



Montana Department of **LABOR & INDUSTRY**

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative – PY 2018

Montana submits its WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative for PY 2018 to the Secretary of Labor in accordance with the “WIOA Common Performance Reporting-OMB Control No. 1205-0526.” This report serves as a complement to the WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report (ETA 9169).

Waivers:

Montana has two approved waivers. Neither waiver has been in place for at least one program year.

Two approaches the state chose for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator pilot:

Montana’s focus is on all three performance indicators: Retention with the Same Employer; Repeat Business Customers; and the Employer Penetration Rate. Job Service Montana (JSM) staff record business contacts in the Montana Department of Labor & Industry (MDLI) database. This practice allows for a relatively smooth calculation of the pilot’s WIOA Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicators.

In the spirit of WIOA, MDLI partnered with Adult Education (AE) and Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services (VRBS) to report the Effectiveness in Serving Employers in the MDLI database. Though only JSM and VRBS currently record business contacts in MDLI database, AE also has access to the MDLI database to report their services, so that MDLI can eventually report for the entire state.

Include brief descriptions of:

a) current or planned evaluation and related research projects, including methodologies used;

b) efforts to coordinate the development of such projects with WIOA core programs, other state agencies, and local boards. For the sake of thoroughness, a) and b) are combined throughout the descriptions below.

MDLI continues its efforts to improve evaluative capacity and program knowledge across all workforce programs throughout the agency. MDLI completed data collection in a randomized control trial (RCT) evaluation of the Workforce Services Division’s (WSD) 100% program. The 100% program complements the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program by providing Unemployment

Insurance (UI) claimants, not selected for RESEA, with an orientation to workforce services offered by MDLI. Currently, in the analysis step of the evaluation, the effects of the program on UI claim duration, utilization of UI benefits, and the rate of benefit exhaustion are all being measured. Results from the evaluation will be used in future programmatic decision-making for the 100% program. Additional insights from the study will be used to enhance MDLI's service delivery strategies as well.

Montana's large geographic area and dispersed population makes providing in-person, RESEA services in every corner of the state next to impossible. Access to local JSM services can be difficult for residents who do not live in a city that contains a JSM office. MDLI's evaluation efforts include initial planning for a RCT evaluation of RESEA-related appointments that replace in-person service delivery with video-calling technologies. Assessing the effectiveness of distance service delivery and proving its feasibility as a tool in workforce development are important first steps toward improving MDLI productivity by widening the customer base and making JSM accessible to more customers. Gold-standard, RCT evaluation methods are used to compare take-up rates and outcomes between a randomly selected treatment and a control group. MDLI continues to report evaluation and performance results to the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) and relies on SWIB board guidance for direction on future evaluation efforts.

c) a list of completed evaluation and related reports and links to where they were made accessible to the public electronically:

MDLI completed in-depth reports on two of the state's workforce programs, providing descriptive information on participants and basic outcomes for the Montana Registered Apprenticeship (MRAP) and HELP-Link programs. These annual reports provide information on participant demographics as well as program participation trends that are valuable for program planning. Both reports are available publicly online.

MDLI produced a labor force report on the city of Bozeman and surrounding Gallatin County—Montana's fastest growing county over the past years. Located in southwest Montana, Gallatin County was also one of the fastest growing micropolitan areas in the country and a significant contributor to statewide economic growth. With an unemployment rate sitting well below 3% throughout 2019, a report on the county economy, including current and projected labor force trends, was especially valuable for workforce and economic development professionals.

- 1) Apprenticeship Report: <http://lmi.mt.gov/Publications/registered-apprenticeship-program-data-report-1>
- 2) HELP-Link Report: <http://lmi.mt.gov/Publications/PublicationsContainer/help-link-2018-fiscal-year-end-report>
- 3) Bozeman Report: <http://lmi.mt.gov/Publications/PublicationsContainer/bozeman-area-labor-report>

d) State efforts to provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits for Federal evaluations:

In addition to an assessment of program compliance and fiscal compliance, MDLI monitoring visits include a review of data entered into MDLI's management information system. Desk reviews and on-site visits are both utilized to evaluate participant records, gather data, and provide reports back to service providers. MDLI monitoring gathers information necessary for data performance reporting and

provides program managers with the information needed to plan appropriate technical assistance and comprehensive on-going training to case managers. Each site is visited/monitored annually.

The SWIB is responsible for conducting independent, objective evaluations of One-Stop sites. The SWIB evaluates and certifies One-Stop sites no less than once every three years. The SWIB completed its certification of Montana's One-Stop System on September 26, 2017. In support of the goal of continuous improvement, each certified site will start providing an annual report to the SWIB detailing progress toward pursuit of higher standards set forth in the certification criteria.

e) Continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated:

MDLI is currently working to improve the agency's access to program-related data in a variety of forms via dashboards and data accessibility tools. These tools will serve two purposes: 1) to provide visual analytics of labor market information and program activities to inform managers, workforce consultants, and other staff for decision-making purposes; 2) to ease access to downloadable data on program activities and allow for improvement in monitoring and auditing, information sharing, and management decisions.

