

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative
Program Year 2018

WE ARE YOUR DOL



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I. COMBINED PLAN STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

A. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM PROGRESS

The New York State (NYS) Combined State Plan for Program Years (PY) 2016-2019 envisions a unified workforce development system that is regionally coordinated and programmatically seamless, delivering workforce training, business services, and statewide job linkages to all New Yorkers. This vision is supported by goals that address governance, service delivery, and accountability.

Regarding the goal of governance, NYS's plan is to build partnerships and strategic alliances, creating a unified workforce system that integrates government, education, and business. Progress has been made toward this goal through Governor Cuomo's creation of the New York State Office of Workforce Development, based in the Governor's office, to formalize coordination of workforce development activities across New York State and the work of NYS's Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs), with membership including local experts and stakeholders from business, education, local government, and non-governmental organizations.

In PY 2018, the REDC process awarded approximately \$750M across NYS's ten regions for job creation and community development projects through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA). A priority of the REDCs in PY 2018 was identifying workforce development strategies, including collaboration with business and educational institutions. At the end of PY 2018, the CFA for Workforce Development Initiative (WDI) was launched, providing up to \$175M in additional funding for workforce investments supporting efforts to meet businesses' short-term workforce needs and long-term industry needs, improve regional talent pipelines, enhance the flexibility and adaptability of local workforce entities, and expanding workplace learning opportunities. The CFA and CFA WDI are important pieces of the workforce system in NYS and are discussed in more detail in later sections of this report.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Interagency Team, consisting of staff from the NYS Department of Labor (NYSDOL), the NYS Education Department (NYSED), the NYS Office of Children and Family Services/NYS Commission for the Blind (OCFS/NYSCB), the NYS Office for the Aging (NYSOFA), the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), and the NYS Department of State (DOS) will continue to meet throughout PY 2019 to further the progress made in PY 2018 as it relates to the development of NYS's workforce.

The WIOA Interagency team workgroups continued to be active in PY 2018. These workgroups include the:

- Accessibility Workgroup, which collaborates with the NYS Career Centers to make the centers and workforce development services accessible to all New Yorkers through assistive technology;
- Business Engagement Workgroup, which focuses on the development of a common system for agencies to track their engagement of businesses and new statewide policy across agencies;
- Combined Plan Workgroup, which works to develop the PY 2020-2023 NYS Combined Plan;
- Data Integration Workgroup, which is tasked with determining how NYS can best comply with WIOA's requirement for integrated data reporting;
- Referral and Release Workgroup, which created a confidential release of information form for use by all partners, and furthers the development of a seamless referral process among system partners; and
- Training and Assistance Workgroup (TAG), which focuses on identifying important training for staff across all partner programs and helping to identify opportunities for skills building.

Regarding the goal of service delivery, NYS strives to meet the needs of businesses and job-seekers through public-private sector partnerships such as education, government, and community organizations, with priority given to individuals in special populations. The Referral and Release Workgroup of the WIOA Interagency Team issued a common release of information form applicable to all core WIOA partners, which has, and will continue to, streamline services provided to customers common to multiple partners. Likewise, several solicitations were released across core programs in PY 2018, providing priority in scoring to applicants planning to serve individuals with barriers to employment.

Regarding the goal of accountability, efforts are being made to integrate information technology across programs and pursuing new technologies. System partners continue to meet to develop a statewide unique identifier and determine a method to best share and combine agency data.

B. MEETING BUSINESS NEEDS TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Functioning as the Career Center system's conduit to the business community and supporting WIOA's principles for a demand driven system, NYSDOL's Business Engagement team (the NYSDOL Business Services and NYSDOL Rapid Response Units) directly engages new and repeat business customers to offer targeted programs, services, and job development. Integral to these efforts is strategic business outreach, which is built around an understanding of the unique needs of individual businesses, and a tailored service strategy to meet those needs.

II. SECTOR STRATEGIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

A. BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

NYSDOL Unemployment Strikeforce

NYSDOL's Unemployment Strikeforce (the Strikeforce) employs a sector-based model that relies on a network of partnerships among business intermediaries, government, educational institutions, training providers, economic developers, and labor and community organizations. This type of model requires active staff engagement in job development (business demand) and customer case management (worker supply) with intensive referral and job brokering.

NYSDOL considers the Strikeforce model to be the gold standard of service delivery, providing intensive placement services in specific areas of NYS suffering high unemployment or high poverty. Key aspects of the initiative include stationing Career Center staff in convenient community locations to:

- Provide case management of customers, which includes ensuring that each customer has a quality resume prepared, providing appropriate job leads and referrals, assisting with interview preparation, and following-up with continued assistance; and
- Engage and provide services to local businesses in convenient locations, including developing job openings, matching job posting orders to Strikeforce customers, referring qualified candidates and advocating to businesses on their behalf, developing customized recruitments and career fair events to facilitate hiring, and following-up to ensure business customer satisfaction.

The Strikeforce was first piloted in the Bronx in 2014 and subsequently rolled out to the following 14 areas across NYS: Bronx, Queens, Lewis, Kings (Brooklyn), Jefferson, Franklin, Montgomery, Orleans, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Steuben, Niagara, Buffalo, and Lackawanna. In June 2019, plans were implemented to further expand the Strikeforce into Syracuse, Binghamton and Elmira.

The Strikeforce has proven to be a successful model with 172,739 individuals enrolled in the Strikeforce returning to work by the close of PY 2018.

Regional Business Services Teams and Alignment with Regional Economic Development

NYSDOL's regional Business Services staff collaborate with Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), WIOA Titled partners, and Career Center staff to develop sector strategies and to align service to businesses in concert with regional industry cluster/sector strategies and the goals of the REDCs. Regional Business Services Teams are established throughout NYS to support alignment of Career Center services to sector initiatives/strategies in the region. This structure brings Career Center Staff and NYSDOL Business Services and Local Business Services staff together to discuss common challenges and share promising practices. It also allows staff to share workforce intelligence and strategies for marketing services, as well as hiring and training incentives for businesses.

Strategic Business Engagement

NYSDOL Business Engagement works closely with many high-profile businesses on projects with significant job creation and sector impacts. These include coordinating with businesses to create a customized recruitment plan and application process, followed by matching, referring, and assessing qualified candidates in NYSDOLs talent bank along with the job seeking public.

Customized Recruitments and Career Fairs

Customized recruitments are no-cost, targeted hiring events built around the specific needs of each business. NYSDOL Business Services staff work directly with business customers to develop job specifics, search the talent bank for qualified candidates, and set up a hiring event where the business can interview these candidates.

Career Fairs provide businesses with the opportunity to interact one-on-one with job-seekers. NYSDOL Business Services staff organize and participate in numerous career fairs around NYS each year at no cost to participating businesses.

