

ARKANSAS: WORKFORCE INFORMATION PY' 09 ANNUAL REPORT

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administrations' Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 30-08, dated June 12, 2009, this is Arkansas's annual report of accomplishments on the six core products and services contained within this grant.

POPULATE THE WORKFORCE INFORMATION DATABASE WITH STATE AND LOCAL DATA

All mandatory core tables of the Workforce Information database were updated by June 30, 2010. This is a continual project, as we update the information in the Workforce Information database as it is made available. Arkansas also populates many of the Workforce Information database's non-required demographic and economic tables and has built tables that will power local WIB Area profile reports in the "Discover Arkansas" system. We maintain the Uniform Resource Locators (URL) of <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> and <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>, both being official Web site addresses for our Internet delivery of Workforce Information database information.

All required licensing data are currently up to date with the last submission to the National Crosswalk Service Center on June 30, 2009. PY'10 will be our next year for updating the licensing data.

PRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Long-Term

Due to the continued uncertainty in the economy and the effects of the different occupational layoffs occurring, Arkansas is continuously looking at the State's state-wide Industry and Occupational Employment Projections for 2008-2018, due to these being performed on a biennial basis. Arkansas completed and submitted this set of projections, for public dissemination, to the Projections Managing Partnership Consortium on June 23, 2010. It was placed on the "Discover Arkansas" website on September 14, 2010, and the long-term projection's state-wide hard-copy publication will be ready for release by September 30, 2010. State-wide long-term projections can be viewed and downloaded from our Workforce Information database Web site at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>.

Short-Term

The statewide Industry and Occupational Projections for the 2009-2011 period, utilizing a base period of 1st quarter 2009 and projected out to 1st quarter 2011, have been completed, and the necessary files sent to the Projections Management Partnership Consortium on June 16, 2010. Database files were added to "Discover Arkansas" on June 30, 2010, with the printed version of the 2009-2011 statewide short-term projections released on July 20, 2010.

Arkansas completed the 2009-2011 sub-state Industry and Occupational Projections on May 12, 2010, and submitted for inclusion in the Workforce Information database on June 30, 2010. Printed versions of the 2009-2011 sub-state short-term projections should be released by September 24, 2010.

State and sub-state level Short-Term Projections can be found through our Workforce Information Database Web site at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>

PUBLISH AN ANNUAL ECONOMIC ANALYSIS REPORT FOR THE GOVERNOR AND STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

The Labor Market Information section of the Department of Workforce Services will release the fourth edition of the *Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report* on "Discover Arkansas" on September 24, 2010. Printed versions of the report will be submitted to Arkansas's Governor and State Workforce Investment Board at their next meeting on October 12, 2010. The Annual Economic Analysis Report can be found through our Workforce Information Database Web site at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>

POST PRODUCTS, INFORMATION, AND REPORTS ON THE INTERNET

Arkansas's major deliverables, as well as Projections and the Directory of Licensed Occupations, can be viewed through the Internet at:

Discover Arkansas (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov):

"Discover Arkansas" is the state's Web-based LMI delivery system supporting the WIBs, business, education, other agencies, and the public, utilizing information in Arkansas's Workforce Information database. This fully ADA compliant system was officially released on January 31, 2005, and is continually updated with new information, reports, and consumer products.

ArkOSCAR (www.arkoscar.org)*: The Arkansas LMI Department continues to support an Arkansas-specific Web version of the popular **Occupation and Skill Computer-Automated Researcher (OSCAR)**. ArkOSCAR continues to be a powerful O*NET-based application that allows Arkansas Workforce Centers and schools to assist dislocated workers, youth, and other job/career seekers in their career exploration by leveraging O*NET data with current state LMI (Wages, Occupational Growth Projections, Job Openings, Demographic data, and more). The system contains seven different ways to help users explore job and career possibilities, including automation of the first two O*NET Assessment tools. ArkOSCAR displays an engaging window into the powerful O*NET database and is an excellent way for users unfamiliar with O*NET to learn about occupational possibilities. The system will again be updated when the system is moved to the “Discover Arkansas” Web site.

*To visit ArkOSCAR, from the sign-in page (www.arkoscar.org), select “Out-of-State” from the “LWIA or EDS” drop down menu, and then type in “54321” in the “Password (Zip Code)” window.

