



**MARYLAND WORKFORCE
INFORMATION GRANT
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT
Program Year 2011**

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**WORKFORCE INFORMATION CORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES GRANT
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT
JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012**

OVERVIEW

The recession is over and, while the recovery has begun, economic rebuilding and the path to sustainability have been somewhat uneven. In the aftermath of the recession, a large pool of unemployed workers still remains. Many of these workers, not just unemployed but actually displaced by the economic downturn, have found their skills obsolete in the current market. Ill-equipped to compete in the market, these workers must reinvent themselves either through skills upgrading or occupational training in order to realize their full potential in the workplace.

As business resources representatives and economic development specialists work with employers to re-energize the economy through job creation, the workforce development community must work collaboratively with these and other partners in order to maximize available resources and ensure that investments in education and training are aligned with employer needs.

The need for Labor Market Information (LMI) to bridge the gap between workforce needs and training has never been greater. Jobseekers, career planners and displaced workers planning a career change need access to LMI information – occupational and industrial trends/demand, wages -- and tools to facilitate their decision-making. Employers need access to available resources to assist with their business planning and staffing needs.

The activities funded by and undertaken through the Workforce Information Grant (WIG) have and will continue to be used to improve LMI programs by expanding informational resources and to facilitate LMI delivery system through process and system enhancements.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

➤ Populate the Workforce Information Database (WID) with State and Local Data

The WID serves as a data storage system which can be used as a source to populate other workforce information systems. For that reason, maintaining data currency in the WID is paramount.

- OWIP continue to populate all designated WID core tables on an ongoing basis throughout the program year as required, updating data on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis. Historical data updates were also undertaken as needed.
- Data uploads from the WID were integrated into the Virtual One-Stop (VOS) Maryland's Internet-based labor market information delivery system. WID structured data files -- current employment statistics, unemployment statistics, quarterly census of employment and wages estimates, occupational wages and projections data for multiple geo areas -- were regularly uploaded into the VOS system.
- The WID structure runs in conjunction with our VLMI and VOS system. Our projection site of the VLMI and VOS runs off version 2.4 of the WID structure. Our contractor Geographic Solutions Inc. is in the process of migrating to the Workforce Information Database (WID) 2.5 Structure with the release of version 12.05 of the Virtual LMI and Virtual One-Stop system. The anticipated release date is March 2013.

➤ Compliance with planned milestones

Updating occurred based upon data availability.

➤ Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections

Projections data is a key component in workforce development activities, helping to guide the planning of new programs and the validation of existing programs. Career planners, jobseekers, counselors, educators and businesses need industry and occupation trends data to facilitate informed decision-making.

During the program year (PY), the following activities were undertaken.

- 2018 substate occupational projections by Workforce Investment Areas (WIA's) were made available on both the OWIP and VOS websites.

- Following the release of detailed projections data, occupational briefs, highlighting demand components and demand by education, were developed for each of Maryland's WIA's.
- 2020 Statewide industry and occupation projections were completed and submitted to North Carolina as required by the Projections Managing Partnership.
- Short-term (2010-2013) industry and occupation projections for the state were also completed and submitted as required.
- Publication of OES wage data survey results and subsequent updating of data (using ECI) between cycles was completed.

Projections are a widely used data series. While user needs are frequently accommodated through published materials, there are many instances where specialized data development is requested. Following are some examples of "special requests" utilizing projections data.

SPECIALIZED DATA DEVELOPMENT

- Developed WIA projections data extracts for Unemployment Division – stratifying occupations by growth and decline for TAA Program requirements.
- Prepared a series of industrial/ occupational bullets, highlighting future demand for presentation being given by DLLR's Assistant Secretary.
- Developed staffing patterns data for multiple health care industries and cross matched with projections data to stratify statewide demand occupations (with wages) by education/training. Data to be incorporated into speech being given by Lt. Governor.
- Similar request from State Senator addressed demand and wage data in healthcare occupations for each of the state's WIA's. Data used for meetings held across the state to promote a healthcare initiative.
- Developed occupational projections data for STEM occupations, both major occupational group and detailed occupations, with short analysis for Governor.
- Provided Governor's Office with major group projections data stratified by low, middle and high skill. Data also provided on detailed occupations under each skill level category.

➤ **Compliance with planned milestones**

Projections data preparation, model population, estimates development and review are an ongoing process throughout the year. All milestones were met; each projections data series was submitted within prescribed timeframes.

➤ **Conduct and publish relevant economic analyses, special workforce information, and/or economic studies to be of benefit to the governor and state and local WIB's**

Economic analyses provide the foundation for program planning, policy development and resource allocation. During the PY, OWIP analysts, in addition to preparing several formalized economic analyses, facilitated numerous ad hoc requests for technical assistance in interpreting market movements.