In PY 2018, 265 recruitment events and 371 career fairs were conducted by NYSDOL Business Services. Some examples include:

- Western NY – NYSDOL's largest event in PY 2018 was the Queen City Job Fair where staff worked closely with the City of Buffalo and state and local elected officials to host 196 businesses and 950 jobseekers. Business placement at the event was organized by sector for ease of customer navigation.
- Dick's Distribution Center, Conklin, NY/Southern Tier Region – Since 2018, Business Services has worked closely with Dick's Human Resources (HR) team to customize a service plan around hiring needs for their expansive new Conklin distribution center in Broome County. The Regional Business Services Team played a key role in providing recruitment assistance to help the business onboard 150 employees needed for the facility to open in January 2018, followed by an additional 100 more hires in April 2019 for their automated shipping expansion. Services included 20 hiring events (16 in PY 2018) facilitating their participation in numerous regional job fairs; job order posting and matching to NYSDOLs talent bank; and referring qualified candidates. Regional Business Services Team members will continue to work with the businesses for ongoing needs.
- Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY/Central Region – In Spring 2019, NYSDOL Business Services worked closely with the university to hire 90 food service employees for their 2019-2020 school year. Staff customized an information session/application day at the Career Center, identified and invited qualified candidates from the talent bank, and provided technical assistance with the employment application process.
- Jet.com, Bronx, NY/New York City Region – A subsidiary of Walmart, Jet.com operates an online shopping club for various grocery and consumer products. The company has partnerships with companies like Blue Apron and NY's Fulton Fish Market. NYSDOL Business Services has been assisting Jet.com with their hiring needs since their expansion into the Bronx in 2018. Services include job posting, identifying and referring qualified candidates, and hiring events. More than 300 individuals have been hired.
- Tractor Supply (TSC) Distribution Center, Mohawk Valley Region - Beginning July 2018, NYSDOL Business Services worked closely with the business and regional business services team partners to develop and deliver a customized recruitment plan while their facility was under construction. The plan included job order posting, identification and referral of qualified candidates, candidate skills assessments, and hiring events. These services helped the business hire 290 employees. The facility held a grand opening in March 2019. Staff will continue to provide recruitment assistance to the business to help them meet their future long-term hiring targets of up to 350 full-time employees by 2024.

- United States (US) Census Bureau/Statewide – As part of statewide efforts to support the hiring needs of the US Census Bureau, staff is engaged with US Census throughout all ten regions of the state, posting and matching jobs and including them at hiring events where possible. During PY 2018, the US Census participated in 140 hiring events.
- Targeted Business Outreach/Statewide – Targeted outreach strategically focused on certain cohorts of businesses such as top companies by employment size, businesses with seasonal employment needs, veteran friendly companies, companies in the Hospitality cluster, and non-profit establishments.
- NYS Job Bank Seasonal Microsite/Statewide – A seasonal microsite “NY Seasonal Jobs” was launched in Spring 2019 to highlight summer seasonal employment opportunities - <https://seasonalworks.labor.ny.gov>. The site is a subsite of the NYS Job Bank and only lists jobs that are summer or seasonal opportunities. The site currently has over 8,000 seasonal jobs available.

As a workforce partner, NYSDOL provides extensive recruitment assistance and supportive services to hiring businesses in sectors with large impacts, connecting individuals to employment. Examples of services and initiative provided include:

- Nonprofit Sector Initiative – An effort to engage nonprofit businesses, support their workforce needs, and develop job openings. 1,072 nonprofit businesses statewide were directly engaged and offered services (620 were new business customers). Email blasts were sent to nonprofit job leads and to 130,830 job seekers statewide. An informational webinar on HR Consultation Services for nonprofit organizations was held and 122 HR professionals attended. A social media campaign highlighted nonprofit businesses and jobs through 13 different media posts, reaching 11,236 individuals. Ten nonprofit focused hiring events were held across the state in October 2018, serving 108 businesses and 1,110 jobseekers.
- Jobs Express - An online database for businesses to post available jobs sorted by region and occupational category. Local workforce areas use the Jobs Express system as a lead-generation source to grow the NYS’s database of business customers. Since December 2012, staff have engaged and provided services to more than 170,000 businesses using Jobs Express as a lead source.
- On-The-Job Training (OJT) – In PY 2018 NYS operated two OJT Programs, the Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant Worker Based Training (SP NEG) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) OJT for Energy Efficiency and Clean Technology, to provide businesses with incentives to hire target populations, such as the long-term unemployed. Not only have these programs enabled New Yorkers to get back to work, they provided businesses with the opportunity to invest in their workforce and remain competitive. These OJT programs are proving to be successful vehicles for workforce development and the response from the business community continues to be very positive.
- HR Consultation Services – NYSDOL Business Engagement provides no cost technical assistance to businesses with a variety of HR issues. These services include job analysis and descriptions, application processes, skills gap analysis, turnover analysis, employee handbooks, and help navigating rules and regulations.
- Hiring and Training Incentives – NYSDOL Business Engagement provides businesses with technical assistance to help them understand available employment-based tax credits and training incentives. By taking advantage of these incentives, businesses can save money by reducing tax liability or by using grant funds to offset the costs of training.

Additional Business Engagement Activities and Communication

NYSDOL's Business Engagement staff engages approximately 500 unique businesses each week with services. In PY 2018, staff provided services to 25,513 unique businesses.

To help coordinate services across NYS, NYSDOL Business Engagement staff from the ten regions and central office communicate on a regular basis. Examples include:

- Weekly productivity report sharing;
- Ongoing quality assurance focusing on service to businesses and customers, providing real-time suggestions culminating in quarterly regional conference calls;
- Weekly calls with the teams to understand the current clientele, review time management practices, and uncover promising practices for statewide sharing;
- Bi-weekly statewide Rapid Response scrums with Associate Business Services Representatives and Regional Rapid Response Coordinators; and
- Ongoing conference calls involving the statewide Rapid Response Coordinator and key Regional Rapid Response coordinators for specific WARN accounts involving multiple regions.

B. WORK-BASED LEARNING (INCLUDING APPRENTICESHIP)

NYSERDA Energy Efficiency and Clean Technology Training Funding Opportunities

As first mentioned in Section II. A., NYSERDA released \$10M in funding for OJT for new hires at energy efficiency and clean technology businesses in October 2018. NYSDOL Business Services promotes NYSDERA funding opportunities to businesses in the energy sector and works closely with NYSERDA to provide technical assistance to businesses with the application process, hiring eligible candidates, skills gap analyses, and development of training plans. During PY 2018, NYSDOL helped 43 businesses hire and train 88 individuals.

CFA

As mentioned in Section I. A. of this report, the NYS CFA is a unique collaboration across NYS agencies where each agency identifies grant solicitations to support regional economic development, and entities apply for one or more grants through a single application. The eighth round of the CFA involved more than a dozen NYS agencies including NYSDOL. NYSDOL's role was to make state-level WIOA funds available to support two types of training initiatives: the Existing Employee Training (EET) program to train incumbent workers in specific occupational skills that lead to job retention and/or advancement in middle-skills occupations; and the Unemployed Worker Training (UWT) program to provide occupational skills training to workers to prepare them for full-time jobs needed by businesses in the region as well as to offer career development and supportive services to workers with additional barriers to employment.

