

##### **ABSTRACT:**

Individuals come to American Job Centers (AJCs) looking for work and resources to help them gain employment. The AJC customer experience involves not only an individual’s interactions with an AJC but also what an organization offers and how the customer perceives and interacts with those offerings, the staff, and the AJC brand. This summary report was based on information collected in the spring and summer of 2016 from staff and customer discussions, customer focus groups, and kiosk surveys. Nine centers participated in this study. The study was exploratory; therefore, the insights in the summary report were not intended to represent all AJCs. Still, the themes and patterns that emerged portrayed the customer experience and suggested ways to enhance it.

In reviewing the data, the following themes emerged. Customers appear to have positive experiences at the AJC and are largely satisfied with the center staff and services. Individual, one-on-one interactions with staff play a significant role in how customers feel about their overall AJC experience. New customers often did not know what to expect from or had misconceptions about their AJCs. Many customers are not aware of the full extent of AJC services. Program registration, enrollment processes, and requirements can feel overwhelming or arbitrary to customers. Most employer customers have one point of contact at the center who caters to their specific needs.

The authors conclude the report with a brief description of promising practices and strategies to improve the customer experience for individual job/training customers and employer customers based on this exploratory study. These strategies include both existing practices that appear promising and ideas for developing new practices. Many of the strategies are drawn from behavioral science and address specific behavioral barriers that customers may be facing. Proposed changes for the customer experience are suggested for pre-visit, during visit, and post visit, as follows: revise or augment the invitation letter that job/training seekers receive, initiate a social referral program, simplify the registration/check-in process for employers and allow more control over digital tools, offer targeted orientation sessions that focus on introducing AJC services and resources, create a one-page document with a brief overview of AJC services, remove eligibility barriers by opening services to everyone, create a personalized calendar for job/training seekers, and for staff, set aside time for “busy work,” incorporate set breaks, and centralize calendars.

### **“Study of the American Job Center Customer Experience: Literature Scan”**

Chamberlain, Anne, Annelies Goger, Jessica Cadima, Matthew Darling, Andreana Kenrick, et al. “Study of the American Job Center Customer Experience: Literature Scan.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, LLC, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Customer-Experience-Literature-Scan.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Review

#### **ABSTRACT:**

American Job Centers (AJCs) offer job seekers resources to help them gain employment. A customer’s experience in an AJC reflects their perceptions of the technical service performance, tangible items related to the service, and the behavior of the service provider. The objective of this scan is to learn (1) what has been reported recently on AJC customer experience, (2) what is known from the emerging field of behavioral research, (3) how behavioral researchers are measuring customer experience, and (4) promising AJC customer experience strategies. The researchers achieved these objectives by reviewing recent literature on customers’ experiences in AJCs and analogous systems and relevant behavioral science literature. The research team also attempted to collect reviews of customer experience from customers themselves, using Social Media Topic Modeling (SMTM). While team members did not find sufficient social media reviews for analysis, they saw it as a promising mechanism for future research.

Overall, the research team found that while some research literature addresses AJC customer satisfaction and the specific needs of some target AJC customer groups, little is known about AJC customer experiences more broadly. Moreover, AJC research that includes the customer perspective is limited. A few findings on customer experience follow. First, customer perceptions can differ from actual experiences, and service providers can apply strategies to create a positive experience. Customers may also arrive with certain expectations, so anticipating and correcting misperceptions and creating realistic expectations for AJC services may enhance customers’ overall experiences and increase the continued use of AJCs. Ensuring positive interactions with customers, gaining customer trust, and understanding what contributes to whether people take up and use AJC services are crucial.



### **“Institutional Analysis of American Job Centers”**

Holcomb, P., L. Rosenberg, E. Brown, B. English, K. Dunham, et al. “Institutional Analysis of American Job Centers: Study Highlights.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2018-03\\_StudyHighlights\\_AJCs\\_508\\_Compliant.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2018-03_StudyHighlights_AJCs_508_Compliant.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2614>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analysis

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This study of American Job Center (AJC) institutional features was funded and overseen by the ETA. It was initiated just prior to the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Consequently, the public workforce system was in the early stages of implementing WIOA. The study team visited 40 purposively selected AJCs. The study examined the administrative structure and One-Stop operations, partner involvement, funding- and resource-sharing practices, data systems and sharing, and service delivery for job seekers and employers. Five briefs were developed under this study, which provided information on key features of the AJC system.

1. Key Institutional Features of American Job Centers
2. One-Stop Operators of the American Job Center System
3. Resource Sharing Practices Among American Job Centers
4. American Job Center Service Delivery in Rural Areas
5. An Institutional Analysis of American Job Centers: Study Highlights

The study found that at the time of the data collection, there was more to be done, particularly at the AJC level, to (1) leverage partner resources and establish resource-sharing agreements, (2) competitively procure one-stop operators, (3) use cross-program and entity-wide data for AJC management and to serve participants, and (4) collaboratively engage employers. It also highlights some unique challenges for AJCs in rural areas. The study also identified strategies that appeared to be working for certain AJCs, for example, AJCs exhibiting successful collaborations through co-location or through managing partnerships across a large service area, as opposed to within one AJC.

Study findings should be reviewed in the context of the workforce system in the early stages of transitioning from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to WIOA. At the time of the study's site visits in the latter half of 2016, state-level workforce and partner agencies were heavily engaged in planning for WIOA and had submitted their first WIOA state plans, and local areas and AJCs in the study were awaiting additional federal and state guidance on key provisions. While local-level staff anticipated that WIOA could or would lead to significant changes to the current AJC system and day-to-day operations, it was largely unclear to them what these changes would entail or how they would be achieved.

## **Eligible Training Provider Lists**

### **“How States Manage Eligible Training Provider Lists: Findings from a State Survey”**

Kracker Selzer, Amy and Lauren Eyster. “How States Manage Eligible Training Provider Lists: Findings from a State Survey.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2015.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-10%20EPTL%20Report%20\(Accessible%20PDF\).pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-10%20EPTL%20Report%20(Accessible%20PDF).pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

A primary objective of the WIA was to improve the training options available to adult and dislocated workers. WIA instituted a market-based voucher system in which training customers could use federal funds to pay for training programs included on a state-approved list known as the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). While WIA provided a basic structure for these processes, states and local workforce investment boards have a great deal of flexibility in implementing ETPLs. Because of this flexibility, state ETPL policies and practices vary throughout the country. This report serves as a reference for understanding how states administer their ETPLs and the policies and practices they are adopting.

Based on a web-based survey of ETPL coordinators in all states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico administered between May and June of 2014, the study found that states maintain significant responsibility for many of the key tasks associated with ETPL management. Almost all responding states collect self-reported data from training providers. Most responding states collect information about program performance when ETPLs apply for initial inclusion on the ETPL, during follow-up reviews of eligibility, or both. Responding states find most tasks related to working with training providers to be easy. The survey responders rate getting new providers on the list and including enough qualified providers as particularly easy. Collecting reliable data about ETP program performance is the task most frequently rated as difficult or very difficult by responding states.

### **“Comparing State and National Approaches to Education and Training Program Scorecards”**

Davis, Scott, Stephen Wandner, and Louis Jacobson. “Comparing State and National Approaches to Education and Training Program Scorecards.” Columbia, MD: IMPAQ International, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2019-07\\_Comparing\\_State\\_and\\_National\\_Approaches\\_Final\\_Report\\_508.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2019-07_Comparing_State_and_National_Approaches_Final_Report_508.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

American workers interested in enhancing or augmenting their skills often enroll in education and training programs that they expect to help them progress along a career path or find and keep good jobs. To provide individuals with information to help them decide among program alternatives, some states have created websites (termed scorecards) that allow users to browse education and training opportunities and view the labor market outcomes of recent program completers. Because of the challenges states face in producing such systems, the Employment and Training Administration explored alternatives to help in these efforts in three states—Missouri, New Jersey, and Ohio.

This study focused on two questions: (1) Is it feasible to use national databases of employment and earnings data for state education and training program scorecards? (2) How different are employment- and earnings-related outcome measures for education and training programs when based on single-state unemployment insurance (UI) wage records versus data from a national database of earnings? Missouri, New Jersey, and Ohio each provided administrative data on training completers along with UI wage record data and agreed to allow the matching of their data to the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH), a national database of earnings. Analysts calculated a series of outcome measures using both data sources to understand how the employment- and earnings-related measures typically used in scorecards compare when based on single-state wage record data or a national database of earnings.

The report found: (1) limited alternatives in terms of existing databases with national coverage that could be used to support a national approach to scorecards; (2) in Missouri and Ohio, scorecard measures based on single-state UI data are not meaningfully different than if they were based on national data; and, (3) in New Jersey, scorecard measures based on single-state UI data are underestimated due to substantial missing data on trainees who work in other states. Based on the findings, the recommendations are (1) streamline the process of accessing the NDNH or other suitable data; (2) encourage and/or help foster regional wage record data sharing among groups of states; and (3) identify ways to enable information sharing among states, so states without scorecards may learn from states that have created and maintained scorecards successfully.

## Digital Approaches

### “Technology-Based Learning in Workforce Development and Education: A Review of the Research Literature”

Gan, Katherine N., Glen Schneider, Zachary Epstein, and Alex Silverman. “Technology-Based Learning in Workforce Development and Education: A Review of the Research Literature.” Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, 2014.

#### HYPERLINK TO STUDY:

[https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/ETA\\_TBLinWDandEDLiteratureReview\\_Report\\_Aug2020.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/ETA_TBLinWDandEDLiteratureReview_Report_Aug2020.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Reviews

#### ABSTRACT:

The rapid adoption and evolution of technology-based learning (TBL) has dramatically altered the landscape of education and training in the U.S. and beyond. This report focuses on how TBL has been used for work-related skills and training, factors associated with effectiveness, gaps in the knowledge base, and possible directions for future research. TBL, or e-learning, broadly encompasses interventions that rely on advanced electronic or communication technologies to supplement or replace traditional (i.e., classroom-based) instruction and includes a continuum of interventions shaped primarily by how integral the technology is to the learning process. TBL models may rely entirely on technology for learning, may balance the use of technology and classroom learning (hybrid or blended models), or may incorporate some lesser use of technology into a predominantly classroom-based setting.

The literature reveals an array of considerations that shape individual and institutional decisions to adopt and pursue TBL opportunities, as well as challenges that TBL presents in: monitoring and assessing engagement and learning; adapting learning to individual's needs; modularizing learning to allow adults to focus on prescribed skills; promoting motivation and interpersonal interaction; using resources cost-effectively; ensuring individuals have the appropriate supports for learning; and assuring that the skills imparted are responsive to business and industry needs. The few rigorous studies (randomized control trial or quasi-experimental design studies) explored in this review compared TBL and traditional classroom instruction and found that TBL that provides more opportunity for interaction (i.e., blended models) were more likely to have uniformly positive impacts than those without interaction. Additionally, the evidence suggested that impacts of technology-only interventions may be sensitive to "dosage" (i.e., amount of time learners spend in the intervention) and "locus of control" (i.e., active engagement with and learner control over content and practice work with feedback).