- Serve as a resource for ad hoc requests for narrative analyses and graphic presentations of demographic and labor stats for Governor and DLLR Secretary.
- Updating of statewide performance monitoring databases – State Stats and Economic Dashboard – with monthly and annual industry data for the nation and the state and labor force statistics for the nation, state, local jurisdictions and workforce areas within the state continued. The State Stats database was also updated on an ongoing basis with WIA workload estimates and performance data.
- On a semi-annual basis, an analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Business Employment Dynamics data for Maryland is prepared.
- An annual economic analysis, examining national, state and local market indicators – demographics, industry performance, wage data and unemployment – was prepared and provided to grant planners for incorporation into the Annual WIA Report.
- On a monthly basis, a number of statistical charts and narrative analysis to explain monthly market movements (unemployment/jobs) are prepared and shared with the DLLR's Communications Office, with the Department of Business Development (DBED) and with the Governor's Office – charts/analysis are used to write the DLLR's monthly press release and to respond to media questions.

➤ **Compliance with planned milestones**

All planned activities under this deliverable were completed as scheduled. Ad hoc requests were handled expeditiously.

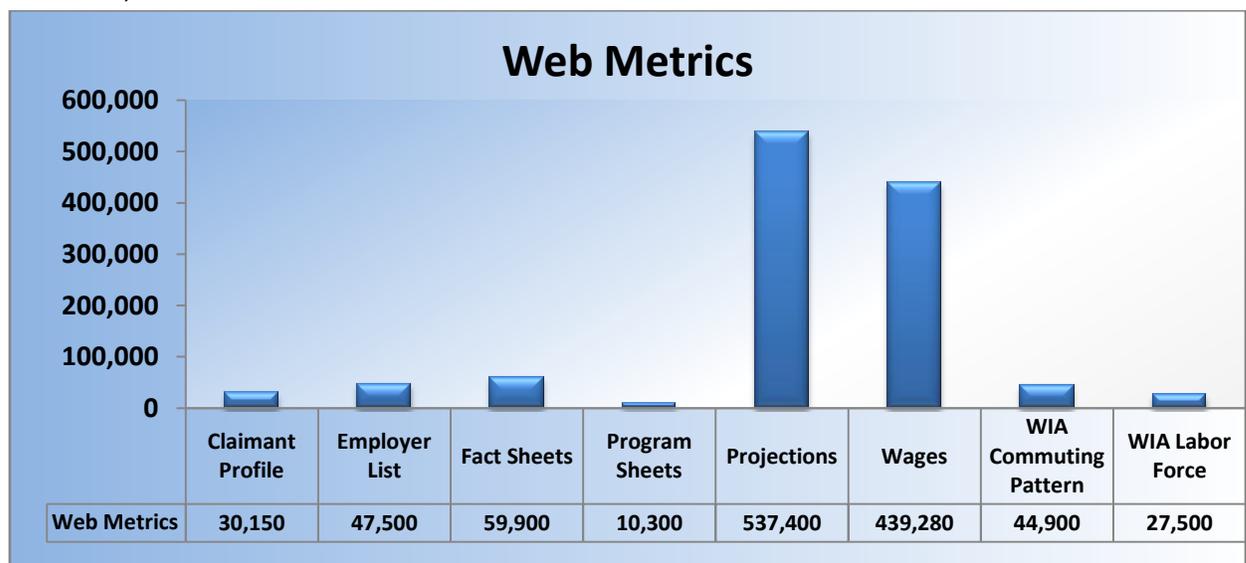
➤ **Post products, information and reports on the Internet**

OWIP plays a pivotal role in ensuring that users have access to timely, accurate and relevant information about local and regional labor market demographics and dynamics. The release of print-based publications has declined significantly as Internet use has risen -- a user option which has made OWIP's web site the primary vehicle through which both regularly produced data under the BLS programs and value-added information products are made available to users.

In addition to the OWIP website, the newly designed landing page on the VOS site www.mwejobs.maryland.gov has increased the visibility of LMI and provided a point of access to an even wider audience. The VOS site combines the traditional data available on OWIP's site with "real time" LMI as well as career assessment tools and career exploration and job search resources. See below VOS web metrics:

	11-Nov	11-Dec	12-Jan	12-Feb	12-Mar	12-Apr	12-May	12-Jun
Visits	493433	489807	577121	541317	590245	555639	547937	539480
Page Views	15061606	13850937	16369969	16140106	17380964	16067208	16735876	16723715
Hits	69511849	63067736	73962315	72332669	76214646	68823393	71610132	71589325

Moreover, the DLLR/OWIP-LMI 2011 web metrics achieved 2.8 million hits on the following sets of data: Claimant Profile 30,150; Employer Lists 47,500; Factsheets 59,900; Program Sheets 10,300; Occupation and Industry Projections 537,400; Employment and Wages 439,280; WIA Commuting Pattern 44,900; and WIA Labor Force 27,500.