In this round of the CFA, NYSDOL made 121 awards totaling \$10.1M to train more than 10,800 workers. Over the entire eight years of the CFA, NYSDOL has made 773 awards totaling \$51.7M to train 57,542 workers.

CFA WDI

As noted in Section I. A., PY 2018 saw the release of the new CFA WDI on May 8, 2019. This program is funded using state-level WIOA funds to support the same EET and UWT programs as the eighth round of the CFA, and includes a third type of training initiative, the New Hire Program (NHT). This program is designed to provide on-the-job occupational skills training commensurate with REDC priorities to newly hired employees. Businesses are eligible to apply for one or more of these programs, depending upon their needs.

Registered Apprenticeship

NYS's economic well-being is developed and sustained with a highly skilled workforce and Registered Apprenticeship plays a leading role in ensuring a reliable and constant source of skilled workers for in-demand industries. NYSDOL has received four apprenticeship-related grant awards since 2016. The first of these was a \$200,000 Accelerator Grant in June 2016 that served as a stepping stone toward the goal of apprenticeship expansion.

Also in 2016, NYSDOL received a \$1.5M State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) Grant from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). NYSDOL received \$1.8M in additional funds in March 2018. The SAE Grant and its additional funds continue until October 2020 and will provide more opportunity for NYSDOL to market and expand Registered Apprenticeship in all regions of NYS.

NYSDOL has also seen success with the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant (AEG), funded in part with funds awarded to NYSDOL under USDOL's recent apprenticeship expansion initiatives. A total of 15 programs received funding under NYSDOL's initial AEG program, including some large group programs such as The Manufacturers Association of Central New York and 1199SEIU League Training and Upgrading Fund. The application period for the initial AEG funding opportunity expired March 29, 2019, but NYSDOL has made an additional \$3.7M available in a second round of funding. Sponsors and signatories of NYS Registered Apprenticeship programs can apply for up to \$300,000 in funds (up to \$10,000 per apprentice) to cover costs associated with training such as OJT, related instruction, books, and tools. The AEG targets industries such as Information Technology, Health Care, Advanced Manufacturing, and other in-demand occupations. Since the AEG focuses on expanding apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship programs in the field of construction are not eligible for funding unless the trade is to be used for the upkeep and maintenance of a facility owned by the business entity employing the apprentice, such as Plant Maintenance Trades. The application deadline for this funding is April 30, 2020.

Most recently, NYSDOL applied for and received approximately \$4.4M under the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Grant. These funds continue until June 30, 2022 and will allow NYSDOL to sustain the goal of apprenticeship expansion within NYS.

In addition to these grants, NYSDOL continues to develop new trades and move more trades into alternative training approaches, allowing for further diversity and expansion into new and emerging industries. This includes a recent increase in the number of new programs in non-traditional trades. During the reporting period, NYSDOL approved 118 new programs and of those programs, 81 were in trades outside of building and construction. These numbers continue to rise and NYSDOL anticipates continuing this trend by further expanding apprenticeship beyond the traditional construction trades.

NYS has also developed the Empire State Apprenticeship Tax Credit (ESATC), which created an annual state budget allocation of \$10M to provide tax credits beginning at \$2,000 for each qualified apprentice. Initial ESATC credits are available for apprentices who are hired and remain in a Registered Apprenticeship program for six months. Additional or enhanced ESATC credits are available for each year that the apprentice remains in the program, as well as for businesses that hire disadvantaged youth as apprentices or provide the apprentices with the support of a mentor. The ESATC focuses on encouraging new apprenticeship opportunities in-demand occupations throughout NYS, and as such most construction trade Registered Apprenticeship programs are excluded from the ESATC.

During the reporting period, NYSDOL's Commissioner Roberta Reardon hosted the first annual Registered Apprenticeship Summit to promote Registered Apprenticeship throughout NYS. Commissioner Reardon was accompanied by the State University of New York (SUNY) Chancellor Kristina Johnson, the Business Council President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Heather Briccetti, and other industry leaders from across NYS. The keynote address was given by Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul. Every region of NYS was represented, with attendees from schools and colleges, businesses and business organizations, economic organizations, government, and more. The event was a success and Commissioner Reardon plans to hold additional regional Summits to continue to further promote the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship statewide.

C. WORK EXPERIENCES FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS

As described in Section VIII.E.6., NYSDOL currently operates a Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) systems change grant funded by USDOL. A key component of this opportunity is the provision of work experience to youth, ages 14-24. DEI project staff work with businesses and community partners to develop these work experiences that include, but are not limited to, paid or unpaid internships, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeship, on-the-job training, career-focused mentoring, and/or transitional jobs. These types of work experience have been incorporated in the program to meet the diverse learning needs of youth.

NYS is on track for spending 20% of local Title I Youth program funds on work experience. Most LWDBs have developed local work experience policies to assist providers in the implementation of work experience, including the educational components. NYS continues to provide reporting, programmatic and fiscal guidance regarding work experiences. NYS is also encouraging LWDBs to develop work experience agreements between staff, work-site supervisor and youth, to clarify expectations and roles related to the work experience.

NYS used statewide activities funds to support work experiences of youth in different parts of NYS through two Request for Proposals (RFP): Opportunity Youth Career Exploration and Access (OYCEA) and Help Obtaining and Maintaining Employment and Education (HOME2). NYS continues to support the 22 OYCEA and one HOME2 grantees to offer quality work experiences to the youth and build strong partnerships with businesses.

D. TRANSITIONAL JOBS

As described in Section VIII.C., NYSDOL currently operates an Opioid National Dislocated Worker grant funded by USDOL. A key component of this workforce opportunity is the provision of disaster-relief employment aimed at alleviating the issues caused by the opioid crisis in affected communities. These employment opportunities include but are not limited to providing support for addiction treatment services; serving as peer recovery navigators or in other peer-focused positions that support individuals struggling with opioid addiction or recovery; or carrying out intake and coordination services that connect homeless individuals affected by the opioid crisis to partners who can provide shelter, food, and other assistance. These temporary positions can serve as an on-ramp for positions in health care, including health care positions related to the treatment and prevention of opioid abuse and addiction.

E. INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING

CFA

As discussed in Section II. B., CFA Round 8 included an incumbent worker program, the EET program. Up to \$2M was made available, and an additional \$1.09M was added to meet program demand. A total of 47 awards were made accounting for \$3,094,750 in funding to support 5,227 incumbent workers.

CFA WDI

As further discussed in Section II. B., the CFA WDI also has an EET program. Up to \$10M is available for occupational skill-based trainings to underemployed incumbent workers. Funds are targeted to businesses that seek to train their incumbent workers for more skilled positions leading to promotions, increased pay, or increased earnings through more work hours. Applications are being accepted on an ongoing basis.

III. PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

A. STATE PERFORMANCE MEASURES OR GOALS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THEM

After the close of PY 2017, NYS developed and released a WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance Report to the LWDBs. This report detailed the negotiated PY 2018 Local Workforce Development Area (or Local Area) Goals as well as the Local Area performance on each of the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance in PY 2017 Quarter 4. NYSDOL continued to develop quarterly reports on the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance throughout PY 2018. This report is used to assess Local Area progress toward meeting the Primary Indicators of Performance and will continue to be released quarterly moving forward. NYSDOL uses this report to assist the Local Areas with improving performance and to determine workforce training needs throughout the system.

