



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **Utah Department of Workforce Services**

| Workforce Investment Act  
Program Year 2014

<http://www.jobs.utah.gov>



# WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT ANNUAL REPORT

## Utah Department of Workforce Services

### Program Year 2014

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert's focus on the economy has led Utah's recovery from the Great Recession, while attracting businesses and investment to the state as well as helping homegrown businesses flourish. The Governor continues to focus on four priorities; education, energy, jobs, and self-determination.

### Education

For the Education component of his vision, the Governor continues to support the goal that 66 percent of working-age Utahans will have a postsecondary degree or professional certification by the year 2020. Based on research conducted by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (2009), two-thirds of all jobs by 2018 will require a post-secondary degree or certificate. In addition, the Governor is concerned about the number of Utah students entering post-secondary education with a need for remediation, especially in the area of math. As such, a number of initiatives have cultivated. The Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) supports the Education priority not only through Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs, but through other initiatives which continue to be enhanced and expanded, including UtahFutures and the Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership (UCAP) and STEM initiatives which are discussed in more detail throughout this report.

### Energy

Energy is a priority globally, and Utah plans to be a leader in energy production. The Governor set forth a call to action to, "ensure access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy by producing 25 percent more electrical energy than we consume by 2020". Given Utah's unique ability to produce energy from a multitude of sources, including wind, solar, oil, gas and coal, Utah has an opportunity to grow its energy-related workforce and business base.

### Jobs

Governor Herbert has stated, "The role of government is to empower the private sector – to create a stable and predictable business environment, and to stay off your back and out of your wallet." Governor Herbert put out a call to action to accelerate private sector job creation of 100,000 jobs in 1,000 days. The Governor did not simply hope for a better economy, but rather set the goal and continued to work with the business community. While the Governor's Office of Economic Development was recruiting new businesses to create jobs, DWS was connecting job-seekers to those new opportunities. In August of 2014, that goal was not only met but exceeded when 112,200 jobs were created by the 1,000<sup>th</sup> day.

In 2012 the Governor, through the Governor's Office of Economic Development, laid out four objectives to achieve this goal as detailed in Utah's Economic Development Plan. Although the goal of reaching 100,000 jobs in 1,000 days has been met, these objectives continue to be a part of the Governor's priority for jobs.

- Objective 1: Strengthen and grow existing Utah businesses, both rural and urban.
- Objective 2: Increase innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment.

- Objective 3: Increase national and international business.
- Objective 4: Prioritize education to develop the workforce of the future (Herbert, 2012).

DWS supports these objectives in numerous ways, including the administration of Job Growth Funds, coordination and collaboration of premier youth programs, and job-focused veterans’ initiatives. These initiatives are discussed in more detail in this report.

Additionally, one of the action items Governor Herbert has laid out is to, “Align public sector job training and placement efforts with private sector demands and workforce needs.” The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) continued to be focused on this area throughout PY14. The State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) under WIOA will continue to look for ways to focus on labor market demand trends and issues, shaping the jobs of today and influencing the opportunities for tomorrow.

### Self-Determination

The Governor’s final priority is that of self-determination. A healthy and sustainable workforce is key to economic success. Under this heading, the Governor detailed objectives in cultivating solutions for health care reform, public lands, and immigration. The broad scope of programs administered by DWS includes Medicaid eligibility, which supports the health care reform focus of this priority.

### Overarching Goals for the State’s Workforce System

As noted, Governor Herbert has created specific, attainable goals that are relevant to the economy of today and tomorrow. In doing so, he created objectives and action items to guide and challenge his cabinet. The DWS Executive Director and the SWIB (now the SWDB) are taking leading roles in this call to action. Collaboration and partnership are keys to achieving these goals. DWS executives, agency staff, and SWDB members serve on various boards, committees, and workgroups that target the Governor’s goals. DWS also partners and contributes in the Utah Economic Summit, Rural Economic Summit, and quarterly economic meetings. Beyond high-level coordination, the efforts of DWS employment counselors and workforce development specialists in meeting the needs of employers and job seekers also helps create a growing, vibrant economy.

## **A. PROGRAM YEAR 2014 HIGHLIGHTS**

Jon Pierpont, DWS Executive Director, has outlined four cornerstones to ensure that, “DWS will be the best-managed state agency in Utah.” The four cornerstones are:

- *Operational Excellence:* We will deliver the highest quality services, with innovative methods, at the most efficient cost.
- *Exceptional Customer Service:* We will meet the needs of our customers with responsive, respectful and accurate service.
- *Employee Success:* We will provide an environment that fosters professional growth and personal fulfillment.
- *Community Connection:* We will actively participate with and engage our community partners to strengthen the quality of life for Utahans.

### State Workforce Investment Board Activities

The SWIB continued to examine the potential of Work Ready Communities and WorkKeys to support job seeker and employer needs. The SWIB provided feedback and approval of the department's Workforce Development Division Economic Service Area Operational Plan, which supports the four cornerstones outlined above. In addition, the SWIB learned about WIOA and discussed implementation and their role as the board transitions to the SWDB requirements.

The Apprenticeship sub-committee of the State Workforce Development Board is made up of both Union and non-Union representatives. One of the issues this group is working on is how to get qualified candidates into apprenticeship programs. The need for pre-apprenticeship has been identified and this group will be trying to inform education on the need to develop and use these programs to increase the number of qualified applicants they receive. Currently, this group is comprised mostly of individuals in the trades, occupations that typically utilize apprenticeship. It is also looking to expand membership to other occupations such as IT and Manufacturing that could benefit from strong apprenticeship programs.

The State Youth Council (SYC) will continue to meet under the recently implemented WIOA program as the Standing Youth Committee. One addition in PY13 that continued in PY14 is that during each quarterly meeting a youth was invited to come and talk about their experience with the WIA Youth program. One guest in PY14 included an Adult Education student who was close to completing the credits needed for earning his high school diploma. Many discussions took place during the most recent committee meetings about the changes to the WIA Youth program to the new WIOA program, including spending 75% of WIOA funds on out of school youth, expanding the definition of in school versus out of school youth, and spending 20% of funds on work experiences for youth.

