

Annual Report on the Workforce Investment Act

to

The United States Department of Labor

Program Year 2009

July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

Russell L. Fry, Acting Executive Director

Submitted September 30, 2010

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112 California Avenue, Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0112

An agency of the Department of Commerce

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**[www.workforcewv.org](http://www.workforcewv.org)**

***Message from the Governor:***

It is my pleasure to present West Virginia's annual report on the Workforce Investment Act for program year 2010. With the national economy in recovery, the state of West Virginia has leveraged federal funding to benefit our workforce.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds have been invested in summer youth programs throughout the state to build work readiness skills for ages 14-24. The West Virginia Career Readiness Certificates I have awarded as part of the ACT's WorkKeys program have continued to increase —providing documentation that our workforce has the skills to get the job done. The program also represents a groundbreaking partnership with WorkForce West Virginia, the West Virginia Department of Education, and Community and Technical Colleges.

As this report will demonstrate, West Virginia's workforce development system is working together in unprecedented collaborations. An important part of this system is the funding of the Workforce Investment Act that is administered by the United States Department of Labor.

West Virginia has been a good steward of the national investment in our workforce, and we look forward to continuing to retool our state's workforce.

With Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Manchin III  
Governor

*A Word from the Acting Executive Director:*

On behalf of WorkForce West Virginia, I am pleased to provide you with our annual report on the Workforce Investment Act for program year 2010. While the national economy moves into recovery, we have implemented many new initiatives to ensure that West Virginia workers are fully equipped to take advantage of new opportunities during the recovery.

Here are highlights of the new and expanded partnerships detailed in this report:

- WorkForce West Virginia entered into a new partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education to provide on-line training and remediation for WorkKeys® through KeyTrain® to job seekers throughout the State
- WorkForce West Virginia launched a new public-private partnership with AARP that will offer WorkSearch® as a resource for the unemployed, for dislocated workers, and for individuals who want to improve their employment options.
- The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration awarded WorkForce West Virginia a \$1.9 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant to enhance and expand public-use computers, connection speeds and wireless capabilities at 20 WorkForce West Virginia field offices across the state.
- In cooperation with Microsoft® Corporation, WorkForce West Virginia and its partners provided free vouchers for on-line computer training and Microsoft Certifications.
- WorkForce West Virginia has increased resources in One-Stop Career Centers to ensure that all partners are providing priority services to Veterans. Local Veterans Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program staff will cross train all partners on the requirement to provide priority service to veterans in all One-Stop Career Centers, statewide.
- In the summer of 2009, with approximately 4.3 million dollars in ARRA funds, the state of West Virginia regional Workforce Investment Boards served 1,573 young people aged 14 to 24 as part of a stand-alone summer youth employment opportunity.

We are proud of the proactive approach WorkForce West Virginia has taken; and we will build upon our successes in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,



Russell L. Fry  
Acting Executive Director

**WorkForce West Virginia PY 2009: Continued initiatives and partnerships bring fresh resources and opportunities to the State's workforce.**

The past year is notable for WorkForce West Virginia's new and exciting partnerships that have benefitted the State's workforce. Here are highlights:

**KeyTrain® partnership improves work readiness certifications.**

WorkForce West Virginia entered into a new partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education to provide on-line training and remediation for WorkKeys® through KeyTrain® to job seekers throughout the State. Data indicates that job seekers using KeyTrain® improve their WorkKeys® skill levels.

In fact, West Virginia Governor Joe Manchin III has issued 17,761 Governor's WorkKeys® Career Readiness Certificates since the statewide program was launched by WorkForce West Virginia in partnership with West Virginia Community and Technical Colleges and the West Virginia Department of Education. The assessments measure real world job skills and can improve worker productivity and reduce turnover.

In the past year, WorkForce West Virginia's ACT-authorized Job Profilers have provided job profiles free of charge for State employers. In less than a year, job profiles conducted by WorkForce West Virginia will account for more than one-third of all job profiles in West Virginia.

**AARP's WorkSearch® is a new resource for West Virginia job seekers.**

WorkForce West Virginia launched a new public-private partnership with AARP that will offer WorkSearch® as a resource for the unemployed, for dislocated workers, and for individuals who want to improve their employment options.

The AARP Foundation's WorkSearch® Assessment System provides job and career information to individuals who are seeking to remain in, or re-enter the workforce. WorkSearch® provides a variety of services including interest and ability inventories; skills assessments; information about the local community job market; and connections to both on-line and community based training and employment opportunities at low or no cost to the individual.

One of the key services the program offers is a comprehensive web-based assessment tool to help older workers find appropriate employment. The program also helps older workers polish their skills in preparation for targeted job searches in all fields. It is especially helpful in preparing for those in industries that are facing critical skill and labor shortages both now and in the future.

When clients walk through the door of a WorkForce West Virginia One-Stop center, the benefits of WorkSearch® will be available to them. WorkSearch® will be listed on the checklist used by employment counselors as they work with customers.