Updating of website selections, on both the OWIP and the VOS sites, continued on an ongoing basis during PY 11. A few new selections were added to OWIP's website during the PY including:

- *Mass Layoff Statistics Report – provides a demographic profile of workers impacted by layoff events involving 50 or more workers – produced at the state level on a quarterly and annual basis.*
- *Labor Force Demographics and Job Overview-- a market overview combining detailed monthly labor force demographics with monthly “real-time” data on job openings by industry, occupation and employer. Overviews prepared by workforce area.*

➤ **Compliance with planned milestones**

Website updating was a continuous process throughout the PY. OWIP also engaged in uploading of LMI data/publications into the VOS.

➤ **Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards and other key workforce and economic development partners and stakeholders**

Facilitating the LMI needs of workforce system partners is at the core of OWIP's efforts. While generic LMI products may well satisfy the “need to know” function relative to labor market conditions and indicators needed for planning, a blanket strategy in product development may fail to address individual needs. Since each partner has their own distinct way of approaching/achieving their workforce development goals, data customization has become a popular marketing strategy in developing and maintaining working relationships with system partners.

Throughout the PY, OWIP was routinely called upon to facilitate partner needs. Requests frequently required specialized data development. Following are some examples of data development required/technical assistance provided to workforce development partners.

Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB)

- Provided updated employment estimates in healthcare industry (4 digit level), industry wages, occupational projections data and occupational wages for update of Healthcare Report being prepared for committee/GWIB Board.
- Assisted GWIB Executive Director by providing data on industry employment, business size class, labor force/unemployment and top Maryland employers for power point presentation being given to Maryland Chamber of Commerce.

- Worked with GWIB analyst to identify industries involved in clean energy and provided historical employment data for identified industries. Identified occupations in the sector and provided projections data for those occupations.
- Assisted GWIB Executive Director in updating of an annual report. Provided select LMI data and further facilitated by identifying appropriate resources to be used in additional report updating being performed by a consultant.
- Assisted GWIB analyst with LMI needs for a proposal on skills gaps – provided varied data elements for proposal and provided direction for further investigation on market issues resulting from skills gaps.

Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB)

- Provided local WIA Director with youth demographics (age, education, labor force status, industry/occupation concentrations, and poverty status) for use in program planning.
- Assisted local WIA Director with data/information needs for a presentation on economic impact of BRAC movement – provided estimates supporting growth in federal employment, information on BRAC-related construction activity as well as information on BRAC-attached businesses relocating to the area.
- Developed historical industry employment estimates (3 digit level) for local WIA Director. Data to be shared with Board and used for strategic planning.
- Provided WIA staff person with employment stats/industry growth and current industry demand (from VOS) for a grant application being prepared.
- Provided information on “real-time” job openings, candidates and supply/demand ratios for a piece being prepared for LWIB.
- Facilitated data request from WIA Director on job growth in the WIA – provided information on industrial job growth at the 2-3-4 digit level – data requested by LWIB.
- Developed estimates on industry employment decline and insured/ regular unemployment by workforce area. Also developed PY labor force estimates by county and workforce area for use in funding allocation.
- Assisted WIA Director with determining eligibility to apply for a training grant – developed unemployment estimates for the state, nation and workforce area provided income data and developed select target group estimates.

- OWIP's Director regularly provided LMI/MWE/VOS updates at quarterly WIA Director's meetings
- Refresher training provided to WIA staff on performance reporting and on MWE/VOS system operation.
- Developed historical data on UI claimants by workforce area, specifically claimants with 19+ weeks of unemployment and number of claimants exhausting benefits. This request evolved into an ongoing monthly activity.
- Developed comprehensive lists of all employers, by WIA, for use in targeting employment demand for summer youth program.
- Facilitated media requests handled by local WIA Directors, providing on-demand economic – demographics data and, also, providing technical assistance in data interpretation and analysis.
- Developed employment trends data for IT, Retail and Hospitality Sectors to support grant application.

Department of Business Development (DBED)

- Provided State DBED with entry, experienced and median wages for list of 20 occupations by workforce area for publication in their annual Brief Economic Facts.
- Continued to serve as a member on Maryland State Researchers Roundtable – a forum comprised of researchers from multiple state agencies. At bi-annual meeting, delivered an LMI presentation, providing an overview of BLS. state/federal cooperative programs as well as an overview of data development capabilities.
- Developed employment estimates and wages for Biotech industries (3 digit level) for Baltimore Metro Area and Baltimore City for marketing piece being prepared by Baltimore Development Corporation.
- Developed industry size class data (5 specified size classes) for Maryland and each local jurisdiction for use in marketing.
- Developed unemployment estimates for bond ratings.
- Provided local DBED with private sector employers by size class, establishments by size class, average weekly wages by industry and employment and establishments by industry sector for a power point presentation.
- Developed size class data (business units/employment) for select industries for Office of Tourism.

- Facilitated interactions with prospective employers by providing industry, wage and worker availability data.
- Provided economic and demographic statistics, accompanied by analysis, for use in Rural Loan Program submissions.
- Participated in conference call with Lower Shore DBED Director and staff, providing an overview of BLS program data, uses of data and OWIP technical assistance capabilities.