The literature suggests several important priorities in future research and evaluation examining the impacts of TBL, such as: exploring reliable proxy measures related to learner engagement (e.g., attendance, time on task, assignments completed, use of communication tools); identifying drivers of learner satisfaction; focusing on cutting-edge technologies and their potential to deliver more individualized, learner-centered experiences shaped by real-time feedback; and unpacking the types of populations, program designs, and supports needed for TBL to be deployed cost-effectively for workforce development. There are also many options for such research on TBL, covering a broad spectrum of learning and skill-building areas relevant to the workforce system, including basic literacy and numeracy, occupational skills, job readiness and employability, job search skills, career advising/counseling, and technological literacy.

### **“Technology-Based Learning in the Public Workforce System: Emerging Policy and Practices in States and American Job Centers”**

Cropper, Porsha, David Robinson, Mary Farrell, Riley Webster, Justin Germain, et al. “Technology-Based Learning in the Public Workforce System: Emerging Policy and Practices in States and American Job Centers.” Alexandria, VA and Rockville, MD: Abt Associates and MEF Associates, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2020-06\\_TBL\\_Report-1\\_TBL\\_in\\_PWS\\_Emerging\\_Policy\\_Practices\\_in\\_States\\_and\\_AJCs.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2020-06_TBL_Report-1_TBL_in_PWS_Emerging_Policy_Practices_in_States_and_AJCs.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2630>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report explored the use of technology-based learning (TBL), i.e., educational technology or digital learning, in the public workforce system, where it has been used to extend learning opportunities geographically, reduce costs, and allow for individualized learning. The research addressed TBL use among local American Job Centers (AJCs) and policies and practices regarding the use of TBL by state workforce agencies (and their partners) in the following focus areas: employability or “soft skills,” basic literacy and numeracy, technological literacy, job search skills, and at the state level, occupational training and certification. The study documented use of and experiences with TBL, perceived barriers related to TBL implementation, perceptions of the effectiveness of existing TBL-based services, and promising strategies for effective implementation.

The study was based on in-depth site visits in 2018 with five state workforce agencies (Massachusetts, Kentucky, Utah, Minnesota, and California) and nine AJCs, all of which were actively developing policy or expanding use of TBL. Some of the key findings included: (a) TBL use was widespread but highly variable, ranging from early stages of piloting to adoption of diverse sets of TBL software and support resources; (b) access to technology was improving but still a challenge, particularly in rural areas where broadband coverage is sparse and individuals have limited financial resources for at-home internet access or lack reliable transportation options to utilize technology resources or computer labs at AJCs; and (c) lack of technological literacy and costs are the most common barriers to the adoption and use of TBL in AJCs.

State workforce agencies also noted some challenges in coordinating with AJCs in TBL implementation and negotiating the inclusion of online out-of-state training providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Some of the strategies being used to enhance the use and effectiveness of TBL, as identified by state workforce agencies and AJCs, included: (1) developing and cultivating partnerships with libraries, local community and state colleges, and community-based organizations; (2) increasing remote access and broadband coverage; (3) providing professional development opportunities; (4) engaging AJC staff in the selection of TBL resources; and (5) building staff capacity to support customers' TBL engagement. The report notes that despite substantial amounts of funds being spent on TBL, there is little research that shows whether these investments are paying off and that more systemic research may be needed to understand which types and features of TBL are effective—or could be made more so—for the varied customer groups in the workforce system.

### **“Shaping a Portal Website: A Study of the Collaborative Online Workforce Education and Training Portal Demonstration Project”**

McKay, Heather, and Mary Murphree. “Shaping a Portal Website: A Study of the Collaborative Online Workforce Education and Training Portal Demonstration Project.” New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Women and Work, 2020.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2020-05\\_TBL\\_Report\\_Shaping\\_a\\_Portal\\_Website\\_Study.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2020-05_TBL_Report_Shaping_a_Portal_Website_Study.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

The study was completed in 2011 (but finalized in 2014) and shares findings for four state workforce agencies' implementation and use of the Collaborative Online Workforce Education and Training Portal, later known as Workforce Online Learning Information Portal (WOLIP). The purpose of WOLIP was to connect, in a single location, adult learners accessing the public workforce system with online, nationwide certificate and degree programs for high-demand and high-growth jobs in their local area. In July 2008, DOL awarded two-year demonstration grants to test the portal with Colorado, Maine, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania. With approved extensions, Pennsylvania ended their grant in December 2010, and Colorado, Maine, and Mississippi closed their grants in June 2011.

While the WOLIP did provide some value to states, it did not follow its initial vision for various reasons. For instance, states' development and management of the portal were limited in terms of staff time and expertise, as well as contributions of state funding reserves for maintenance of the portal. For similar reasons, no state added additional resources to the portal, such as financial aid information. The report also discusses other reasons for the lack of centralization of the portal. Instead, the portal primarily served as a place where states could list online courses in their state or local areas and where workforce staff or case managers could identify coursework for or with their clients; therefore, many workforce clients never saw or used the WOLIP or even knew it existed.

WOLIP was more successful in giving states experience in implementing online learning in general, as most demonstration states during 2008-2011 lacked prior experience with online learning. Although the portal was not adopted after the demonstration ended, two states, Pennsylvania and Mississippi, continued using an adaptation of the portal to enhance graduation and degree completion for workforce clients who were only a few credits away from earning an associate or bachelor's degree.

## **Approaches to Industry and Sector Training**

### **“Implementation of the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grants: Grantee Characteristics and Experiences Providing Employer-Based Training”**

Martinson, Karin, Glen Schneider, Mike Fishman, Katherine Gan, April Yeane, et al. “Implementation of the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grants: Grantee Characteristics and Experiences Providing Employer-Based Training.” Bethesda, MD, and Alexandria, VA: Abt Associates and MEF Associates, 2015.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-03\\_TST%20Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-03_TST%20Report.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report describes the implementation of DOL’s H-1B Technical Skills Training Grants program. To address skill shortages in the U.S. labor market, ETA awarded 76 grants in 2011 and 2012 to partnerships of workforce agencies, training providers, employers, and other organizations. The programs were designed to train unemployed individuals and incumbent workers for middle-skill positions in sectors like information technology; communication and broadband technology; advanced manufacturing; and health care, including health information technology. The program is funded by fees paid by businesses seeking to hire foreign individuals requiring an H-1B visa. This report documents grantees’ experiences operating their training programs and spotlights two employer-based training strategies: incumbent worker training, where employers refer employees to training to upgrade workers’ skills, and on-the-job training, where the individuals’ wages are subsidized as an incentive for employers to hire and train workers.

Findings were based on information collected between fall 2013 and spring 2014 (midway through the grant programs) via phone interviews with all grantees and site visits with five grantees. The study examined key operational themes and strategies from all the grantee programs, as well as how key operational and strategic elements relate to incumbent worker and on-the-job training. Focal topics include industry focus, target populations, partnerships, employer recruitment and roles, and service delivery.

The descriptive information collected for the study indicates that most grantees successfully launched and implemented these employer-based training strategies, and many grantees operate programs on a large scale. Collectively, the grantee experiences offer insight into factors to consider in implementing incumbent worker and on-the-job training programs:

- Partnerships with employers are critical to the training initiatives, and concerted recruitment efforts are needed to engage this community.
- The dual target groups for the Technical Skills Training grants have presented recruitment challenges for some grantees and made participant outreach a priority.
- Grantees’ efforts to establish employer partnerships broadened awareness of the public workforce system in the business community.
- Employer-based training models require ongoing attention.
- Reducing the administrative burden on employers helps to gain and maintain their commitment to the program.
- Grant funds are useful for leveraging employers’ specialized training resources.
- Employer-based training requires balancing the needs of workers and employers.

### **“The Green Jobs and Health Care Impact Evaluation: Findings from the Impact Study of Four Training Programs for Unemployed and Disadvantaged Workers”**

Martinson, Karin, Julie Williams, Karen Needels, Laura Peck, Shawn Moulton, et al. “The Green Jobs and Health Care Impact Evaluation: Findings from the Impact Study of Four Training Programs for Unemployed and Disadvantaged Workers.” Bethesda, MD, and Princeton, NJ: Abt Associates and Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-07%20Findings%20from%20the%20Impact%20Study.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-07%20Findings%20from%20the%20Impact%20Study.pdf)

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

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report presents the results of the Green Jobs and Health Care Impact Evaluation. This evaluation used a random assignment research design to examine the impact of four DOL grant-funded job training programs (two in health care and two in green occupations) on participants’ receipt of services and public benefits, educational attainment, employment and earnings, and income. Two grantee programs focused on training in health care fields: the Soil to Sky program, operated by the American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center (AIOIC) in Minnesota, and the Health Matrix Grant, operated by North Central Texas College (NCTC). The other two programs provided training in green-related industries: the Pathways to Prosperity program at Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) in Michigan and the Clean Energy Center program at the Kern Community College District (KCCD) in California. Three grantees used the grant funds to provide training services and related supports. One grantee, NCTC, used the grant funds to provide partial scholarships to participants to attend existing training programs.

Random assignment of program applicants began in summer 2011, lasting for nine months in GRCC and 22 months in the other three programs. The study relied on a baseline survey administered to treatment and control group members at the time of random assignment; a follow-up survey administered to members approximately 18 months after random assignment; and quarterly administrative wage record data on employment and earnings, available through the National Directory of New Hires. The study also included site visits to grantees and an analysis of participation patterns based on program administrative data.

Within an 18-month follow-up period, the evaluation found that all four programs had positive impacts on participation in vocational training, receipt of training-related supports, and receipt of vocational credentials. However, the evaluation detected statistically significant positive impacts on employment and earnings within the same period for only one program. For example, KCCD’s participants had significantly higher employment rates in the third and fourth quarters after random assignment, with a ten-percentage point difference in the fourth quarter. They also earned about \$1,520 more than control group members in the fifth and sixth quarters after random assignment.

Following the presentation of results for each of the four training programs, the report concludes with a discussion of the implications of the results for policymakers and program operators. A first implication is that investments in short-term training programs can substantially raise both participation levels in training and receipt of occupational credentials among unemployed individuals. Additionally, investing more substantially in developing job-related skills might be needed to enhance the employment and earnings of disadvantaged populations. The report also recommends targeting training resources to populations that are not typically served by available training services or in locations where training is unavailable. When developing training, the report recommends giving attention to employer demand, financial assistance for training participants, wages for positions resulting from the training, and strategies for connecting training to employment.