**WorkForce West Virginia receives Broadband Technology Opportunity Program grant.**

The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration awarded WorkForce West Virginia a \$1.9 million Recovery Act grant to enhance and expand

public-use computers, connection speeds and wireless capabilities at 20 WorkForce West Virginia field offices across the State.

WorkForce West Virginia will purchase new equipment for each Public Computer Center (PCC), upgrade to faster broadband connections, and add video conferencing at each site.

In the short-term, WorkForce West Virginia's public computer centers will provide access to job opportunities and job training for the unemployed or under-employed. Specifically, West Virginians will be able to utilize the video conferencing capabilities at the centers to participate in job interviews or training, and connect to specialized medical care. Each PCC will provide special equipment and broadband access for persons with disabilities.

In the long term, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) investments will help bridge the digital divide in West Virginia, improve access to education and health care services, and boost economic development for communities held back by limited or no access to broadband – communities that would otherwise be left behind. The project will stimulate demand for broadband by allowing customers an interactive experience with the benefits of this technology.

WorkForce West Virginia's partners on this project include AARP; the West Virginia Department of Education; the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources; the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services; the West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services; and the West Virginia Office of Technology.

### **Microsoft's Elevate America program provides free computer training through WorkForce West Virginia.**

In cooperation with Microsoft® Corporation, WorkForce West Virginia and its partners provided free vouchers for on-line computer training and Microsoft Certifications. From May 2010 through August 2010, WorkForce West Virginia issued 3,000 vouchers for on-line training; 650 vouchers for Information Technology Professional training; and 1,000 vouchers for certification exam testing.

Joining WorkForce West Virginia in this effort were regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs); West Virginia Women's Business Center; West Virginia Northern Community College; West Virginia Library Commission; Mission West Virginia; and Bridgemont Community and Technical College.

Data indicates that the program served the target market of unemployed or under-skilled workers. A demographic breakdown of vouchers indicates that about 38 percent of the participants were unemployed. Almost 2 to 1, participants were female and most respondents were ages 36-65. In fact, one 80-year-old participant successfully completed her certification exam!

Of particular note is that the program helped West Virginians who do not have access to a home computer, by encouraging them to use public access computers located at libraries throughout the State.

Here is an excerpt from an email we received from an Elevate America participant in Kanawha County: *'I have to say that the voucher that I chose for the Microsoft Office 2007 has really helped me out a lot. I didn't realize how much there actually was to Microsoft Excel until I started this program. I should be able to lay out a pretty good spreadsheet by the time I've completed my course of training. I'm so excited about it!!'*

### **The WorkForce West Virginia System**

“Workforce development” is a generic term, which reflects the purpose and intent of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA or the Act) of 1998. As defined by the Act, “the purpose of Title 1 is to provide workforce investment activities that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants, and increase occupational skill attainment by participants, which will improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation’s economy.”

The delivery of workforce services involves both state-level and local efforts across West Virginia. The federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the key legislation driving the delivery of workforce services, emphasizes a locally driven workforce development system that meshes federal, state, and local resources to respond with a comprehensive and customer-focused system. The centerpiece for the delivery of these services is the statewide network of “One-Stop” service locations, known as WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers. An integrated service delivery system is the core ingredient to the WIA law.

This emphasis on local control is reflected in the State’s reliance on seven local workforce investment regions. These regions, each overseen by a local board appointed by local elected officials, provide locally driven services to individuals and businesses within the framework established by the federal Workforce Investment Act and the state of West Virginia. As implied by their name, WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers, these centers are intended to offer job seekers and employers ready access to the many workforce development resources available in a local region. A brief description of the seven local regions and the WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers follows.

### **Local Workforce Investment Regions**

**Region One** consists of two comprehensive centers, three satellite centers and four affiliate sites. The Region One Workforce Investment Board administers eleven southeastern counties. The Region, indicative of many areas of the State, is mountainous and rural, and is the residence to an assortment of industry sectors. Although employment numbers are not as considerable as they have been in previous decades, health care occupations are a vital part of the economic structure for this region. Tourism and leisure and hospitality related businesses are expected to produce notable employment growth in the years ahead as are other associated service providing sectors.

**Region Two** consists of one comprehensive center, one satellite center and seven affiliate sites. The Southwestern West Virginia Workforce Investment Board oversees service delivery in this region, which consists of seven counties. Region Two offers an urban presence in Huntington and the supporting Metropolitan Statistical Area, but also contains a mix of rural areas and small municipalities. The health care sector significantly influences the regional economy as does the service industry.

**Region Three** consists of one comprehensive center and four affiliate sites. The Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County is responsible for the State's only single county workforce investment region. The face of industry in Region Three has changed noticeably over the last few decades. Government employment and business continues to wield a weighty influence in the region, but now the health sector has become more prominent. Of the top 100 private employers in the State, Region Three is home to a hospital group that is the third largest employer, thus emphasizing the importance of health care to the area.

**Region Four** consists of one comprehensive center, three satellite centers and four affiliate sites. Nine counties comprise a region of rural and urban population that includes the Ohio River as its western border. While health care is a significant industry in Region Four, other key parts of the economy include the need for educators and hospitality service workers. Growth in the regional economy is likely to continue in health care.