### WIOA

DWS has had oversight of WIA and Wagner-Peyser for several years and has long benefited from a robust partnership with our Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education partners. In preparation for implementing WIOA, DWS began discussions with Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education on strategies to further coordinate programs and services to meet the requirements and vision of WIOA.

## **B. STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT**

### Governor's Office of Economic Development Collaboration

DWS continues to enhance one of its most important partnerships, that of Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED). Through executive and program-level positions, DWS works closely with GOED to assist in identifying skills gaps, business recruiting, and educating companies about the current skills available in Utah. Providing valuable data and collaborating closely with GOED, DWS hopes to serve as an integral team member in growing Utah's economy in both urban and rural areas..

### WorkReady Communities

Utah is one of 20 states participating in the ACT Certified WorkReady Communities initiative. Building this infrastructure in our state is a strategic response to industries asking for a “soft skills” assessment tool and skill building curriculum. The three soft skills areas include applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information. This infrastructure adds value on three fronts; individuals entering the workforce can earn National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC) demonstrating their “soft skills”, companies can reduce turnover and costs by "profiling" jobs to increase retention, and communities can be certified as “WorkReady” when the numbers of certified workers reaches a critical mass, which assists with local economic development and Site Selection. Additionally, DWS provides online remediation curricula to raise the soft skills level and increase the success of any individual, including those entering the workforce for the first time, career changers and incumbent employees. The infrastructure is currently being deployed at the county level including local economic development leaders, education partners such as the Applied Technical Colleges and local businesses. Since starting this initiative, Utah provided over 10,000 tests and 3320 National Career Readiness Certificates to customers. Currently, 34 Utah employers are utilizing WorkKeys as part of their hiring and promotional process and 11 counties are working toward becoming WorkReady Communities.

### Job Growth Fund

The Job Growth Fund (JGF) is a strategic revenue source that funds employer initiative programs. This revenue comes from the Unemployment Insurance Special Administration Expense Account. JGF helps to fund training, education and job creation programs. Projects using JGF are discussed throughout this report.

### Small Business Bridge Grant Pilot Program

The Bridge program was designed to assist small businesses in creating jobs by providing grant funding to offset training costs of those newly hired. The program was particularly effective in creating job growth in rural counties. In PY14 this grant program served 157 employers, resulting in 250 Jobs Created through January 30, 2015 when the program ended. Of those, positions 95 paid wages to address underemployment statewide (paying \$41,000 per year or more). Strategically investing job growth funds, through Bridge, into Utah small businesses has proven to be an important part of supporting economic expansion in Utah. However, since this was a program to assist businesses in hiring during the recession, it has been determined that it is no longer needed and has sunset.

### Workforce Development Specialists

Each economic service area within the state has knowledgeable workforce development specialists who work directly with employers to provide industry specific labor market information and occupational wage information to employers. The workforce development specialists focus on building relationships with employers, education, training providers and community partners. Together they identify and resolve issues that impede the development of an adequate supply of qualified workers for identified industries and occupations. Strategies include increasing training opportunities, developing worksite learning

opportunities such as OJT and youth internships, and promoting DWS employment exchange services based on the needs and demands of the employer.

The workforce development specialists share employer demand information with the service area director, employment counselors, job developers, and connection team staff. This sharing of information influences customer training, career counseling, job development, worksite learning, labor market information publications, and service area projects to enhance the economy and shape workforce development efforts. Each service area has an economist assigned to provide expert consultation for strategic planning, partnerships, and SWIB initiatives. One of the main focuses of service area initiatives is to provide the greatest opportunity for job seekers by targeting specific occupations and industries that are relevant to that service area's economic goals. Jobs are created by businesses, and the best way to support job seekers is by preparing them for and connecting them with the jobs that businesses demand.

### Labor Exchange for Employers

Employer focus groups and surveys asking about use, satisfaction, and needs of the labor exchange system have been gathered over the past two years. The information gathered has been used to make changes to the labor exchange system including:

- Mobile application for posting jobs.
- Ability for employers to upload applications and add pre-application questions to their job posting.
- Option for employers to schedule onsite recruitment visits in one of our local offices online.
- Request to host a worksite learning opportunity online.
- Instant feedback on job posting wages based on similar jobs in the same area.
- Improved job matching technology with star ratings on potential job candidates.

## **C. VETERANS INITIATIVES**

The programs, initiatives and services for serving veterans are all encompassed in DWS Veterans Employment Services. During PY12 the Veterans Employment Services was refocused and reorganized under the leadership of new Chief of Veterans Services.

The Chief identified four strategies that DWS is using to provide employment services to veterans: Employment, Employer, Outreach and Military Networks, and Education. These strategies are discussed below.

Additionally, the Executive Director of the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs is a member of the SWIB. DWS and the SWIB are actively connecting with veterans' organizations and veterans focused businesses to provide more employment opportunities for those who have served in the U.S. Military

## Employment Strategies

At the initial point of contact with all job seekers, veterans and their spouses are given the opportunity to identify themselves as a covered person who is eligible to receive priority of service. Staff and signage in the one-stops encourages military service members and spouses to self-identify.

Gold Card services are provided to any veteran job seekers presenting themselves as eligible for these services. Veterans' Representatives provide case management services including the 6-month follow up services, when needed.

DWS employs 15 Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, or Veterans' Representatives, to provide intensive services to veteran populations with significant barriers to employment or who meet priority group definitions. The Veterans' Representatives are funded by the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment & Training Service (VETS) Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG).

Veterans' Representatives are located in DWS employment centers throughout the state, and every employment center has an assigned Veterans' Representative to provide services.

