



Robert Bentley  
GOVERNOR

Fitzgerald Washington  
COMMISSIONER

STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

September 19, 2014

Mr. Eugene Caso  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Employment and Training Administration  
61 Forsyth Street, SW  
6M-12  
Atlanta, GA 30303-3104

Attention: Lovie Thompson

Dear Mr. Caso,

Enclosed is Alabama's Workforce Information Grant Labor Market Information Progress Report for Program Year 2013-2014. A pdf of this report will be submitted through email. We respectfully ask that you review the added section of the report that addresses the unused funds from this program year. We hope you will consider our proposal for plans to use this money through the next year.

Sincerely,

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Fitzgerald Washington, Commissioner  
Alabama Department of Labor  
SWA Administrator

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Governor Robert Bentley

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George Clark, Chairperson  
Alabama Workforce Investment Board

STATE OF ALABAMA  
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
LABOR MARKET INFORMATION DIVISION

## **WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT REPORT PY 2013-2014**

The Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Division (ADOL/LMI) makes every effort to make use of the established methodologies provided by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and Employment and Training Administration in a cost-effective, and superior manner to collaboratively fulfill responsibilities as Alabama's official statistical data collection and analysis experts for the Alabama Workforce Investment System. Customers of Labor Market Information have had access to quality information, data and resources to help make better informed decisions at the local, regional and state levels.

During this period of recovery from economic downturn, many aspects of the labor force have shifted. As a result, the strategic plans for both education and economic development have been raised to a higher level. This shift has boosted the desire for planners in the State of Alabama to seek labor market information more than in the past. The increased emphasis on labor market information is beginning to open doors to stronger partnerships with other workforce agencies. ADOL/LMI has increased its efforts to deliver information through all types of mediums, with the lofty goal of ensuring that all career counselors, career technical teachers, postsecondary teachers, local and regional planners, policymakers, economic developers, and workforce development boards can no longer say that they didn't know this free information existed. ADOL/LMI works to reach as many customers as possible through personal interaction, because better understanding seems to emerge from this approach.

During PY 2013, a stronger relationship was formed with the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), Workforce Development Division. This is a huge step forward for the success of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) deliverables in the state; for, ADECA oversees a majority of these activities. ADOL/LMI is now closely involved in the state's WIA strategic plan, and also annual report. ADOL/LMI is also much more involved in the strategic plans and reports for the state and local workforce boards.

At the end of PY 2012 ADOL/LMI became aware of Alabama's new strategic plan for economic development through the attendance of a governor's taskforce meeting. The plan outlines eleven industry clusters for economic developers, local officials, and policymakers to target when recruiting new industry. The LMI division analyzed the industry clusters, and produced an annual synopsis of data for each of those clusters to support the state's economic development strategy while creating a stronger partnership with the Alabama Department of Commerce.

With the 2013-2014 school year being the first year that the State of Alabama required all 9<sup>th</sup> graders to take a course called *Financial and Career Preparedness*, ADOL/LMI stayed busy providing career information to high schools, teachers, career coaches, career technical teachers, and even students. ADOL/LMI was invited to assist with training staff on the multitude of labor market information resources available to help students make informed decisions about their future careers. In addition, a large number of local areas across the state now offer high school students a chance to experience firsthand the opportunities that local industries have to offer, through

special Career Exploration Bazaars. ADOL/LMI has been invited to attend many of these events to share labor market information with the teachers of these groups, as well as the students themselves.

ADOL/LMI continues its efforts to stay abreast of new training, economic development, and funding initiatives in the state, so that the division can customize its reports and materials to best meet the needs of the customers. In addition, the division continues to follow, as closely as possible, economic occurrences at the local level. Furthermore, the division stays current with national initiatives in economic development, training, and connecting workers with employers. Many of the reports that are produced by ADOL/LMI are a result of staff research on what is happening in other states and at the national level. The division strives to ensure that the State of Alabama continues to produce the most useful labor market information products, with available resources, in the nation.

A result of ADOL/LMI staff staying current on the hot topics nationally in employment trends, Alabama funded a statewide Skills Survey at the end of 2013. The goal of the survey was to report actual employer responses to questions on their difficulties hiring qualified applicants and their difficulties with current employees. The survey was completed in early 2014, and results are posted in an online dashboard. ADOL/LMI plan to create summary reports for the state and the workforce development regions to also post on the LMI website. The results of the survey justified what ADOL/LMI staff had heard from employers around the state, and had researched at a national level. Employers are having the most difficulty hiring people with basic work skills, including showing up for work, showing up on time, and following procedures. The top reason employers reject applicants is due to a drug screen failure. This topic of workplace skills will continue to be a source for additional research and reporting.

Federal grant funds have been used for the delivery of products and services as part of the state's workforce information system. Enhancement of products and services above and beyond those discussed in this report has incorporated other partner funds.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **1) Populated the Workforce Information Database with state and local data**

#### **A) Outcomes for this objective**

In January 2014, the Workforce Information Database (WID) was converted from version 2.4 to version 2.5. At this time, all core tables including crosswalks were updated with the latest available information according to consortium guidelines. LMI staff participated in training opportunities through webinars and conference calls to stay abreast of additional information that needed to be added to the database and of changes made to the WID system.

#### **B) Extent to which activities conformed to schedule**

The WID was maintained and populated as scheduled with no variance from anticipated milestones.

#### **C) Aggregated expenditures and variance**

There was no variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

## **2) Produced and disseminated industry and occupational projections**

### **A) Outcomes for this objective**

In September, 2013, the LMI analyst began preparation work for the 2012-2022 statewide and regional industry projections. The analyst worked on the time series data, trying to compile as much historical data prior to the year 2000 as possible to allow for a better statistical modeling. In addition, changes to the historical series had to be made due to changes in NAICS industry classifications and also regional workforce geographical definitions. The analyst also worked to prepare historical series relevant data series that would serve as good independent variables for use in statistical models used to project respective industry employment to 2022. This preparatory work was completed in anticipation of the US National industry projections to be released in November of 2013. When the national data was released, the analyst began modeling all industries at a 4-digit NAICS level for the state and each of the ten workforce development regions.

