

# Workforce Information Grant PY 2008-9 Annual Performance Report Minnesota Labor Market Information Office

---

**Grant goal and strategies: Support regional economies by employing the following strategies.**

- A. Develop workforce information and economic analysis to support regional economic development initiatives.
- B. Participate in economic and workforce activities that are designed to identify regional assets, exploit strengths and opportunities, and address weaknesses.
- C. Help economic development project teams address gaps identified in their assessments and participate as catalysts in the development of implementation strategies.
- D. Help develop integrated economic development strategies unifying workforce and economic development systems and connecting to other public and private entities.
- E. Integrate workforce information and economic data into accessible, user-friendly tools, information, and products for use by workforce professionals in providing career guidance for students, adults, and workers of all ages to use in making career decisions.

**A. Accomplishment**

<b>Deliver -able</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Projected Time Line</b>	<b>Status for PY 08</b>	<b>Web address</b>
1	A, E	Continue to populate the WID version 2.4.1 with state and local data	Ongoing	Complete	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi</a>
2	A, E	Continue to develop and post quarterly short-term forecasts	Quarterly	Complete	<a href="http://deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/projections.htm">http://deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/projections.htm</a>
	A, E	Develop regional long-term employment projections	Available on website April 2009	Complete	<a href="http://deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/projections.htm">http://deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/projections.htm</a>

This deliverable is integral to the goal of disseminating LMI information because we run the data tools on our website off the WID. All of the data tools pull directly from the WID and by updating the requisite tables in the WID we keep our website up-to-date. We also use the WID to pull data for research, reports, special requests and presentations. Lastly we give other organizations, including State Colleges and Universities and Metro Council, direct access to our data through the WID. The WID is at the core of the work that we do in LMI.

We continue to produce and disseminate short-term forecasts on a quarterly basis and long-term employment projections as the national production schedule dictates. Long-term projections are one of our most popular data products and are incorporated into a number of career information products including *MNCareers*, a career guide that goes out in hard copy to all 11<sup>th</sup> graders through Minnesota, as

well as [www.ISEEK.org](http://www.ISEEK.org), which is Minnesota's career information website and Occupations in Demand.

3	A E	Produced annual economic analysis	Complete by June	Complete: available on-line, at printers	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/trends.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/trends.htm</a>
---	-----	-----------------------------------	------------------	--	---

Our final *Trends* issue this program year is our annual state of the state's economy issue. This year we have articles that focus both on the recession and its impacts as well as regional economies around the state.

4	A, E	Maintain and enhance LMI website	Ongoing	Complete to date with 1,76,300 visits during program year.	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi</a>
	A, B, E	Designed and published new Regional LMI Website	August 2008 through June 2009	Complete	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/rws/Default.aspx">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/rws/Default.aspx</a>
	E	Email and mailing lists	Ongoing	Complete to date with over 6,000 subscribers	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/contact.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/contact.htm</a>
	A, E	Unemployment Statistics data tool	Spring 2009	Complete	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/ui.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/ui.htm</a>

Besides maintaining our website with all of the current data and information available we have added a new regional website and developed a data tool to display Unemployment Insurance (UI) data. The brand new regional website pulls all of our LMI data together in one easy to use tool. We worked with our IT department to design and develop this new tool. We know from customer consultations including the regional WIBs that our previous regional website was not all it could be. In consultation with the regional WIBS and other key regional customers we designed a brand new data tool to replace these pages. We also are the first in our agency to make use of the newly available graphing software to provide visual representations of each data series. We have been gathering feedback on the tool and will be making minor modifications throughout the summer based on this feedback.

The UI data tool provides more UI data, in an easier to use format, than we have ever been able to use before. The impetus behind this was the recession and all of the questions that we are getting related to UI as a result.