## Employer Strategies

In 2010, Governor Herbert and DWS implemented the employer recognition program called the Utah Patriot Partnership (UPP). UPP allows employers to pledge that they will hire qualified veterans for their job openings. In return they receive a certificate signed by the Governor that can be posted in their place of business, and a star symbol is placed next to their job orders in the labor exchange system at [jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov).

From May 2011 to October 2014, 1,170 employers had pledged membership in UPP. In the last Federal Fiscal Year (through October 2015), an additional 395 employers have signed up for the program for a total of 1,545 participating employers to date. More than 43 percent of all participants have posted a job in the last 6 months.

Five Hero 2 Hired Job Fairs were conducted this past year in collaboration with the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce and the Utah Veteran and Military Employment Coalition. Over 300 employers participated in these events. Various Service Areas throughout the rural parts of the State hosted separate Veteran Job Fairs in conjunction with local chambers of commerce and institutions of higher education. This expanded the number of employers by an additional 80 employers.

An additional effort to create and enhance veteran employment launched a Veterans Business Partnership Committee coordinating efforts with the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the US Small Business Administration, the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and community veteran groups. This committee works to help veterans start or expand their own business creating employment for themselves and others

### Outreach and Military Networks Strategies

DWS continues efforts in developing relationships with key partners in providing services to veterans by meeting monthly with the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce Military Advisory Committee, the Veterans Affairs' Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Committee, the Utah Veteran and Military Employment Coalition, the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs, the Veteran Business Advisory Committee, and the Utah National Guard and Reserve units throughout the state

### Education Strategies

DWS implemented the Accelerated Credentialing to Employment (ACE) Program in July 2012 to connect Veterans, members of the active components, currently serving members of the Utah National Guard and the Reserve as well as their respective spouses with licensing and credentialing entities or into employment.

DWS employs four full-time ACE specialists throughout the state. During PY14, a total of 386 individuals were placed in training and/or education programs resulting in 266 obtaining a license or credential and 255 were placed in employment through the work of the ACE specialists. The "Estimated Annualized Wages" of those placed in employment was \$5,237,371.00. These outcomes demonstrate the ACE program's ability to provide outreach to targeted job seekers and as a result ACE is being funded for a fourth year with Job Growth Funds.

Additionally, DWS is a participant in a Veterans Education Working Group that addresses issues specific to Utah veteran students. The Veteran Education Working Group is comprised of representatives from the Utah System of Higher Education, the Utah College of Applied Technology, the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs, and DWS. In light of the success of last year's Veterans Education Summit, the working group again planned and delivered a summit in April of 2015. The summit is discussed further under the State Discretionary Fund Usage section below.

## **D. WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES**

Utah's PY14 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Annual Report reflects the state's commitment to strengthen the state's workforce development system. The state met or exceeded all WIA Program Year 2014 common measure performance standards with the exception of the Dislocated Worker Entered Employment and Employment Retention measures, which were still well within 80 percent of the Department of Labor's negotiated level. All required elements are reported uniformly based on guidance from the Department of Labor so that a state-by-state comparison can be made.

Utah Department of Workforce Services Program Year 2014 Common Measure Performance Outcomes				
Common Measure Element	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Attained	Measure Results
<b>Adult Program</b>				
Entered Employment	64.0%	68.3%	106.7%	Exceeded
Employment Retention	87.0%	86.9%	99.9%	Met
Six Month Average Earnings	\$15,000	\$15,434	103.9%	Exceeded
<b>Dislocated Worker Program</b>				
Entered Employment	81.0%	81.6%	100.1%	Exceeded
Employment Retention	90.0%	88.3%	98.1%	Met
Six Month Average Earnings	\$16,400	\$20,689	126.2%	Exceeded
<b>Youth Program</b>				
Placement	61.0%	67.4%	110.5%	Exceeded
Degree Attainment	55.0%	62.9%	114.4%	Exceeded
Literacy & Numeracy	36.0%	36.8%	128.1%	Exceeded

Participants Served and Exited by Program			
Program	Participants Served	Participants Exited	Exited to Served
Adult	247,676	210,631	85%
Dislocated Worker	2,956	1,656	56%
Youth	2,318	1,114	48.1%

WIA Youth Performance Outcomes			
Total Youth Participants		In-School Youth Participants	
Served	2,318	Served	2,406
Exited	1,114	Exited	872
		Out-of-School Youth Participants	
		Served	279
		Exited	242

## **E. STATE DISCRETIONARY FUND USAGE**

In the past, Utah has used one-third of the previous 15 percent set-aside for administrative costs such as case edits/monitoring, finance, audit, human resources, communications, executive management, and legal costs. The remaining two-thirds were used to pay for program costs, such as state program staff, DWS' case management system (UWORKS), Workforce Information staff, Worker's Compensation, and statewide

activities. By centralizing these functions DWS reduced overhead costs, allowing more funds to be spent on training for customers.

With set-aside funding being maintained below 15 percent, DWS was forced to shift certain costs to the operations, namely the costs associated with UWORKS and the Performance Review Team (case edits/monitoring), which are two of the higher cost items. When set-aside was restored to 8.75 percent for PY13, the UWORKS and Performance Review Team costs were moved back to the state level. During the last quarter of PY14, the Performance Review Team costs were again shifted to operations. The reduced availability of funds continues to impact our ability to use these funds extensively toward affecting performance beyond the required activities.

DWS was able to use a small portion of funds to collaborate on a Veterans Education Summit help at Dixie State University in St. George, Utah. The summit was jointly planned by DWS, the Utah Department of Veterans & Military Affairs, the Utah System of Higher Education, the Utah College of Applied Technology and the Dixie State University Veteran Services office. The summit was attended by almost 80 faculty, department chairs, deans, administrators, student services staff, veteran coordinators, academic counselors and advisors. DWS staff presented on the WIA programs as well as the ACE program. Other topics included helping veterans transition from combat to the classroom, a student and faculty panel on student success, PTSD and services available to veterans. Additionally veteran student centers throughout the state were highlighted and best practices were shared. The summit was a result of a working group between the entities named above who have been meeting for over two years to discuss and collaborate on how to increase the success of veterans in education.

