

**PY11 Workforce Information Grant Annual Performance Report**

July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012

**1. Populate the Workforce Information Database (WIDb) with State and Local Data.**

Maintained the current WIDb and updated all core tables as required and according to guidelines as data became available. Through the search engine utilized in Illinois, the Workforce Info Center (WIC) (<http://illinois.virtuallmi.com/>), this database supports informed local and regional workforce analysis and employer services. Staff review feedback on the delivery of workforce information via the WIC and enhancements are identified for the appropriate internal implementation or prioritization for the Virtual LMI Consortium. (The Workforce Info Center is generally accessed through <http://www.ides.illinois.gov/>, the redesigned IDES website through the Workforce Partners and Data & Statistics tabs.)

**2. Produce and Disseminate Industry and Occupational Employment Projections.**

- ▶ Assembled, reviewed and posted statewide 2011-2013 short-term and statewide 2010-20 long-term industry and occupational employment projections.
- ▶ Updated online and print employment projections publications “Learn More Earn More” (<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/page.aspx?item=1003>) in both English and Spanish.
- ▶ Customer contact via email or phone for assistance with the analysis and interpretation of projections data continues to be the principal source of feedback on projections data.

**3. Conduct and publish relevant economic analyses, special workforce information, and/or economic studies determined to be of benefit to the governor and state and local WIBs.**

Based upon ongoing consultations with state and local workforce board and partner agency staff, during PY11 Economic Information and Analysis staff leveraged resources to conduct workforce analyses to address several critical workforce and economic development strategies in Illinois. We published two post recession labor market studies based on local area unemployment rates and mass layoff statistics and one study on the impact of the housing bust on household wealth. These studies were in lieu of the annual economic report and cover a broad perspective on economic and labor market conditions in the U.S. and Illinois.

Decreased Household Wealth: How the Housing Bust Led to National Economic Stagnation  
<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/publications/Publications/DecreasedHouseholdWealth.pdf>

The Illinois Labor Market after the Great Recession: The Economy Improves but Long-Term Unemployment Remains High  
<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/publications/PressReleases/TheIllinoisLaborMarketAftertheGreatRecession.pdf>

After the Recession: Employment Status and Earnings Recovery of Illinois Workers  
<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/publications/ILMR/PostRecovery.pdf>

We also provided a follow up to last year’s **Veterans’ report**. Demand for research on Veterans labor market conditions remained strong in the past year and research demands for this special group will continue to play a significant role in workforce development and analysis. As funding allows, we will try to undertake additional research projects focused on Veterans’ needs in the labor force.

Analysis of Illinois' Enlisted Veterans' Military Skills and Postsecondary Education Data  
[http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/publications/Report/Veterans\\_Education\\_Report2012.pdf](http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/publications/Report/Veterans_Education_Report2012.pdf)

Dave Bieneman writes: "The main purpose of this paper is to perform a detailed analysis of postsecondary education data related to Illinois' enlisted veterans. The education data for veterans is compared to national enrollment data for the general public and with military occupational skills data in an effort to identify any significant relationships."

Illinois has invested heavily in **real-time data analysis tools: HWOL and TORQ**. The Conference Board's HWOL online job ads provide information on current demand for employment by occupation and industry. Occupational demand provides useful input to current and future job seekers in that people train for occupations, not industries. Thus, it is important to know that demand exists for computer programmers, not whether the programmers will be hired in state government or banks. The HWOL data is available by detailed geography and we are often asked to depict the demand for various occupations within very small local areas. Educators and job seekers are aware that the job market may be broader than a single county. Consequently, our monthly HWOL list of jobs in demand is compiled by Economic Development Region (EDR). There are 10 such regions in Illinois. The first link is an article describing the use of HWOL at IDES. The second link takes you to our website where the monthly in-demand jobs by EDR are posted. Our goal for the upcoming year is to create additional (monthly or quarterly) reports with this data-rich tool.