In the past year, MDLI completed two new dashboards for workforce development in Montana. An apprenticeship dashboard displays Montana apprenticeship sponsors and occupations, allowing interactive exploration of potential apprenticeship fields. The dashboard can be used by employers considering the apprenticeship model as a tool for hiring and training workers; as well as job seekers who are interested in apprenticeship as a training model. This dashboard can be found at: http://apprenticeship.mt.gov/Home/pk_vid/b4035f99055858b615687346125ae3c1.

The second dashboard provides information on Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways and related job specifics, including wages and projections for careers in those fields. This dashboard is designed to assist educators in identifying CTE programs, as well as individuals who wish to research pathway options and related information. This dashboard can be found at: https://dataportal.mt.gov/t/DLIReporting/views/Projections-withcareerclusters/Dashboard5?iframeSizedToWindow=true&:embed=y&:showAppBanner=false&:display_count=no&:showVizHome=no&:origin=viz_share_link

Describe the state's approach to customer satisfaction, which may include such information used for one-stop certification, in accordance with 20 CFR 678.800:

The One-Stop Operator, MDLI economists, and the SWIB Director worked together to develop the initial steps in gathering customer satisfaction feedback from all Title 1B Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants who exited services each month. A letter, a customer satisfaction survey, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope are sent by mail to former participants the following month. The survey identifies the provider and the program, allowing follow-up to both favorable and unfavorable responses. It also asks if additional services or information would be helpful and follow-up is provided for those requests, including referral to another provider.

The number of individuals provided customer satisfaction outreach and results, which are calculated in two ways:

- Rate (percentage) of surveys returned to surveys mailed:
 - PY 2018: 59 surveys returned to 442 surveys mailed for a rate of 13%.
- Percentage of participants who responded as – very satisfied, satisfied, and dissatisfied:
 - PY 2018: very satisfied – 88%; satisfied – 9%; dissatisfied – 3%

Local service providers regularly elicit feedback from business partners and Wagner Peyser customers related to hiring events, career and resource fairs, workshops, and other workforce development events.

A description of Montana’s continuous improvement processes for incorporating customer satisfaction feedback:

When a promising practice is identified through surveys, details are shared with all providers and WIOA program managers. Specific service-related kudos and suggestions are forwarded to the provider and the appropriate case manager. When a participant notes specific service deficiencies, the provider is contacted for a detailed discussion of the feedback and options for improvement. MDLI’s future goals include automation of the survey process.

Specific state performance measures or goals and progress toward meeting them:

MDLI has specific goals for each WIOA program to measure individual providers outside of federally negotiated performance measures. These goals are monitored on a quarterly basis and regular feedback is provided to service providers to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery to all participants across the state. The goals include cost-per-participant, amount spent on direct participant payments and outcomes to employment. The goals are reviewed by the SWIB, as well as MDLI management.

Performance deficiencies on the primary indicators of performance:

MDLI continues to improve WIOA reporting, striving for consistency in required performance-data entry. The changes and improvements in WIOA federal reporting are frequent, demanding staff time and funding. With its available resources, MDLI endeavors to adapt to the required changes and safeguard participant data.

To provide consistent support and foster their success, MDLI strives to provide case managers with performance data-related tools and training. During PY2018, MDLI committed to the development of a new electronic case management system to focus on the collection and uniformity of required information, eventually leading to an accurate report of participant outcomes and the state’s negotiated credentials.

Common exit policy:

Montana has a common exit policy for Wagner Peysers; WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; TAA; Vets; and any National Dislocated Worker Grant. Once ninety days have lapsed since the client last received a countable service, with no additional services planned, a date of exit can be determined. The exit date is retroactive to the last date of service and is not delayed, postponed or affected by self-service or information-only services or activities.

The state’s approach to data validation and ensuring data integrity:

MDLI developed written procedures for data validation. The policy is a collaborative effort of MDLI’s WSD Monitoring Unit, WIOA program managers, and the division’s policy analyst. WSD program managers and administrators discussed the policy draft at a November meeting. Before the policy is considered approved, ready for adoption, and posted publicly/internally, the draft will be presented to the SWIB’s WIOA and Executive Committees.

MDLI’s monitoring of service providers will include verification of the integrity and validity across workforce development programs. Monitoring staff will provide service providers and program managers with a written summary of identified errors or missing data and a request to correct the inaccuracies. WIOA program managers will provide technical assistance. Service providers will respond in writing when all inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies have been corrected.

MDLI’s monitoring staff will attend data validation training annually. MDLI’s Monitoring, Audits, Performance and Sanctions Policy details monitoring protocols, consistent with 2 CFR 200.328 to ensure program staff are following written procedures.

A review of program data that includes the United States Department of Labor’s (USDOL) required elements will be conducted on an annual basis and the data validation process will be assessed regularly for effectiveness.

Information on activities provided by state funds:

The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program, available to employers with fifty employees or less, provides resources to improve Montana workers’ job skills and related knowledge.