## **F. INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE**

### GED Attainment

DWS continues to work with multiple school districts, educational providers, and the Utah State Office of Education Adult Education Program to develop strategies to assist individuals in obtaining their high school diplomas or GEDs and slow the drop-out rate of current students. Adult Education has provided access to their system (UTopia) for DWS to obtain information on common customers. Having access to the system has made monitoring for these customers more efficient and meaningful. In anticipation of the implementation of WIOA on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, DWS youth counselors began increasing collaboration with Adult Education in order to determine whether youth attending Adult Ed. should be in-school or out of school based on the new WIOA definitions.

### STEM

Utah's Legislature has invested \$31.5 Million in STEM education over the last two years. Federal grants have added about \$10 Million and over \$2 Million has been raised from the private sector for the STEM media campaign. At the Closeit.org Summit held in October 2014 in Washington DC, Utah was given the Excellence in Innovation award and has been recognized as a leader in the nation for its collaboration and

coordinated efforts surrounding STEM. It has been noted that Utah is one of the very few states that has included the public workforce system.

DWS has administered the STEMLink Partnership which provided grants to develop, implement, expand or enhance STEM skills and activities for students. These grants focused on helping under-served youth gain and apply STEM skills and targeted those students requiring the most help in gaining employable skills needed to achieve financial independence. The overarching goals for projects funded were to:

- Increase interest and excitement in STEM learning
- Increase STEM skills, understanding, knowledge and competency
- Increase awareness and interest in STEM education and career pathways
- When appropriate, provide students with industry recognized or stackable credentials.

A total of 17 projects were funded impacting over 100 individuals in PY14.

DWS has also continued to support the Utah's annual STEMfest event, which offers hands-on, interactive exhibits to junior high and high school students. This event is provided through industry, education, and government collaboration and exposes students to a wide variety of STEM training opportunities and careers.

To enhance the partnership and synergize efforts in STEM activities DWS is creating a STEM Specialist position which will be a shared liaison position with the STEM Action Center (AC) and funded at 50% by each entity. This position is modeled after the successful implementation of a liaison between the STEM AC and the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) and will be charged to align the workforce development efforts of both DWS and the STEM AC.

The STEM Specialist will perform a mapping of Utah's existing STEM resources, gaps and successful models to replicate. A strategy and network of partnerships will be developed to connect our youth, underemployed and veteran customers to high wage, and high demand STEM-related jobs through clear and concise pathways with multiple entry and exit points. The STEM workforce development strategy will align with the mission, vision and goals of DWS, WIOA – Career Pathways and Sector Strategies, and other DWS and STEM AC initiatives.

#### Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership

The Utah Cluster Acceleration Partnership (UCAP) is a collaborative partnership among DWS, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) and the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED).

UCAP provides funding to public post-secondary educational institutions to develop, implement or enhance educational programs that are responsive to regional and statewide industry needs. UCAP also provides funding to state and local economic developers that serve a state designated industry cluster or regional economic need.

The program is intended to increase the number of individuals who earn industry-recognized credentials, develop career pathways with multiple entry and exit points for students along the post-secondary education

continuum and create systemic change by establishing processes and programs that better connect education, the workforce and employers.

Applicants are encouraged to form a consortium to develop programs that will impact individuals across a region, statewide, industry sector or cluster of related industries and leverage their collective experience to expand the available education and career training programs. Consortium applications with at least two eligible institutions or local economic developers and multiple employers within a cluster are also encouraged.

The primary outcome measurement for UCAP is the annual amount of new capacity created to award certificates and degrees that meet the Governor's 66 percent by 2020 initiative, with specific relevance towards educational programs that serve cluster industries in the State (<http://www.business.utah.gov/targeted-industries/economic-clusters/>).

The link between education and employers is crucial for developing a qualified workforce and so the UCAP metrics reflect business engagement activities. UCAP applicants are required to engage local industry to gain support for their projects as well as local DWS representatives to promote collaborative workforce development efforts.

In total, 15 projects were funded resulting in 37 new programs developed or expanded creating capacity for an additional 925 individuals the ability to receive a certificate or degree.

<b>Cluster</b>	<b>Project Sponsor</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>Approved Funding</b>
Aerospace	Box Elder County	Utah Unmanned Aircraft System Test Center	\$200,000
Manufacturing	Bridgerland ATC	Automated Manufacturing & Robotics BATC - Brigham City Campus	\$100,000
Manufacturing	Dixie ATC	Advanced Manufacturing Alliance	\$200,000
Manufacturing	Ogden Weber ATC	Advance Composites Equipment (ACE)	\$100,000
Manufacturing	Salt Lake Community College	Plastics Molding Skilled Workers Project	\$175,000
IT	Snow College	IT/CS Expansion Program	\$110,000
Aerospace	Southwest ATC	Advanced Manufacturing	\$120,000
Aerospace/IT	Southern Utah University	Workforce Development for MSC Aerospace Industry Cluster	\$73,500
Energy	Uintah Basin ATC	Well Control/Safety Enhancement	\$77,500
Multiple	University of Utah	Church & State Business Incubator	\$200,000
Life Sciences	University of Utah	A Cell Therapy & Regenerative Medicine Mini-Cluster	\$200,000
STEM	Utah State University - Moab	Launching Career, Technical and STEM Education Programs	\$101,000
Life Sciences	Utah State University - Eastern (Blanding Campus)	Expanding Healthcare Workforce in Eastern Utah	\$160,000
Life Sciences	Utah Valley University	Regulatory Affairs Graduate Certificate - Year 2	\$33,000
Manufacturing	Weber State University	Production Control and Automation	\$150,000
			<b>\$2,000,000</b>

### Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

DWS continues to coordinate with the State's Senior Community Service Employment Program and incorporated their State Plan within DWS' Five-Year WIA and Wagner-Peyser State Plan for PY12. The WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker program specialist attends a quarterly coordination with the SCSEP director and his team. This collaboration has resulted in better practices for sharing information and coordinating services for common customers.