**“Regional Collaboration to Create a High-Skilled Workforce: Evaluation of the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge Grants”**

Angus, Megan, Brittany English, Kevin Hollenbeck, Jeanne Bellotti, Stephanie Boraas, et al. “Regional Collaboration to Create a High-Skilled Workforce: Evaluation of the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge Grants.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2019-06\\_Regional\\_Collaboration\\_to\\_Create\\_a\\_High\\_Skilled\\_Workforce\\_Eval.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2019-06_Regional_Collaboration_to_Create_a_High_Skilled_Workforce_Eval.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2620>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

To spur regional economic growth, five federal agencies collaborated to award grants in 2011 and 2012 to 30 self-identified regional innovation clusters focused on specific high-growth sectors through the Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge (JIAC) and Advanced Manufacturing JIAC (AM-JIAC) initiatives. The clusters were formed to increase productivity and economic growth by accelerating product or process development and commercialization in key sectors and regions; support innovation and regional collaboration; train workers to enter high-skilled, high-wage industries; and support entrepreneurship and small business growth.

The final evaluation report presents findings on seven research topics: multi-agency collaboration at the federal and cluster level; cluster history, leadership, and management; cluster partnerships; activities; workforce-related outcomes; sustainability and replication; and the lessons learned. The report relies on data from grant documents across all 30 clusters, telephone interviews with federal agency representatives, two-day site visits to nine clusters, lists of funded and unfunded partners across the 30 clusters, and a survey of a subset of those cluster partners.

Noteworthy findings from the report involve worker, business, and cluster-level outcomes. Worker outcomes included moderate rates of job retention and some job advancements for employed individuals, as well as high rates of training completion, credentialing, and employment in the sector of training for unemployed individuals. At the business level, 60 percent of funded partners reported networking, and 52 percent reported activities to increase awareness of the cluster. Some businesses in clusters also used Small Business Administration funds to support small, disadvantaged businesses in promoting growth in the targeted sector. At the cluster level, a multi-agency working group reportedly energized the funding agencies, developed a common vision for collaboration, and interacted across agencies and clusters to communicate and share ideas. Four of the nine clusters reported taking an integrated, cohesive approach across grantee organizations, with organizations in the remaining clusters operating independently.

**“Evaluation of the Ready to Work Partnership Grant Program: Findings from the Implementation Study of Four Training Programs for Long-Term Unemployed Workers”**

Martinson, Karin, Elizabeth Copson, Glen Schneider, Sam Elkin, Bright Sarfo, et al. “Evaluation of the Ready to Work Partnership Grant Program: Findings from the Implementation Study of Four Training Programs for Long-Term Unemployed Workers.” Bethesda, MD and Alexandria, VA: Abt Associates and MEF Associates, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/RTW-Implementation-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

In 2014, DOL funded the Ready to Work (RTW) Partnership grant program for partnerships of workforce agencies, training providers, employers, and other organizations, to improve the employment prospects of the long-term unemployed by providing a range of customized services, including training and job search assistance.

This report documents early findings from an implementation study of four RTW grantees. For each grantee, the report describes the design and operation of its grant-funded program components, including staff guidance, occupational training, employment readiness and job search assistance, work-based training, and other services individualized to each participant’s needs and skill gaps. The report also presents key findings related to the implementation and operation of the programs.

Overall, the grantees in the RTW evaluation launched their programs to provide a range of services for long-term unemployed individuals, as specified by DOL. Though recruitment was challenging, the grantee programs used a multifaceted outreach effort to identify and enroll well-educated and unemployed individuals, many of whom were out of work for prolonged periods. Many of the grantee programs’ services were specifically designed for the RTW population to find employment in the middle- to high-skill positions targeted by the grant, particularly employment readiness workshops, often with an emphasis on addressing emotional circumstances of those experiencing long-term unemployment; work-based training at an employer; and direct job search assistance. The grantees also funded tuition to attend existing occupational training programs, but these training programs were not generally developed specifically for the RTW grant program. Three of the programs featured a staff person who worked closely with participants to develop and guide a service strategy, and this was viewed by staff as a critical program component.

## **“The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program Briefs”**

Mikelson, Kelly S., Lauren Eyster, Christin Durham, and Elissa Cohen. “TAACCCT Goals, Design, and Evaluation: The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program Brief 1.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2017.

Cohen, Elissa, Kelly S. Mikelson, Christin Durham, and Lauren Eyster. “TAACCCT Grantee Characteristics: The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program Brief 2.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2017.

Eyster, Lauren, Elissa Cohen, Kelly S. Mikelson, and Christin Durham. “TAACCCT Approaches, Targeted Industries, and Partnerships: The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program Brief 3.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2017.

Durham, Christin, Lauren Eyster, Kelly S. Mikelson, and Elissa Cohen. “Early Results of the TAACCCT Grants: The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program Brief 4.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2017.

### **HYPERLINKS TO STUDIES:**

<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/20170308-TAACCCT-Brief-1.pdf>

<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/20170308-TAACCCT-Brief-2.pdf>

<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/20170308-TAACCCT-Brief-3.pdf>

<https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/20170308-TAACCCT-Brief-4.pdf>

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

### **ABSTRACT:**

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program is a \$2 billion federal workforce investment program aimed at helping community colleges across the nation increase their capacity to provide education and training programs for in-demand jobs. DOL administers the seven-year grant program in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education. Four DOL-funded briefs were produced from the national evaluation of the DOL TAACCCT grants. The purposes of these briefs are to document and assess the implementation and outcomes of the grants and synthesize the evidence from the grant project evaluations.

“TAACCCT Goals, Design, and Evaluation” highlights the goals of the TAACCCT grant program and provides an overview of evaluation activities for the four rounds of TAACCCT grants. This brief describes grant requirements, proposed evaluation designs, and TAACCCT grant funding for evaluations.

“TAACCCT Grantee Characteristics” provides an overview of the types of TAACCCT grants awarded, the geographic distribution of grant funding, and characteristics of the colleges receiving TAACCCT funding from the grants across the four rounds awarded (2011–2014). This brief describes the overall structure of the TAACCCT grant awards, breaks down the grant-funding allocations, and provides an overview of the colleges’ institutional structures and the types of students served.

“TAACCCT Approaches, Targeted Industries, and Partnerships” provides an overview of the approaches TAACCCT grantees planned to implement, the industries targeted at the start of their grants, the degrees and certifications they planned to develop, and the types of partnerships grantees leverage for the grants.

“Early Results of the TAACCCT Grants” brief presents preliminary results on key outcomes and characteristics of program participants from the first four years of TAACCCT. Sixty-two percent of program participants either had completed a TAACCCT-funded program of study or were retained in a TAACCCT-funded program as of September 30, 2015. Thirty-two percent of the participants employed at the time of program enrollment experienced a wage increase at some point after starting a grant-funded program. Forty-three percent of participants who were not employed at program enrollment and completed a TAACCCT program began employment by the end of the first quarter after college exit.

**“Career Pathways in Early Care and Education: Career Pathways Design Study”**

Cheng, I-Fang, Robin Koralek, Adele Robinson, Sue Russell, Deena Schwartz, et al. “Career Pathways in Early Care and Education: Career Pathways Design Study.” Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/Career-Pathways-Design-Study/4-Career-Pathways-in-Early-Care-and-Education-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Program/Policy Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

The rapid rise of career pathways strategies, including an emphasis on them in WIOA, creates a need for more evidence on this approach. This document presents an analysis of the potential for career pathways approaches in the early care and education (ECE) sector to inform the development of evaluation design options that could address critical gaps in knowledge related to the approach, implementation, and success of career pathways strategies generally and in ECE specifically. Previous reports for this project discussed research and evaluation relevant to career pathways approaches and the implementation of existing and past career pathways initiatives.

The authors reviewed recent research about the ECE workforce released by federal agencies and prominent organizations engaged in ECE research and held group discussions with 23 experts selected in consultation with DOL to supplement what the authors learned about ECE career pathways from the literature. The experts expressed concern that the field does not include many job opportunities with family-sustaining wages compared to sectors that are more commonly the focus of career pathways approaches. For example, a child care center often contains dozens of child care workers and a single director, meaning that the proportion of child care workers who can be promoted and the scope for subsequent promotions are small. Low-wage jobs dominate the field even as educational requirements for the ECE workforce increase. The authors’ review of recent research on the ECE workforce found few national or state initiatives aimed at creating comprehensive ECE career pathways approaches that incorporate many of the program- or system-level elements in the career pathways approach.

The report identified multiple barriers to advancement in the ECE, including those that limit job opportunities with higher wages and those that limit the pursuit of additional education and training. Several promising practices have emerged in the field to support the ECE workforce. These practices include promoting career pathways, apprenticeship, access to postsecondary education, wage supplements, and supportive services.

## “TAACCCT Employer Perspectives Study: Insights on How to Build and Maintain Strong Employer-College Partnerships”

Scott, Molly, Lauren Eyster, Yipeng Su, David Blount, Alex Trutko, et al. “The Employer Perspectives Study: Insights on How to Build and Maintain Strong Employer-College Partnerships. TAACCCT Round 4 Evaluation.” Rockville, MD and Washington, DC: ABT Associates. 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Employer-Perspectives-Study-Report-Round-Final.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analysis

### ABSTRACT:

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Employer Perspectives Study garners insights from community colleges receiving TAACCCT grants and employers that the colleges identified as strong partners. Leveraging a survey of round 4 TAACCCT grantees and interviews with 41 employers, the study sought to understand what constitutes strong employer partnerships. In doing so, the study provides community colleges, future grantees of federal workforce initiatives, other training providers, the public workforce system, DOL and other policymakers, and other stakeholders with insights about how to approach, build, and sustain strong partnerships with businesses.

The research team notes that this study looked solely at employers identified as having *strong* partnerships, meaning that this study is not representative of all employers and is not generalizable. The research team calculated the employer contributions to TAACCCT grantees and selected the top 25 percent of all the employers named by colleges in the grantee survey. Participants represented a range of industries, including manufacturing (20 employers); information technology (6 employers); mining, quarrying, oil, and gas extractions (5 employers); utilities (4 employers); health care and social assistance (3 employers); and other industries (3 employers).

The research found that all 41 employers had high levels of satisfaction with their college partnerships, with these partnerships ranging in duration from a few years to decades. More than half of employers reported that partnerships focused on a single education or training program, with two-thirds involving more than one person engaged in cultivating a relationship.

Employers reported a range of promising strategies to initiate an employer-college relationship. Almost half of participants reported that strong employer-college relationships are initiated by the colleges. Additionally, 34 of the 41 employers stated that their interest in these partnerships is rooted in the business' specific interests. However, the business interests may overlap with other reasons, including sector-building and altruism.

