

Workforce Information Grant PY 2008 Montana Progress Report

1. Continue to populate the Workforce Information Database (WID) with state and local data.

Monthly and quarterly data is updated regularly and on schedule. We also populate tables for the Consumer Price Index and training providers/programs from the State Workforce Investment Board's eligible training provider list as well as all 2-year, 4-year, and proprietary schools in the state. Occupational licensing data is updated annually and submitted to the National Crosswalk Service Center.

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

Montana produced statewide short-term industry and occupational projections for 2008 – 2010. Short-term projections were also produced for the Billings Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) for 2008 – 2010. The data has been submitted to the Projections Managing Partnership (PMP). The Workforce Information Database (WID) has been updated and the information is available at <http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=158>. Sub-state long-term projections were produced for the Billings MSA for 2008-2018. This will enable sub-state estimates to remain current with statewide estimates, as statewide projections for 2008-2018 are scheduled to be produced by October 31st, 2009. All data will be input into the WID, putting us ahead of our normal schedule for PY 2009.

3. Publish an annual economic analysis report for the governor and the SWIB.

Montana published and presented its annual economic analysis report to the governor and the SWIB on September 2, 2008. The report is scheduled in conjunction with the Labor Day holiday and is called the Labor Day Report. Each year a general overview of the state's economy is covered including unemployment, employment growth, wages, and income. Each year the report also presents more in depth information on other topics that relate to the Montana economy. This year's report focused on wage growth and the connection to workforce training. This was the fourth year that a portion of the report was dedicated to economic data for Montana's Indian reservations. The report is posted on our website: www.ourfactsyourfuture.org (Direct link: http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/2864_LDR08.pdf) and was downloaded 4,779 times throughout the grant period.

4. Post products, information, and reports on the Internet.

Montana used hard copy publications and fliers, the Internet, and other media deemed appropriate to provide O*Net SOC-based occupational products to customers on a variety of pertinent occupation-related information. Montana continued to improve current products and develop new products for our users. Our Workforce Information Database delivery mechanism (Workforce Informer) allows us to promote a standard electronic delivery system via the Internet that can be accessed 24/7. Of note, a major accomplishment during this grant period was the complete redesign of our website.

We also produce a career information delivery system (CIDS) known as the Montana Career Information Delivery System (MCIS). This information is available to all Montanans at no cost through our partnership with the Student Assistance Foundation via Internet. It is used by all of our customers

for career development, career choice or change, financial needs and skills assessments. This tool gives customers the means to access occupational information, wages, job outlook/projections and employment trends to make better informed choices. Data populated as noted in items 1-3 are delivered through our website: www.ourfactsyourfuture.org.

There were 266,291 visits to www.ourfactsyourfuture.org during the grant period. Products posted on the website (and provided in print version) include the following:

Publication	Downloads	# of printed publications*
OES Wages	72,087	4
Minimum Wage Fact Sheet	13,684	--
Economy At A Glance (EAG)	46,366	27,600
EAG Articles	27,582	--
EAG Podcasts	4,027	--
County Fliers	50,549	395
Reservation Fliers	42,764	1,785
Statewide Fliers	1,081	4
Labor Day Reports	7,492	130
2006-2016 Projections	12,635	299
2004-2014 Projections	1,027	--
Labor Availability Studies	12,762	--
Occupational Injuries & Illnesses	2,812	--
Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries	1,750	50
Consumer Price Index Chart	558	--
Montana Career Guide	9,103	16,591
Career Heroes:		
A Career Awareness Workbook	9,385	2,587
Jacob and Emily Skip School:		
A Career Clusters Workbook (Including Teachers' Guides)	8,540	1,002
Experience Wanted: An Employment Guide for Montana Seniors	1,682	62
Inside Edition: Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Criminal Records	7,297	140
Willing and Able: Job Hunting Guide For Montanans with Disabilities	2,847	336
MCRN Connections Newsletter	3,904	6,922
Career Peeks and Alphabet Pages	4,643	1,016
Interview Tips & Activity	9,299	168
Who Needs Math?	3,508	597
Who Needs Science?	2,269	563
MCIS Jr. Workbook and Implementation Guide	8,427	580
What to Pack?	8,414	2,601
Pocket Resume	1,168	1,791
MCIS Brochure and Informational Products	2,468	158
R&A 2006 Impact Report	2,668	13
Foreign Labor Certification Information	1,571	--

*We print a majority of publications by request to minimize waste. Each year continues to see an increase in the number of our publications being downloaded from our website.

5. Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards and key talent development partners and stakeholders.

