

## *State Of Connecticut*

### **WORKFORCE INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT – PY2005**

This report identifies the information products and services that the Connecticut Department of Labor's Office of Research developed and provided during program year 2005 to support the State's workforce investment system. The Workforce Information Core Products and Services funding provided for this purpose is critical to the development of the workforce information on which Connecticut's strategic workforce investments are made, as well as to the decisions made by the workforce development professionals and customers of the State's workforce investment system.

1. **ALMIS Database**: *Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with State data.*

In program year 2005, the Office of Research completed implementing version 2.3 of the ALMIS Database to include all core data tables and license.dbf and licauth.dbf licensing files in accordance with the guidelines issued by the ALMIS Resource Center.

The Connecticut licensed occupation information has been updated and submitted to the National Crosswalk Service Center for inclusion on America's Career InfoNet (ACINet), incorporating the O\*Net/SOC taxonomy.

The Office of Research continues to play major roles in national research and development workgroups such as the ALMIS Resource Center's Database Structure Committee, addressing national, state, and local customer information needs.

2. **Industry and Occupational Employment Projections**: *Produce and disseminate state and sub-state industry and occupational employment projections.*

In program year 2005, the Office of Research produced and disseminated new statewide long-term projections for the 2004 to 2014 period. The Office also earlier completed long-term occupational employment projections for each of the State's five Workforce Investment Areas and statewide short-term industry and occupational employment forecasts to 2007. The statewide and regional projections were developed using the methodology, software tools, and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership, published on the Office of Research website, and populated in the ALMIS Database.

The industry and occupational projections provide critical information for many of the Office's electronic and print products, and for special studies of importance to the State on topics relevant to the labor market and the workforce development system, such as the demand for occupational skills requiring knowledge in science and math and the profiles of Connecticut's industry clusters.

3. **Occupational Analysis Products:** Provide occupational and career information products for public use.

The Office of Research continued to improve the provision of accessible and relevant labor market information in program year 2005. The Office focused its efforts on the dissemination of workforce information in multiple user-friendly methods including Internet systems and print products.

The *Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion (JCC)* ([www.ctjobandcareer.org](http://www.ctjobandcareer.org)) underwent an extensive revision to include updated occupational wages and employment projections, expanded career videos and licensing information. All industrial and occupational classifications were updated to include NAICS and O\*NET SOC classifications. Its sister site, the *Connecticut Education & Training ConneCTion (ETC)* ([www.cttraining.info](http://www.cttraining.info)) is being modified to include up-to-date program and provider information including cost details, program prerequisites, and student completion statistics.

The Office of Research continued to produce a variety of workforce publications in print format in program year 2005. Among them are publications based on our employment projections. These include *Connecticut's Industries and Occupations – Forecast 2014*; *MATH & SCIENCE Knowledge and Skills: Catalysts for Future Economic Growth Within Connecticut*, and *Regional Data: Employment Outlook by Occupation*.

The popular *Connecticut Career Paths* publication was updated to include the most current occupational information, instructional programs and job seeker resources. More than 135,000 copies of the *Connecticut Career Paths* will be distributed to the State's secondary schools, CTWorks centers, community colleges, correctional facilities, and others. It will be available in electronic format through the Office of Research website.

The Office of Research revised its *Job Search Guide* publication to include up-to-date information on tools, strategies, and resources for aiding the job search process. The *Job Search Guide* has become an important part of the vocational exploration and job search strategies workshops held in the CTWorks centers. To meet the anticipated demand, an additional 25,000 copies of the *Job Search Guide* were printed in program year 2005.

The Office updated its *Connecticut Occupational Employment and Wages* publication. This publication includes employment and wage data for more than 800 occupations in the State. The *Connecticut Occupational Employment and Wages* publication is available in print and electronic format through the Office of Research website.

4. **Information and Support to Workforce Investment Boards:** *Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.*

Increasingly, the State and local Workforce Investment Boards have used information from the Office of Research for strategic planning, policy development, and evaluating services of the *CTWorks* system. In program year 2005, we conducted an information session with the State's Workforce Investment Board planners for the purpose of identifying their data needs and discussing the applicability of the *Information for Workforce Investment Planning (IWIP)* publication to their planning efforts. The 2005 *IWIP* was enhanced based on feedback received from the planners. In addition to State and local labor market information, the 2005 *IWIP* contained several new data items, including the latest occupational and industry forecasts, industry clusters, housing by ownership status, and youth population.

As part of the Office of Research's *Labor Market Information* website redesign, we began to explore interactive capabilities that enable the Workforce Investment Board planners to more easily retrieve workforce information, economic profiles, and related data for each of the State's Workforce Investment Areas. We plan to begin implementing some of these in PY06, as time allows.