**Region Five** consists of two comprehensive centers and one satellite center. Six counties comprise the area overseen by the Northern Panhandle Workforce Investment Board. Historically, the region has been heavily reliant on the steel industry. That dependence in recent decades has been shaken with significant job losses throughout this sector and many of the related businesses. Future growth is expected to be in service providing industries such as food services and professional services.

**Region Six** consists of four comprehensive centers and nine affiliate sites. Made up of thirteen counties, Region Six consists of mostly rural areas, but contains sizeable municipalities as well. The dominant university health care sector is expected to continue its expansion and influence on the regional economy. However, additional growth is anticipated in technology, research, and the service sector.

**Region Seven** consists of two comprehensive center and one satellite center. Eight counties comprise the area served by the Region Seven Workforce Investment Board. Region Seven offers a contrast of rural life in its western counties and the growing eastern counties that are heavily influenced by the Washington, D.C. metro area. Until the recent recession, government and construction industry sectors have provided significant growth. In recent months, however, the Washington metro area has been more resistant to the economic downturn and will likely provide a positive ripple effect for Region Seven. As the national economy returns to a normal pace, the region is expected to regain its expansionary persona, especially in health care, education and professional services.

## **The WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers**

In response to the economic downturn and its affect on West Virginia, WorkForce West Virginia strengthens its focus on employers and referring qualified applicants for employment opportunities. The State, through WorkForce West Virginia's network of local offices, has developed a customer-oriented system that makes maximum use of current technology to reach the greatest number of customers. Employers and job seekers have direct access through Internet technology, or personal contact with staff, throughout the employment and training process. WorkForce West Virginia One-Stop Career Centers continue to provide access to services by a combination of partners physically located within the Center and services accessible via electronic linkages. This system provides technology links, programs, and various other aids to appropriately assist our customers.

WorkForce West Virginia has excelled in using technology to link related workforce services and bring them to the public. WorkForce West Virginia was awarded funds from The United States Department of Commerce to significantly enhance existing PCCs located in 20 WorkForce West Virginia comprehensive One-Stop locations. Enhancements would include a new and expanded number of computers; faster connections; special equipment providing broadband access for the disabled; and dedicated video conferencing machines.

The PCCs usefulness in training and education will be greatly improved with the expansion and enhanced capabilities afforded only through this grant. Not only will existing education and training programs provided by mandated One-Stop partners benefit, but new training programs offered by the AARP Foundation will also capitalize on the new capabilities available at the modernized PCCs.

There are many challenges facing job seekers and employers today – for example, the globalization of the economy, and the rise of technology that has had an impact on most jobs in West Virginia. With the challenges facing our state, AARP and WorkForce West Virginia are united in believing that most people, regardless of age or income, want a better life for themselves and their families so they can achieve the safety, security, and prosperity they desire. One major challenge is that job seekers now need to direct their attention to the development and marketability of themselves as individuals rather than that of an organization. Job Seekers have essentially become their own enterprises

AARP integrated their WorkSearch program into the WorkForce West Virginia One-Stop system. The WorkSearch complements and enhances the many educational and job-search programs WorkForce West Virginia already has in place for job seekers. Through this partnership, AARP provides additional tools for job seekers and expands the capacity of the One-Stops to provide services through their volunteers. AARP also publicizes (in AARP publications) services that are available in the One-Stops.

WorkForce West Virginia continues to lead the charge of the workforce development system in West Virginia by focusing on workforce challenges that require a more active and engaged role of all partners. With support from our partners and the Legislature, WorkForce West Virginia has served the State with distinction during the economic recession. WorkForce West Virginia was awarded two national awards.

The United States Department of Labor recognized the West Virginia Unemployment Compensation (UC) program with the 2008 Pinnacle Award for the highest achievement in performance nationwide. Additionally, the American Institute for Full Employment awarded the 2009 Full Employment Performance Award to WorkForce West Virginia for its reemployment program.

In response to the United States Department of Labor's request to transform and enhance reemployment services to UC claimants and others under the ARRA, and through the use of available resources and partner services, West Virginia reemployment services were enhanced. WorkForce West Virginia's mission was to decrease the average duration of weeks filed by claimants. Reemployment Services (RES) aimed toward assisting the customer to return to work as early as possible, at the highest wage, and to retain the new employment.

WorkForce West Virginia assessed 13,475 RES participants, with 12,875 (95.5%) receiving Workforce Information Services and 8,170 (60.6%) being referred to WIA services. In addition to RES participants, WorkForce West Virginia will be targeting Emergency Unemployment Compensation and Eligibility Review Program (ERP) participants for participation in this comprehensive program, which focuses on transitioning claimants back into the workforce. This will be accomplished through comprehensive workshops and intensive services provided by WorkForce West Virginia staff and partners within the One-Stop Career Centers.