<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/publications/ILMR/HWOL.pdf>

<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/page.aspx?item=2518>

Workforce Associates' TORQ, which stands for Transferable Occupation Relationship Quotient is a tool that can be used in Rapid Response, Economic Development and simply when job seekers are job hunting and need to shift gears in their occupational choices when demand for occupations change due to the economic environment. The link below shows how one of the Labor Market Economists used TORQ at Scott Air Force base to help military personnel transition to civilian jobs.

Incidentally, TORQ is primarily a tool for employment services specialists and workforce partners, but utilizes Illinois-specific labor market and career information. Consequently, an EI&A staff person is the TORQ administrator at IDES and she conducts numerous web training sessions throughout the year. In addition, the labor market economists around the state act in a "train the trainer" capacity as needed in the local offices.

<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/publications/Publications/ILMR/scottairforcebase.pdf>

### **Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI)**

Over the course of the past year (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012), senior EI&A staff met regularly with our partners from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and state education agencies. IDES/EI&A and DCEO submitted a proposal for the 2010 round of WDQI grants, but were unsuccessful in receiving the grant in the first round. Nonetheless, we continued to work with our education and workforce partners in 2010 and 2011 and proceeded to follow the plan that we had outlined in the 2010 grant proposal. When the 2012 round of WDQI grants were offered, we submitted a successful proposal because we were better prepared.

Together with IDES and DCEO, the agency partners at state secondary and post-secondary education agencies have worked together to establish a common vision and plan of action for building a cost-effective education and workforce longitudinal data system under the direction of a statewide governance body. In this approach, Illinois workforce and education agency partners will take responsibility for building and maintaining their own longitudinal data systems internally or with university partners. They will enter into standardized agreements with one or more agency partners to exchange data in cooperation with university intermediaries as needed for approved long-term initiatives as well as more short-term projects. To make this distributed approach work effectively and efficiently, all education and workforce agency partners will use a shared Identification Management System to ensure consistently high levels of quality, reliability, and security in matching and managing

individual-level data across all agency and university partners. These agencies and their university partners will adhere to common data quality and privacy/security requirements for managing longitudinal data systems that meet the most rigorous federal and state requirements for education and workforce data.

The WDQI project is only one part of an infrastructure project Illinois' EI&A began in 2010. Together with our university partner (Illinois State University) we are building an infrastructure to house UI Wage Records, Claimant Benefit data, IllinoisJoblink.com (job seeker data), and Employment Services data. These data sets will allow us to provide more robust information to IDES Operations staff to target employment services where they are most needed.

#### **4. Post Products, Information, and Reports on the Internet.**

To assist partners and local stakeholders to achieve the State Workforce Investment Plan's goals of economic self-sufficiency and business growth, IDES' online labor market and career information systems continue to provide access to tools and services that enable customers to make informed career and occupational decisions. In order to insure accessibility to all stakeholders in the Illinois Workforce Development System, IDES' web sites maintain their linkages to Illinois workNet and provide analysis of employment trends, educational, training and skill requirements, wages, career advancement opportunities, and labor market conditions with a demand-driven focus on major employing industries in the state. As a result, in PY11 385,900 customers visited Illinois' labor market and career information web sites.

- ▶ The updated 2011-2012 Career Information System (CIS) and CIS Junior were released to the Web as scheduled in September and December 2011. Number of unique visitors, CIS = 117,313; CIS Junior = 22,882.
- ▶ LMI Source is the primary point of access to labor market data for most customers. Number of unique visitors = 114,194.
- ▶ Illinois' Workforce Info Center serves as the WIDb platform. Number of unique visitors = 20,354.

#### **5. Partner and Consult on a Continuing Basis with Workforce Investment Boards and Key Talent Development Partners and Stakeholders.**

- ▶ Again this program year, IDES continued to expand and enhance the incorporation of the Career Information System and the most frequently requested labor market information into Illinois workNet as part of our partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (IDCEO) and Illinois Workforce Investment Board (IWIB).
- ▶ Provided monthly Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Current Employment Statistics (CES), Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) summary reports and Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) data, in requested formats, by Economic Development Regions (EDRs) and Local Workforce Areas (LWAs) to Governor's Office, IDCEO, IWIB, and to all Local Workforce Investment Boards.
- ▶ Local Labor Market Economists provided technical assistance to local and regional economic and workforce development partners and their constituents by:
  - Serving on Local WIB Youth Councils, advisory committees, and standing committees.
  - Compiling data for reports and presentations for/to economic development professionals, Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Education, and local elected officials.
  - Assisting local and regional Rapid Response teams in their efforts.
  - Preparing data for site selection packages to support local business attraction efforts.
- ▶ Reviewing the highlights of outreach activities conducted during PY11 to support key partners and stakeholders, a few themes emerged this year.