5	B, C, D, A	Collaboration with DEED's Regional Analysts	On-going	Complete to-date	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/regional.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/regional.htm</a>
	A, E	Update Occupations in Demand (OID) statistics	September 2008 and March 2009	Complete to date, updated biannually	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oid/default.aspx">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oid/default.aspx</a>
	A, C, E	Produce Job Vacancy statistics and highlights	August 2008 and February 2009	Complete to date, updated biannually	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/jobvacancy.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/jobvacancy.htm</a>
	D, A,	Collaboration with MnSCU on	Ongoing	Complete to date	No results available yet

E D, A, E, B	bioscience job vacancy survey Collaboration with MnSCU and iSeek on career information including regional websites	Ongoing	Complete to date	<a href="http://www.iseek.org">www.iseek.org</a> <a href="http://www.mncareers.org">www.mncareers.org</a>
C, B, D, E	Develop Energy Careers website portal in collaboration with MNSCU	May-June 2009	Complete to date	
A, E	Use EDS to produce and publish OES regional statistics and update wages quarterly	Quarterly	Complete to date	<a href="http://deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oes.htm">http://deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oes.htm</a>
B	Industry and occupational profiles and other tools for BSSers and industry specialists	Ongoing as needed	Complete to date	Presentations and brochures are not available on the internet
A, B, C, D	Complete GIS special projects	On-going	Complete to date	Various, upon request
B, D	Expand Minnesota 3D website statewide (previously covered only 7-county Twin Cities)	Winter 2009	Complete	<a href="http://map.deed.state.mn.us/m3d/">http://map.deed.state.mn.us/m3d/</a>
B	Produce monthly economic analysis (for distribution) and highlights (for website)	Monthly	Complete	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/Home.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/Home.htm</a>
A, B, D, E	Give presentations as requested	About 4 per month as requested	Complete to date	
A	LMI Helpline and DEEDMail – resource for a wide array of data and info from within LMI and DEED and from outside of agency and state	Ongoing	Complete to date	

Our SWAs, SWIBs and LWIBs rely on the production of regional labor market information for strategic planning. We produced regional OES, using the EDS system, regional projections, which also uses the EDS system, and regional job vacancy survey statistics, which also uses the EDS system. These data sets are used in economic and workforce development planning. They are also used in career information including our state career planning website, [www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org), and our state career magazine called *MNCareers*. Besides data, we also provide technical and analytical support for both.

Our career information specialist worked with MNSCU and Iseek staff to develop an energy portal on the career information website

this spring. The site is still in review as I'm writing this, but will be an available link from [www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org) soon. This was a very exciting project for us and will be used as a model for a green careers portal soon.

The Job Vacancy Survey is a major undertaking during second and fourth quarters of every year. We conduct this survey in collaboration with MNSCU who makes use of the resulting statistics for program planning. Our sample of 10,000 units results in statistics for 20 industries, about 750 occupations, 13 substate regions and 4 size classes. We publish available data on the website and provide special data extractions for a number of different customers each survey round. In addition to our normal sample, we worked with MnSCU to identify bioscience and wind energy related units. We are now writing up a report on the findings. We developed our Occupations in Demand web tool specifically at the request of the Dislocated Worker Program and the Youth Services unit. In developing this web tool we consulted with Dislocated Worker councilors as well as high school councilors. The data are also being using on the iSeek regional web pages which came out of DEED's Youth Services unit.

We have developed a strong working relationship with our DEED industry specialists and business services specialists and provide them with both training and brochures and information to use when they speak with businesses and industry groups. We have also developed a strong working relationship with the staff of the GWDC (SWIB) through partnering with them on their Joyce Foundation Grant and other projects. We hope to continue that partnership this year by working more closely with the Committee on designing our annual report and by attending all GWDC board meetings in the role of research and data consultants.

Interest in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) continues to grown. We have expanded our M3D website statewide and are receiving more visits than ever on that site. We also produce other web based applications and maps upon request for a wide range of customers including economic and workforce developers. The number of mapping requests continues to escalate to the point that The workforce development side of the house has offered to pay for the purchase of ESRI software to make application development more straightforward. We are currently pursuing this option with our IT unit.

We produce monthly economic analysis and highlights. The analysis was originally meant for those who would be speaking with the media about the monthly employment and unemployment numbers but is now distributed to others including SWIB members. The monthly Minnesota Economic Highlights is our LMI homepage and is targeted at general customers as well as members of the media. This work also serves to prepare us for interviews with the media.

