



# Workforce Investment Act Program Year 2009

Annual Report



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**Bobby Jindal**, Governor  
**Curt Eysink**, Executive Director

## Office of the Executive Director

October 1, 2010

It is my pleasure to present the 2009 Workforce Investment Act Annual Report for Louisiana, which covers our efforts and activities from July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010.

The work begun in 2008 as part of Governor Bobby Jindal's reform agenda continued this past program year as the Louisiana Workforce Commission took to heart its mantra: ***We put people to work.*** Our effort to institute a progressive, demand-driven service delivery system that responds to the needs of Louisiana business and industry focused on three overarching goals: 1) Understand and better define job demand, 2) Grow the workforce, and 3) Improve the skills of the workforce. We looked beyond traditional program avenues for partners in our quest, recognizing that status quo was not only inadequate, it was unacceptable.

Our state has not been immune to the effects of the national economic downturn, which placed additional demands on already strained resources. The Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster and subsequent drilling moratorium have created new challenges for our state.

However, we in Louisiana have a long history of being resourceful and creating solutions that serve our citizens. This annual report provides a snapshot of how the Louisiana Workforce Commission is committed to changing things for the better, even in these times of shrinking budgets and economic uncertainty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Eysink", written in a cursive style.

Curt Eysink  
Executive Director

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## I: State News

### Deepwater Horizon Oil Disaster and Resulting Drilling Moratorium

Among events in Louisiana during the past program year, probably none equaled the impact to the state's workforce development efforts as the April 20, 2010, explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig and resulting oil spill. Unlike natural disasters the state has faced in the past, the full impact of the oil spill and the subsequent drilling moratorium was continually evolving.

Despite the uncertainty, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) marshaled resources quickly to respond effectively. For example, on April 30 - the same day that oil hit the Louisiana coastline - the agency was contacted by a company wanting to recruit for hundreds of oil spill clean-up jobs. The next day, LWC held its first recruiting event for oil spill clean-up jobs, with thousands of job seekers attending. By early May, mobile units had been deployed in the areas most affected by the oil spill, and LWC coordinated the use of additional mobile units through cooperative arrangements with workforce development agencies in Texas and Arkansas.

While most activity centered in Workforce Investment Areas (WIAs) that border the coast, all WIAs throughout the state were involved through job seeker assistance and employer verification as oil spill-related jobs were posted through the agency's online job services system, LAVOS. According to the latest research, more than 18,000 applications for clean-up jobs were entered into LAVOS statewide and 3,802 oil spill-related job openings were posted. At the same time, 13,973 referrals were made to oil spill-related job openings, with a minimum of 1,396 job placements made.

LWC's focus on collaboration helped job seekers get the training components necessary for oil spill-contracted jobs. The agency worked with the BP training provider to engage the state's community college system for training opportunities, and also provided field and outreach services to connect job seekers with work opportunities and training. As one example, a BP contractor notified LWC of an immediate need for 500 workers for coastal clean-up on May 26. The following day, LWC did outreach to hundreds of qualified area applicants and provided a local interview site and immediate transportation to training for those hired. By 2 a.m. on May 28, 392 workers were on the job.

LWC was also engaged in ongoing discussions with BP regarding its claims process and ensuring that BP contractors were making it a priority to hire locally qualified labor. The agency also monitored safety and workers' compensation compliance of contracted companies.

LWC secured funding from BP through a responsible party grant for two mobile units to provide services and continued outreach to affected workers. The agency's award in late June of a \$10 million National Emergency Grant will provide employment-related assistance and retraining for people who have lost their jobs because of the oil spill, with locally driven plans addressing the unique needs of the diverse populations and industries impacted.

The full scope of the oil spill disaster and resulting drilling moratorium is still unknown, and is expected to continue to impact both short-term and long-term workforce development efforts in Louisiana.

### Maximizing Resources and Putting People to Work

LWC was part of two efforts of Gov. Bobby Jindal's administration and the Louisiana Legislature — the Commission on Streamlining Government and the Postsecondary Education Review Commission — as the state dealt with shrinking budgets and addressed shortcomings of the state's postsecondary educational systems.

As recommended by the LWC to the Commission on Streamlining Government, the Louisiana Legislature approved during its 2010 Regular Session the transfer of programs of **Louisiana**

**Rehabilitation Services (LRS)**, formerly under the then-Department of Social Services, to LWC. Programs transferred were Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living Program Part B, Independent Living Older Blind and Randolph-Sheppard. The overriding goal of bringing LRS under LWC is to expand the LRS programs' level of service and increase job placement rates. The move went into effect July 1, 2010.

**Connections to Work**, a program aimed at better collaboration between workforce development and the state's social service programs, launched as a pilot program in LWIA-41 (Lafayette, La.) in September 2009. Among the results: 60 percent of one program's participants entered employment within 90 days of entering the pilot. The pilot also created a better understanding and working relationship with agency partners and community action agencies, helped ease the transition of LRS to LWC, and helped to identify statewide computer programming issues. The pilot was expanded to LWIA-40, which serves the areas surrounding Lafayette, with a statewide expansion under discussion.

As the state administrator of **Community Services Block Grants (CSBG)** for the 42 community action agencies (CAAs) that serve Louisiana, LWC actively engaged the CAAs to make full use of federal stimulus dollars available and help as many low-income Louisiana citizens as possible reach or maintain self-sufficiency. With the help of CSBG funds, LWC was able to offer summer youth employment programs in many areas of the state in Summer 2010. Aligning CSBG funding with other funding streams was also part of a best practice efficiency study commissioned by the LWC as it looked for collaboration opportunities among all entities that play a role in workforce development and delivery in Louisiana.

LWC worked closely with the Department of Education (DOE), Board of Regents and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) to align education with regional workforce needs. LWC officials and members of the Workforce Investment Council made presentations to the **Post Secondary Review Commission** as part of its goal to guide changes to training so that labor supply matches anticipated job demand.

One example of the collaborative effort between LWC and the state educational entities was the development and publication of a comprehensive **Career Planning Guide**. The guide, designed to serve as a career guide for students and adults seeking new careers, was a joint effort by LWC, Board of Regents, DOE and LCTCS and includes information on regional demand jobs and salaries, top employing industries in the state based on career cluster, educational programs and certifications available in the state by career cluster, and true-life accounts of Louisiana students and workers in various demand occupations. Well received by school counselors and those involved in skills development and job placement, the guide was updated with the latest occupational forecast numbers and will serve as a primary resource for the next two years.

LWC's **legislative efforts** of the 2010 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature resulted in expanding the workforce reform begun in 2008 to several workers' compensation measures that help "level the playing field" in support of good business.

Since 2008, LWC has worked with the Louisiana Legislature on drafting new laws that have served as a reform of workers' compensation in Louisiana, with focus on efforts to shorten the time workers are kept "in the system" and out of the workforce, preventing workplace accidents from happening in the first place, and leveling the playing field for all. Legislation passed in 2009 established evidence-based medical treatment guidelines for workers' compensation benefits, capping a groundbreaking collaborative effort by public and private entities. New medical treatment guidelines, which will be in place in January 2011, are expected to significantly cut resolution time for workers' compensation cases from as much as 18 months down to 50 days. The guidelines will ensure that injured workers get efficient and timely medical treatment, allowing them to return more quickly to work, as well as reduce costs for employers and insurers.

The state's **Second Injury Fund** was the focus of legislation in 2010 that better aligned the fund to accomplish its intended purpose of (1) encouraging employment of injured workers, and (2)

relieving employers of additional liability when a worker with a pre-existing disability is subsequently injured on the job. The new law expanded the presumed conditions that are covered by the fund to include, for example, herniated or ruptured intervertebral discs, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), post traumatic stress disorder syndrome (PTSD), post concussive syndrome, Alzheimer's disease, sickle cell anemia and joint replacement surgery. Additionally, the LWC is working toward the procurement and implementation of an electronic claims management system to increase efficiencies, decrease risks of payment errors and better maintain data integrity. Rules are being established to better integrate the services of the Office of Workforce Development with the Office of Workers' Compensation in order to create greater opportunities for Louisiana employers to employ individuals with pre-existing permanent, partial disabilities.