Near the end of January 2014, work began on the Alabama Short Term Industry projections for 2013-2015. An LMI analyst met with the University of Alabama, Center for Economic Research to gain access to their short term economic model data output for industries in the State of Alabama to a 3-digit NAICS detailed level. The analyst worked with the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage staff to compile respective quarterly data to use for the 2013 base year. Additionally, the analyst gathered data on employment changes that had occurred in the overlapping time period to add to the projections manually. Information was obtained on mass layoffs and announced new industries that would affect employment levels during this projection period. This information would later be entered into the projections results. Using all of these resources and datasets, Alabama Industry Projections for 2013-2015 were completed by the end of February 2014 and were submitted to the appropriate national site through the Projections Software, created by the Projections Managing Partnership. A short term projections publication was produced for customers, and will be submitted to regional ETA office for review.

Once short term projections were completed, work resumed on Alabama long term industry projections. Models were completed, extensive review and analysis was performed, to finalize the industry base year and projected year employment data. Industry data was then submitted to the occupational analyst for submission into the projections software, provided by the projections managing partnership, to combine with the occupational employment statistics staffing patterns to produce the statewide occupational long term employment projections. Upon completion, additional extensive review and analysis was performed. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Alabama statewide long term industry and occupational employment projections files were submitted to the appropriate location for national review through the Projections Software, created by the Projections Managing Partnership.

Staff has participated onsite training offered by the Projections Managing Partnership in June of 2014. Furthermore, all webinar updates and training events were attended by several members of the LMI staff to ensure that the most current information was available to all staff involved in working on all aspects of industry and occupational projections.

**B) Extent to which activities conformed to schedule**

Alabama Short Term Employment Projections for 2013-2015 were submitted on time through the required method in accordance with the new deadline of February 28, 2014, as was indicated in the guidelines for the Workforce Information Grant for Program Year 2013. Additionally, Alabama Long Term Employment Projections for 2012-2022 were submitted on time through the required method by June 30, 2014 as indicated by the required guidelines.

As work continues to produce regional long term projections for 2012-2022, some analysis in the regions has revealed some areas that may need some revisions at the state level. This analysis will continue to ensure that the state projections as well as the regional projections are as accurate as possible so they are a reliable source of data for customers to use for both career preparation and industry recruitment.

**C) Expenditures and variance**

There was no variance from the original estimated aggregate expenditures.

**3) Publish economic analyses, special workforce information and economic studies**

**A) Outcomes for this objective**

In October, 2012 the Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Division, along with several other public and private partners, such as The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education, Alabama Industrial Development Training, Alabama Power, and the Alabama Office of Workforce Development, reinstated its partnership with the University of Alabama, Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) to produce State of the Workforce Reports. ADOL/LMI signed a two-year agreement for CBER to produce one State of the Workforce Report each year, which would include the results from the underemployment survey conducted each year during the agreement. ADOL/LMI also contracted with CBER to develop a more detailed report on underemployment in the State of Alabama and in the workforce development regions in the state. ADOL/LMI works closely with CBER to provide them with essential data needed to achieve the ultimate goal of the report, which is to provide recommendations to planners, policymakers, developers, and educators on how to move the economy in a positive direction in coming years. These recommendations are based on labor market information data from ADOL, The Alabama State Data Center, and multiple additional resources. The reports are produced for the State of Alabama, Jefferson County Workforce Board, Mobile County Workforce Board, and the ten regional workforce boards in the state. Once the report is published, LMI staff partner with CBER staff to present information from this report and new products from the LMI division to each of the ten workforce development regional boards, to the extent the Governor's office of Workforce Development and the Regional Boards will work us in to their regular meetings. During this program year, this information was presented to 6 workforce boards. The most current report, published in April of 2014, is available in a downloadable pdf file on the LMI website at the following link; <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/workforcedev/WorkforceReports/Alabama.pdf> . The underemployment report, which examines the possibility of projecting underemployment by applying autoregressive models to the survey results collected in each of the five previous years, was published in September of 2013. The report is entitled, "Investigating the Feasibility of Forecasting Underemployment in Alabama," and is available in a downloadable pdf format on the LMI website at the following link; <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/workforcedev/Underemployment%20Forecasts.pdf> . As a continuation to

the accuracy of forecasting underemployment, a report will be published in the upcoming program year that will outline the accuracy of the forecasted underemployment data compared to the actual data collected in 2014.

The LMI division has continued during Program Year 2013 to produce monthly reports based on data collected from the Help Wanted Online (HWOL) data series. In addition, the division has conducted some additional studies into the data offered by The Conference Board, Wanted Analytics, and the Help Wanted Online Data Series. Monthly historical data for all counties was organized to allow customers to see the trend of online job ads for specific occupations, both total ads and new ads. This gave planners in workforce development regions a good idea through a visual medium how the demand for specific occupations has changed in recent years, and through the recession. LMI staff also began to realize and explore some additional data features in the Wanted Analytics data module. During analysis of the HWOL data, LMI staff found some reporting problems with the data. LMI staff worked with staff from The Conference Board to get these issues resolved, and continue to work together to refine the data so that it is as accurate as possible. The reports are available on the homepage at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/default.aspx> and the following link provides an example of the statewide 2-page report <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/WORKFORCEDEV/HWOL/AL.pdf>. In addition to the report for the State of Alabama, monthly reports are also published for each of the eleven metropolitan areas and each of the ten workforce development regions. The division plans to conduct additional analysis and publish reports with data provided through this valuable resource.

The Business Employment Dynamics (BED) Newsletters continues to be updated on a quarterly basis, and posted on the LMI website at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/workforcedev/BEDPR.pdf>.