1. TORQ activity increased over the year as we offered more webinars to train ES staff to help unemployed claimants and other jobseekers and TORQ assessments were undertaken with greater frequency.
2. Veterans were major beneficiaries of our outreach activities this past year due to the Governor's and IWIB Veterans' Taskforce Initiatives begun last year.
3. A significant number of workforce partners and economic development professionals requested specific labor market information for grant proposals.
4. Career Information was as important as ever, but we are getting more kudos on the ARRA-funded projects we undertook last year on ReNew (career information for adults) and Job Seeker Mindset Training.

### **TORQ-related**

- Based upon request and input from the REA Manager, developed and scheduled a REA-specific TORQ webinar to pilot how the REA assessment form and TORQ can work in concert.
- Based upon request from Southern and Central Regions ESPMs, drafted a work flow to use TORQ with Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker program clients.
- Assisted Scott Air Force Base's Family Services Center to prepare for an audit by re-stocking our print materials (*Learn More Earn More* and *TORQ Quick Reference Guide*) and drafting language on available partnership services.
- In keeping with our goal to provide good customer service for our TORQ clients, created an Outlook account for them to use in contacting our office for TORQ-related issues/concerns/questions.
- After using TORQ while working with the spouse of an active duty veteran, received this note: *"Thanks for the link. I've found a few companies who have posted overseas contract work, but still haven't heard anything. I appreciate all of your help."* (Gary Deer).
- *Good morning, I was skimming through some of the TORQ news just to see how other areas are using it and I see how innovative we can be. In Fort Lauderdale, they are using it at Rapid Responses. I can visualize us doing a sample project at rapid responses and orientations, just so customers understand that there is hope and we are here to help. I am super excited to use this tool! Thanks.* (Pakita Eckford, TAA Specialist, Southwestern Illinois workNet-LWIA 24).
- During the beta testing of TORQ, staff submitted the suggestion that users be allowed the option to enter one occupation at the start, rather than an entire work history. In a recent response from the TORQ developers/programmers, LME V. Niederhofer was noted: *"And this is exactly why we do beta testing with people just like you. It's still early in our process, and tweaks like you're suggesting are doable indeed as we gather feedback from across the country. We'll call it the "Niederhofer option button" . . . we really appreciate your time and energy."*

### **Veterans-related**

- In order to support Illinois members of the UCX-UI Data Sharing and Reemployment Strategies workgroups, Dave Bieneman utilized data from the veterans' transition to stable civilian employment project to compile base reports on recent discharges from the Army. In addition, a brief description of data elements available on UI claims data records was provided to other involved IDES staff. EI&A participated in meetings with other Illinois members assigned to workgroups (both the Unemployment Data and the Reemployment Strategies workgroups) and in two conference calls that included federal and state (TX, NC, GA, IL) staff.
- Compiled data/information bullet points on RNs for International Brotherhood of Teamsters Heroes to Healthcare Coordinator for use at National Teamsters Women's Conference.
- "Heroes to Healthcare": The organization expressed an interest in having regular participation of the state agencies: IDVA, DCEO and IDES, at their meetings. A DOL/ETA grant application was recently submitted and they thought their chances were very good of receiving funding for a pilot program, which would be started in the Chicago metro-area.

- “Military Community Blueprint Summit for Change” Conference. The conference was focused on issues veterans faced upon discharge. Passed actionable information learned to IDES ES staff.
- Every other week, staff conducts a presentation on labor market and career information options and resources to separating service people at Scott Air Force Base. TORQ is regularly featured at these events to help veterans and families find jobs.