MDLI is increasing the visibility of the IWT program through agency press releases, social media, and the network of JSM offices located in sixteen communities. In partnership with MDLI’s MRAP, agency staff promoted IWT at several industry events and offered the state’s first apprenticeship/IWT enrollment. MDLI and the Montana Economic Developers Association partnered to promote and educate employers on the IWT program. Finally, MDLI continues to develop an intensive training for JSM workforce consultants and employers, so that they can assist businesses with the IWT program. The following is a summary IWT program data:

	PY2018
Funds Awarded	\$ 291,355
# of Applications	190

Highest Training Cost	\$ 24,000
Lowest Training Cost	\$ 115

The IWT program set the following goals:

- 1) Expand the number of communities that utilize IWT funds by twenty (20) percent;
- 2) Increase the number of occupations/industries utilizing IWT funds to meet identified training needs;
 - Ten to fifteen new IWT grants per year will fund training in high-demand occupations.
- 3) Expand the use of IWT funding to assist businesses with apprenticeship training;
 - Each Registered Apprenticeship Program Specialist will have at least one sponsor that utilizes IWT funding.
- 4) Improve the quantity and quality of statewide business services by partnering with JSM offices;
 - Quarterly calls with offices to share ideas, answer questions, and collaboratively meet goals 1, 2, and 3.

Initially authorized by the Montana Legislature in 2015 and reauthorized during the 2019 legislative session, the Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Act program is a collaborative effort between MDLI and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS). HELP Act provides Medicaid coverage and workforce development opportunities for adults, ages 19 – 64, with an income less than 138% of the federal poverty wage. HELP-Link is the workforce development component of this program operated by MDLI. By increasing the earning capacity, economic stability, and the self-sufficiency of HELP-Link participants, this workforce development strategy intends to increase the number of individuals who purchase their own health insurance coverage and no longer require Medicaid coverage.

During PY2018, the HELP-Link program served 1058 enrolled clients. Clients can be co-enrolled in other federally funded programs such as RESEA or WIOA programs. Forty-four percent (466) of HELP-Link participants received training assistance. Fifty-two percent (241) of those participants completed their training.

The most common occupations pursued by HELP-Link participants are:

- Registered Nurses
- Nursing Assistants
- Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- Medical Record and Health Information Technicians

In Montana, registered nurses earn a median wage of roughly \$65,960, which would likely lift a family of five out of poverty and above the Medicaid expansion eligibility threshold. The remaining occupations have median wages between \$28,820 and \$45,430 per year which would likely lift individuals or a family of two above the Medicaid expansion eligibility threshold.

Through its Assistance for Business Clinics (ABCs), MDLI continues its effort to serve businesses effectively. MDLI plans and organizes an average of fifteen clinics annually across the state with approximately 700 businesses participating. The day-long clinics provide businesses with compliance requirements,

resources, and access to subject-matter experts on a variety of topics: workers' compensation claims, the Stay at Work/Return to Work program, independent contractors, revenue withholding and e-services, labor market information, and wage and hour and safety regulations. Attendees have the option of receiving CPA, Legal, or Human Resource Continuing Education credits.

In PY2018, MDLI hosted a business and Rapid Response services training for JSM staff. Massachusetts Department of Labor's Ken Messina and MDLI's WIOA partners—Montana VRBS and the Montana Department of Commerce—also participated. This effort enabled front-line JSM staff and management to receive the same training, share promising practices, and participate in break-out groups by service delivery area to update and plan collaborative efforts that consider the business engagement and lay-off aversion needs of employers.

The Montana Continuum of Care Coalition (MT CoC) and MDLI formalized a partnership to address common goals and identify areas of collaboration. To increase homeless individuals' access to statewide employment opportunities, both agencies agreed to expand mutual understanding of their distinct missions, programs, and data through awareness-building and cross-training activities. The partnership includes joint participation in the development of a statewide plan to increase job opportunities for homeless youth. The plan would also address prevention of homelessness among high-risk youth who age-out of foster care or reenter the community from institutions and previously homeless youth at-risk to become displaced again. Both agencies will also participate in the state's Spring 2020 Homeless Conference presentations, breakout sessions, or other appropriate activities.

Promising practices, lessons learned, and success stories that focus on serving employers, communities, and individuals with barriers to employment:

Since WIOA's enactment in 2014, WSD focused on the WIOA Hallmarks of Excellence. During PY2018, staff's training and workforce development conversations centered around innovation and true collaboration to respond to community needs; support for local and regional economies; integrated services, and continuous improvement.

a) Serving Individuals with Employment Barriers:

In PY2018, MDLI maintained and supported various pathways to statewide re-entry efforts. These pathways led to process improvement opportunities for the stakeholders involved and a reduction in recidivism by citizens who fully embraced community support and educational, training, and employment resources. MDLI's formal role in reentry is rooted in collaboration with the Montana Department of Corrections and other public and private entities and a joint application for grant funding through the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Second Chance Act.

The Second Chance Act grant made implementation of multi-pronged, innovative workforce development strategies related to re-entry possible. JSM offices support a variety of grassroots efforts in various locations. Bozeman, Billings, and other communities continue to identify additional ways to support their citizens' re-entry. JSM offices partner with representatives of parole and probation, local correction facilities, law enforcement, various social service networks, and employers to identify strategies and processes to reduce recidivism and strengthen Montana's economy by tapping into the

labor market of returning citizens. With employment at or near an all-time low in Montana, entry-level workers are needed and valued.