The State continues to experience layoffs and workers are on unemployment insurance for longer periods than in past years. Workers are facing difficult times and WorkForce West Virginia has reached out to provide employment and training assistance, through RES and Reemployment Assistance programs. Through the use of unemployment insurance, reemployment services and stimulus programs, workers have an opportunity to change career paths as needed and prepare for suitable employment.

WorkForce West Virginia's goal is to market its available services and help applicants and employers to identify the services. To expand employment opportunities to claimants and employers, WorkForce West Virginia plans to increase activities in the demand ERP; use direct intervention through the ERP; and expand the number of participants in the program. Emphasis is also placed on removing barriers to obtaining employment such as the lack of a high school diploma or lack of computer skills. The GED program and computer skills training are readily available to all. Individuals in need are referred to partners who can directly impact their future.

One of WorkForce West Virginia's goals in 2009 was to preserve and create jobs as well as develop and expand reemployment services. This required collaboration with mandated partners to continue to develop a true integrated system. As part of its Reemployment programs, WorkForce West Virginia continues to enhance its Unemployment Insurance Profiling program to include resume assistance; soft skills (interviewing, test preparation, etc); WorkKeys assessments; career counseling/guidance; networking strategies; job referrals (including apprenticeships); and follow-up services. The claimant will move from core and intensive services to training and focusing on high growth and demand occupations.

## **Workforce Investment Council - New State Level Collaborations**

The State workforce leadership has forged new peer-to-peer partnerships that have significantly enhanced interagency collaboration.

The Council sent recommendations for workforce development initiatives to the West Virginia Board of Education. Here is an excerpt from the letter:

“On behalf of the Governor’s Workforce Investment Council, we are submitting recommendations for career development programs in West Virginia middle schools and high schools for your consideration.

The Workforce Investment Council is a broad, stakeholder group of business, industry, labor, and education/training agencies, charged with advising and overseeing State programs focused on workforce development, specifically those funded under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The Council meets quarterly to conduct business and focus on workforce needs and issues. At the January 2010 meeting, both the education/training and youth committees expressed concern that students in middle and high schools are not being provided adequate time to explore career options, set goals and develop education plans to prepare them for viable postsecondary and career options.

Given that a large percentage of jobs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are classified as ‘middle skill’ technical in nature, it is extremely important that all middle and high school students are provided structured opportunities to explore and investigate the broad spectrum of career options open to them. Unfortunately, current State Board of Education policy related to this issue is vague and lacks a time allocation for implementation. While some school districts attempt to address the career development component, there is little consistency or engagement of students in the process.

A number of the Council members are aware of the State Board’s current work related to high schools and hope that this issue will be addressed in future policy development. In addition, the council suggests the following:

- Expanded career and technical education offerings in middle schools;
- Use of electronic student portfolios;
- Structured career experiences beginning in seventh grade;
- Engagement of parents in the planning process; and
- Use of engaging, digital delivery of career development content.

The Council suggests creating a network of virtual mentors from the business sector to advise students in their career planning process, including the types of jobs available and the skill sets needed for success.”

## **Milestones and Achievements of the Program Year**

While this annual report is provided under WIA requirements, many of the highlights and achievements are due not only to the programs operated under this legislation, but to the efforts put forth by the entire WorkForce West Virginia system. The continued growth and success of a

comprehensive workforce delivery system such as WorkForce West Virginia requires the work of dedicated individuals from the state level to the front-line staff found at the WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers across the State.

### **Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT)**

In the past year, the monthly meetings of the ICT have highlighted programs and services of workforce development agencies and partners. Partners making presentations include: West Virginia Department of Corrections; West Virginia Rehabilitation Services; West Virginia Division of Health and Human Resources (DHHR); WIBs; West Virginia Community and Technical Colleges; and WorkForce West Virginia.

This new approach has broken new ground in partnerships. For the first time, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services provided grants to WIBs for workforce development efforts for persons with disabilities. Also, DHHR made its first grants to WIBs for workforce programs.

### **Improved Services for Veterans**

One-Stop Career Centers are the delivery point for a significant percentage of qualified job training programs and services covered by the Jobs for Veterans Act. One-Stop Career Centers are required to implement priority service to qualified veterans. West Virginia Code 9A-4-1 states “The Legislature finds that West Virginia veterans represent a strong and productive part of the workforce of this state. They are frequently disadvantaged in their pursuit of civilian employment as a result of military service and delayed entry into the civilian labor market. It is, therefore, in the public interest and welfare that veterans continue to be provided the traditional priority of services in workforce development programs administered under the provisions of the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998.”

Therefore, it is mandated by the State of West Virginia to require all federal and state-funded employment and training programs offered in West Virginia to adopt a written policy providing priority of services to veterans of the United States military over other individuals seeking employment and training programs including:

- Referral to jobs and job training programs
- Counseling, testing and job development assistance
- Eligibility determination for tax credit programs
- Assistance in filing complaints to:
  - Federal contractors regarding affirmative action for qualified veterans;
  - Federal agency hiring practices related to veteran preference;
  - Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, including rights of national guard and reserve members.