In conjunction with the release of the Primary Indicators of Performance Report, NYSDOL also provides detailed technical assistance to ensure data is entered accurately and offers individualized training to Local Areas in need of further guidance and assistance.

B. ANY PERFORMANCE DEFICIENCIES ON THE PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

The Credential Attainment measure for Adults and Dislocated Workers has emerged as a potentially difficult measure in NYS. It is important to note that NYS is performing satisfactorily in the measure overall, and due to the newness of the measure NYSDOL determined that it would be baseline for LWDBs during the PY 2018-2019 negotiation cycle (meaning no negotiated standard was established). However, many Local Areas have struggled to meet the state goal. To address this difficulty before performance sanctions are imposed, NYSDOL developed a plan to work with Local Areas to improve performance on the Credential Attainment measure. The plan included analyzing and evaluating Local Area Credential Attainment measure performance. Conversations were held with high performing Local Areas to determine best practices that can be shared with underperforming areas. NYSDOL has also begun sharing information on the participants in the Credential Attainment measure with Local Areas on a quarterly basis so appropriate follow up can be conducted with customers who have not shown a positive outcome. NYSDOL continues to develop and deliver trainings to Local Areas to improve performance on the Credential Attainment measure.

C. DESCRIPTIONS OF ANY FACTORS IMPACTING PERFORMANCE

The calculation of the Credential Attainment and Measurable Skill Gains measures is completely reliant on staff performing proper data entry because an administrative method to gather this information does not currently exist. This reliance has had a negative impact in NYS, and NYSDOL is actively working to improve data entry. NYSDOL staff have developed and delivered extensive trainings in the form of in-person, webinars, and guides for local staff on proper data entry and its importance in calculating these measures. NYSDOL is also working with local staff to ensure they understand the quarterly reports of individuals included in these measures and are performing the appropriate outreach to collect and data enter this information.

D. COMMON EXIT POLICY

NYSDOL has implemented a functional alignment policy for the Title I and Title III programs. Individuals 18 years of age or older who receive a service from a Career Center must be enrolled as a WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker or Youth and are considered participants in both the WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser (WP) programs. Any participant who receives services funded in whole or in part from the WIOA Title I, Title III WP, Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), or Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA or Trade Act) programs, sequentially or simultaneously, will be counted as a participant in each program, and will share a common "date of participation" and a common "date of exit" for federal reporting. Both Title I and Title III WP follow this common exit policy. If a participant receives services from multiple programs, the common date of exit for reporting on each program is the end date of the most recent service across all programs. Participation in any one program extends across all programs that share a common enrollment. Customers who do not receive a service within 90 days will exit enrollment effective the date of last service.

E. NEGOTIATED PERFORMANCE LEVELS FOR LOCAL AREAS FOR PROGRAM YEARS 2018-2019

For PYs 2018 and 2019, negotiated performance goals were established for Local Areas using the Statistical Adjustment Model. Proposed and negotiated performance goals for the Local Areas can be found on the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance page on the NYSDOL website:

<https://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/wioa/wioa-performance.shtm>.

F. DATA VALIDATIONS AND DATA INTEGRITY

Now that the annual USDOL Data Element Validation (DEV) review has been discontinued, to ensure data validations and data integrity, NYSDOL continues its annual onsite Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Trade Act program monitoring reviews of NYS's 33 LWDBs. These annual program monitoring reviews include DEV reviews of sampled One-Stop Operating System (OSOS) case management participant records and files, with findings and required actions made and technical assistance provided as necessary to improve compliance.

IV. WAIVERS**A. WAIVERS IN PLACE FOR A LEAST ONE PROGRAM YEAR**

In PY 2018, NYS received approval for one USDOL waiver to support workforce development activities and maximize the effectiveness of state-level funds: Waiver of the requirement at WIOA Sec. 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that states expend 75% of all Governor's reserve funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

This waiver assists NYS in continuing to provide high-quality services to all youth by allowing the state to maximize the use of state-level funds on targeted In-School Youth (ISY) programs without compromising the WIOA goal of 75% Youth expenditures on OSY. This is being done by leveraging the OSY funds expended by the LWDBs in the state against ISY programs developed by the state and funded with state-level discretionary dollars. When pooled in this manner, the OSY funding expended at the Local Area level covers the 75% requirement, allowing the state to issue ISY RFPs without having to also issue OSY RFPs for three times the amount.

B. PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES IN ETA APPROVAL LETTER AND/OR STATE'S APPROVAL REQUEST

The additional flexibility in the use of state-level discretionary funds has allowed NYS to issue three RFPs under the OYCEA initiative. These grants provide career exploration services to ISY who are at least 14 years old at the time of program enrollment, are attending or enrolled in school, and are authorized to work or otherwise able to obtain authorization to work.

The first OYCEA grant offered up to \$3M to serve youth in both Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island, covering three Local Areas. The second grant offered up to \$1M to serve youth in the city of Albany. The third grant offered up to \$1M to serve youth in the city of Syracuse. Interest in the OYCEA grants has exceeded NYSDOL's expectations in Long Island and Syracuse, leading to available funding increases in the amounts of \$715,852 and \$696,502 respectively.

C. IMPACTS ON STATE AND LOCAL AREA PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES, IF ANY

OYCEA participants are funded via state-level discretionary funding, and therefore are included in state-level performance only. The programs have not been in place long enough to have exiters included in the Primary Indicators of Performance, so NYSDOL is unable to determine what impact the programs will have on state performance. There is no impact on Local Area performance.

D. ANY AVAILABLE QUANTITATIVE INFORMATION

Through the OYCEA grants, NYSDOL has awarded \$6,253,852 to 22 contractors.

In Long Island, \$3,715,646 has been awarded to thirteen contractors:

- Long Island Gay and Lesbian Youth, Inc.: \$300,000;
- Adelante of Suffolk County, Inc.: \$299,951;
- Family and Children’s Association: \$195,998;
- Leadership Training, Inc.: \$300,000;
- West Islip Youth Enrichment Services, Inc.: \$300,000;
- Brentwood Union Free School District: \$298,520;
- Economic Opportunity Council of Suffolk, Inc.: \$261,093;
- United Way of Long Island: \$300,000;
- Self Initiated Living Options: \$260,116;
- Uniondale Union Free School District: \$300,000;
- Long Island University: \$299,970;
- Eastern Suffolk BOCES: \$299,998; and
- Viability, Inc.: \$300,000.

In Albany, \$841,704 has been awarded to three contractors:

- Equinox, Inc.: \$300,000;
- St. Anne Institute: \$241,704; and
- City Albany Department of Youth and Workforce: \$300,000.