Montana communities are unique with available resources diverse and influenced by educational centers, culture, population, and accessibility. With 146,000 square miles of land (which could easily encompass five or six East Coast states), Montana's geography might demand that citizens travel several hours one-way to access resources and/or support. For that and other reasons such as weather, limited childcare, and the number of hours in a day, re-entry support by a strong, cohesive team with a common vision in a citizen's community is the most effective way to maximize engagement. While the re-entry lead in each community may not be the same entity or person, that factor does not diminish the success of a grassroots approach. Successful outcomes are possible when a team of like-minded Montanans remain undaunted by challenges. Local commitment to a common goal provided value and service to re-entering individuals, their families, and their community. Real-time innovations and flexibility resulted in exceptional employment relationships between employers and returning citizens; i.e. Jail to Jobs led in part by Bozeman's JSM office.

In Great Falls, the Veterans Treatment Court program is a collaborative effort of the Eighth Judicial District Court, the Great Falls Police Department, the Cascade County Sheriff's and Attorney's offices, the Montana Office of the Public Defender, Montana Department of Corrections Adult Probation and Parole Bureau, treatment and mental health providers, volunteer veteran mentors, and the VA Administration. The program is designed to provide consistent veteran care, supervision, and accountability for those who wish to achieve and maintain a life free of alcohol and chemical dependency. The city's local Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist continues to be an active veteran mentor.

Raising awareness and mutual understanding through outreach continues to be a cornerstone of MDLI's veteran services. MDLI and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) collaborated to increase eastern Montana's responsiveness to veterans' employment and their need for services. Outreach to smaller towns included a day of community service, open to veterans and all local citizens. Conversations with individuals in their local communities remains an important tool in developing a strong, knowledge-based network to assist veterans with employment and employers with their business needs. Part of MDLI's work with Sidney's RSVP included development of a resource manual tailor-made for eastern Montana communities.

In western Montana, the Thompson Falls/Polson Veteran Representative team regularly contacted Kalispell's State Veteran Affairs officer during bi-monthly outreach visits to Lake County to reiterate a willingness to meet with and assist veterans who are not aware of the benefits and services provided by JSM. Weekly outreach in Eureka, and monthly in Troy, at community gathering centers such as the American Legion, resulted in assisting veterans with interviews, enrollment in WIOA programs, and access to training opportunities.

Veterans' workforce development activities in Helena included coordination of various veteran advocacy groups: Helena Resource Advocates (HRA), Veterans Center, Job Service Employers Committee (JSEC), Montana Joining Community Forces Coalition (MJCF), and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

at Fort Harrison. When the VA's Fort Harrison faced a shortage of medical support assistants, MDLI promoted and supported hiring events.

JSM continues to partner with VRBS to maximize access to high-demand, quality careers for individuals with disabilities. VRBS faced funding shortages and asked JSM to consider taking on some tasks that VRBS paid a private vendor to complete. JSM offered to pilot this aspect of their partnership in Havre and Billings. To date, the pilot is successful, providing another venue for integrated service delivery that may eventually be expanded statewide. Additionally, VRBS and their partners continue to include JSM staff in trainings designed to improve service to our customers with disabilities.

MDLI's Jobs for Montana's Graduates (JMG) partners with the WIOA Youth Program in the northwest region of Montana; specifically, Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders counties that comprise Montana Association of Counties (MACo) District 10.

JMG strives to provide quality, beneficial services to eligible participants and focuses on the individuals long-term academic, occupational learning, and employment opportunities. During PY2018, JMG provided out-of-school youth with an opportunity to reconnect with their community. Out-of-school youth are encouraged and supported re-engage in school, receive their HiSet, and complete occupational training through Work Experience (WEX) or On the Job Training (OJT). The overall goal is to assist those with barriers to be successful and productive participants in our workforce.

Utilizing established employer-provider connections, JMG successfully transitioned clients to training in industry-specific occupations to meet the client's goals. JMG recently assisted a homeless client, who sought employment as a barista and struggled due to a lack of related experience. During a WEX, the individual gained knowledge, experience, and an opportunity to demonstrate a noteworthy work ethic. The employer decided the client would be an ideal permanent employee and with more training through an Alternative WEX, an assistant manager. The client successfully completed the Alternative WEX and is currently employed as the assistant manager.

JMG established and built relationships with local and regional employers and service providers. These partnerships allowed JMG to provide broader, more effective services to clients. JMG's partnership with Adult Education grew significantly. The collaboration between the two programs advanced the way the TABE test is administered. Currently, JMG administers the test, which allows easier access to determine eligibility for WIOA. Adult Education also requested that JMG discuss the WIOA program and available resources with new groups of HiSet participants. A developing partnership with a youth homeless shelter focused on the best ways to serve that population.