Other findings concerned how to maintain strong employer-college relationships and the value of relationships to employers. Thirty-three (33) employers reported relationships had a generalized focus, meaning the programs were not specific to a single employer's need, and that customer-focused relationships (6 employers) with colleges were not more invested in their relationships than other employers were (35 employers). Most employers described regular communication of moderate intensity (36 employers). The most cited benefit for employers was satisfying their hiring needs (22 employers). Most employers described their contributions to the relationship in terms of staff time (35 employers), but none of the participants had calculated the monetary costs of this input.

## **“Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program Evaluation (Round 4)”**

Trutko, John, Alex Trutko, Lauren Eyster, Nathan Sick, Carolyn O'Brien, et al. “A Picture of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grants: Results from a Survey of Round 4 Colleges.” Rockville, MD and Washington, DC: Urban Institute and Abt Associates. 2020.

### **HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

[https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/ETA\\_TAACCCT\\_Round4\\_College-Survey-Report\\_December2020.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/ETA_TAACCCT_Round4_College-Survey-Report_December2020.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/currentstudies/14>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

### **ABSTRACT:**

The TAACCCT grant program was a \$1.9 billion initiative, with a total of 256 grants awarded between 2011 and 2018 to eligible institutions of higher education (mainly community colleges) to build their capacity to provide workforce education and training programs. TAACCCT focused on a career pathways approach to improve labor market outcomes for unemployed and other adult learners. TAACCCT encouraged grantees to implement three capacity-building strategies for accelerated learning, college persistence and completion, and connections to employment. The Round 4 report focused on two objectives, preparing eligible workers and other adults for high-wage, high-skill employment, and introducing or replicating innovative and effective methods for designing and delivering instruction. In the final year of the Round 4 grant, a survey was conducted to determine how colleges were meeting these objectives. The survey of the 263 Round 4 colleges sought to understand the strategies used to recruit participants, build partnerships, and deliver services, as well as grantees' perspectives on accomplishments, challenges, and program sustainability.

Key observations are described below. Most colleges targeted their services to the unemployed and underemployed workers, veterans, low-income individuals, or adults with low education levels. Over three-quarters of the colleges targeted one or more of these populations. All 71 grantees engaged employer partners.

Nearly all grantees engaged employers on advisory boards, asking them to provide feedback on labor market needs and partner surveys. Grantees also engaged employers by requesting their feedback via a partner survey or needs assessment to collect information on required skills, industry trends, and their experience partnering with grantees. Reports commonly highlighted the career navigator/coach role as a useful innovation in promoting participant persistence and completion. Simulations of work settings were common technology-enabled learning environments, especially for manufacturing and health care training programs. According to the survey, career coaching or counseling was by far the most common support strategy for students, occurring at 70 percent of colleges. Of the 14 colleges visited, nearly all also included career navigators as a key component of their project designs; this was a service that the participants valued.

Synthesis findings suggest that a career pathways model that combines accelerated learning strategies, persistence and completion strategies, and connections to employment strategies results in consistently positive educational impacts and mixed employment impacts. More than three-quarters of participants were employed, generally in full-time positions with benefits, approximately 15 months after program entry. The change in earnings between three and five quarters was greater for those who left their program without finishing than those who finished their classes. Participating colleges planned to sustain 88 percent of programs developed or enhanced with grant funds beyond the grant period. Many colleges developed new strategies to accelerate learning: stackable or latticed credentials (84 percent), industry-recognized credentials (65 percent), and new career pathway programs (58 percent). Nearly half the colleges designed and implemented online courses, and 62 percent designed and implemented hybrid courses to increase access to and accelerate completion of training. Colleges faced several common barriers to recruiting and enrolling participants, such as conflicts with work and school hours (60 percent), finding eligible participants (49 percent), and insufficient basic skill levels of applicants (43 percent).

Colleges had to carefully consider the challenges adult learners faced in accessing online or hybrid learning, such as a lack of a computer. Some colleges had to address the concerns of faculty and staff who were resistant to online learning.

## **Self-Employment Training**

### **“Evaluation of the GATE II Grants: Is Self-Employment Training Effective for Rural and Older Dislocated Workers?”**

Davis, Scott, Marios Michaelides, Eileen Poe-Yamagata, and Andrew Davis. “Evaluation of the GATE II Grants: Is Self-Employment Training Effective for Rural and Older Dislocated Workers? Final Report.” Columbia, MD and Seattle, WA: IMPAQ International and Battelle, 2013.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-09\\_Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_GATE\\_II\\_Grants.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-09_Evaluation_of_the_GATE_II_Grants.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials) and Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

In June 2008, DOL awarded Growing America Through Entrepreneurship (GATE II) grants to four states: Alabama, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Virginia. Alabama and North Carolina used the grants to provide self-employment training to dislocated workers in rural areas, while Minnesota and Virginia targeted older dislocated workers. This report presents the results of two studies: (1) an implementation evaluation of the GATE II program as implemented in the four grantee states and (2) a random assignment impact study used to examine the impact of GATE II on participants' labor-market outcomes (for example, self-employment, overall employment, self-employment earnings, and total earnings) in the two states (North Carolina and Virginia) that were able to implement a random assignment design.

North Carolina and Virginia used a Participant Tracking System to gather applicant information at the time each applicant entered the program, which collected information on demographic characteristics (for example, gender, race, age, and education); employment and income (for example, employment status and household income); self-employment experience and access to credit when entering the program. The systems included the same data for both the treatment and control groups. The independent evaluation team implemented a telephone survey of all program applicants approximately 32 months after entering the program in North Carolina and 24 months after in Virginia. State agencies provided administrative data on study participants' UI claims and wages.

The impact study of the Virginia GATE II program showed that the program was effective in helping older dislocated workers to start their own businesses after program entry. However, there were no statistically significant impacts on self-employment or employment overall. The impact study of the North Carolina GATE II program showed that the program was effective in helping rural dislocated workers start their own businesses following program entry and continue to be self-employed nearly three years after program entry. Additional analyses showed that the North Carolina GATE II program was more effective for younger workers (those less than 45 years old) and workers with no prior self-employment experience.

### **“Three Issue Briefs from an Evaluation of the Self-Employment Training Demonstration”**

Amin, Samia, Caroline Massad Francis, and Irma Perez-Johnson. “Case Management for Self-Employment Success: Emerging Lessons from the Self-Employment Training Program.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

Francis, Caroline Massad, Irma Perez-Johnson, Samia Amin, and Mary Anne Anderson. “The Characteristics and Motivations of Participants in the Self-Employment Training Demonstration.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

Anderson, Mary Anne, Samia Amin, Irma Perez-Johnson, and Caroline Massad Francis. “What Does \$1,000 in Seed Capital Buy? Emerging Lessons from the SET Program’s Offer of Microgrants for Business Start-Ups.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

#### **HYPERLINK TO STUDIES:**

[https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-05\\_Case\\_Management\\_for\\_Self\\_Employment\\_Success.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-05_Case_Management_for_Self_Employment_Success.pdf)

[https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-05\\_Characteristics\\_and\\_Motivation\\_of\\_Participants.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-05_Characteristics_and_Motivation_of_Participants.pdf)

[https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-05\\_What\\_Does\\_\\$1,000\\_in\\_Seed\\_Capital\\_Buy.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-05_What_Does_$1,000_in_Seed_Capital_Buy.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

ETA funded the Self-Employment Training (SET) Demonstration to give dislocated workers interested in self-employment access to dedicated self-employment advisors who could assess their needs on an ongoing basis and provide tailored support to guide their journey through self-employment. Four sites offer SET: Chicago, Illinois; Cleveland, Ohio; Los Angeles, California; and Portland, Oregon. The program enrolled 1,981 participants between July 2013 and January 2016. Qualified microenterprise service providers working in close partnership with participating AJCs and the UI program deliver SET Demonstration services.

The three issue briefs highlight key findings from the implementation phase of a rigorous randomized controlled trial evaluation.

- “Case Management for Self-Employment Success: Emerging Lessons from the Self-Employment Training Program” finds that the SET case management model can be implemented with fidelity and that participants found SET case management useful.
- “The Characteristics and Motivations of Participants in the Self-Employment Training Demonstration” found that the average SET study participant was an experienced, college-educated, middle-aged worker; that the principal motivation for applying to SET was to gain a source of income; and that many study participants had prior experience with self-employment.
- “What Does \$1,000 in Seed Capital Buy? Emerging Lessons from the SET Program’s Offer of Microgrants for Business Start-Ups” finds that an amount as low as \$1,000 can help participants get their business started and that most recipients used the \$1,000 to invest in electronics, supplies, and marketing materials that could help them bring in and serve customers.



### **“A Study of the Self-Employment Assistance Program: Helping Unemployed Workers Pursue Self-Employment”**

Weigensberg, Elizabeth, Karen Needels, Alix Gould-Werth, Ankita Patnaik, and Joanne Lee. “A Study of the Self-Employment Assistance Program: Helping Unemployed Workers Pursue Self-Employment.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/SEA-Study-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses; Outcome/Performance Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

Individuals who lose their jobs may have the skills and desire to start their own businesses. Some states have taken action to help unemployed workers create their own jobs by establishing Self-Employment Assistance (SEA) programs, which allow UI-eligible individuals who meet SEA program requirements to receive a weekly self-employment allowance while they are setting up their businesses. This allowance is equal in amount and duration to regular UI benefits. SEA program participants are also exempted from actively seeking wage and salary jobs so they can devote their energies to self-employment activities while they receive SEA allowances. This study focused on learning about states’ motivation for establishing SEA programs, states’ experiences with implementing them, and outcomes of SEA participants and their businesses.

Close to 5,000 UI recipients entered SEA programs between January 2014 and June 2015, and six states had an active program at the end of 2015. SEA administrators were motivated to implement SEA programs because of interest in self-employment among UI recipients, the potential of SEA to contribute to state economies through small business development, a state context favorable toward entrepreneurship, support from service delivery partners, and from other states that have SEA programs. To implement the programs, states adapted elements from other states’ SEA programs and partnered with organizations with expertise in small business development. State staff reported expending more resources to serve SEA participants than regular UI recipients.

Each study state’s SEA program had requirements for participants to maintain their eligibility for program services and offered supports to foster the participants’ business development efforts. SEA staff questioned the usefulness of the federally mandated requirement that SEA participants be identified as likely to exhaust benefits because it may screen potential SEA participants who could be successful in the program. They preferred targeted outreach to broad program promotion to pique program interest only among individuals likely to be eligible for the program.

Administrators reported collecting three main types of SEA program data related to claims, participation, and outcomes, which were used to examine participant experiences and outcomes. In the two states with the largest SEA programs (New York and Oregon), a very small proportion of UI recipients applied for the SEA program. On average, SEA program participants in these states claimed about 23 weeks of benefits and collected significantly more money in benefits, on average, than the comparison group of UI recipients. Fewer than one-third of New York SEA participants who responded to a state-administered survey reported that their business was operating at any point in the first four quarters after they enrolled in the program. In 2014, the SEA program in New York generated \$536,937 in federal income taxes and \$140,136 in state income taxes.