The bureau provided data and economic analysis to members of the SWIB's Executive Committee and staff throughout the year. This included economic data, "talking points" papers, and PowerPoint presentations on the general economy, healthcare occupations, and career pathways. Staff worked closely with the SWIB to help determine LMI needs and to disseminate information. R&A also worked with the State Tribal Economic Development Commission. As the governor's designee for Section 118 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, R&A also provided career information to state students, parents, educators, and job-seekers. Additional work included:

Consultation with Statewide Workforce Investment Board:

Provide analysis and guidance for SWIB strategic planning and work plan development.

Consultation with Governor's Office of Economic Development:

Multiple and varied consultations throughout the grant period, providing economic analysis and workforce and career information to help guide administration policies and strategies.

Consultation with Montana Business Assistance Connection:

Examine worker availability and training issues for a three-county area.

6. Conduct special studies and economic analyses.

R&A has increased awareness of our staff's expertise, resulting in increased interest in and requests for special studies and economic analysis. Bureau staff also made many presentations throughout the year, speaking to approximately 1,100 people about the economy, workforce issues, and career development. During the grant period the bureau produced the following studies and partnerships:

Partnership with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education:

Examine the link between education and work success in Montana.

Partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation:

Examine the economy directly associated with restoration of the environment, identifying occupations, employment, skills, and education opportunities.

http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3669_Restoration.pdf

Partnership with WIA program, DLI, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), and Office of Public Instruction (OPI):

Design, test, and implement a three step process that will help adult learners develop a plan for success (workforce/postsecondary), using MCIS as the foundation for developing the plan, with multiple points of entry (ABLE, postsecondary, job service).

Partnership with DLI and Governor's Office (WIRED):

Examine labor market information for eastern Montana and identify employment needs, shortfalls, and training options for future workforce.

http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3622_WIRED_energy.pdf

Labor Availability Study:

Collect data to update the 2002 study. This study was completed in PY08 and gathered data on

the rural and urban labor markets in Montana, to include our American Indian reservations and general information on the supply of workers and selected job characteristics.

http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3384_las.pdf

Partnership with Montana Hospital Association:

Provide update and analysis on economic impact of primary access hospitals in Montana.

Montana Economy At A Glance

This is a monthly publication providing the latest economic data such as unemployment rate, employment, and wages, including monthly articles outlining research on various topics. During this grant period we continued to produce podcasts of each Montana Economy at a Glance and feature article. During the grant period the following articles were included:

- Using MCIS to find employers and employees and escape the Twilight Zone
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/2816_Jun08_EAG_art.pdf
- American Indians in Montana: An Underutilized Labor Pool
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/2842_Jul08_EAG_art.pdf
- Labor Day Report 2008: An Overview
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/2880_Aug08_EAG_art.pdf
- Scary Economic Times
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/2931_Sep08_EAG_art.pdf
- What Skills are Most Profitable for the Montana Economy?
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/2943_oct08_eag_art.pdf
- Mass Layoff Events and Dismissed Workers in Montana
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3247_nov08_eag_art.pdf
- Introducing the Redesigned Research and Analysis Bureau Website
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3344_dec08_art.pdf
- Entrepreneurial Activity in Montana and the United States
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3404_jan09_art.pdf
- Is the Official Unemployment Rate Telling the Whole Story?
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3419_feb09_art.pdf
- Labor Availability in Montana: An Overview
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3450_mar09_art.pdf
- Survival Rates for Montana's New Business Startups
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3513_apr09_art.pdf
- The Forgotten Group: Being Self-Employed in Montana
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/3546_may09_art.pdf

Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to Deliverables.

While Montana feels we were able to operate within and comply with the deliverables as stated, we also feel there is some room for improvement. Specifically:

- 1) Maximum flexibility must be allowed for states to continue to meet the deliverable to provide an annual economic analysis for the Governor and the SWIB. For example, PY09 saw a continuance of the annual Labor Day Report. However, at the request of the Governor, this report was more narrowly-focused than previous years' reports. The report was subsequently expanded slightly for presentation to the SWIB, but the concern remains that a strict interpretation of the deliverable may find that the initial report to the Governor doesn't meet the intent of the deliverable. One suggestion would be to allow states to show that they provided the information via multiple presentations, publications, and media channels, reaching the intended audiences.
- 2) Often it appears that deliverables 5 and 6 are interchangeable. Most of our consultations result in a presentation, publication, or other type of product/service. Additionally, most, if not all of our grant funding is spent to satisfy deliverables 1 through 4, leaving us to use other funding to fully satisfy deliverables 5 and 6. To further simplify the process, one suggestion would be to combine deliverables 5 and 6.