Montana is home to seven Indian reservations and the state-recognized Little Shell Tribe of the Chippewa Indians. JSM staff clearly understand that barriers to training and employment are often higher for citizens living on the reservations and that delivery of population-specific services is critical to those communities. JSM offices are well-positioned to deliver direct services in the following locations:

- Blackfeet Reservation - served by Job Service Cut Bank, scheduled weekly outreach;
- Rocky Boy Reservation - served by Job Service Havre outreach;
- Flathead Reservation - served by Job Service Polson, located in the heart of the reservation; and Job Service Thompson Falls, in the outermost regions of the reservation;

- Crow Reservation - served by Job Service Billings outreach;
- Fort Belknap Reservation – served by Job Service Havre outreach;
- Fort Peck Reservation - served by Job Service Wolf Point, located on the reservation;
- Little Shell Chippewa Tribe (Great Falls) - served by Job Service Great Falls;
- Northern Cheyenne Reservation - served by Job Service Miles City outreach.

JMG implemented a pilot project at Fort Peck Community College to increase graduation rates and support workforce readiness by fostering student retention and credential attainment. Project information is included in the college's course catalog. Instruction delivered twice-weekly by video conferencing combined with project-based learning offered participants the opportunity to learn, practice, and master the professional skills needed to become gainfully employed after college.

When Montana communities' unique cultures, needs, vision, resources, well-established relationships, and talents are acknowledged and embraced, local strategies and their implementation yield positive outcomes.

b) Services to Business:

MDLI partnered with VRBS to sponsor Windmills training for staff from both agencies, including JSM staff. The Windmills curriculum trains staff to work with employers to overcome fear and misperceptions often associated with working with people with disabilities. In communities within their service delivery area, staff from each agency partnered to provide Windmills training to employers. Employers gain valuable knowledge about an untapped labor pool available to meet workforce demands.

To address a primary WSD goal of promoting and understanding the workforce needs of business and industry in the communities we serve, MDLI's Research & Analysis (R&A) Bureau staff provided comprehensive Labor Market Information (LMI) training to JSM staff via several methods. Initially, LMI staff visited local JSM offices, providing an overview of LMI: where to find relevant information and how to incorporate it into daily interactions with job seekers and businesses. An economist from MDLI's R&A Bureau is also co-located in a JSM office.

A comprehensive online LMI presentation was created as a refresher for experienced WSD staff and as an orientation for the division's new-hires; including JSM offices. This online training was presented over two Skype sessions and was also recorded for all WSD staff to access at any time.

This year, MDLI incorporated business-related LMI training in ABCs. Throughout PY2018, designated local JSM staff received LMI training developed specifically for business customers. Several hundred business professionals participated with positive comments on an evaluation reflecting the training's success. These LMI presentations at the ABCs give businesses the opportunity to learn how to utilize LMI data for recruitment, retention, and planning for future staffing and training needs. Developing the LMI training increased the local JSM staff's ability to serve their community.

c) Promising Workforce Development Practices:

Become an Alum

Overview

There are approximately 120,000 Montanans who attended a Montana University System (MUS) institution but left before attaining a degree or credential. MDLI and the MUS have studied the circumstances of these individuals and determined that most would benefit from upskilling through degree or credential completion.

To address this, MDLI's Job Service Missoula office partnered with the University of Montana on a pilot project called Become an Alum. This project sought to potentially re-enroll some of the 3,900 individuals who 1) left U of M in the past 5 years, 2) did not complete a degree at another institution, 3) are not currently enrolled at another institution, and 4) are still within commuting distance to the U of M campus.

Many of these former students left after completing varying levels of credit hours in programs that are today high-demand workforce areas. Additionally, many of these same former students are currently working in lower-wage occupations and could experience wage gains if they were to go back and finish their degree or certificate. To that end, Job Service Missoula took steps to engage with approximately 3,000 individuals who have under 30 credit hours and recruit them for this project.

Initial outreach focused on 537 individuals who had 15 or less credit hours. Engagement of that group was attempted via a survey, traditional mailings, email, a website, and phone calls. A secondary outreach focused on 348 individuals who had between 16 and 30 credit hours.

Outcomes

MDLI and Job Service Missoula, working in concert with U of M and Missoula College, have developed processes to conduct outreach, gauge interest, provide career guidance and case management services, address related barriers, and ultimately re-enroll individuals. To date, this project has seen approximately 140 individuals re-enroll (or commit to do so) in some college class (non-credit or 2- or 4-year).

Beyond individual re-enrollments, a crucial element of this project's success has been business participation. Job Service Missoula recruited 35 local employers with high-demand, high-wage jobs who have difficulty filling them to be a test audience for helping guide and ultimately employ project participants.

Work-Based Learning

Montana and five other states participated in the National Governor's Association (NGA) Policy Academy on Scaling Work-Based Learning (WBL). The first-phase development of authentic, workforce-preparation experiences for youth and young adults in STEM-intensive industries, such as advanced manufacturing, health care, information technology, engineering, and math-related opportunities, created value for the sponsoring employer and JSM participants statewide. Scaling involves creating

individual learning profiles that help students follow their own paths through a competency-based progression in flexible environments.