**“Supporting Self-Employment as a Reemployment Strategy: Impacts of a Pilot Program for Dislocated Workers After 18 Months”**

Hock, Heinrich, Mary Anne Anderson, and Robert Santillano. “Supporting Self-Employment as a Reemployment Strategy: Impacts of a Pilot Program for Dislocated Workers After 18 Months.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2019-08\\_2-SET-Pilot-Program-Final-Impact-Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2019-08_2-SET-Pilot-Program-Final-Impact-Report.pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2622>

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

**ABSTRACT:**

DOL funded the Self-Employment Training (SET) pilot program to test strategies for supporting dislocated workers interested in starting their own businesses. Unemployed and underemployed workers who proposed businesses in their fields of expertise were eligible to participate. SET participants received free access to 12 months of case management, customized training and technical assistance, and up to \$1,000 in seed capital microgrant funds for business start-up costs. The program operated in four sites—Chicago, Illinois; Cleveland, Ohio; Los Angeles, California; and Portland, Oregon—between 2013 and 2017.

This report presents results from an evaluation of SET's impacts on outcomes using survey data collected 18 months after the study enrollees applied to the program. The authors estimated impacts based on the evaluation's random assignment design, in which 1,981 eligible applicants were divided almost equally between the SET program group and a control group. Key findings are that, as of the 18-month survey date, SET led to greater receipt of personalized assistance and seed capital, produced a sustained increase in self-employment activity, and led to modest increases in the rate of employment in any job (through self-employment or a wage/salary job). The SET program group and the control group earned similar amounts during the year before the survey. Hence, there was no discernable impact of SET on earnings over the period covering 7 to 18 months after study enrollment. Findings for additional outcomes, as well as differences across sites and select demographic and socioeconomic groups, are included in the report.

## **Transitional Employment**

### **“The Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration: Implementation and Early Impacts of the Next Generation of Subsidized Employment Programs”**

Redcross, Cindy, Bret Barden, Dan Bloom, Joseph Broadus, Jennifer Thompson, et al. “The Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration: Implementation and Early Impacts of the Next Generation of Subsidized Employment Programs.” New York, NY: MDRC, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2016-07\\_The%20Enhanced%20Transitional%20Jobs%20Demonstration%20Implementation%20and%20Early%20Impacts%20of%20the%20Next%20Generation%20of%20Subsidized%20Employment%20Programs.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2016-07_The%20Enhanced%20Transitional%20Jobs%20Demonstration%20Implementation%20and%20Early%20Impacts%20of%20the%20Next%20Generation%20of%20Subsidized%20Employment%20Programs.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials) and Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

Transitional jobs programs offer temporary subsidized jobs that aim to teach participants basic work skills, help address personal issues, and find unsubsidized jobs. In 2010, DOL held a national competition to select programs to participate in the Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration (ETJD) and its rigorous impact evaluation. The seven selected programs targeted either noncustodial parents who owed child support but were unable to pay because they were unemployed, or individuals recently released from incarceration. Grantee programs were also specifically designed to address the shortcomings of previous transitional jobs programs revealed through other research. Enhancements to the seven programs fell into three general categories: (1) structural changes to the transitional job progression for program participants; (2) special support or assistance, such as short-term training in occupational skills; and (3) child support incentives to encourage participants to remain active in the program.

This report presents findings from the implementation analysis and early findings from a random assignment impact evaluation at 12 months after random assignment. The impact evaluation relied on surveys administered to participants as well as administrative data on wages, child support payments, and criminal justice system involvement provided by state and federal agencies. The evaluation followed study participants for 30 months and included a benefit-cost analysis. A final report was published in 2018.

All the programs met their recruitment goals of enrolling 1,000 people. The project succeeded in testing models that were different from earlier programs, but some of the enhanced approaches did not operate as planned. All but one of the programs generated large increases in employment in the early months of follow-up; however, these increases were mostly or entirely the result of the transitional jobs and faded as participants left those jobs. Two of the three programs targeting people recently released from prison appear to have experienced reduced recidivism. These decreases were concentrated among the participants at the highest risk of recidivism. Most programs increased payment of child support. These impacts were largely consistent with the programs' impacts on employment, though coordination with child support agencies and some special child support enhancements contributed to the pattern of effects.

## **“New Perspectives on Creating Jobs: Final Impacts of the Next Generation of Subsidized Employment Programs”**

Barden, Bret, Randall Juras, Cindy Redcross, Mary Farrell, and Dan Bloom. “New Perspectives on Creating Jobs: Final Impacts of the Next Generation of Subsidized Employment Programs.” Washington, DC: OPRE, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2018-02\\_03\\_ETJD\\_STED\\_Final\\_Impact\\_Report\\_2018\\_508\\_Compliant.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2018-02_03_ETJD_STED_Final_Impact_Report_2018_508_Compliant.pdf)

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

### **ABSTRACT:**

The Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration (ETJD) evaluation, funded by ETA and the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), tested seven enhanced transitional jobs programs that targeted either people recently released from prison or unemployed non-custodial parents who had fallen behind in child support payments. The programs were designed to help hard-to-employ individuals "learn to work by working" to improve their ability to get and hold unsubsidized jobs. Because the ETJD programs targeted noncustodial parents and recently incarcerated individuals, they also aimed to increase payment of child support and reduce recidivism, outcomes that may be tied to employment.

The evaluation used a random assignment research design. Program group members were enrolled in the ETJD programs, while control group members were denied access but could avail themselves of other services in the community. This report presents the final impact results from the study 30 months after enrollment, as well as information about the cost of the ETJD programs. Most outcome measures presented in the report focus on the final year of the follow-up period, when nearly all ETJD program group members had left their transitional jobs. Therefore, the results reflect the longer-term effects of the programs after the subsidized jobs had ended. Findings include:

- The ETJD programs increased participants' earnings and employment rates in the final year of the study period.
- ETJD participants were significantly more likely to pay formal child support during the final year, although ETJD programs did not produce statistically significant impacts on the amount of child support paid.
- There is some evidence that ETJD programs affected some measures of recidivism; however, overall, ETJD programs had no effects on criminal justice "events."
- Despite the positive impacts, most sample members in both the program and control groups were still struggling in the labor market at the end of the study's follow-up period. Only about one-third of those who responded to the 30-month survey reported working more than 34 hours per week. The authors suggest that ETJD participants would probably need to develop substantially greater skills to obtain better-paying, more stable jobs.

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## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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In this section, UI-related studies using implementation/process analyses, experimental impact analyses, program/policy analyses, outcome/performance analyses, non-experimental impact analyses, and characterization/quantification analyses, as well as UI-related literature reviews, are presented. Due to the depth of information, this section includes three subsections to further categorize the studies and literature reviews: (1) reemployment services and (2) alternative UI payment schemes, and a broader category for any work that does not fit into the first two categories, (3) other UI publications.

### Reemployment Services

#### **“Strategies for Connecting Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants to the Workforce System: Findings from the Implementation Study of the UI Workforce Connectivity Grant Program”**

Martinson, Karin, Jill Hamadyk, and Tyler Moazed. “Strategies for Connecting Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants to the Workforce System: Findings from the Implementation Study of the UI Workforce Connectivity Grant Program: Final Report.” Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates, 2015.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-02\\_UI\\_Workforce\\_Connectivity\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-02_UI_Workforce_Connectivity_Final_Report.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

DOL has continued to explore strategies to improve UI claimants' access to reemployment services provided through the public workforce system to speed their return to work in good jobs with good wages. Most UI claimants now apply for and maintain their benefits primarily via the Internet or phone. As a result, many claimants are physically disconnected from the workforce system and are often unaware of how to access the range of reemployment, job search, career counseling, and training services available to them. Moreover, the automated systems for filing UI benefits claims and accessing reemployment services are often separate, with limited or no connections between them, making it cumbersome and confusing for individuals to navigate between the two systems. DOL partnered with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies' Information Technology Support Center to provide grants to states to improve connectivity between UI program services and reemployment services provided through the workforce system by incorporating three key strategies—integrated workforce registration, real-time triage, and skills transferability components.

This report presents findings from an implementation study of these grants. The states involved identified several important benefits:

- Reduction in duplicative data entry by UI claimants, employment services registrants, job seekers, and agency staff.
- Claimants, when they apply for UI online, receive job referrals and other training and reemployment services tailored to their interests, capabilities, and needs.
- The skills transferability capability can be used as a staff-assisted or self-service tool to provide claimants and other job seekers with real-time job leads tailored to their skills and interests.
- The real-time triage capabilities will significantly improve the quality and timeliness of job leads provided to job seekers.
- Development of tools that will be useful to other states in developing stronger connections between job seekers and the workforce system.

Overall, there appeared to be clear benefits to implementing the elements that were part of the connectivity project. However, further evaluation is needed to gauge the impact of those services more clearly and whether they result in sufficient benefits to UI claimants.

### **“Using Behavioral Insights to Strengthen Labor Programs: Lessons Learned”**

Lefkowitz, Jaclyn, Matthew Darling, Gregory Chojnacki, Irma Perez-Johnson, Samia Amin, et al. “Using Behavioral Insights to Strengthen Labor Programs: Lessons Learned.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/BI-Files/8-BILRP-Implementation-Brief-Final-20170501.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials) and Implementation/Process Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

DOL’s Behavioral Interventions project adds to a growing body of evidence indicating that relatively minor changes in how programs operate can lead to striking improvements in their performance. In three trials that tested applications of behavioral science, the project team found substantial benefits for three DOL programs. Separate technical reports detailed the design and findings of each trial. This brief focuses on the lessons learned by the team as it identified opportunities for behavioral trials and implemented each one.

In one two-phase trial, the authors tested the effectiveness of emails designed to address the behavioral factors that might reduce employees’ participation in the Thrift Savings Plan for retirement savings. Sending emails incorporating behavioral insights increased the number of trial participants contributing enough to receive the full employer match by 7.5 percentage points.

Another two-phase trial tested whether the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) could improve employer responsiveness by (1) distributing a handout on its citation process during workplace inspections, (2) revising its citation cover letter, and (3) following up with reminder postcards and phone calls. After an initial phase that tested the impact of all three components, the trial’s second phase tested the effect of the handout, revised cover letter, and postcard, excluding the phone calls, to determine whether an approach that required fewer resources could yield similar benefits. These changes boosted employer responsiveness in both phases; in the second phase, the study found a 5.4 percentage-point increase in the number of employers that responded to citations.