### JumpStart

In collaboration with Granite School District (in Salt Lake County) DWS identified a need for refugee youth to further develop their English skills as well as earn credits toward their High School Diploma. Through the WIA youth program, refugee youth are able to participate in the JumpStart program during the summer where they continue to learn English, earn high school credits and stay on track to graduate from high school. The program has received a lot of positive response from the school district and the youth who participate.

This was the third year DWS has been in partnership with offering the Jump Start program to WIOA youth participants through Cottonwood High School. The program is offered during the summer and therefore lapses program years. The first summer it was offered was 2013 and there were 53 participants who completed the program. The program continued for the summer of 2014 with 43 completing. This year, 62 WIOA youth customers participated in the program, each earning at least .5 of a credit or more, and 4 of them completes the credits the needed to obtain a high school diploma.

### Labor Exchange System

DWS collaborated with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry to submit a grant application, proposing the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) be used to re-write their states' labor exchange systems, incorporating innovative technology to improve outcomes for job seekers and employers. The proposal, known as the Next Generation Labor Exchange, was approved and awarded at \$4,637,238 and is in its final year in both Utah and Montana.

The Next Generation Labor Exchange project will occur over the course of three years, with the project now in its third year. A contractor has been secured to evaluate the status and outcomes of the grant. Baseline data was collected on Utah's current labor exchange system prior to the Year One grant changes being implemented in November 2013; additional data was collected from November 2013 through September 2014 regarding the changes made and the data used to implement changes October 2014. The Year Three grant changes were then made in October 2015 and incorporated the feedback collected during the previous year. Data will continue to be collected over the course of the next year to determine if any additional changes are needed.

## Utah Futures

UtahFutures is Utah’s premier career information system for students, job seekers, employment service providers, educational institutions, and more. It is provided free of charge to all Utah residents and features cutting-edge career planning tools, leading labor market information, job search success skills, education and training options, and direct links to Utah employment opportunities. One exciting component of the system is that it is available anytime, anywhere with applications available for iPhone, iPad, and Android.

UtahFutures.org was deployed August 15, 2014 as a “pilot” website. During the past year Utah Department of Workforce Services and K-12 counselors received training for the new website. The site will continue to receive key enhancements through the next year. A full-time trainer has been hired to support statewide training activities.

UtahFutures is currently utilized in most Utah public and charter schools and is offered to private schools. Profiles within the system are available to students as they transition to post-secondary education or the workforce. DWS, Adult Education, Higher Education and Vocational Rehabilitation utilize UtahFutures as an employment counseling tool. The new system has direct connections to Utah’s job exchange system. Also, the community partners component allows businesses, colleges, training providers, non-profit organizations, and other groups to create profiles and connect with students and job seekers to share information about jobs, programs, and to post scholarships.

An Executive Steering Committee, appointed by the Governor, oversees the system and was expanded during the 2015 legislative sessions. Members of this committee include: DWS, Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority, Utah System of Higher Education, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), the Governor’s Office, the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, Utah Colleges of Applied Technology, and Utah State Office of Education.

Since the release of the UtahFutures pilot (August 15 – October 31, 2014) there are:

- 39,100 Student Users
- 12,300 Adult Users
- 589 School Counselors
- 16 Community Partners

These numbers will continue to grow as more students, job seekers, counselors, and community partners create accounts and use the system.

## Work Readiness Evaluation

For even the most skilled individual, getting a job is an overwhelming prospect. To assist job seekers at any level, the Work Readiness Evaluation process was developed to help both job seekers and staff members have a focused approach for job preparation activities.

The process consists of evaluating a job seeker in specific areas: job search techniques, résumé/master application, and interviewing skills. Based on this evaluation, staff members can educate and provide

resources to assist the job seeker to become well versed in job search best practices in each of those areas. Ensuring quality and consistency is an important factor, so validation criteria in each area were established to provide the seeker as well as staff member specific goals to work toward.

The information DWS provides to job seekers and all of the quality components of the Work Readiness Evaluation are continually being reviewed with employers. This ensures DWS is effectively preparing job seekers to meet employer needs. Since beginning the Work Readiness Evaluation process, employers have responded positively and noted that applicants who have been assisted through this process are better prepared for interviews with a higher quality resume and professionalism than other candidates who have not utilized this process. The Work Readiness Evaluation is provided through both mediated and online self-services.

During PY14 21,084 total elements (job searching techniques, resume writing, interviewing skills, or a combination of these elements) were addressed with job seekers. The Work Readiness Evaluation has proven to be an effective tool in helping customers to obtain employment more effectively.

### Labor Market Information

The DWS Workforce Research & Analysis Division (WRA) gathers economic and labor market information. The mission of WRA is to, “generate accurate, timely, and understandable data and analyses to provide knowledge of ever-changing workforce environments that inform sound planning and decision-making.” WRA collects information describing the Utah labor market including wages, employment projections by industry, occupation and area, cost of living, employment and unemployment, labor force characteristics, career trends and industry trends.

DWS, SWIB, and outside entities utilize the workforce information collected in planning and decision-making to determine job growth areas, skills gap, income and wage data, migration, demographics, cost of living, and career exploration opportunities. This information is critical in determining what industries and occupations to target while working with partners in business and education to ensure skills training availability. Additionally, information collected is also used to assist customers while providing core, intensive, and training services, allowing the customer to make informed career choices.

DWS also delivers this high-quality employment statistical information to customers through the labor market information page located on the [DWS website](#). Analysis of data collected and published for the Bureau of Labor Statistics state and federal cooperative statistical program is in demand-driven formats. DWS works closely with customers, employers, and partners to make the information meaningful and practical for end-users. DWS publishes a [directory](#) describing the various workforce information products available.