2009-2010 Career Watch (www.careerwatch.org): Arkansas distributed 105,000 copies of this very popular tabloid-type career magazine in PY'09. *Career Watch* provides students (and their parents) over 20 areas of interests in exploring the world of work. Topics covered included career planning, resumes, apprenticeships, work ethic, military opportunities, top occupations, occupational profiles with wage information, scholarship information, financial aid programs, higher education in Arkansas, and more. The 2009-2010 *Career Watch* magazine is also available for viewing and downloading at www.careerwatch.org or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/?PAGEID=164> , until approximately November 1, 2010, when the 2010-2011 will be loaded into the “Discover Arkansas” system.

High Demand Targeted Jobs – National Governor’s Association (NGA) Skills Matching System: To provide information on the skill needs of jobs/occupations in Arkansas, we created a skills matching prototype system, through the support of the NGA “Pathways to Advancement Policy Academy”. This tool was updated with the newest information in June 2010, and will continue to be incorporated into the “Discover Arkansas” LMI portal. It links Arkansas’s growth industries to the nationally recognized Educational Career Clusters. It also identifies if a growth industry is a targeted industry by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) or an industry that has been identified by the Department of Labor’s High Growth Job Training Initiative. The tool identifies occupations related to each growth industry and career pathway and provides information on skills, projections, wages, training programs, licensing requirements, and notes if it is a high demand occupation in Arkansas. The LMI Department worked with AEDC and their consultant in helping them in the process of defining the newest list of Arkansas’s

Targeted Jobs. Those are now listed within the High Demand Targeted Jobs system found at: <http://www.discoverarkansas.net/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=152>.

Career Interests, Training, and Job Outlook System

Working with the Department of Career Education and the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, Arkansas developed this system to simplify the alignment of the Career Cluster/Cluster Pathway organizational system. Included are long-term projected job openings and average annual wages for the state of Arkansas. This information is extremely valuable to schools that are planning curriculum additions or changes, as well as to individuals seeking career changes and can be viewed on “Discover Arkansas” at: http://www.discoverarkansas.net/aspdotnet/career/CC_AreaSelect.aspx.

Affirmative Action (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov): In support of the SWIB and LWIBs, business, education, economic development, other agencies, and the general public, the “Discover Arkansas” Web site contains an entire Affirmative Action section with statewide, MSA, and county tables that can be downloaded onto the user’s PC.

Real-Life Arkansas: In our continuing support of our partners in Education and Employment, Arkansas’s Labor Market Information section developed and released Real-Life Arkansas in 2007. We continue to update Real-Life Arkansas with the latest LMI and a few cosmetic looks, with the most recent changes being instituted on the website on September 10, 2010. This is an interactive “lifestyle budget calculator” for students and job seekers and can be found at the Web address of www.real-life.arkansas.gov. The site helps users discover how education impacts earnings and to learn about different occupations. The site’s objective is to inspire students, through a “real world” exercise, to take education seriously and pursue higher education/training after high school.

Users of the site have three options to determine the costs and careers associated with their desired lifestyle. By identifying monthly living expenses in “Get a Real Life Check,” the user finds out what careers provide the salary needed to cover those expenses. With “Future Salary,” the user enters a salary and chooses a desired education and occupational category. The occupations with that salary are then displayed. “Occupation Direct” is similar to “Get a Real Life Check” but allows the user to choose an occupation first. The living expenses for a desired lifestyle are then subtracted from the occupation’s salary to check whether the occupation’s wages will cover those expenses.

The Future Awaits: Arkansas continued its distribution and updating of this publication, which focuses on teaching young adults pre-employment basics, including resume preparation, how to apply for jobs, appropriate dress, interview tips, and even basic guidance on how to complete federal tax forms. Due to many requests, we have reproduced the “*Pocket Resume*” out of *The Future Awaits* into a stand-alone workforce tool for citizens to use in their everyday work search. In March 2010, we redesigned the “Pocket Resume” into a more compact tool for our customers to use. *The Future Awaits* can be viewed and downloaded from “Discover Arkansas” at:

http://www.discoverarkansas.net/admin/uploadedPublications/347_Future_Awaits.pdf

The Pocket Resume can be viewed and downloaded from “Discover Arkansas” at:

<http://www.discoverarkansas.net/?PageID=166>

Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) (www.arkansascrs.org): Arkansas unveiled the first nationally recognized WIA certification system during December of 2001, which we actively maintain and provide customer service for on a daily basis. ACRS streamlined a paper system, which averaged 90 days for WIA provider certification, into a 24-hour automated approval process. ACRS provides an interactive, customer driven, search engine to review all educational entities within state boundaries.