The third trial tested the effect of a series of emails on participation in the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA), a requirement for receiving unemployment compensation in Michigan. The first email introduced claimants to REA services using a friendly, positive tone and provided clear instructions for scheduling and attending the first REA appointment. Follow-up emails provided timely reminders about additional sessions. The emails led to a 14 percentage-point increase in the share of claimants who completed the REA program.

This report describes overarching lessons learned while implementing trials in the Behavioral Interventions project. An advantage of behavioral interventions is that they often improve program effectiveness at comparably little cost. For example, in the OSHA trial, the research team learned that some employers who were not responsive were small firms often owned by Spanish speakers; they increased responsiveness by clarifying and translating materials. Another example from the lessons learned is adopting the target user’s perspective. In the Employee Benefits Security Administration trial, the research team worked with a DOL staff member to walk through the steps for changing an individual’s contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan online. In addition, they supplemented their observations of this process by interviewing target users and program staff. This approach deepened their insight into a problem’s context and helped generate more effective solutions. However, it is still important to invest time and resources in identifying the behavioral bottlenecks affecting people’s choices and actions, carefully designing the intervention, and supporting implementation.

**“REA Impact Study: Implementation Report”**

Minzner, A., J. Klerman, Z. Epstein, G. Savidge-Wilkins, V. Benson, et al. “REA Impact Study: Implementation Report.” Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/REA-Impact-Study-Implementation-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

The Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) grant program of DOL supports states in helping UI claimants expedite their return to work and shorten the length of time they are receiving UI benefits. Specifically, the REA program requires that a subset of UI claimants attend an in-person REA meeting at an AJC. The meeting consists of a UI eligibility review, orientation to AJC services, provision of labor market information, development of an individual reemployment plan, and registration with the state’s job bank. Claimants are also referred for reemployment services, which they are required to attend. States must refer claimants who fail to attend meetings to state UI adjudication, with delayed payments or denial of UI benefits as possible penalties for non-attendance. Earlier studies showed that the REA program does shorten the duration of UI receipt. However, these studies were not designed to determine which components of the program drive that outcome.

As a precursor to the impact study analysis, this report describes implementation of the REA program in the four states in which the evaluation study was conducted: Indiana, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin. The description includes a review of study eligibility requirements and exclusions, provision of REA-specific services, as well as general reemployment services, claimant compliance with the program, and penalties for noncompliance. This report also discusses how a rigorous impact evaluation design, which randomly assigned claimants to one of several distinct treatment groups emphasizing a different component of the REA program, was integrated into these diverse service delivery systems in a way that maintained the integrity of the study while preserving the state-specific characteristics of the REA programs operating in each state. As implemented, the REA programs in the four study states look rather different. The program appeared to be closer to voluntary than mandatory, with an emphasis on assistance rather than compliance. Additionally, participation in reemployment services was lower than might have been expected.

## **“Evaluation of Impacts of the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Program: Final Report”**

Klerman, Jacob A., Correne Saunders, Emily Dastrup, Zachary Epstein, Douglas Walton, et al. “Evaluation of Impacts of the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Program: Final Report.” Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, 2019.

### **HYPERLINK TO STUDY:**

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/REA%20Impact%20Study%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>

### **HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:**

<https://www.abtassociates.com/insights/publications/report/reemployment-and-eligibility-assessment-rea-program-final-report>

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

### **ABSTRACT:**

From 2005 to 2016, DOL awarded grants to states to address the reemployment needs of UI claimants and to prevent and detect UI improper payments. The Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) program operated according to the states’ own designs but were constrained by federal requirements. As described in Unemployment Insurance Policy Letter (UIPL) 10-14, REA programs funded assistance to UI claimants in their search for a new job, enforcement of UI claimants’ compliance with ongoing eligibility for the UI program (including that they were able and available for work and actively searching for a job), and mandatory meeting(s) with a state case manager for the provision of assistance and ongoing eligibility. The intervention was low intensity, with at most a few hours of group engagement and a few hours of one-on-one counseling. As such, the REA program generally did not expect to generate large impacts. Given its low direct cost (usually less than \$100 per UI claimant selected for the program), large impacts were not needed for the program to pass the cost-effective test. This report provides an estimate of the impact of the REA program.

The REA Impact Study worked with four participating states—Indiana, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin—to randomly assign nearly 300,000 UI claimants into one of four treatment conditions. The treatment conditions were as follows:

- 1) Control: No mandatory REA meeting and no referral to employment services.
- 2) Partial: Claimant requested to attend one abbreviated REA meeting involving no assistance and is not referred for reemployment service.
- 3) Single: Claimant requested to attend one REA meeting and referred to at least one reemployment service.
- 4) Multiple: Claimant requested to attend one REA meeting and are referred to at least one reemployment service and potentially requested to attend additional REA meetings.

Most of the analysis focused on comparing outcomes for claimants experiencing control conditions to whichever program model the state implemented. For three of the participating states, this was the multiple condition, whereas it was the single condition in the one remaining state.

Nearly every REA-eligible UI claimant was randomized, yet despite this, the sample size was only borderline sufficient to address the research questions. This appears to be because—consistent with the low intensity of the intervention—impacts are small. The smaller the impact, the larger the required sample to observe that impact. Findings suggest REA cuts duration of UI and benefits paid and raises employment and earnings. The study also explored how impacts varied with claimant characteristics and the pathways through which REA has impacts. The study found that the predicted likelihood of benefits exhaustion was not clearly or strongly related to REA impacts, but the program had a larger impact on claimants with lower earnings in the year prior to the initial UI claim and in the year before that, as well as for those with lower weekly benefit amounts. Though both the enforcement and assistance components of REA have impacts on UI duration, the findings suggest that the procedural requirement to attend the REA meeting leads to much of the estimated impact.



## **Alternative UI Payment Schemes**

### **“Wage Insurance and Wage Supplements: Final Evaluation Design Report”**

King, Christopher T., and Kristie Tingle. “Wage Insurance and Wage Supplements: Final Evaluation Design Report.” Austin, TX: Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-04\\_Wage\\_Insurance\\_and\\_Wage\\_Supplements\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-04_Wage_Insurance_and_Wage_Supplements_Final_Report.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Program/Policy Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

The U.S. labor market has changed significantly in many respects since the creation of the UI program in 1935. The provision of cash benefits associated with UI has also changed, yet the basic structure of the UI program remains the same. Due to the possibility that features of the UI program may need to keep pace with the changing nature of work, policymakers are looking to alternative measures to encourage more rapid reemployment and ensure better earnings recovery. Two proposed measures are the provision of wage insurance or wage supplements as a complement to UI, both intended to increase the speed of reemployment and improve the wages of reemployed individuals.

This report outlines design parameters, evaluation methods, data sources, tasks, timelines, and next steps for conducting a wage insurance and wage supplement demonstration and accompanying evaluations. The report proposes key research questions related to program design and results, along with supplemental research questions gathered from the literature, feasibility analysis of the demonstrations, and discussions with an expert advisory committee and DOL policy and program staff. The authors outline design parameters and options for each demonstration. These include program eligibility, targeting, supplement amount, duration and timing, and administrative infrastructure and are largely based on the existing literature. The report proposes an implementation study and randomized controlled trial to capture the labor market impacts of the wage insurance and wage supplement demonstrations using employer records, state UI records, and survey data. The authors also recommend that a benefit-cost analysis be conducted. The report includes a discussion of the feasibility of the demonstrations and evaluation, along with precautions to ensure validity. Recommended large sample sizes and randomized controlled trial design will support statistically significant results.

## **“Exhaustees of Extended Unemployment Benefits Programs: Coping with the Aftermath of the Great Recession”**

Needels, Karen, Walter Nicholson, Joanne Lee, and Heinrich Hock. “Exhaustees of Extended Unemployment Benefits Programs: Coping with the Aftermath of the Great Recession.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-12\\_UI\\_Exhaustees\\_Report\\_\(Accessible\\_PDF\).pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-12_UI_Exhaustees_Report_(Accessible_PDF).pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Program/Policy Analyses and Outcome/Performance Analyses

### **ABSTRACT:**

The Great Recession and the years immediately following it were characterized by the longest average duration of unemployment seen since World War II. To support unemployed workers, Congress passed the supplemental Unemployment Compensation (UC) legislation and, in conjunction with benefits available during non-recessionary times, offered up to 99 weeks of UC benefits to eligible recipients in some states, the longest potential duration of benefits in the history of the UC system. This study examines the extent to which recipients collected all the benefits to which they were entitled (termed “exhaustees”) and assesses the outcomes experienced by those who exhausted their entitlements relative to (1) recipients who did not exhaust all the benefits to which they were entitled and (2) UC nonrecipients.

The analyses used survey and administrative data from 10 states on UC recipients who filed claims from January 2008 through September 2009, as well as data from the Displaced Worker Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The authors report the following findings:

- Twenty-six percent of recipients—recipients who collected benefits from only one claim during a three-year period—exhausted all the UC benefits to which they were entitled.
- Exhaustees collected an average of 87 weeks of benefits compared to 28 weeks of benefits for non-exhaustees.
- Four to six years after their initial claims, and compared to non-exhaustees, exhaustees were less likely to be employed and more likely to be out of the labor force. They also experienced greater losses in household income and had higher rates of participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Social Security retirement, and disability-related income support programs.
- Relative to recipients with long jobless spells, nonrecipients with long jobless spells were less likely to become reemployed in the few years following their layoff and had lower household incomes.

## **"Demonstration and Evaluation of the Short-Time Compensation Program in Iowa and Oregon: Final Report"**

Houseman, Susan, Frank Bennici, Susan Labin, Katharine Abraham, Chris O'Leary, et al. "Demonstration and Evaluation of the Short-Time Compensation Program in Iowa and Oregon: Final Report." Rockville, MD; Kalamazoo, MI; and Gaithersburg, MD: Westat; W.E. Upjohn Institute; and Social Dynamics, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/STC-in-iowa-and-oregon-Final-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Experimental Impact Analyses (Randomized Controlled Trials) and Non-Experimental Impact Analyses

### **ABSTRACT:**

Short-time compensation (STC) is an optional program within some state UI systems that allows employers experiencing a temporary reduction in business to lower the average hours of employees in lieu of laying them off. Employees whose hours are decreased receive UI benefits in proportion to the reduction in their hours, while businesses retain valued employees and avoid future recruitment and training costs. Employer use of the STC option has been low in states with STC programs. Lack of awareness among employers about the STC program has long been hypothesized as a reason for the low take-up.

The authors conducted randomized controlled trials in Iowa and the Portland, Oregon, area as well as a quasi-experimental design in the rest of Oregon to evaluate the effectiveness of several interventions designed to increase employer awareness and use of STC, including disseminating information about STC to specific employers (members of the "treatment" group) over a 12-month period.