### Outreach and Research

LWC continued to engage businesses throughout the state through a series of **regional business meetings** held in February and March 2010. The meetings provided an update on progress made since the 2008 workforce development reform legislation. As part of the outreach efforts, 63 companies across the state were recognized as Workforce Investors for actively participating in and supporting LWC initiatives and services.

The meetings also provided local business and industry, as well as education and economic development representatives, a preview and opportunity for input on the preliminary industry **occupational forecast for 2018**. LWC worked closely with the LSU Division of Economic Development and developed the 2018 occupational forecast using a variety of means to get the most accurate information available:

- Using LWC data from quarterly wage and employment reports as well as annual job vacancy surveys as starting points, LSU economists reviewed statistical industry forecasts, looking for economic causes of trends.
- Economists also contacted and interviewed “driver firms” — a little more than 150 companies in Louisiana that employ the most workers and/or make the biggest economic impact in terms of payroll in the state.
- The input from Louisiana driver firms was also factored with recent news about economic development projects and major business announcements in an effort to accurately reflect the current state of business and industry.
- Additional input was given at the regional business meetings.

The occupational forecast for 2018 was presented and approved in late June 2010 by the Workforce Investment Council, the statewide group appointed by the governor to oversee and direct workforce strategy for Louisiana. The forecast is that Louisiana will experience an annual 0.8 percent statewide growth rate in total job demand through 2018, which equates to 65,040 jobs annually. Annual replacement accounts for 72 percent of total job demand, or 46,570 jobs each year. New jobs are expected to grow by 18,470 each year.

The 2018 forecast was developed prior to the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster and resulting moratorium, so it does not take into account possible short-term or long-term effects from the oil spill and/or moratorium. Plans are to review and update the forecast every two years.

The importance to Louisiana economic development of being able to accurately gauge impact to worker supply and demand is the driving force behind LWC's ongoing **simulator initiative** with the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. The simulator will connect LWC's demand data with ULL's extensive supply data on students in the state. The result will be a more precise forecasting tool that will help identify gaps as things change in the marketplace. Version 1 of the simulator, expected to go live in December 2010, will be able to answer simple, “what if” questions and analyze results.

In November 2009, LWC was awarded a \$2.3 million federal grant as part of a Louisiana-Mississippi consortium that will benefit both states in producing comprehensive labor market information on **green jobs** in the region. LWC is serving as the project lead. Efforts include extensive research on the regional green economy, development of workforce solutions and economic development strategies necessary for future job growth.

In support of the 18-month research project, LWC developed and launched the Growing Green section on its [www.laworks.net](http://www.laworks.net) website in early 2010. The site includes online surveys for industry experts, scientists, human resource professionals, advocacy groups and policy makers, economic development professionals, and workforce development professionals and training providers. Additional outreach has been done to university professors and researchers, and the green jobs project was also presented to area businesses and industry as part of the regional business meetings held in February and March 2010.

### **Additional Efforts**

All 18 **Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) in Louisiana were re-certified** in December 2009 by LWC and the Workforce Investment Council. The certifications are for two years. As part of its goal to improve WIA performance metrics, the LWC implemented an online training program for WIB members, with hundreds of WIB members enrolled.

In May 2010, LWC joined forces with Microsoft in an innovative public-private partnership to provide to Louisiana job seekers and workers free technology training. Through its **Elevate America** program, Microsoft provided LWC with 22,500 vouchers for free, online technology training and certification that was used to enhance the job skills and marketability of job seekers who are registered with LWC as well as participants in the Jobs for America's Graduates program of the Louisiana Department of Education. LWC also worked with its Incumbent Worker Training Program to provide free vouchers to businesses that requested technology training for employees through the Small Business Employee Training program and also provided free vouchers to selected students in the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

Like the rest of the country, Louisiana experienced increased unemployment in 2009. However, the state's **unemployment insurance trust fund** continued to outperform all but one other state, making it the second strongest in the country. As of Sept. 24, 2010, the state's trust fund had a balance of \$953.8 million. By comparison, 32 states have had to borrow money from the federal government in order to pay benefits. Those states will have to pay back the borrowed funds and replenish their trust funds through higher taxes.

Because of the trust fund's stability and strength, current unemployment tax rates on employers will remain unchanged for 2011. The trust fund will also be able to continue funding of the state's Incumbent Worker Training Program at its current level of \$20 million.

## II: Statewide Activities

### Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program

STEP is a requirement of work-eligible Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP) recipients that assists them in preparing for and obtaining employment. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal regulations and state Department of Children and Family Services policy list 12 work activities that count toward federal participation rates. For the 2010 State Fiscal Year, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) met or exceeded all seven STEP performance measures.

#### **SUCCESS STORY: Aubrey Helfand, STEP Program**

When Aubrey Helfand's husband lost his job, the family needed help. The young mother from Lafayette was enrolled in the Louisiana Department of Social Services' (now the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services) STEP program and got child care assistance while her husband went back to school.

As part of the state's assistance, Aubrey was connected to the services of LWC's Lafayette Business & Career Solutions Center, which quickly landed her a place in a temporary employment program. Armed with the skills learned through LWC, Aubrey was offered six jobs within two months. She is currently working as an administrative assistant for a Lafayette company and no longer relies on state-funded assistance.

"These programs have not only helped me to have my choice of employment, they helped me build confidence in a government program I once believed was broken," she said. "I now happily pay taxes knowing that my money is going toward programs such as these."

**Table 1: 2010 STEP End-of-Year Performance Indicator Metrics**

Performance Indicator	Year End Target	Year End Actual
70% of Job Ready Participants who are FITAP certified will complete the Job Ready component	70%	108%
50% of participants completing Job Ready will complete an exit assessment	50%	61%
35% of STEP participants referred/accepted by One Stop Center placed in employment	35%	35%
Number of Emerging Readers completing the first week	180	263
Number of Job Ready participants served	2520	3170
Number of STEP participants enrolled in Job Ready with TABE results above 6.0 grade level	2160	2881
Total number of Emerging Readers enrolled in Job Ready component	240	289

### **Louisiana Job Employment Training (LaJET) Program**

The Louisiana Job Employment Training (LaJET) Program is a participant-centered and service-oriented initiative to provide employment-focused services to targeted mandatory work registrants who are recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

LaJET participants receive intense or expanded services within the Job Readiness Component. The type and level of services depend on barriers, availability and available funding. Expanded services can be provided through in-house programs or third-party training providers that deliver educational and pre-employment training, and/or case management services. Currently, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) monitors the LaJET program in four parishes: Bossier, Jefferson, Lafayette and St. Tammany.

During State FY 2010, 3,728 clients were assessed and placed in the six workforce development activities (job search with employer contacts, independent job search, WIA, job readiness, workfare and self-initiated workfare) that are associated with the LaJET program.

### **Louisiana Virtual One-Stop (LAVOS) Update**

Louisiana Virtual One-Stop (LAVOS) serves as the case management database system for workforce development activities associated with Wagner-Peyser, the Workforce Investment Act, National Emergency Grants, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the state's labor exchange system. Two major upgrades to the system took place in PY 2009.

Louisiana implemented a data exchange between Unemployment Insurance claims information and LAVOS. The UI import-based web service allows for an individual to be partially registered into the LAVOS system. This form of registration is considered a partial registration, since once an individual logs into LAVOS for the first time, they are required to review and confirm their registration information prior to using the LAVOS system.

Once an Unemployment Insurance claim is established, the re-employment initiative between the Unemployment Insurance claims system and the Workforce Development (WFD) Case Management/Labor Exchange system will automatically send an e-mail to the claimant with pertinent information regarding one-stop services and current jobs available. This opportunity e-mail will include a link to the top 25 jobs within a 25-mile radius of the claimant's primary place of residence. When the claimant clicks on the e-mail link, they have access to the same information as if logging into LAVOS as a guest. If the claimant logs in using the UserID and Password provided in the e-mail, the individual will have access to all on-line services: creating a résumé, applying for jobs, etc.

The electronic e-mail process will expedite the filing of an Unemployment Insurance claim and encourage claimant participation in virtual employment services. It is anticipated that this feature will be implemented Sept. 24, 2010.