Education

Developed templates for approximately 20 occupational training programs containing “real-time” data from the VOS on current and historical job availability – templates to be maintained on a monthly basis by staffer in Correctional Education and shared with educators in correctional facilities.

- Reviewed, commented and provided supplemental data for the Labor Market Analysis portion of local community college strategic plan.
- Acted as an intermediary in information gathering/validation for Correctional Education’s Prison Industry Enhancement Program – interacted with employers utilizing staffing to verify wages and assess any issues regarding possible impact on noninstitutional workforce.
- Updated/expanded webinar presented to career counselors working with transitioning military. Webinar broadcast via satellite to participants stationed across the U.S. and out of the country.
- Fulfilling a contractual obligation, the University of Baltimore (UB) assisted in the certification process of and provided updated training provider information (for WIA programs) to Maryland Higher Education Commission.
- Assisted program planner from local school system with data needs for annual planning document

Additionally, OWIP analysts were routinely called upon to fulfill data needs and provide technical assistance in internal agency projects and requests – assisting in grant planning, facilitating training efforts and responding to media requests to name a few.

➤ Compliance with planned milestones

Activities under this deliverable generally result from user requests.

OWIP's PY2011 expenditures charged against WIG totaled \$465,040, leaving a carryover of \$258,593 into PY 2012. Highlights of expenditures listed below:

Personnel Expenditures	\$300,009.10
Communications	\$ 5,534
Travel	\$ 2,013.04
Contractual Services	\$41,780.18
Supplies Total	\$ 3,867.50
Contractual Services	\$41,780.18
Indirect cost	\$39,751.14

OWIP has obligated \$18,000 in PY2012 Qtr 1, the purchase of Data Zoa/Data Zephyr – a new open source integration framework and software /database tool. Additionally, UB/JFI will receive a grant for \$45,000 for the purpose of research studies and presentations defined in partnership with DLLR and local workforce area leadership teams.

➤ Partnerships and Collaborations

Through active participation/collaboration with the GWIB, DLLR's Offices of Operations and Adult Learning and DBED, and through attendance at WIA Directors' meetings, OWIP has been afforded the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of the individual needs of a large segment of the workforce development community.

OWIP has maintained close working relationships with these system stakeholders and, in future, will seek opportunities to network with other stakeholders. These relationships have fostered an open door policy, one that encourages information interchange, promotes OWIP's data resources and capabilities and drives the direction of data development activities, tools and techniques.

Cooperation and communication among system partners is critical to continuous improvement efforts. Following are some examples of data sharing partnerships that have been newly established or maintained – relationships that expand the reach of LMI.

- During the PY, OWIP became a partner in the Maryland iMap program; iMap is a statewide base map which can be used by state, regional, county and municipal agencies to enhance data portrayal. On a monthly basis, OWIP submits an unemployment rate layer file which can be imported into the statewide base map.
- OWIP is an active partner in the U.S. Census Bureau's Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. LED data is useful in filling some of the gaps (new hires, turnover and other key statistics) in traditional LMI. An OWIP analysis is frequently tapped to

critique system enhancements and review LED reports. OWIP was formally recognized at this year's LED Conference for its marketing/ technical assistance and publication of LED data.

- OWIP continued to maintain a contractual relationship with UB. Under the contractual obligation, UB prepared the *Maps of Maryland Employment Dynamics – before, during and after the recession* – a graphic portrayal of pre-recession, recessionary and post-recession employment movements.

Additionally, an LMI forum, co-hosted by OWIP and UB, was held during the PY; approximately 50-60 members of the workforce development community were in attendance. A power point presentation focusing on the use of business employment dynamics in the analysis of market movements/job creation was presented. A second presentation on the use of educational research statistics in workforce development was also provided.

- Also, under the contractual relationship with UB, a study assessing the economic and fiscal contribution of DLLR's Workforce Development programs was commissioned.
- OWIP continued to fulfill data sharing obligations with about a dozen state and local agencies and educational institutions, providing quarterly extracts of employment and wage data for use as a source for research study, strategic planning and forecasting.

➤ **Consultation and Customer Satisfaction**

Focusing on user requirements, determining the need for both generic and value-added information, is essential to developing a system of meaningful information delivery. LMAI, in recognizing its need to maintain accountability, will actively pursue the interests of system stakeholders, employing both formal and informal approaches.

Several formal methods have been employed to solicit customer feedback and suggestions on LMI products and services.