In Syracuse, \$1,696,502 has been awarded to six contractors:

- People’s Equal Action Community Effort: \$234,489;
- ARISE Child and Family Services, Inc.: \$262,014;
- Refugee & Immigrant Self-Empowerment: \$300,000;
- Hillside Work Scholarship Connection: \$299,999;
- Syracuse City School District: \$300,000; and
- CNY Works, Inc.: \$300,000.

E. WAIVERS IN DEVELOPMENT/AWAITING REVIEW

NYS is currently awaiting review and response from USDOL for a waiver of the requirement for Eligible Training Providers to collect and report performance data for all students enrolled in training. The waiver was submitted to USDOL on September 6, 2019.

V. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING BUSINESSES

The WIOA Interagency Business Engagement workgroup focuses on the development of a common system for agencies to track their engagement of businesses. Since its inception, the workgroup has worked to collaborate more closely at both the local and state levels to ensure all partners are included in the Regional Business Service Teams and coordination of activities related to engaging businesses. The group focused on aligning cross-agency services for the purposes of federal reporting, utilizing OSOS for tracking all cross-agency services to business, and identifying key performance measures for engaging businesses.

NYS is utilizing the following methods to report on the Effectiveness in Serving Businesses:

A. REPEAT BUSINESS CUSTOMERS

This measure looks at the percentage of repeat business customers and will be based on the total number of business establishments that received and utilized a service anytime with the previous three years.

B. BUSINESS PENETRATION RATE

This measure looks at the percentage of businesses using services out of all the businesses in NYS.

C. OTHER MEASURES/METRICS USED TO ASSESS EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Additional business engagement activities are recorded by NYSDOL staff in the OSOS case management system. OSOS provides a location to store key information that will improve the effectiveness of contact with that business. Services have been added in OSOS for core partners to record business engagement activities throughout NYS, ensuring streamlined outreach with minimal duplication of efforts. NYSDOL, Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR), and OCFS/NYSCB and Local Business Engagement staff are encouraged to meet locally to discuss outreach efforts and determine the most effective manner of engaging businesses.

Successful engagement is evidenced by the multitude of businesses posting their jobs on the NYS Job Bank. The NYS Job Bank maintains a daily average of more than 223,000 job openings from more than 8,600 businesses.

VI. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

A. INFORMATION USED FOR ONE-STOP CERTIFICATION

NYSDOL's approach to customer satisfaction is to allow LWDBs to implement their own processes that are catered toward their Local Area and the populations being served. By the end of PY 2018, all 33 Local Areas indicated that a customer feedback process is in place and utilized. This was verified by NYSDOL during PYs 2017 and 2018 through the Career Center Certification process where one of the several required continuous improvement components of the Career Center Certification process is having a customer feedback process in place.

B. METHODOLOGIES

NYSDOL has placed a priority on embedding a customer service focus into the service delivery model for both job-seekers and businesses. The programs offered to job-seekers in the Career Centers all follow a continuous engagement model. Customers are continuously invited in to the career center for a variety of services including one-on-one appointments, workshops, on-site recruitments and mini job fairs. Continuous engagement and individualized case management allow staff to provide the necessary services to customers while giving customers multiple opportunities to provide feedback which leads to customer satisfaction. Staff are evaluated on the services provided to their customers and center managers use individual level performance data to provide consistent feedback. This ensures that customers receive the necessary services to help them reach their employment and training goals.

During PY 2018, some examples of surveys used to assist in providing customer satisfaction at the local level include the following:

- NYSDOL developed a Training Inventory survey that was sent to LWDB Directors. The survey examined the training resources available at the local and state level. The results of the survey will be used to create a proposed NYS Training Plan.
- On June 17, 2019 a survey was sent to LWDB Directors regarding career counselors and whether the counselors in the career centers perform similar job duties to NYSDOL Employment Counselors. The feedback was used to determine the need for an Employment Counselor Academy training, which is scheduled to take place in PY 2019.

VII. EVALUATION AND RELATED RESEARCH PROJECTS

A. WEEKLY/MONTHLY REPORTS

NYSDOL produces a number of weekly and monthly reports designed to evaluate the programs, initiatives, and solicitations implemented under WIOA Title I and III in NYS.

NYSDOL responds to a substantial volume of LWDB reporting requests on a quarterly, monthly, and ad-hoc basis. Reports provided include aggregate and individual reporting on performance; cohort demographics and characteristics; services; and outcomes to assist Local Areas with developing more effective service strategies.

NYSDOL focuses efforts on serving customers with barriers to employment. One of the special populations that NYSDOL prioritizes are justice-involved individuals. The Work for Success (WFS) report shows the number of formerly incarcerated participants in NYS that were served and/or hired during specific timeframes. The report also shows NYS job development with businesses that are interested in hiring WFS participants. Lastly, the report shows services and employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals referred to NYSDOL by the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) in several pilot locations, including: Albany, , Bronx, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Hempstead, Hicksville, Massapequa, Middletown, Newburgh, and Syracuse.

NYSDOL actively operates several USDOL funded grants. Programmatic narrative reports are submitted to USDOL on a quarterly basis that describe project activities related to grant goals and objectives. The grants, as well as the information submitted in our reports are:

- The Disability Employment Initiative (DEI): The report includes the number of youth with disabilities served; services provided; training outcomes; employment outcomes; the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program outcomes in NYS; and system change/capacity building activities.
- The Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants to Address the Opioid Crisis (Opioid NDWG): The report includes a summary of grant progress including anticipated participants served versus actual, and total grant allocations versus accrued expenditures; challenges and concerns; next steps and key areas of emphases planned for the project; development and implementation of effective practices and program model strategies; strategic partnership activities; business engagement strategies; key issues and technical assistance needs; significant activities, accomplishments, and success stories; and evidence and evaluation. Reports are also compiled by NYSDOL on a bi-weekly basis and reviewed by management to track grant progress.
- The Trade and Economic Transition National Dislocated Worker Grant (TET-NDWG): As it is an NDWG, the TET-NDWG has the same reporting requirements as the Opioid NDWG above including internal bi-weekly reports compiled by NYSDOL staff and reviewed to track grant progress and outcomes.
- The Fidelity Bonding Demonstration Grant: The report includes cumulative bonds purchased versus those issued; issues or concerns related to grant implementation; and outreach and educational activities.

VIII. ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY STATEWIDE FUNDS

A. RAPID RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND LAYOFF AVERSION

The NYSDOL Rapid Response Program functions as part of the Career Center system, working cooperatively with local WIOA Directors and Career Center managers, to serve affected workers before layoffs occur. NYSDOL Rapid Response is alerted when businesses submit a NYS Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) to NYSDOL 90 days in advance of layoffs. The program also receives alerts regarding upcoming or sudden layoffs via Career Center leads, Contact Center customer inquiries, media reports and other business intelligence. At that time, follow up is made with the business for planning intensive job placement assistance. These alerts are initially categorized as Expeditious Response and are sometimes recategorized as Rapid Response if the layoffs trigger the WARN threshold.

NYS's Rapid Response program saw a decrease in the number of received WARNs and an increase in the number of attached affected workers as filed in PY 2018 compared with PY 2017:

- PY 2018, 277 WARNs (-1%) impacting 27,520 affected workers (+12%).