Among other products produced is the *Connecticut Economic Digest*, which is published through a collaborative effort with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, includes contributions from economists at the University of Connecticut, and contains the most current data on the workforce and economy of the State. It is provided monthly to the Career Centers and Workforce Boards, and is available to others on a subscription basis and electronically through the Office of Research website.

5. **Workforce Information Delivery Systems:** *Maintain and enhance electronic state workforce information delivery systems.*

In program year 2005, the Office of Research remained committed to upgrading its electronic applications for our business, job seeker, and *CTWorks* system customers. Our primary electronic applications – *Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion* and *Connecticut Education & Training ConneCTion* – received extensive content upgrades to include the most current occupation, industry, and education and training information. These applications have gained widespread acceptance within the State's workforce investment system, and the *CTWorks* centers in particular.

As mentioned, the Office of Research embarked on a redesign of its *Labor Market Information* website to include new and expanded data offerings and to improve the delivery to our varied customers. Included in this effort, we are exploring interactive

capabilities that enable users to retrieve economic and workforce data by workforce investment area or town, and the incorporation of graphs and maps to provide visual display of the data.

The Office of Research maintains the workforce investment system's *Approved Training Programs List*. Accessed through the Department of Labor website, this tool helps counselors, career developers, and *CTWorks* staff identify training programs that best suit the needs of individuals receiving WIA assistance to obtain the job of their choice. In addition to updating its program and provider content, the *Approved Training Programs List* is undergoing a rewrite to simplify its entry and display screens, and to eliminate the occurrence of duplicate training programs. When completed, the *Approved Training Programs List* will be integrated into the *Education & Training ConneCTion* to create a single source of training programs and providers.

6. **Workforce Information Training:** *Support state workforce information training activities*

The Office of Research is aware of the need to not only produce quality and timely workforce information, but to provide training that educates users and enables them to understand the uses of the information. We maintained our collaboration with the State and local workforce investment boards and administrators of the *CTWorks* system to address the information needs of all front-line staff. In addition to the provision of instructional sessions that increase their exposure to Labor Market Information, the Office created a basic Labor Market Information tutorial - "*What is Labor Market Information?*" for use in career exploration workshops and other workforce development activities. We regularly provide training on the Office of Research's electronic and print resources to State agencies and community organizations that provide job search assistance.

In total, the Office of Research provided twenty-one training sessions to more than 1,300 business leaders, legislators, job seekers, educators, *CTWorks* staff, faith-based organizations, and others in program year 2005.

The Office of Research began developing a periodic newsletter for *CTWorks* staff and other workforce professionals. The "*LMI Notes*" focuses on the latest workforce information topics, occupational profiles, and Connecticut's workforce issues.

**Other Efforts:** *Workforce information services not included in the categories above.*

The Office of Research staff respond to numerous requests for economic and workforce information, and participate in many initiatives to strengthen the economy, identify and evaluate the workforce needs of targeted regions or groups, and respond to critical economic and workforce issues. These have included active

participation on committees and other workgroups whose purposes have supported such diverse initiatives as defending against of the closure of the New London submarine base, establishing economic benchmarks for the State, identifying high growth and high wage occupations for targeting training in Connecticut, and promoting the development of reliable and comparable workforce information at the local level across the nation.

The Office of Research presented State economic and workforce information at the Department of Social Services' *Employment Summit*. Attended by more than 175 Agency administrators, workforce professionals, counselors, and private sector representatives, the *Summit's* purpose was to address the impact of the aging workforce on employment in Connecticut, and focus on the expansion of the State's employee base through the hiring and retention of people with disabilities and aging employees.

Special studies addressed such issues as the long-term effect of job displacement on the income of workers, and the dynamics of job creation and destruction in the Connecticut labor market. Another effort is underway to provide additional perspectives on the employment and earnings outcomes of graduates of Connecticut's public higher education system. When completed, these studies are made available in electronic format through the Office of Research website.

The lack of information relating to employee benefits has left Connecticut employers asking many questions regarding where they stand in comparison with other employers in the State. To address this issue, the Office of Research is conducting a survey of 3,300 Connecticut businesses to determine the type and frequency of benefits offered to their workers. The report, expected to be completed in the fall of 2006, is anticipated to be a valuable tool for both employers and employees to use during contract negotiations and for evaluating job offers.