- "E-mail alerts" advising stakeholders of new LMI publication is a marketing technique used to "keep the line of communication open" with users. In the alerts, OWIP encourages users to follow-up with questions, comments or requests for additional LMI assistance.
- Training has also provided a forum for assessing user needs and for soliciting input on products and services. During the PY, OWIP staff mounted an intensive outreach

program designed to promote LMI capabilities and services. Multiple training events were held, including the following:

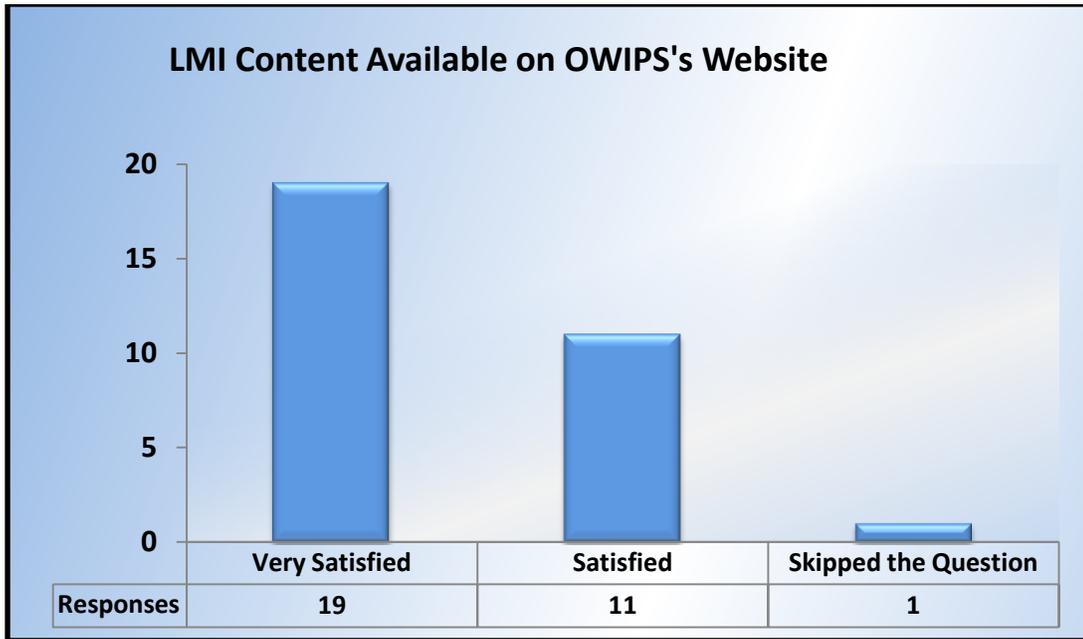
- OWIP participated in an agency “open house” designed to give internal staff an overview of LMI data programs, program data output and data uses. For this event, a power point presentation was developed and a handout of presentation was provided to attendees.
- Webinar focusing on utilization of LMI in workforce development activities was developed and presentation was offered on 5 occasions – attendees were staff from local One-Stop Centers, WIA program planners and counselors, DBED specialists, Business Resources representatives and others. Approximately 30-45 attendees participated in each webinar session. The topic of the webinar: “Introduction to LMI: Understanding and Using Labor Statistics” helped participants become familiarized with basic labor statistics using Maryland’s LMI webpage: www.dlir.maryland.gov/lmi. Through the webinar, participants learned the definition of LMI terminologies, how to interpret LMI data, where to find Maryland LMI data, gained an understanding of some labor market trends in the state, and knowledge about the standard information produced by the state labor market information (LMI) office.
- Scheduled “Hands-on” training on navigating the LMI delivery system (VOS) and data applications/uses was provided to varied user groups (public library staff, MWE help desk staff, and agency staff -- adult learning, One-Stop, TAA, grant program staff) on 5 different occasions. Each session was attended by 10-12 participants. The training topic: “Introducing Virtual Labor Market Information: Basic and Applied Training” provided insight and “hands-on” skills into key “real time” and “historical” LMI data for library and workforce professionals use in conjunction with an overview of key economic and demographic data resources. Participants were assigned desktop computers and asked to learn how to research “real time” and “historical” LMI data, using the Maryland Virtual One-Stop’s data analysis module (VOS). The training offered each participant practical tips and knowledge on their region’s labor force and commuter sheds with the view of knowing how to identify good paying jobs and the skills they require.
- Scheduled “Hands-on” training was also requested and provided to WIA staff on 3 separate occasions, with approximately 35-40 participants attending each session. The training topic: “Introducing Virtual LMI” Workshop explored “traditional” LMI combined with “real time” LMI in the Maryland Virtual One-Stop’s database Analysis Module, and reviewed the LMI Module Navigation Tools and system features – how they work and how they can facilitate easy and quick LMI data access for workforce professionals, job developers and folks in program planning and evaluation.

- At the end of each of the webinars and training sessions presented in PY 11, an evaluation questionnaire (focusing on 1. Training Content, 2. Training Design, 3. Instructor/facilitator's Presentation and 4. Training Results /Objectives) was issued to participants. Overall, about 95% approved of the Workshop/training contents; 85% approved of the Workshop/training design; 90% approved of the workshop's instructor /facilitator; and 95% approved of the workshop/training results – that they accomplished the objective of the workshop/training and that they will be able to use what they have learned from the training.
- In conjunction with the training, developed template that could be used by DLLR and WIA job developers as a marketing tool when meeting with employers. Also provided a variation of template for use in jobseeker/TAA Rapid Response workshops.