Regarding Expeditious Response (non-WARN) service opportunities identified, NYS experienced a decrease in the number of accounts and an increase in the number of attached affected workers in PY 2018 compared with PY 2017:

- PY 2018, 208 accounts (-.04%) impacting 7,764 affected workers (+15%).

Rapid Response is initially focused on layoff aversion by advising the downsizing/closing business of the Shared Work Program, which is discussed in more detail later in this Section. When layoffs cannot be averted, onsite service orientations are scheduled for customer registration in OSOS and messaging. This includes:

- Providing intensive 1:1 job placement assistance;
- Issuing customized job lead templates for customers' initial consideration based on WARN job titles attachment (continuous customer engagement job leads follow);
- Providing ongoing job lead templates as the customer relationship evolves;
- Developing a skill-based resume;
- Advocating to a hiring business on the behalf of a customer who submitted an employment Application;
- Coaching employment interview techniques based on an upcoming job interview;
- Alerting for upcoming recruitments and job fairs (also, introduce customers to specific businesses strongly interested in the labor pool);
- Sharing business and customer testimonials;
- Discussing local Career Center services available;
- Sharing basic information on filing an Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim; and if an anticipated needed, use of a UI content expert remotely available to answer technical questions; and
- Arranging for a NYS Marketplace Navigator to present affordable health care options.

As identified in Section I. B., the Rapid Response unit is aligned with the NYSDOL Business Services unit under Business Engagement. Plans of service are initially drafted for downsizing/closing businesses and subject to modification based on continuing discussion with HR management. Alignment with sector strategies is a point of emphasis toward brokering the labor pool with businesses in expansion mode. The NYSDOL Rapid Response unit and NYSDOL Business Services unit regularly communicate about the Rapid Response customer skill sets and work experience to identify appropriate job leads in addition to conducting dedicated job fairs.

Business prospecting research tools and methods used by Rapid Response include, but are not limited to:

- Prospecting hiring businesses:
 - Quarterly Expanding Businesses Report;
 - NYS Employment Graph indicating hiring trends;
 - Internet mining;
 - Ongoing interaction with Business Services and Career Center staff; and
 - Leads as provided by served customers.
- Prospecting downsizing or closing businesses:
 - Quarterly Contracting Business Report;
 - Quarterly Dun and Bradstreet Distressed Business Report;
 - Internet mining;
 - Leads as provided by customers calling the NYSDOL Contact Center; and
 - Early Warning Report.
 - New regular Unemployment Insurance Benefit Claims, by region and firm single-site establishment firms, with five or more current week claims in NYS, referencing current week and seven previous weeks trend.

Daily goals are established for Rapid Response staff to outreach businesses and customers. Results are shared weekly with all Rapid Response ten regional units (20 field staff). During PY 2018, service activities produced:

- 7,856 unique number of businesses engaged.
- 10,258 unique number of total customers engaged.
- 8,868 unique total customers engaged, number attached to Rapid Response/Expeditious Response accounts.
- 2,140 Placements.

TAA is also highly considered when there is a possibility of layoffs due to foreign competition (directly or indirectly). Benefits to a customer when a petition is certified by USDOL include:

- Job training (classroom, online, and on-the-job training options).
- Income support payments.
- Job search and moving allowances.
- A tax credit to help pay for health insurance.
- A wage supplement for customers age 50 or older.
- Rapid Response asks the employer key fact finding questions to determine if a TAA petition should be filed with USDOL:
 - Is the company doing business in other countries? If yes, where?
 - Has the company recently been sold or purchased by another company that does the same or similar type of work? If yes, who?
 - Do they compete with products /services from other countries? If yes, who and/or what?
 - Does the worker know the name(s) of their competitors? If yes, who?
 - Has the worker trained replacement workers based in other countries prior to the layoff? If yes, what countries?

- Has the worker or co-workers traveled to other countries to train workers? If yes, what countries?

During PY 2018, TAA petition activity included 76 filed petitions of which 51 were certified, 14 were denied, and 11 are under consideration or terminated (e.g., affected workers covered by a previously certified petition or a petition withdrawn from consideration).

Layoff Aversion – Shared Work Program

When a business downturn occurs, the Shared Work Program is a way to retain the valued workforce without incurring layoffs, thereby sparing the expense of recruitment when business improves again. Plans can be submitted online to the NYSDOL's Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division and approval is received within one to two business days.

Rapid Response staff assists with actively promoting use of the Shared Work Program to distressed businesses. A business may submit a Shared Work plan even if it has already submitted a WARN.

Highlights of the Shared Work Program include:

- The business has the flexibility to determine which employees (Shared Work claimants) will be on the plan and how much their hours will be reduced (between 20% and 60%). If the needs of the business change, the plan can be amended.
- Employee benefits remain intact, unless reduction or elimination also occurs for the entire workforce.
- Employees included on a plan can be full-time, part-time, temporary, or seasonal.
- A plan can include as few as two employees.
- Shared Work applications can be submitted online.

During PY 2018, 353 Shared Work plans were approved to begin, and 3,218 participants were registered. This represents a decrease of 9% and 3%, respectively, when compared on a statewide basis with PY 2017.

NYS's unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) decreased to 4.0% by June 2019 compared to 4.1% in June 2018.

B. ACTIVITIES PROVIDED UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT EMPLOYMENT SERVICE SECTION (7B)

NYSDOL is responsible for the delivery of federally funded WP services (otherwise referred to as Employment Service programs), in coordination with other workforce partners and their programs through the Career Center delivery system. These responsibilities include:

- Maintaining and strengthening the public labor exchange through the operation of a central, statewide job bank and talent bank matching system;
- Providing Reemployment Services for UI customers; and
- Providing service to special target populations.

All adult customers served by Career Centers must be co-enrolled in WP and WIOA. Each of the 33 Local Areas developed a local plan outlining how Career Center service delivery is integrated across all programs. During PY 2018, 474,986 individuals were served in Career Centers, with 306,343 receiving Staff Assisted services.

Statewide policy establishes standards for the effective use of customer assessment in the Career Center System. In the policy, Career Center customers across NYS are required to receive an initial assessment to determine whether the customer requires Job Search Ready Services or Career Development Services. This policy emphasizes the value of providing quality job leads and referrals to customers to speed their entry into employment. It also emphasizes the value of identifying customers in need of a more comprehensive assessment to make informed decisions about the Career Development Services needed by the customer.

To help supplement the WP program, NYS administers the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program to serve UI claimants profiled as likely to exhaust benefits. RESEA is framed around four major customer service principles intended to provide intensive case management and a heightened level of services to UI claimants – expeditious entry to the Workforce Development Career Center system, assessment/identification of needs, individual reemployment plans, and continuous engagement.

The RESEA program operates in 65 select Career Center locations in all 33 Local Areas and all ten economic development regions of NYS. The program design has been shown to increase RESEA participants' competitive advantage by returning claimants to work earlier than non-RESEA claimants. NYS received just over \$24M in grant year 2019, which runs January 1, 2019 until December 31, 2019, and \$19.2M in grant year 2018.

C. NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANTS (DWGS)

Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant – Hurricanes Irma and Maria (DWG-Maria)

In February 2018, USDOL conditionally awarded NYSDOL up to \$10M in DWG funding for response to the impact in NYS for the Hurricanes Irma and Maria Evacuees. The initial incremental award was for \$1M.

NYSDOL released this \$1M in DWG funds through a Request for Application (RFA) on July 13, 2018. The funds will be available to applicants located in areas of NYS with significant populations of Puerto Ricans, including: Broome County; Erie County; Long Island; Monroe County; Montgomery County; New York City; Onondaga County; and Tompkins County. These areas were chosen to align with Census in-migration data as potential sites of relocation for Puerto Ricans leaving the island because of Hurricane Maria. NYSDOL has made six awards totaling \$598,135 under this RFA.

Trade and Economic Transition – National Dislocated Worker Grant (TET-NDWG)

On September 16, 2018 NYSDOL was awarded an \$8M TET-NDWG grant by USDOL. These funds were made available to address the economic and workforce challenges NYS faces due to globalization and advances in technology. NYSDOL partnered with 31 LWDBs to develop the state's application for funds (only Saratoga/Warren/Washington and Yonkers LWDBs are not participating).

Upon receipt of the award NYSDOL distributed the funds to the LWDBs to coordinate the provision of career, training, and supportive services to approximately 6,575 eligible dislocated workers. The funds will be administered by the LWDBs with monitoring and reporting oversight provided by NYSDOL throughout the period of performance (October 1, 2018 -September 30, 2020).

National Health Emergency Phase Two: Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants to Address the Opioid Crisis (Opioid NDWG):

On January 16, 2019 NYSDOL was awarded up to \$5,591,446 in Opioid NDWG funds, with an initial increment of \$1,863,815 available for immediate use. USDOL made these funds available to address the economic and workforce challenged by NYS residents and communities impacted by the opioid crisis. NYSDOL partnered with 12 LWDBs (Columbia/Greene, Dutchess, Finger Lakes, Hempstead/Long Beach, Herkimer/Madison/Oneida (HMO), Monroe, North Country, Onondaga, Orange, Suffolk, Sullivan, and Westchester/Putnam) to document the impact and need for NDWG funding. Upon receipt of the award NYSDOL distributed the funds to the LWDBs to coordinate the provision of services to approximately 701 eligible participants. Allowable services include, career, training, and supportive services. Additionally, funds may be used to provide subsidized disaster relief employment to participants. Although Opioid-NDWG services are available to all dislocated workers within the Local Area, additional training opportunities are available to those that voluntarily disclose qualifying opioid impacts.

The LWDBs are responsible for the administration of program funds, with NYSDOL providing oversight and reporting. Additional funding increments will be made available as NYS meets expenditure targets. These funds will be released to the LWDBs as available and needed to support program activities throughout the December 1, 2018 thru December 31, 2020 performance period.

D. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS OF THE NYS WORKFORCE SYSTEM

NYSDOL continues to provide training and capacity-building activities and technical assistance to NYS's workforce development and Career Center System. Training opportunities are provided to all levels of workforce professionals, from NYS and LWDB members to front-line direct service delivery staff in the Career Centers, program providers, and stakeholders. Capacity-building activities will continue to be delivered to workforce professionals statewide through a variety of methods including videoconferencing, conference calls, webinars, classroom training, and WIOA Interagency Partner meetings.

Training needs throughout NYS are regularly assessed through continuous communication and analysis of performance data. Trainings are developed based on the identified need. NYSDOL also maintains a Programs and Tools for Workforce Professionals page on the NYSDOL website which includes guides for a multitude of programs, appropriate data entry practices, and fact sheets.

During PY 2018, a Policy Workgroup was created to focus on developing a toolkit to assist LWDB Directors in identifying required and recommended policies and procedures.

NYS Workforce System technical assistance needs have been identified as:

- Avenues and resources for recruitment and retention of OSY youth, particularly those with multiple barriers to employment;
- Resources to motivate youth with basic skills deficiency to pursue education;
- Toolkits and materials for new front-line staff to learn about WIOA requirements, core partners, and the broader workforce system;
- Data validation elements for reporting; and
- Technical assistance to better serve special populations such as: the LGBTQ community, individuals on the autism spectrum, and individuals with mental health issues.

E. AT-RISK AND PRIORITY POPULATIONS SERVED

Out of School Youth;

- NYS continues to build capacity of Local Areas to help retain OSY. This year a webinar was facilitated on supporting foster, runaway/homeless youth with other programs under the Social Security Act. The Local Areas are increasing their use of social media as a strategy for engaging out of school youth.

Low-income adults;

- As required in WIOA, low income adults are given priority for career and training services in Career Centers.

Dislocated workers;

- As described previously, NYSDOL is currently operating two National Dislocated Worker Grants: the TET-NDWG, and the Opioid NDWG. Both provide Career, Training, and supportive services to Dislocated Workers, including those who have been affected by the opioid crisis.

Individuals who are basic skills deficient;

- NYSDOL issued Technical Advisory #19-2: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth Program – Participant Eligibility Criteria to provide guidance on basic skills deficiency policies. Consistent with this guidance, local areas have developed local policies and begun using valid and reliable assessments to determine basic skills deficiency of individuals instead of using rigorous National Reporting System approved tests.

Individuals with limited language proficiency;

- Individuals with limited language proficiency receive language assistance to access Career Center services. Language interpretation service are provided in more than 200 languages and vital documents are translated into the seven most commonly spoken languages in NYS.

Information on these services is provided in Technical Advisory #17-2.1: Language Interpretation Services Available at Career Centers.

Individuals with disabilities;

- Since 2010, NYS has been awarded four rounds of DEI competitive grants to place specialized staff in Career Centers. These specialized staff members, called Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs) are responsible for increasing the capacity of Career Center Career Pathways Programs to better serve people with disabilities. Additionally, DRCs are responsible for promoting the US Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program – and connecting customers to the NYS Employment Services System Administrative Employment Network via their Career Center. On October 1, 2017, NYSDOL was awarded a Round 8 DEI grant for \$2.25M. This most recent Round of funding places a strong emphasis on improving employment and training outcomes for youth (ages 14-24) with disabilities. This three-year capacity building project will continue through to September 30, 2020.
- Currently there are 16 DRCs providing capacity building coverage to 20 counties in NYS. Three DRCs are employed through the current round of DEI funding. Through sustainability efforts under previous rounds of DEI, the New York Employment Services System (NYESS) has established rolling contracts with five LWDBs to staff five DRCs in their Career Centers. Finally, eight DRCs from previous rounds of funding are still employed by their county/LWDB on a local level.
- By 2020 all NYS Career Centers will be equipped with a range of assistive technology that includes text scanning and reading software for individuals who are blind or visually-impaired, adaptive computer systems, and accessible work stations. Statewide rollout and staff training on use of the technology is underway and will continue as needed.