Last but not least we may be the last office here at DEED to provide customer friendly service over the phone. We have helpline office hours five days a week and consistently score very high marks for promptly responding to customer requests and providing useful information and data on the phone and by email. We provide information and links to many different data series including the CPS, ECI, labor force and population demographics, per capita income, GDP, GSP, links to results of surveys done by other organizations including the Manufactures Association, data from our agencies site selection tool, and many other sources of data. Basically we try to be knowledgeable about any data set in which our customers show and interest. We pair this effort with our policy of providing presentations upon request for a wide range of audiences including education, workforce, business and economic development partners.

LMI handles media, governor's office, commissioner and legislative requests. These requests range from short interviews or requests for data to longer-term research projects including reasons for declining labor force participation, number of green jobs, and prospects for youth summer employment.

6	A, B, D, E	<i>Minnesota Employment Review</i> including LAUS, CES, business incorporations, residential building permits, purchasing managers' index, and help wanted advertising and other data of interest as appropriate 12 feature articles 12 regional spotlights	Monthly	Complete	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications.htm</a>
	A, C, D	Respond to media, legislative, governor's office and commissioner requests	Ongoing	Complete	
	B	Produce wage distribution	May 2008	Complete	Web tool in development
	A, B, C, E	Produce 4 issues of <i>Minnesota Economic Trends</i>	Quarterly	Complete	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications.htm">http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications.htm</a>

We publish two periodicals, our monthly *Minnesota Employment Review* and our quarterly *Minnesota Economic Trends*. *Review* is an opportunity to compile our monthly data and provide monthly and annual analysis for customers. This is also where we publish our monthly labor market index which includes 10 data series including business incorporations, residential housing permits, and the purchasing manager's index among other non-LMI data series. We also include a Regional Spotlight in each issue on a topic of regional interest. Topics range from regional economic and workforce initiatives, to cluster studies, to career information. We also run a monthly feature article on a topic of interest. Features this past program year included:

- Teen Summer Employment Outlook for 2009
- Employment Falls Dramatically in 2008: An economic overview
- Mortgage Fraud: Case studies of mortgage fraud in Minneapolis
- How Did We Help You? LMI Customer Service in 2008
- Funding Unemployment Insurance: A cross state analysis
- The Recession and Its Effect on Job Search: How to survive the recession
- Minnesota's Job Outlook for Third Quarter 2008 to Third Quarter 2009
- Reaching Out to Customers: An Updated Profile of the Minnesota Call Center Industry

- Minnesota's Job Vacancy Survey
- Ethanol Production in Minnesota
- Northwoods Bounty: The wood products industry cluster

For the first time ever we have produced four issues of *Trends* over a 12 month period! We have always had a very difficult time keeping this on a schedule because of all the different groups involved in its writing and publication. However, in Feb 2009 we had a Kaizen event, the goal of which was to get on track to produce a quarterly publication. And it seems to have worked. You can read more about the Kaizen event at <http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/trends/0609/letter.htm> Besides our most recent state of the state's economy issue we produced a Green Jobs issue as well as a veterans issue. Here are a sampling of article titles from PY 2008-9 issues:

- Coming Face to Face With 'Snake Eyes' – A U.S. Army veteran talks about his experience overcoming post-traumatic stress disorder and reentering the labor market.
- Looking for a Few Good Men and Women - Returning veterans often have skills that translate well into successful civilian careers.
- Tracking the Red Bulls - A veteran of the Iraq War analyzes how soldiers in his brigade fared when they re-entered the civilian workforce.
- Labor Market Realities for Minnesota Veterans
- By the Numbers: A Snapshot of Minnesota Veterans
- New Opportunities in the Green Economy
- Something in the Wind - Minnesota's wind-power industry is among the largest in the country and positioned to generate new jobs in the state.
- From Candle Makers to Computer Software Engineers - Census data offer a snapshot of how Minnesota's occupational mix has changed in the last 150 years.
- Helping to Shape the World – Career profile of an architect
- Putting the Green in Gasoline – On Minnesota's biofuels industry
- STEM Occupations in Minnesota
- The Great Recession? Time will tell.
- Minnesota's He-cession – Is the recession hitting men harder?