The One-Stop Career Center coordinator will monitor adherence to priorities through self-assessments and reviewing the Veteran Triage Questionnaires completed by veterans seeking One-Stop services. This will ensure all partners are providing priority services to veterans. Local Veterans Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program staff

will cross train all partners on the requirement to provide priority service to veterans in all One-Stop Career Centers, statewide.

### **Important Youth Program Aspects**

All seven WIB regional youth programs in West Virginia continue to work well within the parameter of the common measures.

As in years past, West Virginia continues to focus on the following elements as important aspects of the youth program design:

- Collaboration and on-going involvement of agencies and individuals serving youth.
- Continuation of cross training of WorkForce West Virginia staff and outreach to employers, educational entities, community-based, and faith-based agencies.
- Training youth to be work ready for specific job assignments.
- Continuing to make WorkForce West Virginia Career Center resources accessible to youth via educational support; employment opportunities integrated with educational pursuits; work readiness; adult mentoring and other guidance or intervention; and follow-up services to ensure retention.
- Maintaining thriving regional youth councils to help connect available services to the youth most in need.
- Keeping the lines of communication open from the administrative staff of WorkForce West Virginia to the youth staff and service providers in the seven regions.

The partnership between the Local Workforce Investment Boards and Mission West Virginia for the Build it, Keep It, Share It program continued to prosper throughout the state. With the infusion of ARRA funds, more youth were served at more locations. As a result of this program, 21-24 year-old youth were able to continue their summer employment through March 31, 2010.

In the summer of 2009, with approximately 4.3 million dollars in ARRA funds, West Virginia regional Workforce Investment Boards served 1,573 young people aged 14 to 24 as part of a stand-alone summer youth employment opportunity.

After only a six-week start-up period, the regions were able to recruit participants, supervisors, support staff and worksites to provide a meaningful work experience to participants and infuse much needed cash into the local economies.

With a diversity of work experiences ranging from private industry to Department of Natural Resources fish hatcheries, West Virginia youth were once again introduced to what it means to be employed.

One region utilized a portion of their funds to offer a residential on-campus experience to 100 youth. The camp was oriented around career exploration including the fields of computer graphics, health education and business administration. After the camp, participants returned to their home counties for a five-week work experience in the field of their choice.

As a part of the summer youth employment program, all participants were mandated to attend job readiness sessions. Of the total participants, 76 percent completed the job readiness component. It was determined that should there be sufficient funds to mount a summer youth employment program in subsequent years, the job readiness component will be offered pre-employment rather than in three-hour increments throughout the entire program.

A successful partnership has developed between the partners in the workforce development system and employers through a pre-apprenticeship program. Partnering with the Mountaineer Challenge Academy, the workforce development system has connected with businesses within the community and educational facilities to serve at-risk youth. The ultimate goal was to develop a comprehensive transition plan that resulted in coordination and collaboration between the Mountaineer Challenge Academy and the One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state for one-stop services upon the youth's release from the Mountaineer Challenge Academy.

West Virginia continues to provide exceptional services to low-income youth who face barriers to employment. Youth were provided a full array of services including intake, assessment and case management services. The number of youth served increased slightly from PY2008; however, the number of youth exiters decreased. Youth funds totaling \$6,844,566.00 were allocated to the seven Workforce Investment Boards to serve 2,947 youth, which includes ARRA youth. The total cost per participant served was \$2,322.00. As of June 30, 2010, nearly \$6,844,566.00 was expended to train and employ youth across West Virginia. Young people gained valuable work experience and employers received the much-needed services these employees provided. Nearly all the local workforce investment area ARRA youth funds were expended by the end of the 2009 Summer Youth Employment Program.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

### **National Emergency Grants**

WorkForce West Virginia is currently administering three National Emergency Grants (NEGs) and a fourth one ended on May 31, 2010.

The first NEG is the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) Bridge/Gap Filler Program. This program is scheduled to end on December 31, 2010. As of June 30, 2010, Quarterly Performance Reports to the Department of Labor reported that 323 participants were served by paying 80 percent of health insurance premium payments. This "Bridge Gap" process enables customers to continue health insurance coverage while they are waiting for the approval/enrollment process in the IRS's HCTC Program.

The second NEG grant West Virginia is administering is the Regional Innovation Grant (RIG). This program began on January 25, 2010, and is scheduled to end on July 24, 2011. The purpose of this project is to develop a Strategic Implementation Plan for workforce development by positioning the region for industry clusters offering the best economic development opportunities based on the region's assets. Advantage Valley, which encompasses 12 counties in 3 states: West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky, is the project area identified for this grant.

The third grant is an On-the-Job Training NEG funded by ARRA. This program began on July 1, 2010, and is scheduled to end June 30, 2012. The purpose of this project is to create OJT employment opportunities for state dislocated workers with prolonged unemployment and whose employment has been adversely affected by barriers to reemployment and the economic downturn. It is projected that 40 participants will be served with these funds.