During the latter part of PY 2012 ADOL/LMI became aware of the new economic development strategic plan for the State of Alabama called *Accelerate Alabama*. (Copy of the strategic plan is located at <http://www.madeinalabama.com/assets/2013/03/AccelerateAlabamaPlan.pdf>). This plan identifies eleven industry clusters for planners, developers, and policymakers to target in the state's economic development efforts through 2015. To assist the Alabama Department of Commerce with these efforts, ADOL/LMI studied the targeted clusters, and produced a summary report for each cluster outlining existing employment, number of companies, historical trend since 2000, top jobs in the cluster, typical wages for jobs in those clusters, maps displaying parts of the state where the clusters are currently prevalent, and many more important variables. A downloadable pdf document for each of the targeted clusters is available on the ADOL/LMI website under the title *Accelerate Alabama*. (An example of the Aerospace Report is available at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/workforcedev/AccelerateAL/Aerospace/Aerospace.pdf>). These reports were published in September of 2013 and made available to the Alabama Department of Commerce, who also included them on their website [www.madeinalabama.com](http://www.madeinalabama.com) under the information on the respective industry clusters. The plan is to update these reports to include the most current data on an annual basis.

In the summer of 2013 ADOL/LMI worked with a contractor to develop a Skills Survey for the State of Alabama. Employers classified in construction, utilities, and manufacturing industries were surveyed through a random sample, that was pulled by the US Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The survey was conducted by phone, and a mandatory 75% response rate was maintained. The phone calls were conducted over a three month period, with regularly scheduled conference calls between the contractor and ADOL/LMI staff. Once the data had been collected, by the end of 2013, the contractor built an online dashboard system which would be used for customers to access the results of the survey. The data from the survey would be

reported for the entire state, and each of the ten workforce development planning regions of the state. This dashboard went live on the ADOL/LMI website in early February of 2014. The results prove that issues businesses have hiring new employees are the same across regions and industries. The response across the state for the Skills survey has been overwhelmingly positive. The dashboard is live on the ADOL/LMI website. Plans are underway to develop summary reports for each area surveyed to post on the website. This will be accomplished during the next program year.

**B) Extent to which activities conformed to schedule**

Due to the schedule of the Center for Business and Economic Research, and the involvement of updating the Underemployment Survey for the State and regions, the delivery schedule for the State of the Workforce reports did not always align with the program years of the One Stop Grant. CBER strives to provide the latest occupational projections and wage data, and because the industry and occupational projections require so much time to complete, the LMI division often does not complete them until the deadline for the end of the program year. As a result, when the division provided CBER with the projections information, they would in turn need another couple of months to update the report and get it published for all the areas. As soon as CBER has a new report, they immediately send the LMI division all the files, and allow the division to publish them and make them available to our customers.

Commuting pattern reports for 2012 were not produced during PY 2013, due to the fact that the US Census Bureau, LEHD Program, had still not released the 2012 commuting patterns at the end of the program year. As soon as the updated commuting data has been released, the Alabama LMI division will produce commuting summaries for all the same areas it has in the past. Furthermore, concerning the LEHD Program, 2014 marks the deadline of the ten-year agreement between the State of Alabama and the US Census Bureau for this program. ADOL/LMI did receive an updated data sharing agreement for signature to extend its partnership in this valuable program. ADOL and The Census Bureau are currently under negotiations to reach agreement on certain terms of sharing data. Hopefully this agreement will be signed so that customers not only in Alabama but in all parts of the country will be able to gain access to this valuable data for the state.

The Skills Survey did run somewhat behind schedule in the data collection process. The goal was to complete the phone calls before the holidays in November. Unfortunately that was not possible due to the difficulty in getting responses from some vital employers, especially in the utilities industry. ADOL/LMI staff worked with members of state economic development, manufacturing, and construction associations to encourage employers to respond so that this report would be as meaningful as possible. In addition, the results of the survey were not displayed on the website until February, 2014, when hopes were to have them up a month earlier. Most of this delay was due to several changes that ADOL/LMI wanted done to the display of the survey results before the dashboard was completed and live on the website.

**C) Expenditures and variance**

The Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Division contracted to spend \$150,000 during this program year to partner in the development of the State of the Workforce Report along with the separate new Underemployment Report. The Alabama Underemployment Forecast report was published in September 2013, just after the beginning of the new program year. The latest State of the Workforce Report was

published in April of 2014. The LMI division expects to publish the next underemployment report in September 2014, and the next State of the Workforce Report in the Spring of 2015.

ADOL/LMI spent \$225,000 for the contractor to survey by phone over 7,000 employers, ensuring a 70% response rate plus develops and maintains an online dashboard that displays the results for the survey for each area and industry. All of the requirements of the agreement were met by the contractor, and they were paid the full amount with no variances.

#### **4) Post products, information, and reports on the Internet**

##### **A) Outcomes for this objective**

As stated previously, to support the statewide Accelerate Alabama economic development strategic plan, ADOL/LMI prepared a report for each of the initiative's eleven industry clusters. These reports are available in pdf format at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/workforcedev/default.aspx> under the heading *Accelerate Alabama*.

ADOL/LMI worked on a plan to organize the multitude of reports and data resources available for each of the ten workforce development planning regions in the State of Alabama. The goal was to allow the user to choose the area, and a list of available information would be revealed to them. The website now is reorganized to include this type of format. The user has a list of areas which includes the state and each of the ten workforce development regions. Once the area is chosen, the table of contents reflects the list of data available for the respective area. Included in the table of contents are the following reports: 1) Commuting Patterns; 2) Employer Benefits; 3) High Demand Fast Growing Declining Occupations; 4) High Wage by Education Level; 5) Industry Change and Distribution; 6) Industry Employment Trend by Age group; 7) Joblink Resumes Top 30; 8) Net Job Change by Industry Sector; 9) Occupational Location Quotients; 10) Older Worker Map; 11) Top 40 Unemployment Claimants by Occupation; 12) Turnover Rates by Industry Sector; and, 13) Worker Profile. All of these are available at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/workforcedev/default.aspx> under the heading, *Statewide and Workforce Development Products*.

ADOL/LMI continues to place various presentations made during the year on the website for people who attended the meetings or anyone else who might be interested in the information that was presented. These presentations can be found under the heading *Training Materials and Archived Webinars* on the website at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/workforcedev/default.aspx>. Webinars that were conducted in 2012 and 2013 are also available at this location. ADOL/LMI plans to offer additional webinars in the coming program year.