Phase II of the NGA's Policy Academy on Scaling Work-Based Learning ended in PY2018. Phase II's vision enhanced high-quality WBL experiences in Montana to:

- Serve Montana's priority workforce development needs;
- Create sustainable talent development pipelines;
- Foster career and college readiness; and,
- Ensure alignment of education, government, community and business resources toward priority employer needs.

Montana's goals included in the phase II action plan:

- Stakeholders share a common understanding of WBL and vision for incorporating high-quality WBL into the education and workforce training programs;
- All Montana students have access to high-quality WBL experiences across the continuum that prepares them for college and/or career;
- Participation and effectiveness of WBL programs can be measured by meaningful data to better understand the gaps and areas for improvement;
- All stakeholders understand the value of WBL and opportunity for multiple pathways.

Led by the Montana Governor's Office, the WBL Core Team completed phase II by developing a Work-based Learning Playbook for businesses. The Playbook incorporates a case study of Livingston's WBL program at Park County High School (detailed in Montana's PY2017 Annual Report Narrative and updated below). It also includes guidance to assist JSM offices in their work with businesses who wish to develop and implement quality work-based learning experiences. As part of the NGA's Policy Academy on Scaling Work-Based Learning, Montana developed a WBL online portal. This portal assists schools, community-based organizations, employers, students, training-seekers and other stakeholders of work-based learning to learn more about these opportunities. The team also worked with workers' compensation insurance analysts to develop guidance for educators, businesses, and JSM staff interested in pursuing work-based learning opportunities.

WBL at Park County High Update (referenced above)

The WBL Facilitator pilot project is a four-year pilot program exploring the impact of a dedicated WBL facilitator to serve as a connector for industry-led collaboration, to develop the talent pipeline, and align educational activities with industry needs. The WBL facilitator is based in WSD's Job Service Operations Bureau (JSOB). MDLI and JSM support both educators and industry, connecting partners to approach the workforce shortage holistically and build a partnership-driven system in which all benefit.

Business and industry are critical components of WBL. Their partnerships with schools can improve their profitability and sustainability, while strengthening the community and helping future workers understand that education and skills lead to secure jobs and success in today's workplace.

PY2018 outcomes included the creation of eight pathways that connect Park County High School classes to industry sectors and post-secondary credentials needed to enter the career. The WBL facilitator connected business and interns (students), placing over fifty interns in sixty+ businesses. Additional WBL experiences are built into classes or independent study. This enabled educators to bring business into the classroom or coordinate community tours.

As the benefits of this Park County High School project became evident, the WBL facilitator worked with some JSM offices and high schools across the state to replicate these efforts. WBL program collaboration with JSM, high schools, and local businesses is currently in various stages of communication and planning in several locations statewide.

d) Integration Efforts:

MRAP and WIOA partners continue to identify opportunities to place WIOA-eligible job seekers into registered apprenticeships—an effective work-based learning approach that builds worker skills and establishes benchmarks and pathways to higher levels of employment and wages.

Currently, MRAP has seven full-time specialists located in JSM offices: one each in Kalispell, Missoula, and Great Falls and two each in Bozeman and Billings. JSM teams received training to advance work-based learning and apprenticeship collaboration as a workforce strategy. Several MRAP specialists are former JSM employees. These individuals helped to quickly close knowledge gaps between the two programs, making collaboration and coordination much easier.

The co-location of staff allows MRAP specialists to include JSM staff in visits to sponsors so they observe and understand the apprentice program and processes. The co-location allows MRAP specialists to gain a better understanding of WIOA services and recognize potential WIOA eligibility when registering new apprentices. JSM staff initiate conversations with businesses to share apprenticeship leads. To address the possibility of MRAP-WIOA co-enrollment, MRAP and JSM are testing ways to increase deliberate pre-screening of potential apprentices to determine if they may be eligible for WIOA funding. These efforts are evolving. As employers continue to search for qualified employees in a tight labor market, the partnership between MRAP and JSM allows MDLI to assist those employers in getting the skilled workforce they need, coordinate its outreach, and look for opportunities to replicate the model in additional communities.

MDLI's JSOB and UI Division increased efforts to integrate and expand service delivery options to claimants. JSOB and UI developed consistent training and provided expanded tools to support JSM staff to enhance services and available information for UI claimants. UI staff are co-located in two JSM offices. Additionally, staff from MDLI Employment Relations Division are housed in two different local JSM locations. MDLI finds that co-location of MDLI staff helps foster relationships that lead to enhanced information sharing and knowledge, all to the benefit of local communities and common customers.

In three locations, JSM is the operator of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Pathways Program through a contract with the Montana Department of Health & Human Services (DPHHS). The purpose of the TANF program is to support families to be stable, able to work, and financially secure. While these three locations have consistently produced successful outcomes, the structure of Missoula's service delivery is noted for PY2018. Before this program year, the Pathways Program (along with SNAP Employment and Training and the Refugee Program) and JSM were housed in separate Missoula locations. During PY2018, these operations were combined under a common management team and services were integrated. From their first day of working together, this team successfully leveraged resources, increased capacity, reduced duplication, and provided high-impact services leading to positive outcomes.

e) Using Data to Inform Decisions:

WSD development of the Pulse Report assists with data-informed decision making. Customer interactions with the JSM offices and WSD's online tools are recorded in the information system database, allowing staff to view an individual client's history. With the development of the Pulse Report, staff are provided with aggregated metrics of client and business interactions and can observe trends in client participation and general trends in the service delivery area.