The fourth grant is a Disaster National Emergency Grant, which started June 1, 2009, and ended May 31, 2010. This grant assisted in flood clean-up activities in the counties of McDowell, Mercer, Mingo and Wyoming. The grant was initially scheduled to serve 40 and was modified to serve 50 - the actual number of temporary workers hired. These workers came from target populations including eligible dislocated and unemployed workers. They were employed in clean-up activities directly related to the flood damage resulting from the May 2009 flooding in West Virginia.

WorkForce West Virginia encouraged the submission of proposals for the State's discretionary ("15 percent") funds that would develop innovative solutions connecting education, workforce and economic development activities. Consequently, workers would be equipped to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century competitive world economy. It was necessary for strategies to target skills and competencies that focused on the role of talent development in driving regional economic competitiveness, increased job growth and new opportunities for workers. The major focus was to allow eligible participants (WIA definition for a youth, adult, dislocated worker or incumbent worker) access to a variety of educational, training, or retraining opportunities through numerous entities. The ultimate goal of receiving a post-secondary degree or an industry-recognized license, certificate, or credential will expand employment and advancement opportunities. Eleven grantees were funded for Program Year 2009-2010.

The grantees, for Program Year 2009-2010, are as follows:

### ARRA

- **North Central OIC** trained participants to work in residential treatment centers, youth shelters, detention facilities, group care homes, specialized community homes, and juvenile rehabilitation centers.
- **Randolph County Housing Authority/YouthBuild North Central** served older youth with a comprehensive array of services that included job readiness, GED preparation, and residential construction trades pre-apprenticeship certification while incorporating training in green building techniques, energy efficiency assessment and weatherization.
- **Southern Appalachian Labor School** provided older youth with GED instruction and trained through internships coupled with being certified by the National Center for Construction and Education and Research Center.
- **United Mine Worker Association Career Center** trained youth, adults, and dislocated workers to become coal miners for the entire industry.

- **West Virginia Department of Education’s Anthony Center**, trained older youth for entry-level positions in the following fields: wired communications, cable programming, and utility system construction. They were trained for positions as electricians, masons, equipment contractors.
- **West Virginia Women Work’s Step-Up** program served adult women in an eleven-week-long formal training followed by strong job placement in predominantly male-oriented entry-level positions in carpentry, welding, and electrical wiring.

**Non- ARRA**

- **Computer Training Center, Inc.** provided customer service representative training for adults and dislocated workers to obtain employable skills to acquire and retain employment at a self-sustainable wage with fringe benefits.
- **Construction Works of West Virginia** provided training for incumbent union construction workers and assisted construction trades apprenticeship programs that are registered with the United States Department of Labor/Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training.
- **Citizens Conservation Corps of West Virginia** readied their participants for unsubsidized employment as energy auditors and retrofitters through various training programs and hands-on work experiences.
- **Kanawha Institute for Social Research and Action** targeted unemployed, older, “at-risk” youth and adults, and provided basic skills development, job training, and job placement.
- **New River Community and Technical College’s Mechatronics** program provided participants a broad array of job-ready skills in integrated manufacturing technologies, which support the mining machining, and production industries of southeastern West Virginia.

The State’s discretionary funded participants, when compared to the overall numbers reflected in our annual report, are a much smaller subset of data. Despite this fact, two areas that excelled are the “Attainment of Degree or Certification for WIA Youth (14-21)” and the “Average Earnings for Dislocated Workers”. Areas that did not excel are being monitored. Necessary steps, such as providing additional training to staff and grantees, have been taken to ensure that the State’s discretionary funds will have a more positive impact on the State’s overall performance moving forward.

The majority of ARRA activity/funding was used at the local level. The local Workforce Investment Boards were able to concentrate on training and increased Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Individual Training Account (ITA) usage. Recovery Act funds were also expended on select Sate discretionary funded activities.

### **The West Virginia MACC System**

The West Virginia version of the Mid Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) continues to evolve into the centerpiece for the State's comprehensive case management information system. Currently, the MACC supports nearly 60,000 users performing two million system transactions per day for case management, reporting, and other data operations.

In the past year, the MACC has received several evolutionary system improvements. Some examples include:

- Enhanced security for staff, job seekers and employers
- A greatly streamlined job seeker enrollment process
- A new resume editing feature
- Simplified job orders for employers
- Continued improvement of the job seeker search and data export functionality
- New literacy/numeracy performance reporting
- ARRA reporting modifications to keep pace with federal changes
- Several user interface improvements
- Significantly more efficient server hardware for the MACC development environment

These new features and upgrades to existing functions were implemented to support increased and more efficient use by state and local workforce investment offices, training providers, educational institutions, partner agencies, and program clients.

In addition to actual system enhancements, the MACC team has also made progress working with educational institutions in a joint pilot project for aggregated graduate employment and wage reporting. Two institutions are presently part of the pilot and another institution has expressed interest in joining the project.

### **WorkForce West Virginia Collaboration and Partnering**

The individuals and entities comprising the WorkForce West Virginia system have continued to come together in various ways to continuously improve the delivery of services to West Virginians. In addition to the efforts highlighted elsewhere in this report, other ongoing efforts warrant mention.