To assess whether outreach interventions significantly increased employers' awareness of the program, the authors conducted a short, three-question survey of employers about six months following the conclusion of the information campaign in each state. They estimated the effect on STC use based on detailed UI administrative data from each state for treatment and control employers for about two years prior to and two years following the start of the interventions. These data include information on STC use and employer characteristics (for example, size, industry, location, UI tax rate, and benefits charges).

The main findings support the hypothesis that lack of awareness is a barrier to STC take-up and that informational campaigns can significantly increase awareness and use of the STC option. The authors found that employer awareness was low in the absence of an informational campaign. They found that outreach, primarily consisting of mailings, raised awareness among targeted Iowa and Oregon employers by an estimated 15 to 30 percentage points. The informational campaign also increased STC adoptions among Oregon employers receiving the information by an estimated 58 to 100 percent. Increased awareness did not translate into greater take-up in Iowa, which the authors argue was likely due in part to the strong economy prevailing in Iowa during the study.

## Other UI Publications

### “A Longitudinal Survey of Unemployment Insurance Recipients in Two Regions in California”

Lee, Joanne, Karen Needels, and Walter Nicholson. “A Longitudinal Survey of Unemployment Insurance Recipients in Two Regions in California.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/UI-Longitudinal-Survey.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### ABSTRACT:

The main goal of the UI program is to provide temporary income support to workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own. Benefits supply only partial wage replacement and are time-limited to maintain a balance between passive income support during unemployment and incentives to return to work for benefit recipients. To minimize the negative impacts of job loss, unemployed workers must make a variety of changes in their activities both shortly after job loss and in the ensuing months, including efforts to find a new job and to manage financial changes associated with job loss.

The researchers designed this study of UI recipients to gain an understanding of the short- and medium-term adjustments they make after their job losses. The study uses data from a two-wave longitudinal survey and UI administrative records to examine such issues as how recipients’ job search strategies change over time, the role of UI benefits and other strategies unemployed workers use to cope with financial hardships, and UI recipients’ satisfaction with the program. The study provides insights useful to policymakers interested in evaluating the extent to which the UI program is meeting its goal of providing temporary income support to unemployed workers who lost their jobs through no fault of their own while also encouraging them to return to work quickly. A key aspect of the study is its longitudinal nature. UI recipients were surveyed early in their unemployment spells and again after about six months when recipients who exhausted their benefits could have done so. Availability of such longitudinal data allowed the study team to examine changes in behavior at the individual level.

The report identified a number of strategies that UI recipients employed to find new jobs and cope with the reduction of income from job loss. Individuals in the study overwhelmingly reported that receipt of UI benefits had been very helpful in allowing them to meet financial obligations, and they generally were satisfied overall with the UI program. The report highlights two recommendations for policymakers:

1. Identify strategies to improve targeting of services to workers who lose jobs and delay filing for UI benefits through more research, if needed.
2. Consider the feasibility and potential benefit of expanding strategies to provide additional reemployment services to UI recipients later in their UI benefit collection periods but before they exhaust benefits.

### **“A Comparative Analysis of Unemployment Insurance Financing Methods: Final Report”**

Vroman, Wayne, Elaine Maag, Christopher O’Leary, and Stephen Woodbury. “A Comparative Analysis of Unemployment Insurance Financing Methods: Final Report.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/completed-studies/A-Comparative-Analysis-of-Unemployment-Insurance-Financing-Methods-Final-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Implementation/Process Analyses and How-to Guides

**ABSTRACT:**

State UI programs have been providing cash benefits to eligible unemployed workers for more than 75 years, but systems of financing vary widely across jurisdictions. During this time, the programs have faced a few serious challenges, such as the major economic downturn that commenced in late 2007, which placed heavy strains on the UI financing system.

This report was prepared for use by state officials interested in assessing their current system of UI program financing and understanding, exploring, and modeling alternative financing arrangements. The guide’s two primary goals are: (1) to serve as a how-to document, with a significant focus on demonstrating how to implement common and alternative benefit financing systems; and (2) to describe current practices, review recent state financing experiences, and identify detailed tax provisions and administrative procedures associated with adequate levels of financing.

Through quantitative analysis of UI tax schedules, tax rates, tax bases, and more specialized topics, the report highlights the following two key findings:

1. Indexing the taxable wage base has strong positive effects on state-level financing experiences.
2. The practice of total cost targeting of tax revenue and associated array allocation has strong positive effects on state-level financing experiences.

### **“Summary of Literature Review: Challenges and Strategies Used to Operate Unemployment Insurance Programs During the Great Recession”**

Lee, Joanne, and Karen Needles. “Summary of Literature Review: Challenges and Strategies Used to Operate Unemployment Insurance Programs During the Great Recession.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/UI-Lit-Review-State-Operations.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Literature Review

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report conducted a targeted review of the literature and summarized states’ challenges and strategies in the operation of UI programs during and after the Great Recession that occurred from December 2007 to June 2009. This report also highlights strategies that UI programs implemented when unemployment and the number of UI claims were relatively low to position UI programs to better meet the demands of the agency’s workloads during future economic downturns.

The Great Recession created the conditions that led to the strain on the UI system with the influx of UI benefits claimants and an increase in the average duration of benefits. The resulting UI claims processing challenges were the need to rapidly expand staffing, use infrastructure in processing claims at high volumes and implementing the new program requirements, and quickly allocate Recovery Act funds to workforce programs when planning how to scale up operations for both UI and workforce programs. The strategies for addressing these challenges included increased training capacity, continuous use of metrics to monitor and improve operations, development of more user-friendly claimant materials, use of cell phones and email forms for inquiries, use of technology to streamline work processes, and coordination with state partners to share resources. Challenges to improving the UI trust fund solvency included states’ taxable wage base being set too low and not having been adequately adjusted over time, tax rates being too low, as well as tax contributions made by employers subject to the maximum UI tax rate being disproportionately low relative to their assigned level of charged benefits.

Strategies for improving the UI trust fund solvency included indexing the taxable wage base to a measure of average wages, considering an alternative experience rating approach, and reducing future UI benefits costs by implementing strategies to decrease overpayments or to change benefits payment rules. Lessons for applying innovations included engaging in ongoing dialogue with UI staff and DOL to identify and solve issues, soliciting feedback from claimants to generate suggestions on how processes can be improved, and trying these innovations in regional, seasonal, or other program contexts that share a need similar to the recessionary period.

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## WORKFORCE RESEARCH

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Studies on workforce research round out the final section of the annotated bibliography. Two subsections include labor market studies and workforce research capacity and methods.

### Labor Market Studies

#### “How Badly Are Native Americans Affected by Economic Recessions? The Role of Agriculture”

Gross, Lawrence, and Johannes Moenius. “How Badly are Native Americans Affected by Economic Recessions? The Role of Agriculture.” Redlands, CA: University of Redlands, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/How-Badly-Are-Native-Americans-Affected-by-Economic-Recessions-The-Role-of-Agriculture.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### ABSTRACT:

Employment is both key to economic well-being as well as a threat to financial stability for individuals if their jobs are at risk during economic recessions. This paper analyzes how much Native Americans have been affected by the three most recent recessions and which type of economic sector structure has been specifically helpful in fostering resilience. Specific attention is focused on the agricultural sector, which lends itself to resilience, regardless of economic conditions. The analysis considers that the share of agricultural employment can contribute to strengthening employment resilience in Native American reservations. Employment data constructed by sector for Native American Reservations and based on Zip Code level data from 1990 to 2015 is the core of the empirical analysis.

Despite the varied causes of these recessions and the secular decline in agricultural employment, variability in agricultural employment remained low. Could an increase in agricultural employment contribute to economic security on Indian reservations? Does it make sense to gear policies toward agriculture, despite the predicted decline in agricultural employment in the foreseeable future? To conduct this analysis on previous contributions of agriculture to employment, researchers conduct a literature review and utilize a three-step approach: (1) examine aggregate measures of vulnerability and resilience by looking at the percentage of job losses during a recession and the gains thereafter in Indian Country as compared to the United States as a whole; (2) repeat this process on the disaggregate level by looking at the distribution of sector shares and their responsiveness to recessions across reservations; and (3) investigate if growth rates and their variability across reservations was influenced by the share of agricultural employment utilizing regression analysis.

Employment growth across reservations was analyzed across recessions and recovery periods, and researchers found that reservations are generally less affected by recessions than the United States as a whole. Resilience is operationalized in two ways: lower variability of employment and speed of recovery. The analyses find a larger share of agricultural employment to be associated with lower variability of employment but also slower recovery. However, the effect of recessions on employment varies vastly by reservation.

**“Competition and Contracting: The Effect of Competition Shocks on Alternative Work Arrangements in the U.S. Labor Market 1995-2005”**

Deibler, Daniel Mark. “Competition and Contracting: The Effect of Competition Shocks on Alternative Work Arrangements in the U.S. Labor Market 1995-2005.” New York, NY: Columbia University, Department of Economics. 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Deibler-DOL-Final-Paper.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

Alternative Work Arrangements (AWAs) are contract forms commonly associated with less attachment, lower wages, and fewer worker benefits. Even though AWAs are theoretically cheaper for firms, they continue to account for only 10 percent of employment. This research explores why AWAs are not more widely used, given their purported economic benefit for firms. Legal rules suggest that while AWAs have lower fixed costs of employment, they may be less productive than standard employment and likely attract workers with lower skills. In this instance, AWAs are used as a mechanism for firms to reduce fixed labor costs in response to a shock. Testing this prediction, this research provides the first evidence that competition shocks, specifically trade shocks, causally increase the use of AWAs across several contract forms.

The researcher analyzed the data using a methodology previously used in a paper entitled “The China Syndrome: Local Labor Market Effects of Import Competition in the United States,” published in the *American Economic Review*. Results indicate that trade shocks increase the use of AWAs across several contract forms. In micro-level analyses, trade shocks appear to increase the probability of manufacturing workers being hired by temporary-help agencies and decrease the probability of manufacturing workers becoming independent contractors. AWAs appear to be associated with lower wages, fewer benefits after conditioning on industry and occupation, and higher rates of inequality.



**“Findings from the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) 2015-2016: A Demographic and Employment Profile of United States Farmworkers - Research Report No. 13”**

Hernandez, Trish, and Susan Gabbard. “Findings from the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) 2015-2016: A Demographic and Employment Profile of United States Farmworkers - Research Report No. 13.” Rockville, MD: JBS International, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2019-01\\_NAWS\\_Research\\_Report\\_13.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2019-01_NAWS_Research_Report_13.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/ Quantification Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

DOL has surveyed hired crop workers since 1988 through the NAWS. The survey collects employment, demographic, and health information and provides an understanding of the workforce resources available to U.S. agriculture. Public and private service programs use data to plan, implement, and evaluate farmworker programs. DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) biennially releases a national summary report of the survey's findings and updated public-use files.