Our econometrician compiles wage distributions and labor market dynamics data from wage records annually. These series now go back as far as the data are available and are current to date. We are now working on a web tool for displaying and querying these data. We use these data for general research as well as to answer specific questions such as how many low-wage workers are there in Minnesota, how many minimum wage workers are in each legislative district in Minnesota, how many minimum wage workers work in the Retail industry, etc. Requests come from a range of audiences including the Restaurant Association, local WIBs, nonprofit organizations and the legislature.

Our aggregate expenditures for the activities listed above exceeded the Workforce Information Grant by approximately \$180,000. We were able to obtain contracts of approximately \$180,000 from various sources for last program year toward these activities.

***B. Customer Consultations***

The following methods were used for customer consultations

1. DEED Workforce Services survey of job seeker and employer customers
2. Surveys at presentations and trainings
3. Solicited feedback on the new regional website and new UI data tool

Based on this feedback, we have made improvements to both of the new data tools. As feedback continues to trickle in, we are committed to continuing to improve these tools.

For overall customer feedback see our annual customer feedback report, “How Did We Help You?: LMI Customer Service in 2008” in the February 2009 issue of *Review* at <http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/review/0209/feature.htm>

Customer satisfaction in 2008 is summarized in the following table:

	Overall Satisfaction	LMI Materials Met Needs
	Percent of Total Respondents	
Very Satisfied	70.9%	45.2%
Satisfied	17.2%	48.1%
Not Satisfied	8.8%	5.1%
Very Unsatisfied	3.1%	1.5%
Total # of Respondents	783	777

Our best way to determine what products are being using is to analyze web statistics. The following table summarizes LMI product usage for 2008 based on web visits.

LMI Product	Web Page	Number of Visits
Data Tools	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools.htm">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools.htm</a>	357,172
Employment Projections Data Tool	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/projections/Default.aspx">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/projections/Default.aspx</a>	139,315
Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Data Tool	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oes/default.aspx">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oes/default.aspx</a>	55,710
<i>Minnesota Employment Review</i>	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/review.htm">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/review.htm</a>	44,128
<i>Minnesota Economic Trends</i>	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/trends.htm">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/trends.htm</a>	39,276

Regions Page	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/regional.htm">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/regional.htm</a>	24,163
Careers Page	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/careers.htm">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/careers.htm</a>	20,341
Local Area Unemployment Statistics Data Tool	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/laus/default.aspx">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/laus/default.aspx</a>	19,310
MN Job Vacancy Survey	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/jobvacancy.htm">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/publications/jobvacancy.htm</a>	15,529
QCEW Data Tool	<a href="http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/qcew/default.aspx">www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/qcew/default.aspx</a>	15,477

### ***C. Recommendations***

We have four recommendations:

- Continue to support the EDS system. The EDS system is essential to all of the regional and career information work that we do. Specifically our educational partners at MNSCU have expressed their desire that we continue producing this information. Without EDS we would not have substate regional level occupational, job vacancy or career information to the level of detail that we do. EDS is also an integral system that we use to check, update and produce OES, job vacancy and employment projections data. The tool works well and has always had good technical support. We hope that ETA will continue to support North Carolina in their efforts to keep this tool current and useful.
- Our customers have identified an update to the Employee Benefits Survey as a serious need in Minnesota. The last survey we ran was three years ago and customers feel that the data are getting stale. This survey is a major undertaking and we currently simply do not have the staffing resources to do the job adequately while continuing to do the other work that customers have come to expect. We were hoping to obtain state support to run the survey this summer but that did not come through. We are currently seeking other support. We urge ETA to support states in their efforts to run an employee benefit survey three years after the ETA supported Employee Benefits Consortium successfully developed and tested the methodology for this complex survey.
- Provide support for Job Vacancy Surveys. We have run our job vacancy survey since 2000. This is an invaluable product for a wide range of customers. It would be even more valuable if comparable data were available in the other 49 states. To make this happen, at the very least ETA would have to provide start-up funding as well as technical support for states who don't have the survey, database, and statistical support that MN has.
- Support the Employment Projections program. The employment projections data are some of our most popular data and are used extensively in both career planning and education and training planning. This program is in danger due to lack of training for states and because the software is written in FoxPro which will not be supported by Microsoft after 2010. We believe that ETA should support this widely used program and hope to be able to send an analyst to training when it is provided so that she can function as a backup to the current projections analyst.