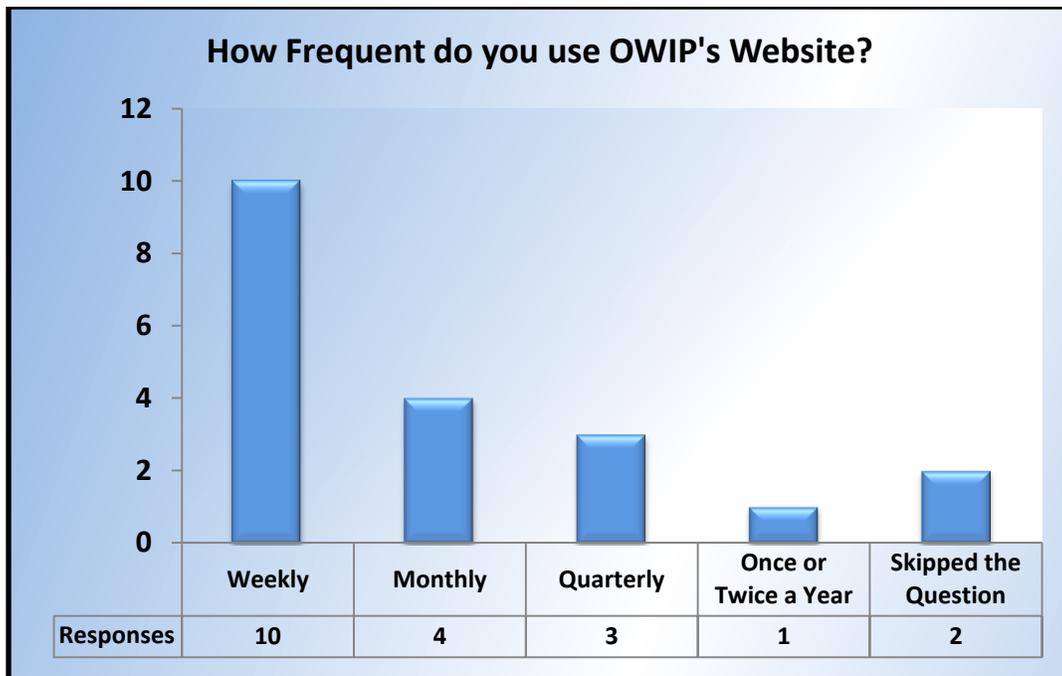
Note: Several new relationships have been forged through training activities.

- An on-line customer satisfaction survey was developed. The focus of the survey was to assess customer use of LMI data, products, services and the LMI delivery system (VOS) and to solicit input for continuous improvement. A total of 7 questions/categories were sent out via Group e-mail to approximately 50 users. The survey resulted in a 40% response rate (20 respondents) as listed below :

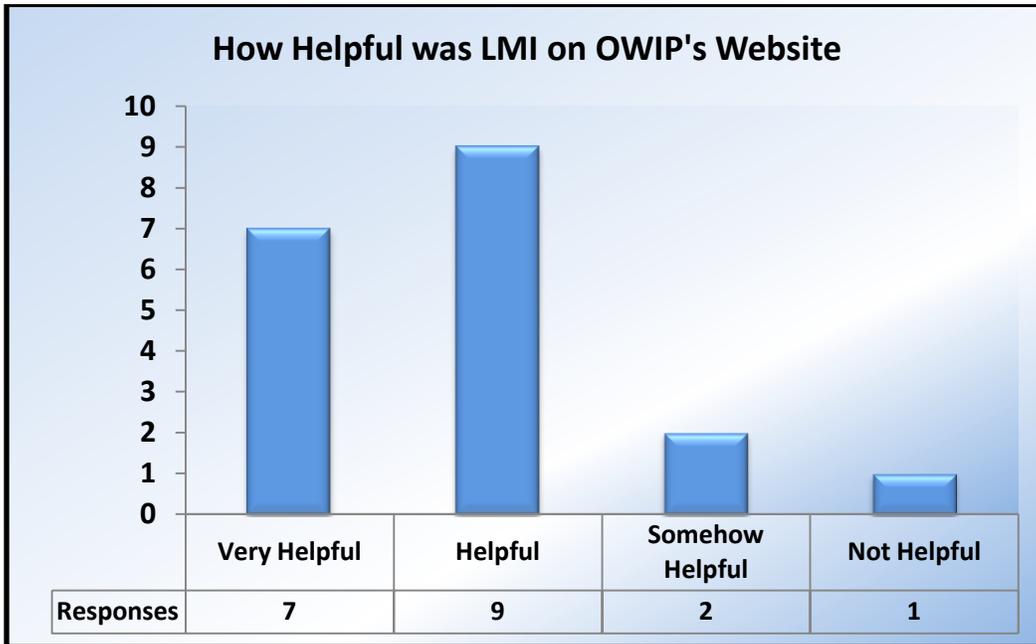
- Overall, how satisfied are you with the labor market information content available on Maryland's Office of Workforce Information and Performance (OWIP) website?