### WOOD Tool

Labor Market Information (LMI) can be daunting to job seekers, but it is one of the most essential tools to a successful job search and career planning. In an effort to make LMI more accessible and understandable to job seekers, DWS created the Wages and Occupational Openings Data (WOOD) tool. The WOOD tool

was launched in PY12 and continues to be utilized by DWS staff and job seekers. DWS uses the WOOD tool as an integral part of their career pathways education process.

The WOOD tool allows job seekers to search for LMI in multiple ways. A basic search allows for keyword, occupational title, or occupational group searches. Another search method allows job seekers to explore occupations based on criteria most important to them, including wage range, education level, geographic location, and interests based on Holland code categories. Any combination of these criterions can be used to help job seekers identify occupations to meet their needs.

The results of the search are displayed in an easy to understand table with comparisons of transferable jobs, hourly or annual wages, annual openings, employment projections, education level, licensure requirements, and current job orders in the labor exchange system, and employers/industries who hire for that position. Using the WOOD tool, job seekers can also view additional information such as skills needed and education providers and can apply for open jobs with just a few clicks.

During PY14 the WOOD tool was accessed approximately 100,000 times by customers and staff to obtain self-service LMI information.

## **G. UTAH USAGE OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT WAIVERS**

DWS recognizes the importance and flexibility waivers afford the workforce development system. The following waivers were in operation through PY14:

- Individual Training Accounts for WIA Eligible Youth

DWS was operating under an approved waiver for the exclusion and prohibition of using Individual Training Accounts for youth. The benefit of this waiver was flexibility in youth program delivery. Youth learn responsibility by making informed decisions, and the waiver allowed participants to choose their post-secondary education provider, which supports the ability of the state to meet performance outcomes.

- Youth Procurement

WIA law and regulations allowed the WIA grant recipient to deliver the “framework” of WIA Youth services (outreach, intake, assessment, and creating individual service strategies) and Summer Youth Employment Opportunities. In addition to the elements allowed by law and regulation, DWS operated under an approved waiver allowing the state to deliver supportive services, work experience, and follow-up. DWS selected the providers of other WIA Youth services by competitive bids based on fee-for-service contracts. This model has resulted in increased efficiency as shown in the ability to serve more youth than in prior years and supports the state’s ability to meet performance outcomes.

- Subsequent Eligibility Determination of Training Providers

DWS operated under an approved waiver to postpone the implementation of the subsequent eligibility process for eligible training providers. The benefit of this waiver allowed Utah a larger pool of training providers for customer choice that fostered increased customer engagement. The result was more skilled customers entering the labor market with increased earnings and retention.

- Fifty Percent Transferability of WIA Adult and WIA Dislocated Worker Funds

DWS operated under an approved waiver to grant the SWIB the ability to transfer up to 50 percent of each program year's allocation between the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. This additional transfer allowance was beneficial in local planning and in meeting service needs of the community. It also enhanced Utah's ability to address workforce needs. The waiver allows the state to increase the number of dislocated workers supported by WIA, and thus performance outcomes, when current funding levels are unable to support the increase in demand, especially in areas hit hardest due to layoffs in the oil and gas industry during PY14.

- Requirement for Reporting Performance Outcome Measures

DWS operated under an approved waiver to enable Utah's workforce development partners to implement the six common performance measures (three adult and three youth) and waive the requirement to report on the 17 (15 core and two customer satisfaction) indicators of performance for employment and training activities. The waiver allowed the state to simplify and streamline the performance accountability system as it stretches across multiple programs and funding streams. By allowing this waiver, the case managers could directly focus on the common measures versus the additional 17 performance measures. The ability to focus only on the common measures ensures a greater probability of success and supports the state in meeting performance outcomes.

## **H. STATUS OF STATE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

### Performance Accountability

DWS formed a statewide team responsible for editing case files and monitoring programs in PY09. The Performance Review Team (PRT) provides rapid feedback to employment counselors, prevents errors and disallowed costs, and aligns with federal program audit requirements for monitoring and case management reviews. The PRT developed Compliance Review Tools that are program specific to adult and youth customers. The tools are refined to address various programs and services, including requirements for WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker, WIA Youth, TANF, Trade Act, etc. The PRT works in conjunction with the annual Single State Audit in an effort to ensure consistency in compliance review.

DWS utilizes PRT to ensure that cases remain in compliance with department policy and procedure. At minimum each employment counselor has ten percent of his or her cases reviewed by PRT each month. All aspects of eligibility and case management are reviewed to ensure policy is followed. When a case review is completed by the PRT, the results are forwarded to the employment counselor and their supervisor with the expectation that issues will be corrected and appropriate action taken. Individual PRT results are

used to identify training needs on an individual basis. PRT reviews are done within the UWORKS system. Results from an individual level to a statewide level are available real-time through DWS' dashboard reporting system eReports.

During PY13 DWS automated the "Second Set of Eyes" process, which ensured eligibility for all WIA cases was correctly determined before funds are expended. This process continued successfully in PY14.

The Utah State Auditor performs annual reviews of all DWS programs, including WIA. After performing a review of a select number of cases statewide, the State Auditor meets with state level program staff and a PRT representative to review the audit results. Process, pathway, and policy modifications are discussed as well as potential system enhancements to avoid similar errors in the future. The State Auditor works with the DWS Division of Internal Audit to prepare the final report to the appropriate federal agencies.

The Division of Internal Audit's contract monitoring team assists DWS in fulfilling its responsibilities as a pass-through entity of federal awards and to provide feedback to various contract management teams based on the contractors' fiscal and programmatic contract requirements.

### eReports

DWS utilizes a high-level dashboard reporting system known as eReports for the real-time review of performance outcomes for customers and employment counselors. These comprehensive reports allow management to identify strengths and weaknesses, discuss best practices, and create strategic plans as well as consistent statewide deliverables for all program types. This assists DWS in meeting the negotiated performance outcomes for common measures.