To develop the Pulse Report, the JSOB and R&A Bureaus worked cooperatively. JSOB staff identified data points of interest and useful metrics for managing program operations, including counts of active job seekers; types of job orders; and/or WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program enrollment. R&A economists developed SQL scripts to calculate and extract the metrics identified and used SAS software to shape the files to a format compatible with Tableau. With the Tableau report, JSOB and JSM staff are also provided with an excel workbook of all the data extracted. In Tableau, R&A developed visualizations that demonstrated trends and changes over time. Data download is permitted, too. Each visualization is interactive, and users can customize the specific office or data range view. The report updates monthly and provides JSM staff information about office-specific trends in customer engagement.

The low unemployment rate resulted in a decrease in the number of customers coming into JSM offices, however current job seekers arrive with more barriers to employment. JSM developed a client intake process for participants who may benefit from resources that help mitigate those barriers. Successful implementation of that manual intake process statewide ignited plans for an electronic version in MontanaWorks.gov. Montana's development team, which includes WIOA and Wagner Peyser program managers and JSM staff, began an exciting collaboration on system functionality with a development team from Massachusetts.

A data warehouse has been established and ongoing efforts are underway to more accurately report information to U.S. Department of Labor. The warehouse is a collaborative effort between WIOA core partners: Adult Education, VR, workforce programs operated by WSD. The warehouse will make possible data-sharing between agencies--allowing for increased collaboration, enhanced service delivery for common participants, and the ability to make coordinated service delivery decisions based on a common language and common data.

f) Using Technology to Assist Customers:

WSD partnered with the National Labor Exchange to act as the warehouse and processing center for handling automated job orders and job matching. The move to the National Labor Exchange is predicted to produce significant cost savings and streamline staff time, enabling them to provide quality one-on-one assistance and services to employers and job seekers, including intensive case management to the universal customer and WIOA Dislocated Worker participants.

In January 2019, WSD implemented a chat feature on our website, MontanaWorks.gov. This technology allows customers from Montana and around the globe to access assistance from a live person. Chat is serviced during normal business hours and questions are answered in a timely manner. Customers, including unemployment insurance claimants, who are unable to visit a JSM office may access services from home or by using a computer at a partner or community agency.

g) Successes:

Workforce Development in Missoula

In January 2017, Shadi, his wife, and two boys, ages 6 and 8, moved to Missoula with assistance from the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Prior to living in refugee camps in Jordan, Shadi owned and operated a barbershop in Syria. The family spoke only Arabic. Obtaining a Montana barber's license is a long-term goal for Shadi. In the meantime, he worked as a manual laborer for a landscape company until the language barrier proved very difficult to overcome. He worked as a dishwasher and later in the laundry department at Holiday Inn, until he was referred to Pathways' Subsidized Employment Program (SEP) in March 2018. SEP worked with Watershed Consulting to develop a year-round, self-sufficiency plan for Shadi; including training in areas ranging from tractor operations, tree care and arborist skills, revegetation and ecologic restoration techniques, prescribed fire application, irrigation management and repair, erosion control, bank stabilization, and tool maintenance and repair. Shadi returned to work for the landscape company and is now paid \$18/hour. He is proud when he tells his SEP case manager that his boys are fluent in English with a Montana accent. Shadi and his case manager now meet without translation assistance. Thanks to the SEP program, Shadi's supervisor reports he and his staff can continue with their production-based workload and support Shadi to become well-rounded in a variety of traditional "Montana" skills suited for outdoor work.

Montana's HELP Act and Clark Fork Valley Hospital in Plains

Clark Fork Valley Hospital (CFVH) in Plains invited JSM Thompson Falls to attend a brainstorming session to develop a plan to train and hire CNAs in response to a shortage of skilled workers. Dr. Gregory Hanson, the hospital's President and CEO, learned of the training component included in Montana's HELP Act through personal interest, research, and determination. In addition, a news story about a HELP-Link participant with a successful outcome convinced Dr. Hanson that other local citizens could benefit from this type of assistance and the hospital could be part of that success and fulfill staffing needs.

Several hospital department heads attended the session with JSM Thompson Falls staff. Discussion centered around JSM assistance with training costs through the various programs and training specifics that offered the best chance for the plan to succeed. Due to the long hours, distance, travel, and space, the hospital's original on-site training made participation a challenge. CFVH decided to implement an on-line CNA training with in-house, hospital clinicals. Access to on-line training is a huge plus for Sanders County. Training costs \$350 for a 6 to 8-week training period and is available at the participant's own pace. CFVH offers bonuses.