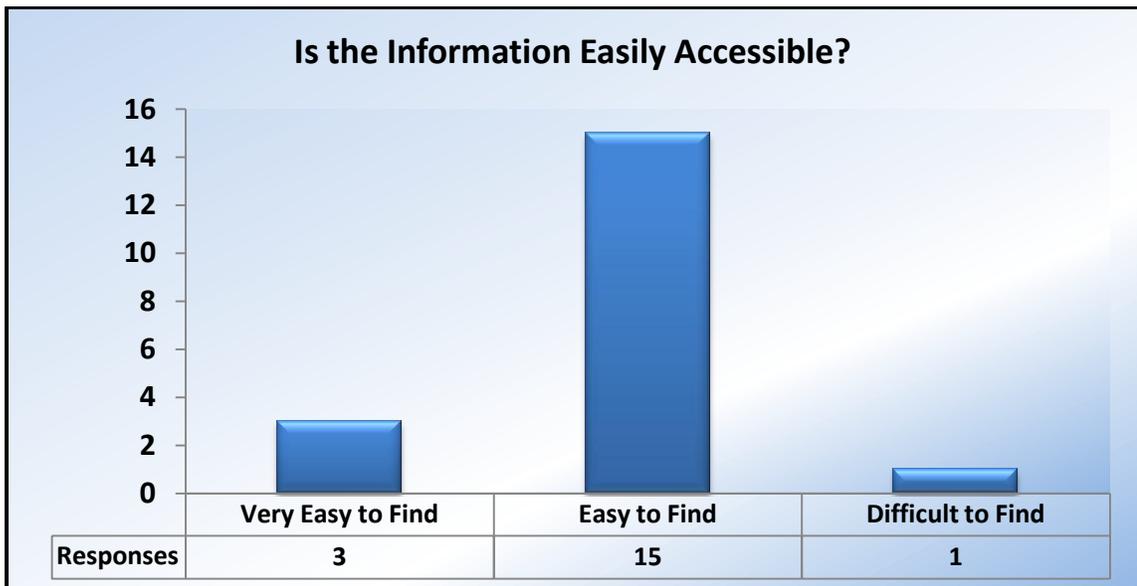
- How frequently do you use OWIP's website?



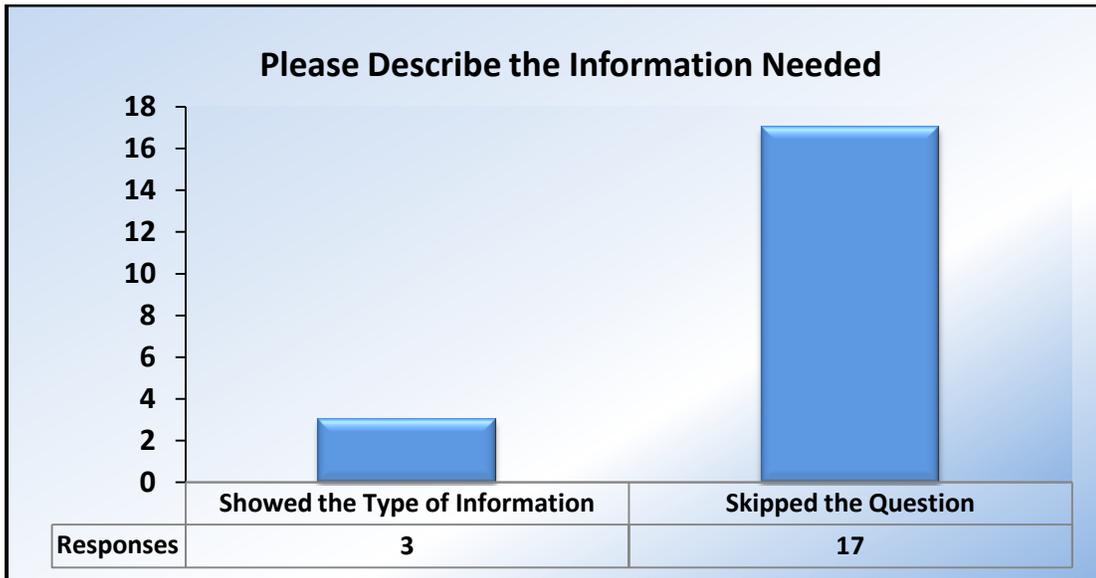
3. How helpful was the labor market information on OWIP's website in assisting you in your decision-making process?