Projected Employment Opportunities List (formerly the “Demand Occupations List”): Arkansas continues to produce this publication that identifies future job opportunities and links them to training programs with the state. The publication presents information in two columns, with the first providing the occupation's code, title, and a Statewide estimated average annual wage. The second column lists the corresponding Classification of Instructional Program training code and title for the occupation. A list is included for the state and each of the 10 Local Workforce Investment Areas. This product is distributed to help the workforce system and its users make better training decisions. Last updated on July 1, 2010, it can be viewed and downloaded at:
http://www.discoverarkansas.net/admin/uploadedPublications/397_Projected_Employment_Opportunities_List.pdf

Workforce Area Profiles: Arkansas has created localized labor market profiles for each of its local workforce investment areas, which we update constantly with new information, with the last update being performed on September 7, 2010. The profiles contain the local demand occupations with local wages and key important economic information for each local area. These can be found on “Discover Arkansas” (www.discover.arkansas.gov or www.discoverarkansas.net) as a left column heading of “Local Workforce Investment Area Statistics”.

Other Printed Publications with Web Access: During PY' 2009, the Department of Workforce Services' Labor Market Information section has updated and produced various other LMI-based publications, such as the popular *Arkansas Wage Survey*, *Arkansas Labor Market*, *Arkansas's Hot 45*, *Career Watch Teacher's Guide*, and other

reports, publications and information. Most of our publications are accessible on-line from the LMI Publications page of "Discover Arkansas," while information and reports are scattered throughout the Web site at www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov.

Estimates Delivery System (EDS): Though EDS is not a Web accessed tool for the public, it does provide extensive information that we use on "Discover Arkansas" and other Web products.

PARTNER AND CONSULT ON A CONTINUING BASIS WITH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS AND KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The Labor Market Information section is housed within of the Department of Workforce Services and is part of the Office of Employment Assistance, which also houses the staff of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). This arrangement allows for almost constant contact, association, and consultation with the Board's staff to identify and produce needed information in an ever changing economic arena. The LMI section also has a representative attend each State and most local Board meetings which allows us to keep in touch with informational needs of the Boards. Also, almost daily, LMI staff is in contact with staff from one of the 10 Local Workforce Investment Boards and their one stop centers and/or one of the 31 full time DWS local offices. We provide information on a multitude of subjects from demand occupations that designates a WIA training requirement to labor supply information for a new industry proposal that's considering locating in one of the Local Workforce Investment Board Areas (LWIB). Along with supplying labor information to the LWIBs, we constantly provide various information to local economic development boards, Chambers of Commerce, as well as, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission to facilitate industry growth within Arkansas and its economic regions.

CONDUCT SPECIAL STUDIES AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Throughout PY'09, the LMI section of the Department of Workforce Services has made itself available to provide information and has conducted numerous special studies for our various customers. To provide these studies we have utilized BLS data, the Local Employment Dynamic (LED) system, the Estimates Delivery System (EDS) and our EMSI's Strategic Advantage system to answer questions and concerns that different customers have had about the State or Local Area labor markets, economic conditions, and special initiatives.

CUSTOMER CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Arkansas's LMI Section continues to be relentless in its pursuit to accomplish all of our certified deliverables and as of this writing we have obtained 100 percent of our timed goals for PY'09. Working with our many varied customers throughout the year, which includes the Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) and the State Workforce Investment Board, we've learned that sometimes we address information in a more technical way than the customers prefer. A continuing example of this, from the information we've gathered from our local users, is that some of our publications continue to be too numbers oriented. We continually address this issue realizing we still have further to go. To help correct a portion of this problem, we've acquired the EMSI tool which includes very good graphing and charting characteristics that we will use in the future to incorporate more of these eye catching ideas into our publications, whether they be hard copy or Internet related. Another area that we have put effort into, but could continue to do a better job in the upcoming PY'10 year, is our personal contact and communication with the Local and State Workforce Investment Boards. To adjust for this, we have again asked each LWIB area to submit their meeting dates for us to ascertain the possibility of having a LMI staff person present as often as possible. We continue to strive for excellence in developing our product mix, but our main goal will be furnishing the citizens of Arkansas with good, reliable, and accurate labor market information regardless of whether they are individuals, employers, agency partners, or local and state workforce entities.