The Alabama Licensed Occupations Guide was updated to include current information from state and federal licensing agencies. This publication is available both in hard copy for customers and as a PDF file for people to download from our website. This publication is available at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/WorkforceDev/LOG/LOG.pdf>. In addition, the online version of the Career Exploration Guide was enhanced on the ADOL/LMI website. The Career Exploration guide now includes all resources used to gather career information. There are links to O\*net, Occupational Outlook Handbook, The Wage Survey, Industry and Occupational Projections, Occupational Videos, The Alabama Hot 40 Poster, Alabama Career Technical Education, Alabama Community College System, and more. The new design also

allows customers to search using four options; keyword search, job family, career cluster, or alphabetically. This new feature is available at <http://www2.labor.alabama.gov/WorkforceDev/CareerExploration/Default2.aspx> .

LED Quarterly Workforce Indicators and Mapping data continue to be updated in partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau, and used in reports to respond to information requests. The LEHD program enhanced some of its online applications to include a new method for customers to download LED datasets. The application is called the LED Extraction Tool, and was developed to replace the QWI Online tool. ADOL/LMI has updated this feature on the state LMI website. In addition the LEHD program has developed another application, the QWI Explorer, which allows customers to be able to compare, rank, and aggregate quarterly workforce indicators through charts and interactive tables. This application was still in beta version at the end of the program year; consequently, ADOL/LMI has not yet added this feature to its website. This feature will be incorporated onto the website once it is out of beta.

The division continues to update its Comprehensive Interactive LMI System ACLMIS. The website link is <https://www.alabamavlmi.com/> and the Green Jobs in Alabama website at <https://www.greenjobsinalabama.com/vosnet/Default.aspx> , which was created through a grant from the ARRA in 2009.

The results of the 2013 Skills Report is available through a link on the ADOL/LMI website at <http://www.dashhound.net/alskills/> . This site is maintained by the contractor who ADOL/LMI funded to conduct the survey and display the survey results. The dashboard allows customers to be able to download tables and graphs with the survey results in a PDF file.

In addition to internet availability, products have been distributed in training opportunities, emailed to customers in PDF formats, and mailed in hard copies where possible. The LMI Division makes certain that every report that is put on the website has some capability to be downloaded by its users, whether in a PDF format or in an excel spreadsheet for analysis.

#### **B) Extent to which activities conformed to schedule**

ADOL/LMI continues to improve the appearance and usability of the LMI website. In addition, the staff is continually updating and adding new information to the website as that information is available, and as staff have the opportunity to get that information placed on the site. This work occurs continuously throughout the program year to ensure the most current information is updated to the LMI website.

#### **C) Expenditures and variance**

In order to have the LMI Institute conduct training for our state, we obtained a state membership with the institute, plus we established an extended contract with them to conduct our training sessions. We plan on maintaining this membership to allow us to gain access to all of the resources and training opportunities provided by the Institute. Furthermore, the state membership provides discounts to states for LMI staff training events that are held throughout the year.

The LMI division has been printing large numbers of Career Cluster Posters and brochures due to the minimal cost for printing. The presence of a printing shop in the Alabama Department of Labor allows the division to

print these resources at a much lower cost than most private printers could. However, there has been discussion to leverage funds from education grants to pay for the printing of these resources in the future. Since the Career Centers have been distributing Hot 40 posters to their clients, they have been using their own grant funds to cover the cost to print the posters. This is a move in the right direction to assist the division in leveraging funds to support the resources that the division produces with Workforce Information Grant funds.

**5) Partner and consult with workforce investment boards.**

**A) Outcomes for this objective**

The Labor Market Information Division has worked closely with Workforce Development statewide and regionally to provide data that is vital to presenting well informed comprehensive plans for enhancing training and developing industry, both regionally and statewide. The LMI division has established a closer relationship with the Workforce Development division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). This division is the source for the state's Integrated Workforce Plan for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Wagner-Peyser Act programs. During this program year, ADOL/LMI has become more involved in these workforce plans, both at a state and regional level. ADOL/LMI division is now much more involved in writing the LMI portions of the reports than it has been in the past. The LMI division is also more involved in the State Workforce Board meetings, and Alabama Local Board meetings. During this program year, LMI staff not only attended the State Local Board meeting, but also presented at both the Birmingham Local Board meeting, and the State Workforce Board meeting. This is a huge step forward in creating better partnerships between those with the training dollars, and those with the data to support training programs.

Workforce Development continues to focus improvement efforts in the areas of supply gaps, training issues, and high wage, high demand occupations and industries. The LMI division supports these measures by providing information on high demand occupations that require an associate degree and under, statewide and regional commuting patterns and detailed educational and training data by occupation and/or industry. During this program year, the publication of the Alabama Skills Survey has provided educational institutions and postsecondary trainers in the state with data on the skills that are lacking in job applicants. These results are vital for the state's training initiatives that will prepare people to positively contribute to the workforce. Continuation of LED program (cooperative program with U.S. Census Bureau) and quarterly updates to LED are ongoing. LED reports also make information available on workers by age and stratification within industry. Industry and occupational analysis of workforce advisory areas and exploration continue as data becomes available.

**B) Extent to which activities conformed to schedule**

Activities of this nature are based on the cooperation of the Governor's Office of Workforce Office and the Workforce Development Regional Boards within the state. LMI strives to present updated information to all workforce boards on at least an annual basis. Working with the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and the Office of Workforce Development, LMI met with all agency partners to schedule dates to present the PY 2013 labor market information to every workforce development board over the next year. It has not always been an easy task scheduling these meetings through the State Office of Workforce Development.

### C) Expenditures and variance

The WIA unit supervisor gained membership to the local SHRM association which required an annual fee. The division plans to maintain this membership on an annual basis in order to accomplish the goals outlined above.

## Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Customer consultation and satisfaction in Alabama have continued to be evaluated using employer groups, workforce investment partner reviews, customer satisfaction surveys, requests for publications, training events, and anecdotal information received from customers. During this upcoming year, ADOL/LMI staff will continue to extend the public's knowledge of labor market information and its benefits to the workforce and economy of the state.