The Business & Career Solutions Center staff will have the ability to search and identify these individuals imported through this UI data exchange. These process changes will require staff to perform evaluations of the criteria for work search requirements in which UI claimants will be held accountable. This process will allow the state to develop more appropriate and aggressive re-employment services.

In November 2009, a new module for the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program was deployed. Training was provided around the state in December 2009, and January 2010, to introduce the module and assist local staff with entering current and past participants into the new system. The TAA module provides staff with several case management benefits that were unavailable while only utilizing the WIA module. The online application captures all necessary information for TAA reporting and also determines eligibility and deadlines for TAA benefits. Other case management improvements include the online training application and waiver entry.

## **WorkKeys® Initiative/National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)**

ACT, Inc. is an internationally recognized organization providing a broad array of assessment, research, information and program management solutions in the areas of education and workforce development. WorkKeys is a recognized job skills assessment system measuring real-world functional skills that employers use to determine hiring qualifications and training needs that are critical to job success. These skills are valuable for any occupation, skilled or professional, and at any level of education. WorkKeys measures the current skills of individuals in four key areas: communication, problem solving, interpersonal skills and personal skills.

Coordinated by the LWC and other workforce partners, WorkKeys is being integrated into all workforce development programs. Business & Career Solutions Centers use the assessment tool to determine and certify skill competencies through job analysis and skill measurement.

LWC, along with workforce partners, actively participates in Louisiana's adopted National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) Initiative that is powered by WorkKeys. This portable credential assures businesses that the job seeker possesses the basic foundational and cognitive skills needed for specific job opportunities. NCRC verifies that an individual has essential core employability skills. Assessment results from WorkKeys are used to award one of four levels of certificates to job seekers: bronze, silver, gold and platinum.

WorkKeys and NCRC work hand in hand with a web-based system used for the reporting and management of the National Career Readiness Certificates called RegiSTAR™. This automated system registers examinees, records test scores, produces certificates and creates various static reports for tracking/monitoring and outcome measurements.

A Career Coaching component has been incorporated into Louisiana's WorkKeys Initiative/ National Career Readiness Certificate efforts. Career Coaches, working within Business & Career Solutions Centers and using ACT WorkKeys, National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and Professional Skills Assessment (PSA) instruments, will assist job seekers with moving along their career pathway, leading to job success. This partnership is a strong element of LWC's strategy to significantly raise the skill levels of job seekers. A strategically sound marketing plan has been designed targeting employers to enhance awareness of the significant benefit of the NCRC, such as the identification of specific skills and reduced personnel turnover.

## **Registered Apprenticeship**

The Apprenticeship Division is responsible for providing oversight, technical assistance and monitoring of Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors and employers throughout the state to ensure compliance with federal and state laws. The specific responsibilities of the division are to:

- Develop materials and conduct programs of public awareness to secure the adoption of training in skilled occupations and related training policies and practices used by employers, unions and other organizations
- Develop policies and plans to enhance opportunities for job seekers to participate in skilled training, both on-the-job and through related theory instruction
- Monitor registered apprenticeship program sponsors for compliance with state and federal apprenticeship laws and regulations by conducting periodic program quality and Equal Employment Opportunity compliance reviews
- Provide technical assistance to program sponsors to strengthen their programs to increase overall effectiveness

- Coordinate the effective use of federal, state and workforce development resources to create a clear training-to-employment corridor for customers of the workforce development system in the most integrated, effective way possible
- Engage in partnership activities with other state programs, organizations and employers to ensure quality service and customer satisfaction

### **SUCCESS STORY: Mindy Pepitone**

#### **Baton Rouge IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers)**

Upon graduating from Ponchatoula High School in 1998, Mindy Pepitone was unsure what her next steps would be. In early 2005, after a few false career starts, Pepitone decided to follow in the footsteps of several male relatives and apply to the Baton Rouge IBEW Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) for admission into their registered apprenticeship program. Pepitone was accepted and began in August 2005.

The Baton Rouge Electrical JATC is a joint partnership between IBEW Local Union 995 and area contractors. The apprentices work a regular 40-hour-per-week job as a paid electrical apprentice, receiving valuable on-the-job training. In addition, each apprentice receives related instruction in the classroom. This is a rigorous five-year, postsecondary educational program, where students “earn while they learn.”

Apprentices are dual-enrolled in the local Louisiana Technical College, where Pepitone earns college credit hours that can be applied toward an associate degree. Additionally, Pepitone receives assistance with tuition, books and tools through the Louisiana Workforce Commission’s Baton Rouge Business & Career Solutions Center. She will not have any college loans to worry about after graduation, because — as is true for most registered apprenticeship programs — there are little to no costs for apprenticeship participation.

“I have had some incredible instructors both on the work site and in the classroom. I am looking forward to being a Journey Wireman. This is a career that I love,” Pepitone said.

Registered Apprenticeship continued to grow in PY 2009, with the addition of three new programs. Although the number of registered apprentices has decreased slightly due to a slow economy, registered apprenticeship opportunities continue to be available across the state, with anticipated increases in construction activity that are expected to similarly increase the demand for apprentices.

The conversion to the Internet-based, USDOL-sponsored Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS) has been a huge success. This has significantly reduced transaction times and streamlined internal processes to provide higher-quality customer service to program sponsors. It combines all information into one database, allows for program sponsors to have their own accounts in the system and greater responsibility for providing up-to-date program data, and provides the electronic means to conduct transaction request/approvals.

More than 100 employers used the Registered Apprenticeship tax credit in PY 2009 representing \$1,352,510.49 in state tax credits claimed, an increase of \$329,671.20 from 2008. Word about the availability of the tax credit to employers who pay apprentice wages continues to spread, therefore greater utilization is anticipated for FY 2010. The relevant Louisiana law will sunset on Dec. 31, 2010, therefore a bill will go before the state legislature to extend the life of the law.

The USDOL grant of \$100,000 that was awarded at the end of PY 2008 was put into action in PY 2009. The first statewide apprenticeship conference, the Louisiana Apprenticeship Action Clinic, was held in October 2009. It brought together program sponsors, Business and Career Solutions Center staff and training partners from all eight regions of the state. The conference highlighted best practices, opened up dialogue and created relationships that have further helped integrate registered apprenticeship into the workforce development system.

### **Rapid Response**

Rapid Response is a federal strategy designed to avert potential layoffs and to provide readjustment services to workers impacted by plant closures and mass layoffs. Readjustment services are also provided as a result of natural disasters resulting in mass dislocation. The goal of Rapid Response is to work in collaboration with other workforce development agencies, to reduce the length of time that dislocated workers would normally draw unemployment insurance benefits.

Louisiana experienced an increase in layoffs within the manufacturing industry in the past year. In PY 2009, the Rapid Response Unit reacted to 99 Extended Mass Layoff Actions taken by employers that resulted in the separation of 8,722 workers from their jobs for at least 31 days.

These numbers are up from PY 2008 – PY 2009, where the state responded to 94 mass layoffs, impacting 7,474 workers. Rapid Response provided re-employment services to 8,461 workers in PY 2009, an increase from the 5,850 workers who received re-employment services in PY 2008.

#### **SUCCESS STORY: Kevin Breaux**

Letter to Rapid Response Team, from Jan. 20, 2010

“You may remember that I was one of your best customers at the IP Pineville Paper Mill closing (worker transition center). I wanted to let you all know that next week, I will start my new job at Boise Paper Mill in DeRidder, La. It is a very good job, possibly better than the one I had. I wanted to thank you for all the time spent on helping me with my résumé and interviewing skills. I am sure that the résumé got me the job. I also wanted to thank y’all for all the other classes, which helped me put together a “back-up plan” just in case the job hunting did not go well. The back-up plan was just as important as the job hunt, well anyway, it made me feel a lot better about being unemployed.

Thanks again,

Kevin Breaux

### **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)**

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is a program of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) that provides a variety of re-employment services and benefits to workers who have lost their jobs or suffered a reduction of hours and wages as a result of increased imports or shifts in production outside the United States. Workers may be eligible for training, training travel allowance, subsistence allowance, Re-employment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA), Alternate Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA), job search, relocation allowance, Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) and Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC). Certified individuals may be eligible to receive one or more program benefits and services depending on what level of assistance is needed to return them to suitable, sustainable employment.