Collaboration continues between WorkForce West Virginia and the seven local workforce boards. In addition to ongoing monitoring and technical assistance matters, State personnel and local boards have continued to collaborate in areas such as:

- Continuing to hold monthly meetings between local directors and WorkForce West Virginia staff;
- Working to blend and leverage funds (where possible) from sources such as WIA and state-funded programs such as the Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program; and

- Promoting and executing a series of local events designed to inform veterans of the opportunities available to them within the WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers.

The West Virginia Legislature has continued to work closely with the WorkForce West Virginia system during the previous program year. Through an oversight commission comprised of members from both the Senate and House of Delegates, legislators continue to receive updates and information from various partners within the WorkForce West Virginia system. In 2007, legislation was passed that consolidated the “State of the One-Stop System” report and the “Funding Stream Report.” The consolidation allows WorkForce West Virginia to identify all Workforce Development Training Funds within the State and how they may or may not be distributed throughout the One-Stop delivery system.

**Performance and Cost Relative to Effort Analysis**

As evidenced by the annual report, West Virginia met or exceeded negotiated performance standards for Program Year 2009 in the following areas: Adult Average Earnings, Dislocated Worker Employment Rate, Dislocated Worker Average Earnings, Youth Placement in Employment or Education, and Youth Attainment of Degree or Certificate. West Virginia continues to see the loss of jobs in what have traditionally been higher paying sectors of its economy, including steel and chemical production. Thus, WorkForce West Virginia staff will continue to closely monitor issues of performance and service delivery throughout Program Year 2010.

**General Analysis of Numbers Served and Cost Per Served**

For Program Year 2009, the total number of WIA participants served was 7,732. The total of WIA funds expended (including ARRA) was \$19,602,495. This yields an average cost per participant of \$2,535. Following is pertinent data by funding stream.

Adults	
<b>Number Served</b>	2,102
Dislocated Workers	
<b>Number Served</b>	4,256
Older and Younger Youth	
<b>Number Served</b>	1,374

**Additional Analysis for Adults and Dislocated Workers**

WorkForce West Virginia performance staff continually monitor for issues and opportunities related to improving performance within the workforce system. For participants served under WIA adult and dislocated worker programs, analysis is ongoing to determine the benefits associated with particular types of services. One analytical tool employed is a comparison of the benefits for those receiving training services versus those receiving only core and intensive services.

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Received Training Services</b>	<b>Received Only Core and Intensive Services</b>
Adult Entered Employment	74.5%	64.7%
Adult Employment Retention	84.4%	76.6%
Dislocated Entered Employment	82.2%	73.5%
Dislocated Employment Retention	92.5%	91.5%

The preceding table clearly indicates the increased benefits derived from training services. This may well be reflective of the fact that many West Virginians receiving workforce services often face the task of transitioning from more traditional employment in manufacturing and related industries to “new economy” opportunities in service, health care and other market segments that require different skill sets. These individuals almost certainly benefit from training opportunities. Certainly, the need for training services is reflected in the high percentage of individuals participating in WIA programs who receive training.

Further examination of the training opportunities provided indicates segments of the economy where adult and dislocated worker program participants are pursuing employment. Among the highest-ranking fields in terms of Individual Training Accounts provided are: truck driving, licensed practical nursing, medical assistant, mining technician, and registered nursing. This certainly reflects a shift toward health care and other careers that are more a part of the “new economy.”

## **WAIVERS**

### **Replace the Performance Measures at WIA Section 136(b) With the Common Measures**

The waiver facilitates system integration and streamlines the reporting process across partner programs, which includes Adult Basic Education, Department of Rehabilitation Services and DHHR. It assists in achieving the ultimate goal of a fully integrated one-stop delivery system; provides clear and understandable information to partners; improves services coordination and information sharing; and simplifies and streamlines performance measurement systems. Outcomes for common measures include a more integrated case management system, improved customer service and operational effectiveness.

### **Utilize Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for Older Youth Program Participants**

The waiver has allowed continued flexibility in utilizing youth funds to providing training services while retaining the limited adult funds to be used for adult training services. It has increased the efficiency and customer choice for older youth. The workforce development system has a full array of services to offer older youth that can benefit them in decision-making processes, such as choosing a rewarding career in health care, law enforcement and the coal industry.

### **Increase Employer Reimbursement for On-the-Job Training**

The waiver has allowed continued flexibility for reimbursement for on-the-job training through a sliding scale based on the size of the business. The majority of businesses utilizing on-the-job-training are small businesses that are taking advantage of the benefits being afforded through this waiver.

### **Fund Transfer Authority**

This waiver allows local areas to transfer up to 50 percent of a program year allocation for adult employment and training activities, and up to 50 percent of program year allocation for dislocated worker employment and training activities between the two programs. The waiver provides local WIBs the ability to better respond to changes in the economic environment and the local labor market. Resources are channeled to the population with the greatest need. With the increased trade-affected layoffs, and closures in PY09, West Virginia was able to serve this population with trade dollars, which resulted in excess dislocated worker funds. The Transfer Authority waiver has empowered the local boards to be more responsive to the volatile economic climate. A little over \$602,296.71 was expended in funds transferred from the Dislocated Worker program to conduct adult activities and training.