This report is the thirteenth in a series on hired crop workers' demographic and employment characteristics. Its findings are based on 5,342 interviews conducted in fiscal years 2015 and 2016. The report's nine chapters summarize national-level findings on key characteristics, including place of birth and legal status; education and language skills; housing and transportation; job characteristics and employment experience; income and assets; and access to health care. There are three public-use files.

The NAWS survey is conducted three times each year to capture the seasonality of agricultural employment. NAWS contractor staff interview crop workers at their place of work. Depending on the information needs and resources of the various federal agencies that use NAWS data, contractor staff interview between 1,500 and 3,600 workers each year.

**“Islands of Labor: Reservation Labor Markets and American Indian Well-Being”**

Redbird, Beth. “Islands of Labor: Reservation Labor Markets and American Indian Well-Being.” Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Islands-of-Labor-D4.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analysis

**ABSTRACT:**

Since the last systematic examination of Native socio-economic well-being, several significant developments have materialized, including gaming, energy projects, expanded social and health services, new forms of tribal governance, and the advent of tribal colleges. Traditionally, labor market research regarded American Indian populations as subject to the same market forces as other historically disadvantaged populations. The resulting assumption is that the theory and conclusions that apply to other minority populations must also apply to American Indians. This may be true in some areas, but in others, distinct institutional and policy features of Native labor markets create unique challenges that impact American Indian well-being.

This project explores the interplay between reservation labor markets, tribal policy, and Native economic health. It begins by exploring the drivers of American Indian poverty. Results suggest that American Indian poverty is largely driven by employment and wages. Given this reliance on labor market factors, the second part of the report examines whether tribal job innovations, particularly gaming and energy development, are creating jobs and alleviating poverty. The findings suggest that the jobs that are created do not offer wages sufficient to pull tribal members out of poverty. Since these industries are high revenue-generating yet produce no wage benefit, it appears as though most of the revenue either enters the hands of a few elite members or leaves the tribe altogether. The report suggests that further research is needed to disentangle these possibilities.

### **“Job Characteristics and Job Retention of Young Worker with Disabilities”**

Shandra, Carrie L. “Job Characteristics and Job Retention of Young Worker with Disabilities.” Stony Brook, NY: State University of New York at Stony Brook, Department of Sociology, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Shandra-DOL-final-Paper.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

People with disabilities experience significantly lower levels of labor force participation than people without disabilities in the United States. Despite the focus on work promotion among this population, comparatively less is known about the factors promoting job retention among contemporary cohorts of young workers with disabilities. This study uses data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) to examine the following:

- How do job characteristics differ by disability status?
- What job characteristics are associated with the hazard of separation among young workers with disabilities?
- Do the characteristics associated with the hazard of separation differ by disability status?

The researcher utilizes Cox regression and longitudinal employment histories of workers from labor market entry through their early 30s. Results indicate that young workers with disabilities have a higher baseline hazard of separation than older workers with disabilities—both overall and when considering voluntary and involuntary reasons for job exit. These results persist for involuntary separations (among those with severe disability) and voluntary health-related separations (among those with mild or severe disability) even after controlling for job characteristics. Employment benefits—including medical benefits, flexible scheduling, unpaid leave, and retirement—are negatively associated with the hazard of separation for workers with disabilities. However, these effects persist for all workers, whereas job satisfaction, job sector, and work hours further condition the hazard of separation among workers with disabilities.

**“Falling in and Getting Out of Unemployment: Ethnoracial and Class Differences across Business Cycles”**

Yu, Wei-hsin and Shengwei Sun. “Falling in and Getting Out of Unemployment: Ethnoracial and Class Differences across Business Cycles.” College Park, MD and St. Louis, MO: University of Maryland College Park and Washington University in St. Louis, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Yu-DOL-Final-Paper.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

**ABSTRACT:**

Research indicates that individuals of different races, ethnic backgrounds, and class origins tend to differ in their unemployment rates. Less is known, however, about whether these differences result from the diverse groups’ unequal risks of entering or exiting unemployment, and even less about how economic fluctuations moderate the ethnoracial and class-origin gaps in the long-term risks of transitioning into and out of unemployment. Without a thorough analysis of how distinct groups fare with economic recessions, we do not know whether the ethnoracial or class gaps in unemployment dynamics vary by the economic conditions in this context.

This paper uses Rounds 1-17 of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 and event history models to examine a contemporary cohort’s experiences of falling into and recovering from unemployment in the United States, with a focus on how the ethnoracial and class gaps in the paces of entering and exiting unemployment vary by local economic conditions. The analysis examines the transition into unemployment using all person-month observations when respondents were employed. They consider other jobless periods as out of the labor force.

Results show that non-Hispanic Black people become more similar to non-Hispanic white people in the hazard of entering unemployment when the local unemployment rate rises, perhaps because jobs largely closed to the former are eliminated in a greater proportion during recessions. Nonetheless, Black people’s relatively slow pace of transitioning from unemployment to jobs decelerates further with economic downturns. By contrast, Hispanic people’s paces of entering and exiting unemployment relative to non-Hispanic white people hardly change with local unemployment rates, even though unemployed Hispanic people are generally more disadvantaged in their chances of finding jobs. With respect to class origin, this research shows that the advantages in both unemployment entry and recovery for men with a postsecondary-educated parent diminish with economic deteriorations. Thus, although economic recessions have changed the existing disadvantages with regards to unemployment risk that certain ethnoracial and class-origin groups face, the changes are by no means universal for all disadvantaged groups.

## **Workforce Research Capacity and Methods**

### **“Evidence-Building Capacity in State Workforce Agencies: Insights from a National Scan and Two State Site Visits”**

Chocolaad, Yvette and Stephen Wandner. “Evidence-Building Capacity in State Workforce Agencies: Insights from a National Scan and Two State Site Visits.” Washington, DC: National Association of State Workforce Agencies, 2017.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2017-13\\_Evidence\\_Building\\_Capacity\\_in\\_State\\_Workforce\\_Agencies\\_Report.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2017-13_Evidence_Building_Capacity_in_State_Workforce_Agencies_Report.pdf)

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Characterization/Quantification Analyses

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This report summarizes a national scan of information on current research and evaluation capacity in state workforce agencies. NASWA conducted the scan in June of 2016 with 50 state workforce agencies, plus the agencies in D.C., Guam, and Puerto Rico. The effort also included site visits to 2 states (Ohio and Washington) with substantial workforce research and evaluation capacity. NASWA had three goals for the study: (1) to understand the capacity of the state agencies, (2) to help agencies learn from other agencies’ experiences and practices, and (3) to identify other mechanisms aligned with new federal workforce development legislation that are likely to enhance research and evaluation at the state level and in cross-state efforts. This study presented the information gathered from both the national scan and the site visits.

State workforce agencies reported that policymakers in their states asked important questions that workforce agency research and evaluations could help answer. However, the results from the national scan demonstrated that many agencies lacked the staff capacity and funding to implement a robust research agenda. Ohio and Washington were among the minority of agencies with significant workforce research and evaluation activity backed by longitudinal administrative data sets. Although their models differed, both states have achieved substantial research accomplishments based on a long history of using evidence to support policy development, critical funding support, buy-in from agency heads and state leaders, and access to well-led, high-capacity research units.

**“Providing Public Workforce Services to Job Seekers: 30-month Impact Findings on the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs”**

Fortson, Kenneth, Dana Rotz, Paul Burkander, Annalisa Mastri, Peter Schochet, et al. “Providing Public Workforce Services to Job Seekers: 30-month Impact Findings on the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2017.

McConnell, Sheena, Kenneth Fortson, Dana Rotz, Peter Schochet, Paul Burkander, et al. “Providing Public Workforce Services to Job Seekers: 15-month Impact Findings on the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs.” Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016.

**HYPERLINKS TO STUDIES:** [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2018-04\\_1-WIA-30mo-main-rpt.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2018-04_1-WIA-30mo-main-rpt.pdf); [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP-2016-04\\_15-Month-Impact-Report-\(accessible%20pdf\).pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP-2016-04_15-Month-Impact-Report-(accessible%20pdf).pdf)

**HYPERLINK TO RELATED RESOURCES:** <https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/details.cfm?q=&id=2615>

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

**ABSTRACT:**

The Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, authorized in 1998 by WIA and reauthorized in 2014 by WIOA, are two of the country’s largest publicly funded employment and training programs. In June 2008, ETA funded a rigorous impact evaluation of the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs in 28 randomly selected local areas across the continental United States. This report’s findings on the long-term impacts of the programs focus on the effectiveness of the availability of WIA-funded training, of the intensive services (primarily staff-assisted employment services), and of both types of services in combination.

Program staff enrolled participants in the evaluation between 2011 and 2013, prior to the passage of WIOA. In this report, the authors present 30-month impacts using data from the National Directory of New Hires and participant surveys and present results of the evaluation’s cost-benefit analysis.

The authors found that intensive services increased earnings by approximately \$3,300 (an increase of about seven percent) over the 30-month period. Intensive services also increased the fringe benefits, such as retirement benefits and paid holidays. The study found no statistically significant impacts on employment or earnings for training, though the results were inconclusive due to the small differences in training enrollment across study groups. The availability of both WIA-funded training and intensive services increased the average earnings of participants during the second half of the follow-up period when most of those enrolled in training had completed or dropped out of their training program.

### **“Data on Earnings: A Review of Resources for Research”**

Czajka, John, Ankita Patnaik, and Marian Negoita. “Data on Earnings: A Review of Resources for Research.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2018.

**HYPERLINK TO STUDY:** <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Data-on-Earnings-Report.pdf>

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:** Methodological Study

#### **ABSTRACT:**

Earnings are a primary outcome in evaluating the impact of job training and other employment-oriented assistance programs. This report describes sources of data on earnings, including administrative records, custom surveys of study participants, and existing general population surveys.

The report reviews five sources of administrative data on earnings. These include earnings data collected by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for tax purposes, the earnings data maintained by the Social Security Administration (SSA) in its Master Earnings File, the earnings data collected by the state UI agencies, the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) obtained from states by the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program at the U.S. Census Bureau. In the review, the report offers key considerations for the use of the administrative data sources. Access is an issue for all five data sources. Coverage is a critical consideration in choosing among these alternative data sources. Earnings data from self-employment are highly problematic. Periodicity of the data can be important to consider as well.

Researchers conducting program evaluation with random assignment frequently conduct their own surveys of participants to compare the treatment and control group members with respect to outcomes of interest, which often include variables for which there are no administrative data. Estimates of program impacts based on surveys tend to be larger and more likely to be statistically significant than estimates based on administrative data. Using both administrative data and survey data is recommended for impact evaluations.

The review included selected federal household survey data due to their relevance to population-based analyses of earnings. Using matrices describing three surveys, the report recommends using survey data linked to administrative data on wages to enhance the analytical value of the administrative data for analyses targeting large segments of the population.

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