In the period of January 2009 through December 2009, 21 petitions were filed on behalf of 3,036 dislocated workers, which resulted in the certification of 15 petitions for TAA/ATAA/RTAA services and benefits through USDOL.

In the period of January 2010 to present, 11 petitions have been filed on behalf of 1,525 dislocated workers, which have resulted in the certification of four petitions for TAA/ATAA/RTAA services and benefits through USDOL. Currently, the TAA Unit has four additional pending petitions, which represent 652 employees who will be potentially eligible for TAA services and benefits.

### **National Emergency Grants**

National Emergency Grants (NEGs) are discretionary awards by USDOL that are intended to complement already existing resources and service capacity on both the state and local-area levels. NEGs provide supplemental workforce development and employment services funds, in addition to other adjustment assistance for dislocated workers, in response to a significant dislocation event. Significant events are those that create a sudden need for assistance that cannot be reasonably accommodated by the ongoing operations of the formula-funded Dislocated Worker program. NEGs are typically awarded for mass layoffs, plant closures and declared emergencies that are determined eligible for public assistance by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

In WIA PY 2009, assistance was provided to 2,329 new dislocated workers through NEG funds. LWC applied to USDOL for three new grant awards and received \$2,660,062 in NEG funding.

This included an On-the-job training (OJT) grant designed to assist eligible dislocated workers and heavily impacted communities in quickly recovering from the effects of the economic downturn. This program will assist 160 individuals.

In PY 2009, \$4,800,723 was received to continue current grant efforts throughout the state. Allocations consisted of \$2,031,400 awarded to Louisiana to provide services for more than 600 new dislocated workers affected by the NASA Lockheed Martin layoffs. Also, \$2,769,323 was received for on-going clean-up services to assist individuals, job seekers and businesses recovering from Hurricane Gustav.

#### **SUCCESS STORY: Dusty Bonton**

##### **Determination + Support = Career Success**

Dusty Bonton isn't a quitter. That was evident when she first went to the Calcasieu Business & Career Solutions Center in Lake Charles and asked for help in getting the skills she needed for a better job.

She was soon enrolled in a computer skills class, but she didn't let her discouragement at not getting a job stop her. She came across an ad for welding school. After preliminary testing, Bonton received the call she had been waiting for—she had been accepted under a National Emergency Grant to take part in the welding class. Though she had never seen herself as a welder, Bonton was eager to learn all that she could.

Getting her Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) and safety cards marked a milestone for Bonton, making her determined to do the best job possible. She recently passed the test that certifies her as a welder—with the pay raise and promotion to match. "The Louisiana Workforce Commission gave me the chance to get the right skills for the right job," she said.

### **Customized Workforce Solutions Team**

The Customized Workforce Solutions Team (CWST) is designed to address the workforce challenges of large employers, industry sectors, regions and agencies across Louisiana. This team strives to be an indispensable source in developing demand-driven, customized and comprehensive solutions that meet the needs of both employers and job seekers.

The CWST works to maximize the abilities and resources of LWC and other state agencies, as well as private and non-profit organizations, to develop customized workforce plans at the speed of business. Each plan is designed to identify specific challenges that are being faced by employers and/or industries, and include a detailed action plan consisting of stakeholder responsibilities, timelines for execution and anticipated outcomes. The CWST draws from its full complement of available resources in the areas of employee recruitment, training and development, and funding.

#### **SUCCESS STORY: ADA Environmental Solutions**

##### **From Start-Up to Production with Louisiana Workforce Commission's Help**

ADA Environmental Solutions came to Louisiana in 2008 and began building what will be the largest activated carbon (AC) manufacturing plant in North America, the Red River Environmental Products plant in Coushatta. When completed, the plant, which will sell AC to electricity producers wanting to reduce mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants, will have an annual capacity of 150 million pounds of AC, enough to capture mercury from up to 40,000 megawatts of coal-fired power generation.

The small staff onsite was overwhelmed at the many different tasks they had to undertake — from construction of the facility, procurement of the equipment, securing permits, developing training programs and hiring personnel. ADA representative Tim Whatley turned to the local Business & Career Solutions Center in Shreveport for help. LWC staff took a very personal approach to understanding ADA's needs, which included posting job openings, screening résumés, responding to phone calls from applicants, providing administrative support and assisting with applicant testing and job fairs.

"We never would have accomplished these enormous tasks without the LWC's help. The staff's experience and expertise with workforce-related issues saved us valuable time and allowed us to focus our efforts on the candidates. It was a job well done," said Whatley.

### **Business Services Representatives Initiatives**

The Business Services Team (BST) is a statewide group of employees that serve as liaisons between LWC and the business community of Louisiana. The team is comprised of both state and locally funded staff. The BST is the source of business intelligence, and relays this intelligence to the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and LWC. The BST manages employer relationships, connects them to the Business & Career Solutions Centers and brokers products and services provided by LWC. Team members also serve as quasi supervisors of the Recruitment and Placement Team (R&P). The Business Services Team meets regularly with R&P to ensure that services, such as employer job vacancies and OJT contracts, are being properly identified, coordinated and managed to ensure that employer needs are met.

In May 2009, the Business Services Team began receiving administrative and functional oversight directly from the administrative office of LWC. This ensures that all employers across Louisiana receive consistent, quality service, regardless of where they are located. Since that time, strategic initiatives have been implemented and employer visits have increased by 25 percent, and according to LAVOS data, services to employers have increased 100 percent.

### **Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS/DOC)**

Through an on-going and comprehensive review of LWC's collaborative efforts primarily with DOC, as well as other agencies, LWC is evaluating the process of preparing offenders to return to society. By supporting and, in some cases, replicating best practices, measures are being taken that will strengthen the probability that offenders re-entering society will succeed and become productive citizens.

#### ***LWC Milestones***

1. LWC provided \$250,000 in funding for instructors at Dixon Correctional Institute, Avoyelles Correctional Center, and J. Levy Debadie Correctional Center. This funding was used to train releasing offenders in top growth occupations, to address the need for trained workers, and to support recovery and rebuilding of the areas affected by hurricanes as well as the state's long-term recovery.
2. LWC collaborated as a member of a cross-functional team charged with a comprehensive re-entry process. The LAVOS system was utilized as a tool in providing pertinent information regarding the offender to various agencies through a process that moves the offender from incarceration to proper housing, substance and/or mental health assistance if necessary, and ultimately, to Business & Career Solutions Centers for assistance with career development and gainful employment.
3. LWC researched best practices, policies and program requirements as needed in order to provide assistance to Judges Hunter and White in the development and implementation of a re-entry pilot program in Orleans Parish.
4. LWC provided funding for the Louisiana National Guard Job Challenge, a job skill-training program for youth ages 16 – 21. In the Louisiana National Guard Job Challenge, students are trained in welding, heavy equipment operation and food services. They are mentored and guided toward employment, military service, Job Corps training, and/or post secondary educational opportunities, such as enrollment in a community or technical college or registered apprenticeship program.
5. LWC provided a strategic level of administration, inspection, investigation and data tracking for the St. Landry Adult Court (CHANGES) to the Workforce Development Program officer.
6. LWC assisted in reviewing and evaluating C-Tech's copper-based network cabling certification programs at the Jetson Correctional facility, in order to potentially replicate their operations in other institutions. LWC also provided technical support to other administrative and/or field staff who assist program graduates with obtaining gainful employment.
7. LWC continued to assist, develop and nurture relationships with grassroots organizations, community-based and faith-based organizations, service providers, employment services, local law enforcement, probation and parole, and other stakeholders in support of a fully integrated, cooperative and comprehensive re-entry platform for ex-offenders.

8. LWC, through offender employment specialists, provided direct information and consultation to offenders who called with questions relating to bonding, outlined requirements for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, benefits and procedures in the optimal utilization of the Business & Career Solutions Centers, in addition to any other offender re-entry issues.