JSM Thompson Falls assisted with recruiting potential participants and enrolling those who are eligible for training funds. They also assisted with marketing ideas. The first Cohort program began on March 18th with seven referrals from JSM. Two of the seven were co-enrolled as Adult/HELP Link participants. The second Cohort began April 29th with three referrals. Two of the three were co-enrolled in Adult/HELP-Link. The third Cohort began June 3rd with one individual enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program. To date, three participants have successfully completed training and two are in the pre-employment hiring phase. One participant will be relocating to Bozeman this fall and is seeking a clinic position. Three participants are still in training. Lisa Eberhardt, Chief Nursing Officer, said

she so appreciated the opportunity to work with JSM Thompson Falls on this very successful collaboration.

Workforce Services Delivery in Northeast Montana

Just released from prison in North Dakota after serving a long sentence, Kacey needed another human being to care about her well-being and assist her to find food, a permanent residence, medical care, mental health support, transportation, and a job. It all started with a JSM Glendive workforce consultant who provided Kacey with a listening ear, water, and some Triscuit crackers. The consultant worked tirelessly on client intake; access to public assistance and the HISET; health and food bank referrals; job search, applications, and interviewing; personal hygiene; and a bicycle donation from the local drug court. Kacey was hired by a local employer and it started with (in her words): "...the only one to ever invest any time into helping <me> find a job and think about a career."

Co-enrollment in Butte

John, a young man determined to get his degree in Petroleum Engineering, came to JSM - Butte in July 2016; out of work and on food stamps. JSM staff co-enrolled John in WIOA Adult/HELP-Link. He received help with enrollment at Montana Tech, career counseling, and as he's progressed through school, financial support. In May 2019, John graduated with honors, receiving a bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering. He started work with Pioneer Energy Services of North Dakota as an operating engineer with a starting salary of \$70,000 a year. John sent a letter of appreciation to JSM Butte, along with details about his new job.

Apprenticeship and JSM Collaboration in Billings

MRAP and JSM Billings saw success through collaboration in assisting a client obtain an apprenticeship and job placement. Skylar attended the Billings' Jobs Jamboree event, described as "Montana's largest hiring event" where he met staff from Apprenticeship and JSM Billings. Staff was able to work with Canyon Electric and get Skylar placement in an apprenticeship program. Based on his previous experience and training he received in the electrical field and in the military, he had 2000 hours and ± one year of his apprenticeship coursework credited to him. This allowed Skylar to start at \$18/hour (minimum set by the state for 0 credit is \$13.53/hour). He will only have to complete 6000 OJT hours and 3 years of additional coursework before he can take his journeyman exam. In addition, Skylar was put in touch with the Montana Office of Public Instruction where Skylar learned he can take advantage of the GI Bill to pay for the remaining education in his apprenticeship.

Family Resource Night in Great Falls

JSM Great Falls Pathways' staff organized and hosted an annual Family Resource Night in August 2018. The event, held in the JSM parking lot, included staff from twenty-two community organizations and donated food to be enjoyed in an on-site picnic area. The drawings for school backpacks and gift cards for food and wellness and leisure activities were a hit. Forty-four Pathways clients attended to learn more about the organizations' varied programs; including but not limited to Benchmark Human Services, Boys and Girls Club, Center for Mental Health, Great Falls Adult Education and the school district's Preschool and Early Childhood Education programs, WIOA Youth and Northern Pathways, VR, and Community Health Care Center. While their parents supported peers, asked questions and/or signed up

for services, sixty-eight children played. The organizations appreciated the opportunity to be part of a broader network. If a client could benefit from services provided by another organization, staff simply walked with that individual to another organization's table; i.e. Benchmark Human Services combined with Great Falls School District's Early Childhood Education program.

Challenges:

The population of Montana is small and therefore, connections and business relationships are often relatively easy to develop and maintain. When good relationships are in place, workforce development efforts succeed very quickly and efficiently. This environment also presents a challenge: projects, mutual understanding between partners, and action are often dependent on a small number of individuals. Progress sometimes stalls or an entire project dissolves because a key person leaves a position or gains additional duties. Sometimes the momentum essential to rebuilding coordinated and collaborative efforts is not regained.

Conclusion:

Montana's WIOA Annual Statewide Performance PY2018 Report Narrative details progress towards meeting its strategic vision and goals for its workforce system. MDLI conducted impact analysis using a randomized control trial to measure the effectiveness of workforce system services, specifically WSD's 100% program. In addition, non-experimental analyses evaluated the effectiveness of the Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program and HELP-Link program. Qualitative and quantification analyses of cost-per-participant, direct participant payments for training and supportive services, and employment outcomes led to subsequent consultation with the SWIB to develop state-wide consistency in provider-specific goals for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth participants. Montana's narrative describes current workforce development initiatives such as Work-Based Learning and the collaborative efforts of MDLI's Job Service Operations and Research & Analysis Bureaus to develop the Pulse Report—a tool to assist data-informed decision making. While MDLI and the SWIB understand that all states likely perceive that the challenges faced by their workforce system are uniquely daunting, they share a commitment to be forward-thinking, consider and use data in new ways, provide excellent customer service to career seekers and businesses, focus on continuous improvement, and continue to play an active leadership role in workforce development.