The Office of Research also played a key role in support of the Agency's rapid response efforts by providing workforce information to Connecticut companies and their workers experiencing a plant closure or staff reduction. We also supplied important industry and occupation data and analyses to other State agencies, committees and workgroups. These included the Department of Economic and Community Development to assist companies considering expansion in the State and out-of-state firms contemplating relocation to Connecticut; the Connecticut Economic Resource Center to benchmark the State's economic progress; the Governor's Commission on Economic Diversification of Southeastern Connecticut; the Career Ladder Advisory Committee to promote career ladder programs for dealing with workforce shortages in targeted areas; the Allied Health Workforce Policy Board to improve Connecticut's workforce capacity in healthcare occupations; the Performance Accountability Workgroup to better identify the success of Connecticut's workforce investment system; and a committee organizing a summit on African Americans, the issues or barriers to their pursuit of higher education, and the economic implications for participating in Connecticut's economy without higher education.

Through our partnerships with local chambers of commerce, education, and business, we administered eight regional job fairs throughout Connecticut, bringing more than 600 companies and 12,000 job seekers together in program year 2005. When requested, the Office of Research coordinated job fairs with other State agencies to assist targeted groups such as college students, individuals with employment barriers, *Title5* recipients, veterans, and ex-offenders. Our collaborative job fair with the state of Massachusetts, “*Border Busters*”, addressed the employment needs of the communities located near the state borders.

## **B. Customer Satisfaction Assessment**

Customer consultation and satisfaction assessment is viewed as an ongoing process focused towards continuous improvement of Connecticut’s workforce information products and services. We continually assess the usefulness of our electronic and print products and services through customer surveys, indicators of website activity, volume of publication and training requests, and daily contacts directly with our information users.

### **1. Web Products:**

The Office of Research reviews website usage statistics for each of its Internet-based products to determine customer satisfaction and to improve the overall performance and delivery of information. We pay specific attention to user tendencies, such as the number and length of user sessions and site sections and products accessed. This information is useful in identifying where enhancements can be made and in demonstrating the level of demand for the information being provided. In addition to website usage statistics, we review user feedback provided through on-line email capability from within each of our applications that enable users to submit questions, comments and suggestions.

In program year 2005, the *Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion* ([www.ctjobandcareer.org](http://www.ctjobandcareer.org)) served 4,400 unique users each month and experienced a total of 214,800 user sessions during the year and, while the *Connecticut Education & Training ConneCTion* ([www.cttraining.info](http://www.cttraining.info)) had 2,000 unique users looking for training monthly and an annual total of 120,700 user sessions. Our Labor Market Information site ([www.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi](http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi)) recorded 531,000 user sessions – an increase of 78 percent from program year 2004! – serving 9,500 unique users every month.

### **2. Publications:**

The Office of Research makes an effort to record the extent to which workforce information products reach the varied customers that use it. This includes the number of requests for and on-line downloads of products made by users.

In program year 2005, the Office of Research distributed nearly 600,000 copies of publications and other products, 90 percent electronically – an increase of 64,000 from PY 2004.

### **3. Outreach Efforts:**

#### **Connecticut Job and Career Fairs:**

The Connecticut Department of Labor's *Job and Career Fairs* have a ten-year history of providing the most results-oriented, cost-effective fairs in the State. We offer employers and job seekers a more effective and economical way to solve their employment needs. The success of the *Job and Career Fairs* is attributed to our commitment to customer satisfaction. Participating employers complete exit surveys that capture an abundance of feedback including, but not limited to, the overall rating of the event, quality of the facility and staff support, and suggestions for improvement. Job seeker evaluations are used to measure the effectiveness of our résumé writing and critiquing workshop, Connecticut's Job Bank system, and other support services. Over the past several years, most employers and job seekers who have attended our events have rated them very good to excellent in customer satisfaction.

#### **Workforce Investment Boards:**

In addition to responding to intermittent requests Workforce Board staff throughout the year, each year the Office of Research holds a formal information review session with the Workforce Investment Board planners. The purpose is to better understand their data needs and timelines. In many instances, their comments and questions provide the ideas that are implemented in our *Information for Workforce Investment Planning (IWIP)* publication or LMI website. As a result of the February 2006 meeting, this year's *IWIP* will include several new pieces of information.

#### **Training:**

The Office of Research uses customer satisfaction exit surveys or interviews for all of its customer training programs and seminars. The findings identify satisfaction levels and areas of the training that may need improvement. The participant's comments are critical to helping our Office improve the quality of this training and for developing future training modules.

### **C. Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to Core Products**

We suggest the addition of an "Other Products and Services" category. This would not be a core product category, but would serve as a place to identify products and services that meet identified needs that are not captured under the existing core products categories.