### **Disability Program Navigator**

The **Disability Program Navigator** (DPN) Initiative was originally funded by federal authorities in 2003 to expand the capacity of the Business & Career Solutions Centers to serve customers with disabilities by providing accessible, seamless and integrated services. At its peak, there are now more than 425 Navigators in 44 states, Washington, D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In addition to creating systemic change, the Navigators act as facilitators to bring together multiple partners in the Business & Career Solutions Centers to develop an integrated team approach with the purpose of blending and braiding resources around an individual customer's employment needs. The initiative came to Louisiana as a result of Hurricane Katrina in May 2006.

Last program year, the DPN Initiative in Louisiana implemented a three-phase training curriculum and to date, more than 200 trainings have been conducted and approximately 2,500 LWIA staff throughout the state have been trained. Assistive technology workstations were purchased and installed in 36 of the Business & Career Solutions Centers throughout Louisiana. Navigators also continued their efforts to assist ex-offenders by attending job and resource fairs to empower them with the resources necessary to find and maintain employment once released. They participated in workgroup meetings dedicated to the Prisoner Re-entry Initiative, **Communities Committed to Re-entry**. Additionally, as a result of the 2010 ARRA Summer Youth Program, Navigators were able to secure 10 percent of the positions to be used for transition-age youth seeking summer employment.

Navigators spearheaded and facilitated the **Social Security Ticket to Work** program throughout Louisiana. This included assisting WIAs with becoming Employment Networks (EN) in three regions. Navigators continued to work to update the Area Disability Resource Manuals for their regions so that they contain up-to-date information covering a broad scope of topics. For the third year in a row, Navigators successfully partnered with other committee members to host job fairs all over the state with the goal of finding adequate employment for people with disabilities. Nearly 2,000 customers came in search of employment. In 2010, the Navigators will spearhead similar job fairs in order to build upon this success. The annual Disability Employment Symposium was held on Oct. 27, 2009, in Monroe, Louisiana for a day of information sharing and network building. Hosted by the DPN Initiative, this event brought together more than 200 employers, agencies, service providers and advocates that service the needs of the disabled.

The Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Initiative was awarded a mini grant from the National Disability Institute (NDI) and the Real Economic Impact (REI) Tour to increase outreach to people with disabilities and their families so that they are more aware of the availability of free tax preparation services, the existence of credits available to them, and the availability of asset building opportunities. The Navigators hosted the National Disability Institute (NDI) in Baton Rouge on March 5, 2010. Workshops about financial literacy and tax incentives for individuals with disabilities, including their families, were conducted.

Partnering with the Arc of Baton Rouge, the Internal Revenue Services (IRS), and the Southern University Law Center, the DPN Initiative provided a **Free Tax Preparation Day** on March 6, 2010, at the Arc of Baton Rouge Children's Services Center. Although the target population for this event was people with disabilities and their families, the general public was welcomed to attend as well. This event was a great success and planning is already underway for the 2011 tax filing session.

Navigators continued their involvement with numerous interagency collaborations and worked to build and strengthen their relationships with mandated and non-mandated partners in order to better leverage resources.

### **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is another tool in Louisiana's diverse toolbox of flexible strategies designed to help move people into gainful employment while obtaining on-the-job experience. It joins other tax credits, education and job training programs that help Louisiana workers with barriers to employment prepare for good jobs; ease their transition from job to job; benefit from the creation of effective regional economic development strategies; and create high performance workplaces.

Currently, there are 11 target groups under WOTC. Businesses that employ individuals who fall into one of these groups qualify for the federally funded tax credit. On Feb. 17, 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 added two new target groups: unemployed veterans and disconnected youth. Due to strong employer participation, more than 19,000 individuals have been impacted by the program, which has provided an average of \$40,910,000 in credits per year.

### **Foreign Labor**

The Foreign Labor Certification Unit (FLC) provides foreign labor certification services to Louisiana employers who want to employ non-U.S. citizens. More than 300 farmers (crawfish, rice, livestock, citrus, corn, nursery crop, soybeans, strawberries, vegetable and pecans) and their employees are impacted by this program on an annual basis. Some 268 farmers were certified by USDOL for the H-2A Program in PY 2009.

### **Community Development Block Grant (CSBG)/Recovery Workforce Training Program**

The Recovery Workforce Training Program (RWTP) was established by the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) in collaboration with the State Office of Community Development's (OCD) Disaster Recovery Unit and the LWC. The RWTP provides funding to create sector strategies or sector-based initiatives that address the need for trained workers and to support recovery and rebuilding of the areas impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as the long-term recovery of the state's overall economy. The six sectors identified as critical to economic recovery and rebuilding infrastructure are advanced manufacturing, construction, cultural economy, healthcare, oil and gas, and transportation. The RWTP program is largely based on partnerships that bring together local education and training entities, along with business and social service organizations to target these six sectors.

In 2009, the RWTP program had 4,590 participants complete training programs and of those participants, 2,618 were placed into employment. That gives the RWTP program a 57 percent placement rate for 2009.

With adequate funding still available toward the end of the original grant period, LWC requested and was granted a one-year program extension by OCD. The program is now operational until Dec. 31, 2010, with administrative funding available until June 30, 2011, for close-out procedures. The LWC asked all sub-recipients from the previous grant to provide a presentation for CDBG and OCD staff in order to make a determination regarding which sub-recipients would be granted an award in 2010. A determination was made based on multiple quantitative and qualitative factors, including but not limited to: (1) prior performance data, (2) cost per participant, (3) administrative costs and (4) strategic plans.

To date, in the 2010 program year, the RWTP program had 925 participants complete training programs and of those participants, 582 have been placed into employment. That gives the RWTP program a 63 percent placement rate thus far in 2010.

Success of the RWTP program is demonstrated by the many well-trained participants who are making a difference in communities most severely impacted by the hurricanes. Through a letter of appreciation from Touro Medical Center and Delgado Community College, the medical center said that the healthcare training program at Delgado has produced well-rounded, knowledgeable and meticulous employees. In addition, an email sent to Sterling Brignac, lead carpentry instructor for Delgado's cultural economy program, included some of the participant's thoughts on the program. Some students were quoted as saying: "This program has everything that I have been searching for. I have been through a lot in my life and wanted something better for me and my family. From the Life Drawing upwards, everything fits together right. Like a puzzle" and "This program has transformed the lives of every apprentice and it has allowed them to gain marketable skills in becoming productive citizens while re-building the city of New Orleans."

### **National Emergency Grant (Katrina Youth)**

Through the National Emergency Grant, Louisiana was able to help in the recovery and rebuilding efforts of the local communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The YouthROC (Youth Rebuilding Our Community) project provided training and jobs in construction and coastal restoration in Region 1 (WIBs of Orleans, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, St. Tammany, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. James and Jefferson parishes). The grant was designed to serve youth ages 16 – 24 with multiple barriers to employment. The goal was to link those youth to educational and employment opportunities through hands-on learning while, at the same time, rebuilding their communities that continue to struggle to recover five years later.

Through this grant, the LWC concentrated their efforts on rebuilding the business community in a variety of ways. This includes finding qualified workers to fill available positions, rebuilding communities by providing short-term vocational skills training opportunities for workers, rebuilding service delivery systems to help displaced workers re-enter the labor market, and rebuilding the workforce pipeline by preparing new, returning and incumbent workers with the training necessary to acquire skills for obtaining high-demand jobs.

Successful outcomes include literacy and numeracy gains, placement into occupations with career ladders, placement into post-secondary educational or training programs and certificate attainment.

### **Grant Activities from July 2009 through June 30, 2010**

Total number of individuals served through the NEG grant:	1,432
Placed in unsubsidized employment:	44
Placed in post-secondary education:	24
Received certifications (NCCER, OSHA, CPR/First Aid):	130
Increased at least one functional level in math, reading and language:	49

### **Louisiana ARRA Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**

Louisiana was able to employ 3,688 youth, ages 14 – 24, in the 2010 Summer Employment Programs. This occurred through the resourceful use of stimulus funding from Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)/ARRA programs, Workforce Investment Act (WIA)/ARRA

employment and training programs, and WIBs. These job experiences provided valuable skills for youth and served as a stepping stone on the path to self-sufficiency. Likewise, these programs gave youth the opportunity to benefit from training and employment services such as work experience, leadership development, work readiness and mentoring. Some of the industries that employed youth included healthcare, service, environmental, government and green building. Healthcare and service industry sectors were specifically targeted as both core and growth-oriented sectors of employment in Louisiana.