Veterans;

- Veterans' services in NYS are delivered through the Career Centers either under priority of service or through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG). A total of 70 Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs) and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs), funded through the \$8.3M JVSG, are located in Career Centers throughout NYS. DVOPs only serve those veterans and eligible spouses with significant barriers to employment (SBE), ages 18-24 or other veterans as defined by the Secretary of Labor. Veterans who are not eligible to meet with a DVOP are served on a priority basis by other Career Center staff. LVER staff's primary functions are to conduct job matching, job placement and business outreach on behalf of all veterans served by their Career Center. The DVOP specialist service delivery model provides early intervention, services tailored to individual veteran needs, and expedited referral of veterans who need additional assistance to services available within the workforce system. Through a continuous engagement of one-on-one appointments and between appointment contacts, veteran customers receive a comprehensive assessment, an individual employment plan, and customized job search support by a DVOP specialist. The veteran is provided with resume assistance, career guidance, coaching, job leads, and referrals to ensure suitable job placement.

Long-term unemployed;

- NYS developed the Strikeforce initiative, first identified in Section II. A. of this report, to help job-seekers in areas suffering from high unemployment or high poverty. The Strikeforce initiative aligns NYS Career Center and NYSDOL Business Services staff to provide services and job referrals to Long Term Unemployed (LTU) and low-income customers. Customers are provided with intensive services including a skills assessment, resume development, job leads as well as labor market and training program information.
- NYSDOL Business Services staff outreach to businesses with job opportunities that aligned with the targeted LTU customers. The purpose of this outreach is to build relationships with area businesses and increase the number of job leads for customers, as well as customize recruitments and targeted career fairs, and create multiple opportunities to connect qualified candidates with businesses.

Other individuals with barriers to employment, including:

Justice-involved individuals:

- NYSDOL administers the Federal Bonding Program in NYS to provide fidelity bonds that protects business against losses caused by the fraudulent or dishonest acts of “high risk” employees. Businesses receive the fidelity bonds free-of-charge, as an incentive to hire these high-risk applicants. Each bond provides \$5,000 worth of coverage and has a \$0 deductible. The maximum amount of coverage that can be provided to a business is \$25,000 (five bonds). Fidelity coverage is free and lasts for six months. In 2019, NYSDOL issued bonds to ten job-seekers at a total of \$70,000 of coverage.
- On June 14, 2019, NYSDOL was awarded a four-year Fidelity Bonding Demonstration Grant (FBDG) from USDOL in the amount of \$100,000. Through this funding, NYSDOL can purchase fidelity bonds to assist persons with criminal records, including individuals recovering from Opioid and other drug addictions, in obtaining employment. The FBDG concludes on June 30, 2023.
- NYSDOL developed a pilot program called Work for Success (first identified in Section VII. A. of this report), working in conjunction with community-based organizations and the Division of Criminal Justice Services to promote and increase the employment of formerly incarcerated individuals. Career Centers provide Work for Success liaisons, known as Reentry Employment Specialists, who assist jobseekers in overcoming barriers to employment due to incarceration, as well as matching formerly incarcerated individuals to job openings. Regional Business Service Teams are working to educate businesses on the program’s incentives and providing job development services. Because of staff outreach, more than 21,000 businesses have hired eligible candidates. Since the program started in March 2013, over 40,000 formerly incarcerated individuals have been served and 68,000 individuals have found employment.

Displaced Homemakers:

- NYSDOL administers the NYS Displaced Homemaker program, which is funded with \$1.62M in non-federal, state funds. In 2019, NYSDOL issued funding to ten (10) organizations in Albany, Bronx, Brooklyn, Nassau, Oneida, Schenectady, Schoharie, Suffolk, Tompkins, and Westchester counties. Additionally, under WIOA, displaced homemakers are considered dislocated workers. This makes them eligible for all dislocated worker services available under WIOA, including but not limited to: career pathway development and counseling; help applying for jobs with interview preparation, resume and cover letter writing; job search strategies, readiness, and referrals; career and computer workshops; information about training and educational services; and referrals to services, such as childcare, medical, housing, transportation, and financial literacy needs.

At Risk and Priority:

Individuals living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS):

- A successful outcome under a previous round of the DEI was the development of a curriculum entitled: “Serving People Living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV): A Training for Employment Services Providers.” This three-hour training was developed in partnership with the Department of Health AIDS Institute and Working Positive Coalition to prepare employment services providers to deliver sensitive services to the diverse population of people who are living with HIV in NYS. With the help of NYSDOL’s Title IV partners, this curriculum was repurposed to be applicable to any population that faces stigma. Further, the good work that facilitated the creation of this training, also influenced the Department of Health AIDS Institute to adopt similar best practices under various rounds of DEI, such as convening local level workgroups, and the importance of making free benefits advisement services available to job seekers collecting Social Security, or other public benefits.

F. CHALLENGES THE NYS WORKFORCE SYSTEM FACES

New York has three sub-county level Local Areas: Yonkers, Hempstead/Long Beach, and Oyster Bay. Additionally, Yonkers Local Area sits fully inside the Westchester-Putnam Local Area. These sub-county areas make it difficult to apply the Statistical Adjustment Model to these four Local Areas when establishing Negotiated Local Area goals and when determining Adjusted Local Area goals after the program year has concluded.

One of the larger challenges the NYS workforce system faces is the absence of one unified case management system for all partners to use. The reporting requirements under WIOA are difficult at best because each core partner uses a different system to collect and report data. These systems do not communicate with one another making collecting and aggregating data from multiple partners challenging. The WIOA Data Integration workgroup was established to address data and reporting challenges and determine a strategy moving forward. This group meets regularly, has data sharing agreements in place to share wage data among partners, has been examining how other states share and report participant information and will continue to work toward determining a solution. The WIOA Business Engagement workgroup has begun to address this through the use of OSOS for tracking business engagement activities across multiple core partners.

With the passage of the NYS Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) in 2019, and the increased prevalence of individuals disclosing that they are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA), as well as non-binary and gender-non-conforming (GNC), it is now more important than ever to address staff capacity to serve these individuals. The Career Center system is often the first place that an individual from the LGBTQIA community walks through to access services as they transition to employment. This is a critical time. Many of these individuals have faced stigma, discrimination, and trauma. One bad experience at a Career Center has the possibility to turn an individual away from the workforce system, denying them access to the critical services that they need to walk the road to work. Workforce staff need to be prepared to serve these individuals from a position that is inclusive, well-informed, and sensitive to their diverse needs, and NYSDOL will be training staff in the coming year.

G. STRATEGIES/POLICES RELATING TO PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING

NYSDOL was a recipient of the \$12M Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Pay-for-Success Pilot Project Grant to serve formerly incarcerated individuals which ran from October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2017. This Pilot Project also included a second non-federally funded phase for services which ran through September 30, 2018. This experience will inform future strategies and policies relating to Pay-for-Performance contracting initiatives including those funded with state-level and local-level WIOA funds and non-federal funds. NYSDOL awaits additional guidance from USDOL on how to implement Pay-for-Performance initiatives that comply with all the fiscal and programmatic requirements of WIOA.