### **Grant-driven Data Requests**

- Compiled UI Claims data, demographic characteristics of the unemployed, and unemployment duration information for the nine Local Workforce Areas of the Metropolitan Workforce Boards of Chicago members and forwarded to their consultant for consideration in a H1-B Grant submission.
- Compiled requested unemployment and poverty data by Local Workforce Area for DCEO research staff for what appeared to be pre-release analysis of potential funding requirements under to-be-proposed (Obama’s Thursday joint session address) federal jobs/stimulus programs.
- Using data on local manufacturing companies in the aerospace industry, provided the Rockford Area Economic Development group and LWIB 3 staff with industry employment projections for a grant application. Later learned that this grant was awarded.
- Compiled demographic characteristics and duration data on the unemployed within Chicago to assist City Colleges of Chicago and National ABLE with a grant proposal application.
- To support a workforce grant proposal effort of the Digital Education Society and Wright College Humboldt Park Vocational Center for the Chicago Community Trust, compiled a thorough response listing the data sources available with State and local data (limited) by Hispanic or Latino ethnicity similar to the data tables and charts in the recently-released (and cited by requestor) USDOL report “The Hispanic Labor Force in the Recovery.”

### **Career Related Information**

- In response to customer request for national research project, W. Almousa prepared employment counts and occupational wage data for Registered Nurses, LPNs and Home Health Aides by industry (Hospitals, Home Health Care, and Nursing Care Facilities) from OES Wage Survey results, 2010Q2. [Maxim Healthcare Services, headquarters = Columbia, MD. Several locations in Northern Illinois, main office = Oak Park].
- As part of our agreement with iSeek Solutions and the Jewish Vocational Services of Chicago, the customized online version of Illinois’ printed “Job Seeker’s Guide to Conducting Online Career Exploration” has been posted (<http://il.jobseekersguide.org/>).
- Met with DCEO Deputy Chief of Staff and consultant to discuss next steps and challenges to P-20 Council’s proposed career readiness and career success metrics for the enhanced School Report Card.
- Compiled and provided Census data on educational attainment for an upcoming community meeting on the need to increase the education level in the Rockford community to LWA 3 staff.
- To assist the Rockford Literacy Council, a Workforce Board 3 partner and board member, researched and provided information on studies related to the affects of illiteracy on unemployment.
- Developed recommended list of possible occupations for training by Dept. of Juvenile Justice to meet necessary limitations (short-term training, low barriers for the formerly incarcerated, and ample job opportunities) including projected employment levels, core tasks, skill requirements, and tally of recent online job ads.
- At the request of Director Rowell, EI&A represented the agency on a grant application review committee working with Chicago Public Schools. Staff reviewed 60 pages of materials prior to the meeting and then conferred with the rest of the committee. Specifically, IDES was asked to comment on the work component of each of the grant applications. Other committee members represented a city agency or a group that operated in the city.