As a result of the summer employment programs, the local WIAs and community action agencies successfully partnered together for several months to administer summer employment programs for low-income youth. Through their efforts and hard work, 94 youth received permanent employment, 154 youth planned to, or obtained a GED, and 985 youth have entered into post-secondary/secondary education.

The LWC's primary objectives for the summer employment program were to create partnerships between community action agencies and local workforce investment areas, place participants in meaningful career-oriented jobs, reach a higher percentage of out-of-school youth, and increase participants work-readiness skills.

Since Louisiana has identified healthcare as a high-demand employment sector youth were exposed to career opportunities in healthcare by receiving classroom instruction, working/shadowing professionals at local hospitals, observing paramedics in the field, and visiting local healthcare facilities such as nursing homes, blood banks, funeral homes, rehabilitation centers and even a forensic lab. The ECHO and HOPE programs provided invaluable opportunities for 48 youth participants to consider a healthcare career that they might not have been exposed to otherwise.

#### **SUCCESS STORY: JeffCAP**

##### **Jefferson Summer Youth Program Provides Job Training, New Experiences**

The devastation from the recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has decreased the economic development along coastal Louisiana. As a result, many residents in the town of Jean Lafitte have experienced tremendous financial distress.

In order to assist the oil spill victims, Jefferson Community Action Programs (JeffCAP) decided to create the Lafitte Summer Youth Job Program to employ youth to help support their families.

The six-week program started in July 2010 and has employed 31 participants. The youth, ages 16 – 24, worked at various Jefferson Parish departments and centers. The program also has career and technical professionals who serve as mentors to provide these young people with real on-the-job experiences and valuable life skills.

Lafitte residents Bryan Wright and Ryan Wright are stellar examples of the program's goal. The 21-year-old twin brothers worked at the Lafitte Senior Center as administrative assistants. While learning how to manage various office tasks, they have also learned how to sew.

The Wright twins attended a sewing class for the center's senior citizens. They have worked diligently to produce several quilts for the town citizens who are sick or bereaved.

"I told myself that I want to learn how to sew, and I am going to learn," Bryan said. He said the center's sewing teacher is a professional tailor, and she taught him how to use a sewing machine for the first time. This job helped me to pick up a new skill that I never had before."

Sewing has definitely intrigued the brothers. They both admitted to their childhood dream of becoming top-notch fashion designers someday. Ryan said the Summer Youth Job Program might help them to turn that dream into a reality. "I do love fashion," Ryan said. "This could be a good thing."

## Re-employment Services

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is focused on connecting Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants with re-employment and training services. To this end, Re-employment Services (RES) ensures that claimants have access to the full array of re-employment and training services available at Business & Career Solutions Centers, while ensuring that claimants comply with all legal requirements governing the receipt of UI benefits. (Training and Employment Notice No. 31 – 09, March 11, 2010).

American Recovery Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds have been made available for re-employment services for UI claimants in Louisiana. These Wagner-Peyser funds will be used to supplement existing re-employment services for UI claimants and support integrating employment services and UI information to serve claimant needs.

Louisiana's Business & Career Solutions Centers have provided a comprehensive and integrated service delivery model to ensure that UI claimants receive an enhanced level of services leading toward a job-ready labor force. Services include job search assistance, job referrals, Labor Market Information, career counseling, assessments, skills upgrade, training referrals, workshops, supported services referrals, and other available services provided by other workforce partners. RES staff are housed in centers throughout the state to provide these services, working in conjunction with UI representatives, Business Service Representatives (BSRs) and other center staff in providing services to claimants.

The chart below provides cumulative statistical information for RES activities for second quarter performance: **April 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010**

Total RES Claimants	Successful Completions	Unsuccessful Completions	Participation Waived
3257	1862 or 57.2%	1192 or 36.6%	203 or 6.2%

**Source:** Louisiana Virtual One Stop (LAVOS)

Based on additional reporting information captured by the RES staff, an estimated 178 claimants returned to work by the end of June 2010. The areas with the highest return to work rates were Baton Rouge, Allen Parish, Lafayette, Slidell and Morgan City.

### **SUCCESS STORY: Unemployed Worker Finds New Position Aiding Job Seekers**

Tony Vets is a military retiree who went to work for the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services section of the Department of Social Services (now the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services). Because of budget cuts, his position, as well as several of his coworkers, was eliminated. The employer services representative from the Rapides Business & Career Solutions Center went to Tony's job site and informed the soon-to-be-laid-off employees of the services provided by the LWC. Tony visited [www.laworks.net](http://www.laworks.net), completed a résumé and set up a virtual recruiter. Within six weeks, Tony was hired as a temporary worker through the LWC's Re-Employment Services (RES) program to work with job seekers in the Skills Development area. When a permanent position through the LWC's Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) came available, he applied and was chosen for the position.

### III: Workforce Intelligence (Labor Market Information)

#### Local Employment Dynamics

The U.S. Census Bureau provided training for representatives of the LWIAs and staff from the LWC in PY 2009 on new time series data created under the federal-state Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Partnership that provides unprecedented details about America's jobs, workers and local economies and communities. LED creatively integrates existing data from state-supplied administrative records on workers and employers with existing censuses, surveys and other administrative records. State-of-the-art methods to protect the confidentiality of the original respondents allow LED to release valid data for local or regional areas beyond traditional boundaries for public use on the Internet.

The indicators from the program will show economic trends by worker age and gender, and by county/parish and WIA area. Combined with local expertise and information, the LED is an important tool for decision makers, employers, workers, transportation agencies, education and training institutions, and economic development agencies. The LED partnership helps to fill critical data gaps and provides indicators for state and local authorities.

#### Job Vacancy Survey

In PY 2009, LWC contracted with LSU to conduct a job vacancy survey to help determine workforce needs in the state. The annual job vacancy survey helps the workforce development system gain insight into the number and types of jobs available in specific industries and regions of the state. Employers can use this information to gauge the existence of labor shortages and to plan solutions to hiring needs. Economic development and both secondary and postsecondary education are using career clusters to align workforce preparation at all education and training levels, and the training providers can use this information to help design just-in-time training to meet employer needs. The job vacancy survey is one way for the state to determine the number and types of jobs available in specific industries at a specific point in time. Below is excerpt from the Job Vacancy Report for 2009:

There were approximately 40,050 job vacancies in Louisiana during the second quarter of 2009 resulting in a vacancy rate of 2.1 percent. This means that for every 100 jobs, approximately 2 jobs were vacant. The number of job vacancies decreased by approximately 37,530 since the second quarter of 2008, a 48 percent decrease.

The largest number of job vacancies was found in Food Preparation and Serving Related (approximately 5,620) while the largest vacancy rate (5.0 percent) was found in the Healthcare Support occupational group. When looking at the results by industry group, Educational and Health Care had the largest number of job vacancies (approximately 9,000). The highest vacancy rate of 4.2 percent was found in the Other Services group. Other Services consists of repair and maintenance, personal and laundry services, membership associations and organizations, and private households.

Overall, Louisiana employers were seeking employees with experience in 73 percent of the job vacancies. Forty-five percent of the job vacancies required more than a high school education with 31 percent requiring vocational training, certification, or a two-year college degree.

Approximately 10 percent of all job vacancies offered a starting wage of \$6.55 per hour or less. Jobs paying \$6.56 – \$7.55 accounted for 15 percent of vacancies. However, 27 percent of vacancies were paying \$7.56 – \$10.55; 11 percent of vacancies were paying \$10.56 – \$13.00; 20 percent of vacancies were paying \$13.01 – \$18.00; and 17 percent of vacancies were paying more than \$18.00 per hour. In addition an added survey question showed that employers offered supplemental health insurance for 42 percent of all job vacancies.

The number of job vacancies in Louisiana for 2009 was approximately one-half of the number of vacancies in 2008. Over half (56 percent) of the job vacancies were found in Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA) 1 and 2, up from 49 percent in 2008.