### **Extend the Period of Initial Eligibility for Training Providers on West Virginia's Eligible Training Provider List**

This waiver has allowed training providers to offer continuous, uninterrupted service to WIA customers. WIA customers continue to have the ability to choose their training providers and access training services in their local workforce investment act area with the highest degree of informed customer choice possible. The primary goal of this waiver is to ensure that the increasing numbers of adult and dislocated workers have a system that can offer training options, which ensure maximum customer choice. The number of providers on the ETPL is 157, allowing participants to choose the best possible program and provider to enhance skills and further their education and career goals.

### **Waive Performance Measures for Youth Who Participate in Work Experience Only Under the Recovery Act and Pertaining to Summer Youth Employment Opportunities Outside of Summer Months**

Under the waiver, West Virginia is permitted to use the work readiness indicator as the only indicator of performance for youth, ages 18-24, who participate in work experience that occurs outside of the summer months (October 1, 2009 through March 31, 2010). The waiver has allowed continued flexibility for approximately 206 youth to participate and complete services beyond the summer employment period.

### **Ongoing State Evaluation of Workforce Investment Act Activities**

Financial management and program operations reviews of workforce investment activities related to the statewide system are conducted annually on the seven workforce investment boards as well as the state set aside grantees. The reviews are conducted to evaluate activities to determine their compliance with federal regulations. The reviews are also conducted to evaluate fiscal solvency and accuracy. The results are then reported. The financial management portion of the site visit is designed to determine if expenditures are made against the appropriate cost categories; if they are within the cost limitations specified; if there is compliance with other

provisions, regulations and applicable laws; and to provide technical assistance as needed and appropriate. Other activities may include assisting in procedure development/update; technical accounting assistance; development of controls where needed; assisting with correction of financial transactions; assisting with design and compliance; and budgeting process design and control.

The program operations portion of the site visit includes State staff verifying and validating performance data prior to federal reporting by checking the accuracy of a sample of computerized records and comparing keyed entries against the original source(s). WorkForce West Virginia is committed to continuous improvement of its information and data system. Program goals and progress toward meeting and/or exceeding performance standards are reviewed.

A comprehensive and thorough review documents the effective practices being used by the State workforce system and it identifies training and/or technical assistance needs of staff. Evaluations result in establishing and implementing methods for continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the statewide workforce investment system and improving employability for job seekers and competitiveness for employers.

State staff provide an overview of the results and recommendations of the evaluation during an exit meeting with the Workforce Investment Board director and staff.

In addition to the monitoring reviews, WorkForce West Virginia conducts the following meetings or site visits with either the local workforce investment areas or State Set Aside Grantees to provide additional monitoring and technical assistance: monthly meetings with the seven local workforce investment areas to evaluate their fiscal and programmatic status; quarterly meetings with each of the State Set Aside Grantees to evaluate their fiscal and programmatic status; on-site programmatic visits to the State Set Aside Grantees to provide technical assistance and identify any potential issues or concerns; and periodic desk reviews of State Set Aside Grantees' fiscal documentation on specific financial requirements (i.e. time sheets, and cost allocation process).

Ongoing analyses also include issues aside from performance. For example, the previously cited "State of the One-Stop System" report is a summary document that gives a public account of the current operations, structures, activities, finances, and future direction of One-Stop Centers of West Virginia. This report is published annually, as required by the West Virginia Legislature, and reported to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Workforce Investment for Economic Development. Overall, the progress of West Virginia's One-Stop system during 2009-2010 reflects the continuous evolution of an integrated service delivery system unlike any seen previously in the employment and training arena. WorkForce West Virginia's career centers continue to improve their services to more effectively serve employers, employees, and job seekers. The seven WIBs show a strong commitment to bringing a menu of integrated workforce investment development programs and services to the local level. The working relationship among state agencies and between state and local WIBs continues to grow.

## **Conclusion**

WorkForce West Virginia continues in the coordination, linkage and blending of multiple funding streams into a statewide Workforce Development System. The individuals and organizations within the WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers are coordinating with partners and stakeholders to create a workforce development system that strives to streamline services and reduce duplication of services. Also the system goal is to improve the overall quality of the workforce and enhance the productivity and competitiveness in the global economy. The work will continue toward the continuous improvement of the delivery of workforce services in our state. While changes continue to be made and improvements undertaken, we will continue to bear in mind that we are serving the people of West Virginia.

## **9091 REPORT**

The 9091 Report was transmitted to DOL electronically on September 20, 2010. A PDF of the report is attached to this e-mail submission.

**For questions regarding this report and the information contained therein, please contact:**

**WorkForce West Virginia  
Russell L. Fry, Acting Executive Director  
112 California Avenue, Room 609  
Charleston, WV 25305  
Phone: (304) 558-7024  
Fax: (304) 558-3512**