- Provided technical assistance at a committee meeting on increasing GED and higher education attainment for the LWIB 3 / Rockford community project. Prepared Census data on educational attainment by population and employment status for the committee.
- At the request of DCEO's Deputy Chief of Staff, prepared customized data on industry employment projections for the Chicago metro area for the Exec. Dir. of the A+ Foundation for Schools for the "How to Prepare our Workforce for a Global Economy" Summit held at the IL Mathematics and Science Academy.
- To assist the program in addressing its Pathway to Results initiative requirements, prepared customized career and labor market information for students in Kennedy-King College's Automotive Technology program and delivered 200 copies of *Learn More Earn More* brochures.
- Modified STEM Manufacturing Cluster analysis to include tally of recent online job ad volume for Gov's Office and DCEO staff pursuing NGA Policy Academy study participation.
- Compiled a largest employers list (from non-BLS sources) to support the efforts of the P-20 STEM Initiative's Agriculture Sector Task Force.
- Led by the College of Lake County, the Illinois Green Economy Network Career Pathways initiative engages 17 "hub" Illinois community colleges\* located in areas affected by foreign trade consequences. After building adult transition services, the hub colleges develop comprehensive training programs in eight green economy industries, employing delivery via online and hybrid (combining online and classroom) programs. These programs will be replicated by other implementing IGEN community colleges, serving the entire state through local and online delivery. Materials will use the open platforms from the Department of Energy NTER and the new AACC VCN (supported by the Department of Labor); the project's outcomes have the potential to reach TAA workers and others nationally. IGEN is also promoting sustainability in all 48 community colleges. After a recent presentation, staff of IGEN has asked that we help them incorporate ReNEW and Find Your Green Job into their green curriculums.  
(\*Consortium members: Carl Sandburg College, Danville Area Community College, Heartland Community College, Highland Community College, Illinois Central College, John A. Logan College, John Wood Community College, Kankakee Community College, Lewis & Clark Community College, Lincoln Land Community College, Rend Lake College, South Suburban College, Southeastern Illinois College, Southwestern Illinois College, Triton College, Waubensee Community College.
- Connections Conference /Pheasant Run Conference Center, St. Charles (Attendance = 85)  
2 sessions: *Wow! That's in CIS??* and *Learn More Earn More Meets Kids & Careers*. Both sessions were very enthusiastic about CIS and our brochures. Evaluations rated the session highly: "Best one at the entire conference!" "As usual, Lola has great new ideas for using CIS with our students."
- Feedback from a recent customer (veteran) of ReNEW and the Job Seeker Mindset Training module included "*I think the material is very good – I'd come to some of the same conclusions as I work on transitioning from the military to civilian life. This program reinforces those ideas, adds some new ones, and provides some useful documents for future reference. I very much appreciate not only the quality, but especially the purpose of the program. I'm sure it is helping to improve many lives, and I know my job is looking for me! Thank you, Brian Schnick.*" (805-621-4011, [bschnick@hotmail.com](mailto:bschnick@hotmail.com)).
- After using ReNEW, a job seeker in Lake Forest emailed, "*I wanted to take a minute to thank you . . . for the Job Search Mindset tools you provide, free of charge, through ILWorkInfo.com. I found the whole series engaging and interesting and thought-provoking and have recommended it to a number of people here at the Center. . . . Thank you so much for offering this free of charge to job seekers. It is so easy to get discouraged. It is so helpful to have the tools and mindset to persevere.*" (Kirsten Caspersen).

### General Appreciation

- In response to a customer service phone call providing technical assistance with employment projections analysis, LME R. Payne received the following email: "Thank you again so much for your wonderful assistance and information! I learned more about this topic in these 15 minutes than I

ever have. It's great to know we have an expert in our back pocket so to speak! I look forward to the Learn More Earn More information on WIA 20 & 21 – and again – *thank you.*” (Lyn Buerkett; Director, Adult Education & Literacy; [lyn.buerkett@lcc.edu](mailto:lyn.buerkett@lcc.edu))

- After his recent presentation, Mt. Vernon LME D. Hoffman received the following thank-you letter: *“On behalf of the Greater Effingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, I would like to thank you for speaking at the Chamber’s Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> First Friday Luncheon. We always enjoy and look forward to your presentation regarding the labor market. . . . the presentation was very interesting and informative for our members.”* (Norma Lansing, President).
- From the Director of the Family Services Center at Scott Air Force Base: *“All of these resource materials are great...thanks for sending the info so quickly. I am busy printing away. Thanks. I am working to make it [our resource area] even better and very evident that we partner with IDES!!!!”* (PEGGY J BOUVAIS, GS-11 USAF AMC 375 FSS/FSFR).
- As part of his regular monthly data distribution to local stakeholders each Metro Employment/Unemployment press release day, LME T. Austin prepares email packages of comparative national, state, and local data. In response, a regular customer recently replied *“Thank you so very much for sending out the three e-mails yesterday regarding the new updated economic data for our area. That is much appreciated and used on a continual basis here at the bank. I even share it with the CFO - 250 miles away!!!!”* (Jeffrey A. Lovett, Regional Market President, Midland States Bank, Dixon, [jlovett@midlandstatesbank.com](mailto:jlovett@midlandstatesbank.com)).