## IV: Performance Data

### Program Costs

Program	Total Participants Served	Total Expenditures	Cost per Participant
Adult Programs <i>(Does not include Self Service Only)</i>	256,553	\$13,599,602	\$53
Dislocated Worker Program	14,995	\$5,968,761	\$398
Youth Program	3,368	\$13,204,503	\$3,921

**PY 2009 WIA Financial Statement — Operating Results**  
**Table N: Cost of Program Activity**

Fund Source	Available	Expenditures as of 6/30/10	Percent Expended	Balance Remaining
Adult Funds	\$12,875,748	\$9,145,407		\$3,730,341
C/O Funds	\$4,454,195	\$4,454,195		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,329,943</b>	<b>\$13,599,602</b>	<b>78.5%</b>	<b>\$3,730,341</b>
Dislocated Worker Funds	\$5,314,239	\$3,824,435		\$1,489,804
C/O Funds	\$2,144,326	\$2,144,326		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,458,565</b>	<b>\$5,968,761</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>\$1,489,804</b>
Youth Funds	\$13,160,901	\$6,772,641		\$6,388,260
C/O Funds	\$6,431,862	\$6,431,862		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$19,592,763</b>	<b>\$13,204,503</b>	<b>67.4%</b>	<b>\$6,388,260</b>
Rapid Response Funds	\$2,214,266	\$199,635		\$2,014,631
C/O Funds	\$1,600,675	\$1,600,675		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,814,941</b>	<b>\$1,800,310</b>	<b>47.2%</b>	<b>\$2,014,631</b>
Statewide Activity Funds	\$5,386,007	\$1,199,489		\$4,186,519
C/O Funds	\$2,926,775	\$2,926,775		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,312,782</b>	<b>\$4,126,264</b>	<b>49.6%</b>	<b>\$4,186,519</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$56,508,994</b>	<b>\$38,699,439</b>	<b>68.5%</b>	<b>\$17,809,555</b>

**Three-Year Progress of the Workforce Investment Act Program**

The chart below illustrates Louisiana's historical results, indicating the state's continued development of an Integrated Services Delivery model that increases service delivery to more individuals while maintaining quality outcomes.

	Program Year 2007	Program Year 2008	Program Year 2009
<b>Adult</b>			
Participants	151,874	217,377	256,553
Entered Employment Rate	67.7%	66.2%	56.6%
Job Retention Rate	81.3%	79.8%	74.3%
Average Earnings	\$12,357	\$12,613	\$12,359
<b>Dislocated Workers</b>			
Participants	3,780	9,290	14,995
Entered Employment or Education	73.3%	72.1%	64.8%
Job Retention Rate	76.2%	83.4%	78.4%
Average Earnings	\$14,554	\$18,418	\$16,148
<b>Youth</b>			
Participants	3,527	3,755	3,368
Placement in Employment or Education	65.1%	66.8%	54.6%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	48.0%	51.7%	54.4%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	25.9%	43.4%	55.5%

**NOTE:** Results are based on U.S. Department of Labor Common Measures definitions.

**Program Year 2009 Workforce Investment Act Program Performance**

	Negotiated Goal	Actual Performance	% of Goal Attained
<b>Adult</b>			
Entered Employment Rate	72.0%	56.6%	78.61%
Job Retention Rate	80.0%	74.3%	92.88%
Average Earnings Rate	\$12,100	\$12,359	102.14%
<b>Dislocated Workers</b>			
Entered Employment Rate	84.0%	64.8%	77.14%
Job Retention Rate	90.0%	78.4%	87.11%
Average Earnings Rate	\$13,900	\$16,148	116.17%
<b>Youth Common Measures</b>			
Placement in Education or Employment	57.0%	54.6%	95.79%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	44.0%	54.4%	123.64%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	52.0%	55.5%	106.73%

**State Evaluation Activities**

Beginning in PY 2007, Louisiana was granted a waiver to use the common measures for performance evaluation. The state met or exceeded the federal negotiated performance standards with the exception of the Entered Employment Rate in both the Adult and Dislocated Workers programs.

The Entered Employment performance measures are based on the current data available through unemployment insurance (UI) wage records. Louisiana acknowledges the need to provide timely data and submits a good faith ETA 9091 report with the awareness the data may be incorrect. Recognizing also the importance of providing accurate data, the state has identified problematic issues with the inaccurate and/or missing recording of UI wages due to the implementation of the Imaging and Remittance Processing Renovation and Workflow Project. Louisiana is working on a solution to provide more accurate UI wage data and is committed to resolving the issues.

## Adult Program

The state met two adult measures, exceeding the Average Earnings measures. Through LWC's Integrated Service Delivery Model, the LWIAs served 256,553 job seekers, placing 56.6 percent of these customers. Over the past year, while continuing to recover from Hurricane Gustav and managing large volumes of job seekers seeking employment with employers involved in the Deepwater Horizon clean-up effort, the state has increased participation from 217,377 job seekers to 256,553 while maintaining quality performance outcomes.

### **SUCCESS STORY: Angelle Wyman**

#### **Rising from Devastation to Become an Elementary School Teacher**

Single-mom Angelle Wyman is a testament to the fact that it's possible to come back even stronger than before after dealing with devastation. Wyman moved to the Acadiana area after her home was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Determined to rebuild her life, Wyman visited the LWC's Opelousas Business & Career Solutions Center, where she was given temporary employment through a work experience program.

With help from LWIA 40, Wyman was able to attend Louisiana State University at Eunice where she earned an associate degree in early childhood education. She followed that with a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Most remarkable is that Wyman was able to maintain a 4.0 grade-point average throughout her college career. She is now working as a second-grade teacher at Southwest Elementary in Opelousas and was honored as a WIA Participant of the Year.

## Dislocated Worker Program

The state met two dislocated worker measures, exceeding the Average Earning measure. The state is utilizing the waiver allowing the transfer of funding from the Dislocated Worker program to the Adult program. While the amount of dedicated dislocated worker funding has decreased, the leveraging of funds and re-employment services helped to increase the number of participants served while maintaining performance. In PY 2009, Louisiana increased the number of dislocated workers served from 9,290 to 14,995, a 61 percent increase from the prior year.

## Youth Common Measures

The state exceeded or met all of the three youth common measures, exceeding the Attainment of a Degree or Certificate and Placement in Employment or Education and the Literacy and Numeracy Gains.

Louisiana requires that at least 50 percent of all youth participants served under WIA be out-of-school youth. In PY 2009, approximately 70 percent of the youth participants were out-of-school youth.

The Management Information Service (MIS) Unit is continuing to assist the LWIAs to better manage the state's youth performance, in particular the Literacy and Numeracy Gains measure through statewide on-site training. The LWC developed a corrective action plan to ensure it meets this standard during PY 2009. Working with the LWIAs, the LWC has identified several issues impacting the state's ability to meet this performance measure. These include youth dropping out prior to the end of the first year and the fact that some EFL levels seem too broad to accomplish in one year. In addition, some programmatic issues related to providing effective basic skills training impact this measure, including difficulties maintaining relationships with this population

that will help adherence to the testing timelines and getting the youth to return for retesting before the 12-month timeframe is up.

While recognizing the importance of meeting the USDOL Common Measures, the state also acknowledges the need to develop real-time “scorecard” performance and outcome indicators. The LWC has designed an internal measurement and improvement system that allows the state and local areas to benchmark the success of Business & Career Solutions Centers. This scorecard provides real-time as well as point-in-time data that can be used to make necessary and quality changes to processes and service inputs, as well as serve as a predictor for the USDOL Common Measures.

### **Workforce Development Scorecard**

A total of 10 scorecard measurements have been put in place.

Four measurements gauge the success of **job seeker** services:

1. **Members Obtaining Employment**

The intent of this measure is to provide an overall percentage of members who have entered employment as a direct result of Business & Career Solutions services. Level of service provided to an individual member will vary based as initial service needs and on-going service recommendation. To positively impact this measure, Business & Career Solutions Centers must concentrate on (1) increasing the number, types, and quality of services that prepare job seekers to become skilled qualified candidates for employer openings, and (2) increasing the number of staff-generated case closures.