There has been continued interest in information and training provided by the Labor Market Information Division. Customers asked for speakers and/or trainers at respective conferences and meetings. LMI staff conducted training at high schools, employer meetings, economic development meetings, career technical education training, and industry association meetings. Information requests came from a wide range of customers such as workforce development, researchers, economic developers, employers, secondary education, postsecondary education, etc. During PY 2013, LMI staff answered over 370 requests for information made by phone, fax and email. Many of these phone calls involved technical assistance and customer service with online callers looking for reports, data, and asking for navigational directions of our online resources. A larger number of request this year were made by reporters gaining information for stories on high demand careers, and information about the economy. Nearly 60% of the specific data requests have come from economic developers. More resource requests come from education. Between October 2012, when the career cluster posters were released, and the end of this program year, nearly 2,200 sets of posters were requested. Additionally, over 2,000 sets of brochures were requested during the short 5-month period they were produced. Finally, the career centers began distributing Hot 40 posters to their customers, and gave out over 40,000 during the program year.

In PY 2013-2014, the division acquired a subscription to Survey Monkey to allow for better customer feedback on training, presentations, and website presentation. This form of customer feedback is in infant stages of development. The division is still pursuing the most efficient means of gaining feedback from the variety of groups with which it is involved. An example of the results from one of the customer surveys conducted through Survey Monkey is included below. It is widely thought that different groups require various methods of customer feedback. The division will continue to develop the most effective and efficient method to gain customer feedback from all its customers in the upcoming year.

During PY 2013, LMI staff attended various meetings to become more knowledgeable in labor market trends in the areas and to gain information to help LMI provide better information to customers. ADOL/LMI staff also gave several presentations to different groups, such as adult education, Workforce Development, Rehab, and others. Finally, ADOL/LMI staff participated in multiple planning consortiums. The following outlines the majority of the meetings that ADOL/LMI attended during the year:

### **Consortium Participation**

Served on the Department of Youth Services District 210 Committee and Career Technical Advisory Council.  
Attended meetings every other month

Served on the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) National Policy Council, representing the southeast region of the country.

Served on the High Tech Consortium. The goal of this consortium was to devise a more current definition of "high tech industries" that what was published by Daniel Hecker in 2005.

### **Membership Associations and Organizations**

Membership to the Economic Development Association of Alabama

Extended Membership to the LMI Institute partnered with C2ER

### **Meetings Attended**

- DYS Advisory Council Meeting, Montgomery, AL
- Economic Development Outlook Conference, Montgomery, AL
- Annual Workforce Development Conference, Montgomery, AL
- GIS Alabama First Annual Conference in April 2014
- Local Alabama Workforce Investment Area (Local AWIA) Region meeting, Montgomery, AL

### **Meetings Where LMI made Presentations**

- Calhoun Community College, Decatur, AL
- CTE Summer Conference, BJCC, Birmingham, AL
- Decatur/Morgan County Leadership Group
- Greenville New Career Coaches Training
- Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) 2013 Annual Conference, Point Clear, AL
- Auburn/Opelika Local SHRM Chapter
- Alabama Business Educators Association (ABEA), Hoover, AL
- EDAA Winter Conference, BJCC, Birmingham AL
- Training for Career Tech Teachers, Ray Thorington Rd Baptist Church, Montgomery, AL

### **Meetings Where LMI Displayed and Offered Information at an Exhibit**

- AL APSE and ACDD 2014 Conference "Waves of Change...Oceans of Opportunity" June 18-20, Mobile, AL
- Worlds of Opportunity, Mobile, AL

### **Workforce Board Meetings Where LMI Staff Presented**

- WDR 7 Board Meeting
- WDR 3 Board Meeting
- WDR 2 Board Meeting

- WDR 4 Board Meeting
- WDR 5 Board Meeting
- Jefferson County Local AWIA Board Meeting
- Alabama State WIA Board Meeting

#### Central 6 Region County Existing Industry Summit Meetings Where LMI Presented

- St. Clair County Existing Industry Seminar
- Chilton County Existing Industry Seminar
- Shelby County Existing Industry Seminar

#### Personal Visit and Training to the Following Career Centers in the State

- Huntsville Career Center
- Jasper Career Center
- Decatur Career Center
- Fort Payne Career Center
- Hanceville Career Center – Wallace State Community College
- Opelika Career Center
- Scottsboro Career Center
- Tuscaloosa Career Center
- Valley Career Center – Southern Union Community College
- Greenville Career Center

### CUSTOMER QUOTES AND ACCOLADES

*"Dear Commissioner Surtees,*

*I wanted to pass along to you a good-news story about one of your employees and her staff: Ms Tonya Lee who works Labor Statistics, et.al. I have been working with the State Military Department for over 9 years, and in that time, I have had the pleasure to work with Tonya many times. In fact, at one time, she and some of her staff came over to my office and "interviewed" our team to try and get an understanding of our needs and requirements. I almost hate to admit it, but for one state agency to go the extra mile to assist another state agency, when there was nothing to gain on her part, was nothing short of miraculous! Furthermore, I've attended Tonya's trainings, been in professional conferences with her, and every time, she never fails to deliver a great product or add valuable input to every discussion! Specifically, Tonya has been a tremendous help in our Military Department Long Range Plan. Without her accurate data and keen insights, our plan might never have gotten off the ground. Instead, when we brief our plan to internal leadership, Governor Bentley's staff or Legislative bodies, we never have anyone take issue because they know that the experts at the Labor Department had their hands, and minds, in our planning. In closing, I cannot say enough good things about Tonya Lee or her staff of professionals, they are truly some of the Stars that Fell on Dixie, and consequently, in to your providential path!"*

**Mr. Eric T. Gerritson**

**Planning and Economic Development Specialist II Joint Forces HQ - Alabama National Guard Montgomery, AL**

*"I spoke with you in Clanton on Monday about your presentation. I thought it was very well done and extremely informative."*

**Kurt Wallace**

**Alabama House of Representatives  
District 42**

*"Your presentation was great and I will be forwarding the information to all of our Board members. We will be able to use a lot of your data in our Local Area Plan that is due to ADECA on June 3, 2014. Once we complete our workforce development strategic planning process with a professional firm, I would think it would be good for you to join us on an annual basis to update us on the economy and high demand industries in Jefferson County. Again, thanks for the presentation."*