### WIOA Implementation Preparation

Most of PY14 was spent preparing for the implementation of WIOA. The law and draft regulations were evaluated for the impacts to customers, staff, pathways, policy and systems. Policy changes and system enhancements were planned and carried out along with staff training.

## **I. COSTS OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES**

<b>Cost of Program Activities</b> <b>PY 2014 / FFY 2015</b> <i>As of 06/30/15</i>		
<b>Program Activity</b>	<b>WIA Federal Spending</b>	
<b>Local Adults*</b>	\$4,953,791	
<b>Local Dislocated Workers*</b>	\$3,977,388	
<b>Local Youth*</b>	\$5,653,040	
<b>Rapid Response</b> (up to 25%) Sect. 134(a)(2)(A)	\$151,899	
<b>Statewide Required Activities</b> (up to 15%) Sect. 134(a)(2)(B)	\$364,442	
<b>Statewide Allowable Activities</b>	<b>Program Activity Description</b>	
Sect. 134(a)(3)	Miscellaneous Allowable Activities (Including Technical Assistance)	\$850,364
<b>Total of All Federal Spending Listed Above</b>		<b>\$15,950,924</b>

\*WIA Federal Spending includes Local Administration expenses.

## **J. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MEASURES**

Satisfaction surveys are a method of collecting information regarding perceptions of the current labor exchange system and services offered by DWS. The satisfaction surveys for job seekers and employers consisted of questions designed in partnership by the University of Utah's Social Research Institute (SRI) and DWS. The quantitative and open-ended questions were analyzed to uncover overall satisfaction with the labor exchange, satisfaction with specific labor exchange components, and identify suggestions for change.

After feedback from the seeker and employer satisfaction surveys is provided, it is compiled and analyzed by the Social Research Institute, with their analysis and subsequent recommendations being provided to DWS. DWS then evaluates the data, as well as SRI's analysis and recommendations, and the feedback is incorporated into future system changes and enhancements.

Both the job seeker and employer satisfaction surveys are self-reported and voluntary. Therefore, there are some limitations to the survey data as it is unknown how the responses of those who completed versus those that did not complete the surveys might differ in terms of satisfaction. The results of this analysis were used to describe the dominant views of job seekers and employers who agreed to share their views via the satisfaction surveys.

Due to the Workforce Innovation Fund grant we are randomizing job seekers into one of two different labor exchange systems. The customer service satisfaction results show the differences between the two systems. It was expected that customer satisfaction would decline slightly in the test system for these results as the first set of data is compared with a test system where only back end changes were made.

### Job Seeker Satisfaction

Job seeker satisfaction was measured using a simple online survey presented as job seekers access the system.

**Sampling:** The survey uses the following sampling procedure:

1. Job seekers are only eligible to take the survey if they have not taken a survey in the last 3 months.
2. Online sessions are sampled randomly (with probability initially set at 30%).
3. If the current session is sampled, the user is invited to participate at a random time during the session using the pop-up window.

**Data Collection:** The online surveys were (and continue to be) made available to potential participants through a pop-up invitation to participate. An individual chooses to participate in the study by clicking on the “START SURVEY” button. This link redirects the job seeker to a secure site hosted by SRI. The participant is first asked to review the informed consent document. If the person clicks NEXT, they enter the survey.

The scale for the satisfaction survey is embedded in the online survey. Participants are asked to rate their level of agreement with or rating of each for the following questions:

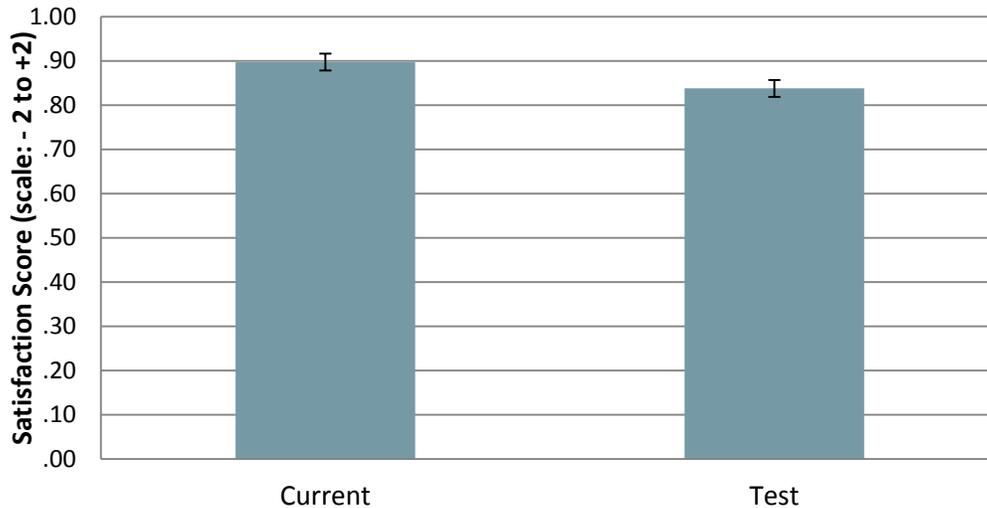
- It is hard to find what I need on jobs.utah.gov
- Overall, jobs.utah.gov is easy to use
- Creating my job search account on jobs.utah.gov was easy
- Searching for jobs on jobs.utah.gov is hard
- I often have trouble “signing-in” to job search
- I can’t find jobs that match my skills and abilities on jobs.utah.gov
- Jobs.utah.gov provides job matches that meet my search criteria
- Applying for jobs is easy using jobs.utah.gov
- I would recommend jobs.utah.gov to other job seekers
- I would return to jobs.utah.gov in the future to job search
- Overall, I am satisfied with my job search on jobs.utah.gov
- Quality of the information
- Overall appearance
- How well the site is organized

Each item was scored from -2 to +2, with higher scores indicating more satisfaction and lower scores less. (Items that were reversed scored reflected this convention.) The scores were averaged for each scale. The result of the satisfaction scale score indicates the level of seeker satisfaction.