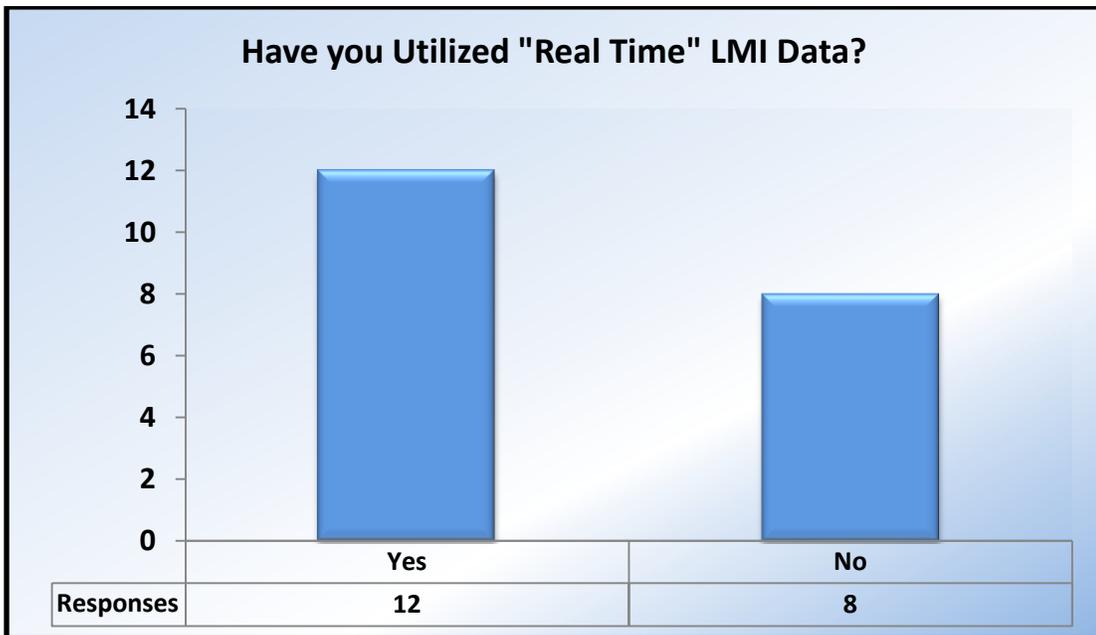
4. When visiting OWIP's website for specific information, is the information easily accessible?



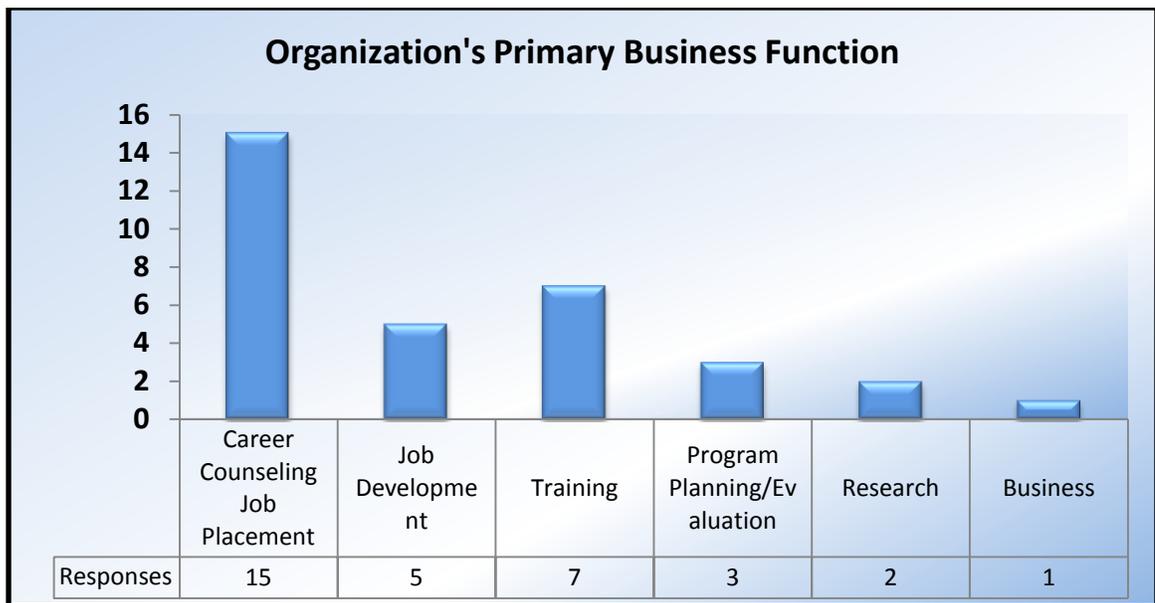
5. If you were looking, but unable to find specific information, please describe the information needed:



6. Have you utilized the “real time” LMI data tools on the Maryland Workforce Exchange Virtual One-Stop website?



7. Please select your organization's primary business function.



➤ **Recommendations for Improvements or Changes**

The core products and services for the Workforce Information Grant have evolved over the years and are currently representative of the types of information and services needed by workforce development partners. Core product guidelines provide the flexibility needed to customize products and services to meet the varied workforce information needs. In Maryland, we have not only increased our suite of products but, also, focused on enhancing product quality and customer service.

Under the deliverables, the one activity which may not be effective is the production of short-term projections. In general, short-term projections have proven to be a relatively low demand product. For program planning, it appears as if our workforce development partners rely more on long-term outlook material.

Additionally, since the short-terms are model generated, the “quality” of short-terms is definitely compromised during economic fluxes. Future production needs to be evaluated.