**Dr. Frederick Hamilton**  
**Chairperson of the Jefferson County Local AWIA Board**

*"Your posters (see below) were a big hit last year!  
We have a different location where we would like to post another set of those posters."*

**Daniel Derrig, PhD**  
**New Hope Elementary School**

*"Thank you so much for meeting with me Friday. I know part of it was rushed, and I apologize. It is difficult to focus on only one task most days. The information you provided is EXCELLENT!!!! I am so excited about it. I have already talked to one of the Career Prep teachers and she took the folder home to look over it for the weekend. :-) I love the relevance of the information you provided."*

**Janice Stockman**  
**Assistant Principal, Prattville High School**

## Product Usage

### Resource Requests

- Career Cluster Posters 1,094 sets of 16
- Career Cluster Brochures 1,021 sets of 16
- Hot 40 posters 40
- Over 50,000 Hot 40 posters have been distributed in Career Centers throughout the state

## Future LMI Goals

One of the major activities that LMI will accomplish in the near future is to present labor market information to various customer groups. The division realizes that there are still many customers who are unaware that this information is available. The division plans to provide webinars on specific LMI related topics, and provide the recorded webinars and training materials on the LMI website. This will allow those who cannot schedule to attend training or the live webinars to access more LMI training materials. The division also plans to provide hands-on, live training on a more regular basis, preferably annually. ADOL/LMI also plans to explore more ways to use social media to reach and educate customers on what labor market information is available to them and how they can use it. Staying current with technology is an ongoing process, but is vital for the success of any organization, whether it is in private industry or public service.

ADOL/LMI will seek to strengthen relationship with partner agencies to share data so that more detailed data can be gained. The division continuously seeks input from career centers, workforce development, industry

representatives, job seekers, and all its users to allow us to make our information not only available to them, but also useable for them. The division will continue to improve the design of the LMI website so that it is easier for customers to find the information they are seeking, making it a user-friendly resource.

The LMI staff will continue to attempt to leverage funds from partner agencies, such as the Office of Workforce Development, Education, Industry, Workforce Regional Boards, etc., but we have yet to be successful in obtaining any extra support from other agencies in the state to work on new projects. With the growing distribution of labor market information throughout the education community in the state, the division is building a stronger partnership with the Alabama Department of Education, Career Technical Education division, and hopes to offer additional data through this effort.

### Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Deliverables

It has been relayed to ADOL/LMI that ETA has considered including skills gaps as part of the deliverables for future grants. While it is understood that this is needed, it is imperative that states are provided with resources that includes both funds and methods for doing these skills analyses. Currently, there is no appropriate method of measuring skills gaps, especially those that are vital to employers. Most employers don't speak about skills gaps in terms of O\*net. As a result, some research needs to be done concerning how to better measure skills gaps before it is put into the grant deliverables.

Alabama supports the alliance of the Projections Managing Partnership, Analyst Resource Center, and the Estimate Delivery System to serve as one large support group for states. The Estimate Delivery System (EDS) is vital to allow states to not only provide occupational employment and wage data for specialized substate areas, but also to serve as important input for the completion of statewide and substate occupational employment projections. The fact that EDS has run out of funding for the last couple of years creates an extra burden for states to be able to offer this local data to their customers. ETA's strength has been to push the importance of using local labor market information to justify decisions made by policymakers to strengthen the states' economies. Without EDS, states cannot provide this local occupational employment and wages data, except for the areas that are surveyed by the OES program.

With the enactment of the new Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA), ADOL/LMI would appreciate more communication from ETA on the changes this new act will mean for the Workforce Information Grant, with respect to both funding and deliverables. Furthermore, it would benefit states to have more specific guidelines concerning the extent to which all agencies in respective states that receive any portion of Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act funds should work together on a regular basis in order to meet the desired outcomes of the act. For example, these funds in many states are distributed across several different state agencies, and one agency doesn't even know what the other is doing. It would be helpful for states to receive a list of all the agencies who receive funds and what their objectives are so that all of the agencies can work together toward a common goal.

### Alabama Plans for Unused Funds from PY 2013-2014

After three straight years of carrying over excessive funds into the respective successive program years, ADOL/LMI is presently only carrying over approximately \$59,000 into the next year. Due to the fact that LMI has obtained a new contract to access the HWOL dataset and will continue maintenance of the state workforce online comprehensive labor market system and green jobs system, it is certain that the agency will carry over limited funds into the next program year, and from this point forward. The LMI unit that is responsible for the deliverables for the Workforce Information Grant did finally get fully staffed near the end of Program Year 2013. Unfortunately, the unit was forced to transfer one person to another LMI section due to the forecast that there would not be

adequate funds to cover the present staff along with all of the contracts maintained with this grant. This situation will be closely monitored over the year and will be reevaluated at the end of the next program year.

### Alabama LMI Website Level of Demand

Website hits by *category* for the LMI website at [www.labor.alabama.gov/lmi](http://www.labor.alabama.gov/lmi) July 2013 - June 2014:

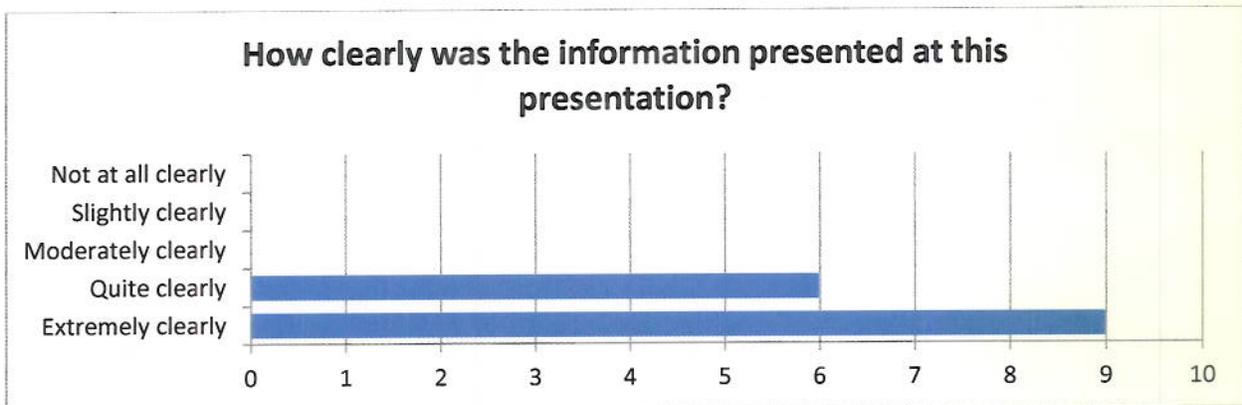
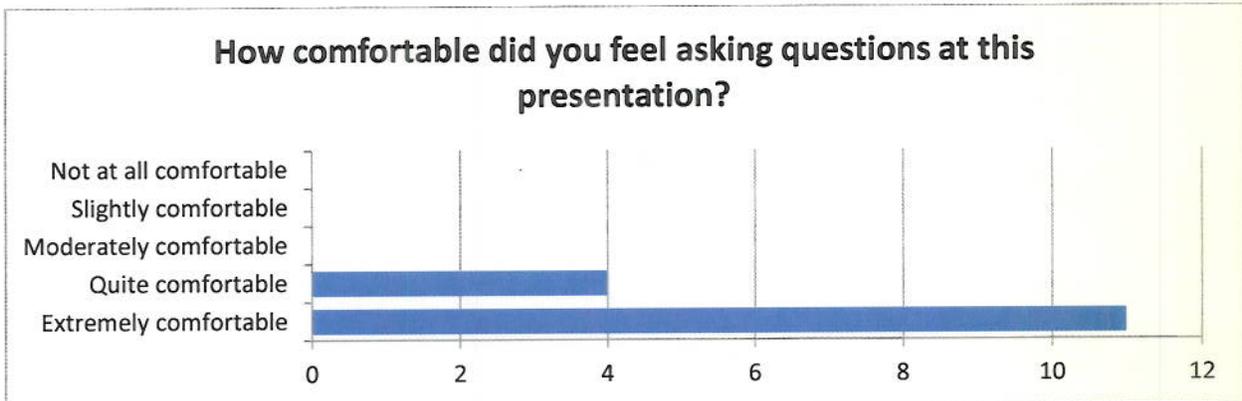
Help Wanted Online (HWOL) Monthly Reports	5,121
Accelerate Alabama Industry Cluster Reports	8,163
Alabama Underemployment Report	22,843
Underemployment Forecast Report	641
Webinars	4,707
Presentations	6,725

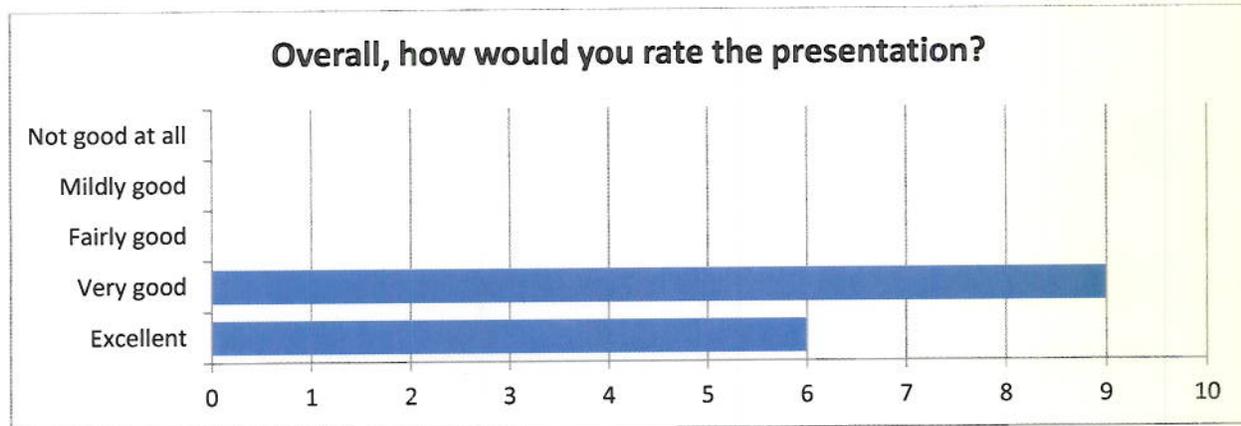
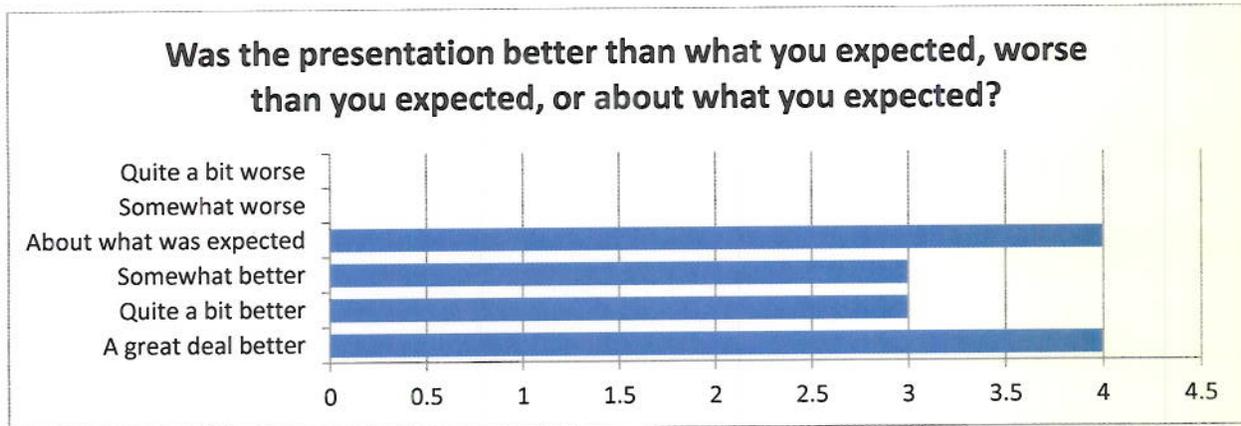
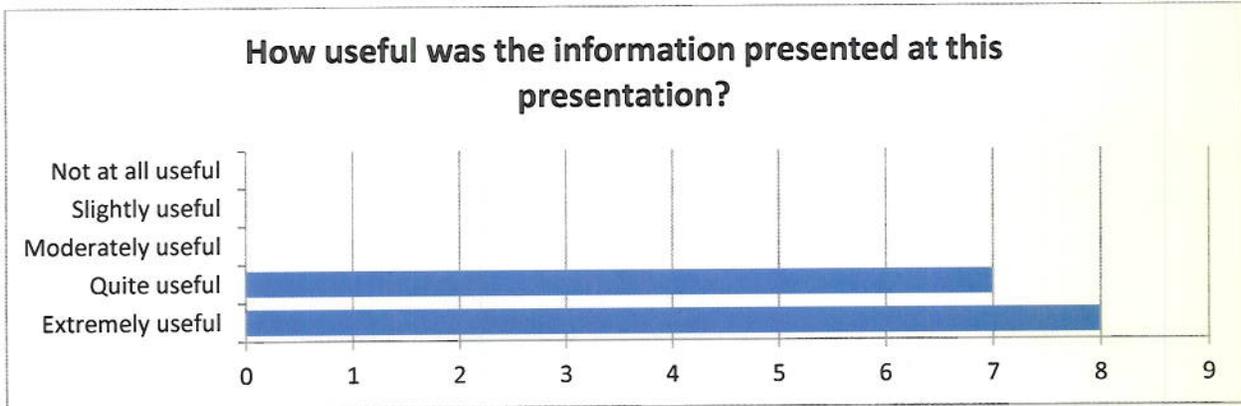
Approximate Total Visits during the period July 2013-June 2014 for the following websites:

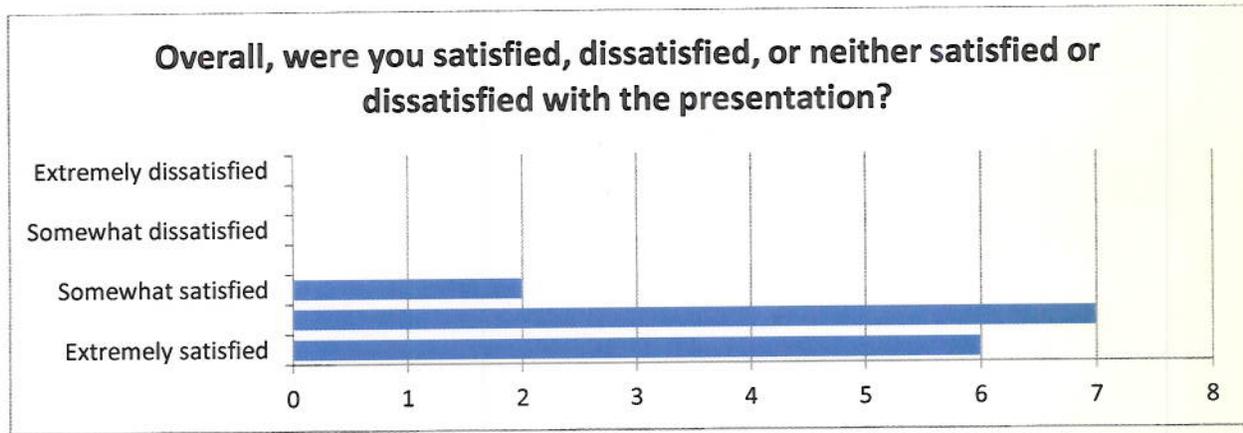
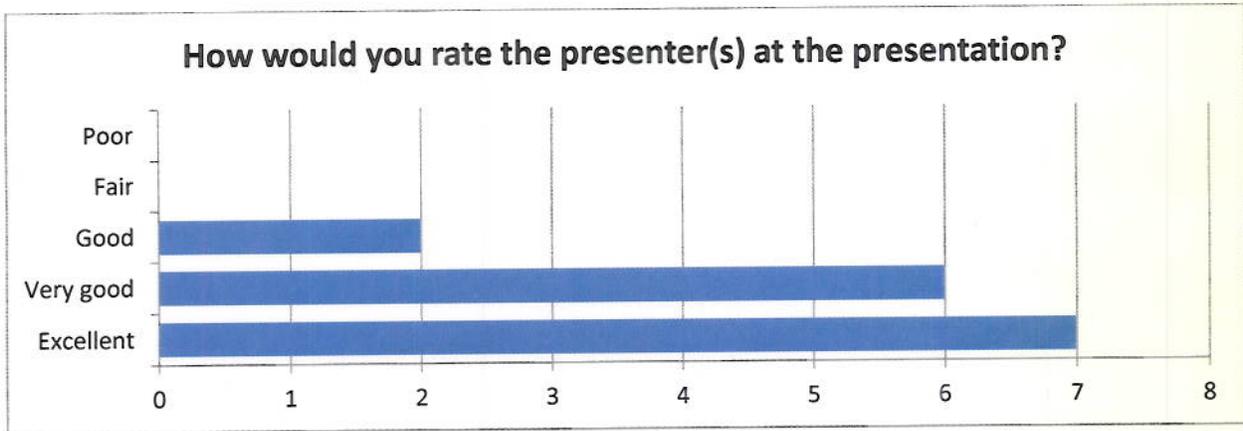
<a href="http://www.greenjobsinalabama.com">www.greenjobsinalabama.com</a>	65,379
<a href="http://www.alabamavlmi.com">www.alabamavlmi.com</a>	6,117

### Customer Satisfaction Survey

#### LMI CAREER COACHES AND COUNSELORS CONFERENCE 5/13/2014







### What did you like about the presentation?

“Great info, relaxed atmosphere” . . . “I liked all of the presentations that I attended. Such as the Win, Go Build Alabama, and the Fire Science” . . . “The interaction, the group dynamics” . . . “It was informative and well organized.” . . . “Very good information and good presenter. Presenter very willing to assist.” . . . “The general session and the individual sessions were very informative” . . . “Better understanding of the LMI website” . . . “The needed information I received from vendors as well as the speakers” . . . “Information that is available free of charge which can benefit our students search for future jobs/professions/careers.” . . . “The way things were presented.”