**Job Seeker Satisfaction Results:** During the TC-1 period, which started on November 12, 2013 and ended on September 30, 2014, there were 2,205 valid scores in the current system condition and 2,536 in the test condition. There was a statistical difference between the test and current system ( $t(4654)=3.28, p<.05$ ). The

test condition had a lower overall satisfaction than the current system, but this effect was small relative to the overall variation in satisfaction (Cohen’s  $d=.07$ ). The users in the test condition had an average satisfaction score of .83. The current system users had an average satisfaction score of .89. Both scores represent generally moderate satisfaction with the online system

**Figure 3: Utah Job Seeker Satisfaction: TC-1**



Cases weighted to correct for response rates. Group differences were statistically significant ( $p<.05$ ). Error bars reflect 1 standard error of the

### Employer Satisfaction Measures

The method of data collection regarding employer satisfaction was the same as implemented with job seekers. Employers who access the state labor exchange system were asked to participate in a satisfaction survey. Not all employers access the system directly. In Utah in 2012, approximately 28% of employers had their job orders electronically uploaded to the labor exchange and another 28% received DWS staff-assisted services, indicating the job orders were entered by DWS workers. The remaining 44% of employers accessed the labor exchange directly, and these self-service employers were the focus of the online survey.

Starting in July 2013, a random sample of employers were invited to participate in the online satisfaction survey. Similar to the job seekers, employers were asked to participate at a random time during their session. The invitation to participate was followed by an IRB approved informed consent document. Data collection proceeded in the same manor it was with job seekers.

The satisfaction scale statements evaluated by employers included:

- I am comfortable using the internet to complete tasks on jobs.utah.gov
- It is difficult to navigate jobs.utah.gov
- I can do everything I want to do on jobs.utah.gov
- I would recommend jobs.utah.gov to other employers
- I often have trouble “signing-in” to post a job

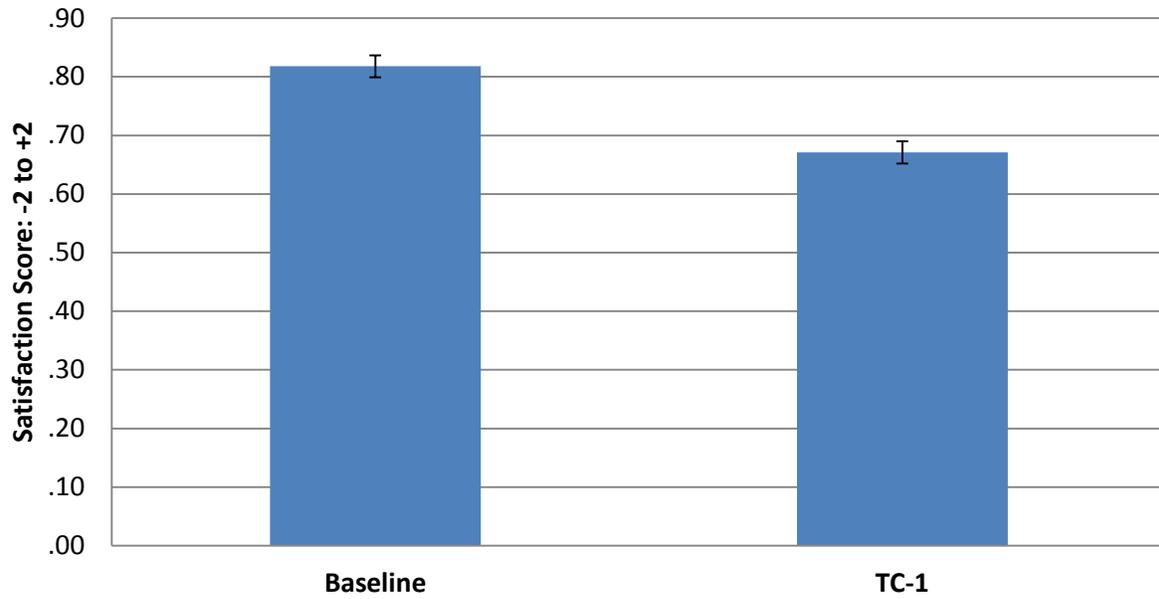
- Posting a job is easy on jobs.utah.gov
- Jobs.utah.gov provides us with enough job applicants from our job postings
- When posting jobs on jobs.utah.gov I have the flexibility to use my own screening criteria to find applicants
- Jobs.utah.gov provides us with qualified applicants who have the skills we are seeking
- I would recommend jobs.utah.gov to other employers for posting jobs
- Overall, I am satisfied with the ease of posting jobs on jobs.utah.gov

Item scoring within the scale and overall satisfaction score calculation was completed in the same way as it was for job seekers.

***Employer Satisfaction Results:*** As with job seekers, response rates for employers were calculated from January 1, 2014, until September 30, 2014, the end of the TC-1 period. There were 3,986 Utah employers asked to take a satisfaction survey during the TC-1 period and 517 said yes at least once. The overall response rate for Utah employers was thus 13%. Again, these rates represent users who at least said that they would take a survey, but not all users started or completed the survey after agreeing to take it.

Using the weighted data, there was a statistically significant difference in satisfaction between the baseline period and the TC-1 period for employers ( $t(116)=2.1, p<.05$ ). Users in the TC-1 period were less satisfied (.67) than users on the baseline period (.82) by a moderate margin (Cohen's  $d=.22$ ). These results should be viewed with caution because the baseline period did not contain the same calendar months as the TC-1 period. This comparison is not based on a randomized controlled trial and is quasi-experimental in nature.

Figure 27: Utah Employer Satisfaction: Baseline and TC-1



Utah Employer Satisfaction TC-1. Cases weighted to reflect response rates of large vs. small