2. **Staff Referrals Resulting in Placement**

The intent of this measure is to evaluate how effectively Business & Career Solutions services and staff are in preparing, identifying, selecting, and recommending job seekers who meet the skills requirements of the employer. Three factors impacting this measure are (1) knowing the skill needs of businesses, (2) understanding the recruitment and hiring practices of employers, and (3) knowing if and how the skill sets of the member referred fit the skill needs of the business.

3. **Members Receiving Training**

The intent of the measure is to assess the volume of members in areas utilizing training funds for eligible members. This measure is impacted by the ability of staff to identify the training needs and opportunities of members.

4. **Members Employed in Jobs Earning Above Average Wages**

The intent of the measure is to gauge how effectively staff is assisting members in securing employment in higher-paying positions. Factors impacting this measure include (1) the ability of the Business Solutions team to recruit employers that hire for positions paying above-average wages, (2) the ability of the Recruitment and Placement team to understand the skill demands of employers for positions paying above-average wages, and (3) the ability of the Recruitment and Placement team to identify members' skills and match those skills to the employers' skill demands.

Four measurements gauge the success of **employer** services:

1. Employer Market Penetration

The intent of the measure is to determine how effectively the Business Solutions team is promoting the value of Business & Career Solutions Center services to area employers with 10 or more employees. Factors impacting this measure include (1) the ability of the Business Solutions team to identify employers with a regular demand for labor, (2) the ability of the Business Solutions team to regularly reach out to area businesses, (3) the ability of the Business Solutions team to identify employers' needs and match Solutions Center services to those needs, and (4) the overall success of the marketing of the laworks.net website and the marketing of the Solutions Centers.

2. Job Vacancies with Staff Referrals

The intent of the measure is to evaluate how effectively job vacancies are being referred to qualified job seekers. This measure is impacted by (1) the ability of the Recruitment and Placement team to understand the skill demands of employers, and (2) the ability of the Recruitment and Placement team to effectively search for those job seekers with the necessary skills to meet those employers' skill demands.

3. Referral to Hire Ratio

The intent of the measure is to capture the Recruitment and Placement team's quality of work on behalf of the employer compared to individuals that self refer on jobs. Factors impacting this measure include (1) the ability of the Recruitment and Placement team to recognize the skill demands of employers with job vacancies, and (2) the ability of the Recruitment and Placement team to recognize the skill sets of qualified job seekers and match those individuals to job vacancies.

4. Employers Providing Employer-Based Training

The intent of the measure is to evaluate the volume of employers utilizing Business & Career Solutions Center resources that offer Employer-Based Training. This measure is impacted by (1) the effectiveness of the Business Solutions team in recruiting employers and educating them of the benefits of providing Employer-Based Training, and (2) overall effectiveness of the marketing of Solutions Center services.

Two measurements gauge the success of **targeted population** services:

1. Youth with Employment or Training Outcome

The intent of the measure is to gauge the effectiveness of service delivery to members classified as youths. This measure is impacted by (1) understanding of the individual youth's needs and challenges, and (2) understanding the services available to those youths and what services fit those youths' needs.

2. Unemployment Insurance Claimants Returning to Work

The intent of the measure is to evaluate how effectively the services of the Business & Career Solutions Centers are returning Unemployment Insurance claimants to the workplace. This measure is impacted by (1) effective service delivery to members who have filed Unemployment Insurance claims, and (2) effective service delivery to employers who could potentially hire Unemployment Insurance claimants.

**Waivers**

In order to make the best use of resources and as part of the state’s extension of the WIA/W-P State Plan, Louisiana was granted extensions of certain waiver requests by ETA in order to possibly seek relief from provisions that restrict flexibility and creativity or limit efficiencies. Following are the waivers granted by ETA and obtained by Louisiana.

<p><i>Waiver of the funds transfer limitation at WIA Section 133(b)(4) to permit states to approve local area requests to transfer up to 50 percent of local area formula allocation funds between the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. State policy for transfer of funds between adult and dislocated worker programs.</i></p>	<p>This waiver enhanced the LWIAs ability to be flexible in planning and addressing the needs of their area. One of the cornerstone foundations of the Workforce Investment Act is the integrating and streamlining of services and costs to workforce development, which is consistent with Gov. Bobby Jindal’s desire to integrate programs in order to better serve the citizens of Louisiana. This waiver helped the LWIAs by addressing the economic situation of the local areas by providing either additional Adult or Dislocated Workers services based on that need. Over half of the LWIAs used this waiver in PY 2009 to help meet the needs of the employers and job seekers in training specific needs.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the required 50% employer match for customized training at WIA Section 101(8)(C) to permit a match based on a sliding scale as follows: (a) no less than 10% match for employers with 50 or fewer employees, and (b) no less than 25% match for employers with 51 – 100 employees. For employers with more than 100 employees, the current statutory requirements continue to apply.</i></p>	<p>The waiver for customized training helped optimize the resources available under workforce development initiatives by focusing on employers’ needs while minimizing programmatic and bureaucratic barriers. By using the sliding scale match, the employers gained the flexibility to compare their cost benefit ratio of contributing a match amount to the benefits of a skill increase for their employees. Employers benefited by having a labor pool with the marketable skills they required. Louisiana was able to integrate various funding streams while providing employers with an integrated seamless approach to workforce development.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of WIA Section 101(31)(B) to permit LWIAs to reimburse the employer for on the job training on a graduated scale based on the size of the business. The following reimbursement amounts will be permitted: (a) up to 90% for employers with 50 or fewer employees, and (b) up to 75% for employers with more than 50 but fewer than 250 employees. For employees with 250 or more employees, the current statutory requirements will continue to apply.</i></p>	<p>The waiver for on-the-job training helped employers to use the resources available under workforce development initiatives by focusing on employers’ and job seekers’ needs while minimizing programmatic and bureaucratic barriers. The sliding scale for the employer match helped to create the necessary flexibility for employers to compare their cost benefit ratio of contributing a match amount to the benefits of a skill increase for their employees. Employers benefited by having a labor pool with the marketable skills they required.</p>

<p><i>Waiver of WIA Section 123 requiring competitive procurement for the follow-up and supportive services elements and inclusion of these elements in the design framework of youth services.</i></p>	<p>This waiver removed the barrier to rapid implementation of the summer employment program and allowed the WIBs the flexibility to either expand existing competitively procured contracts by a percentage equal to the percentage increase in the total allotment from the state or conduct an expedited, limited competition to select service providers.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the prohibition on the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for older and out of school youth. In addition allow youth participants 16 to 17 years of age to use Individual Training Accounts. (WIA Section 123, WIA Section 134(d)(4), 20 CFR 661.305(a)(3), 20 CFR 664.510)</i></p>	<p>Louisiana Older Youth, Out-of-School Youth and youth 16 – 17 years of age benefited from the services provided by certified training providers by allowing the LWIBs to use the ETPL for Older Youth, Out-of-School Youth and youth participants 16 – 17 years of age, with streamlining services and increasing flexibility as results. By increasing the number of participants who received training in a faster and more efficient manner, LWIBs were more flexible in securing training providers, promoting better utilization of service providers in rural areas, and eliminated duplicative processes for service providers, thereby reducing administrative costs.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the current performance measures at WIA Section 136(b) in order to implement the common performance measures.</i></p>	<p>Louisiana used the common measures, which were more conducive to the development of a demand-driven integrated system.</p>
<p><i>Waive provisions at WIA Section 122(c) regarding the requirements for eligible training provider subsequent eligibility based on performance data and allow the state to use the initial eligibility determination at WIA Section 122(b) if needed.</i></p>	<p>LWC requested the waiver of the requirements for eligible training provider’s eligibility based on performance data and allowed the state to use the initial eligibility determination process at WIA Section 122(b), if needed. Following the impact of natural disaster upon Louisiana, many individuals enrolled in these institutions relocated to other areas. This would have affected the completion rate for many areas in calendar year 2008 and 2009. The ability to return to initial ETPL eligibility for at least one year provided areas with sufficient providers to ensure training was available in demand occupations in relevant sectors in their region. Enactment of this waiver was conditionally based on the calculation of training provider performance during the base period for the 2008 calendar year ETPL as well as approval by the state Workforce Investment Council.</p>



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