



Workforce Investment Act Program Year 2008

Annual Report



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Bobby Jindal, Governor
Curt Eysink, Executive Director

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It is my pleasure to present the 2008 Workforce Investment Act Annual Report for Louisiana, which covers our efforts and activities from July 1, 2008, to June 20, 2009.

As part of Governor Bobby Jindal's reform agenda, workforce development in our state has never been more important. In July 2008, the former Louisiana Department of Labor became the Louisiana Workforce Commission, and with its new name came its new vision: to be an indispensable provider of workforce solutions. This task was made even more challenging as our state faced unexpected workforce interruptions and recovery demands after Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, which caused significant damage to Louisiana in September 2008. Since then, our state has begun to feel the effects of the national economic downturn.

Despite natural disasters and economic uncertainty, we remain firm in our resolve to lead the development of the system we need to deliver the workforce current and future employers require. We are focusing on working smart — leveraging relationships and sharing resources to do more through greater efficiencies and collaborative efforts. Throughout the annual report are examples of these integrated efforts, especially among state agencies and other programs that serve the same customers.

With our direction clear and course well defined, the Louisiana Workforce Commission is poised for another year of action, taking the steps necessary to build the workforce Louisiana needs to grow and prosper. We will settle for nothing less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Eysink".

Curt Eysink
Executive Director

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I: State News

Workforce Development Reform

Soon after taking office, Governor Bobby Jindal created a mandate to create an environment within the state in which businesses can grow and people can prosper. To carry out this mandate, Gov. Jindal generated a legislative plan for comprehensive workforce development reform, which he signed into law as Act 743 in July 2008. This reform requires Louisiana to build a demand-driven system that supplies the workforce businesses need, when and where they need it. Implementation of this reform is vitally important to the state for two reasons:

1. Finding qualified employees was identified as one of the top obstacles to business growth for existing Louisiana companies.
2. Workforce issues have been among the top two concerns for roughly 70 percent of Louisiana's business development prospects.

There has been universal agreement among organized labor, business and industry and all other participants in the expansion and implementation of the workforce development reform initiatives that improving opportunities for our people rests on our ability to support the growth of our economy, and our ability to engineer training that qualifies our people for those opportunities when they arise.

Initiatives within Louisiana's comprehensive workforce development reform will be both short term and long term and will be focused in the following areas:

- Targeting and expanding community and technical college programs to prepare workers for demand occupations. Opportunities for workers will increase as training is further aligned with demand occupations and as training capacity is expanded.
- Enhancing rapid response capacity to support business expansions and relocations. This supplies quick-turn training that makes Louisiana a more attractive state for business expansions and relocations by equipping Louisiana workers to meet the needs of those businesses.
- Realigning and integrating workforce programs at state and regional levels based on business input. These initiatives will result in Louisiana providing better solutions faster for current and potential job seekers.
- Cultivating alternative career pathways. More opportunities exist in technical careers than the number of Louisianians who have sought those opportunities. This initiative seeks to encourage greater participation in these careers by raising awareness of the opportunities and training available.
- Increasing workforce participation. By some estimates, up to 750,000 Louisianians are not fully engaged in the workforce, greatly limiting their opportunities and standard of living and making them more likely to require government support in some fashion. By recruiting from among these Louisianians and by working to keep more people from falling into this group, we hope to provide a larger labor pool for businesses and increase the number of Louisianians who are financially independent.
- Reforming public education to better prepare students for the next level—jobs, job training or postsecondary education. A component of this initiative is to expose students to career and job training opportunities while they are enrolled in high school to increase their awareness of the relevance of their education and to offer them greater incentives to graduate.
- Improve alignment of postsecondary educational institutions through reforms in their funding formulas.

State Highlights

On the heels of the passage of **Act 743 of the 2008 Louisiana Legislative Session**, a delegation consisting of top-level cabinet members from Louisiana Economic Development, the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Education and the Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections joined Gov. Jindal at **two major workforce summits** hosted by the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). Information gained through public input proved beneficial to helping identify regional needs of the various business entities represented. These summits were held in October and November of 2008. The first summit, held in Lafayette, focused on the importance of developing soft skills and the promotion of entrepreneurship through career fairs in high school. Additional focus was on the promotion of life-skills teaching for preschool age children and “school at work” sessions.

The second summit, held in Monroe, also focused on the importance of the development of soft skills through classroom and “at work” opportunities, with an emphasis on coaching students in interviewing and “self-selling” techniques when presented with employment opportunities.

The summits were well attended, with more than 800 citizens from all walks of life participating. At the summits, Gov. Jindal shared his workforce vision and his expectations for the development and delivery of a system that incorporates contributions from all stakeholders to meet the workforce needs of current and future Louisiana employers. Each cabinet secretary present outlined the role their respective agency would play in support of the Governor’s vision.

Breakout sessions at the summit facilitated discussion on the importance of training and emphasis on the development of soft skills, the steps necessary to help grow the workforce in Louisiana, the identification of the regional workforce needs and the importance of accurate and real-time occupational forecasting.

Follow-up surveys were conducted on attendees, with the consensus opinion reflecting the overwhelming success of the summits. Post-summit activities included ongoing communication with the local and regional stakeholders to include the formation of work groups on a regional basis that interface directly at the local Workforce Investment Board level. As a result, several summit participants were subsequently appointed to local Workforce Investment Boards and to the newly created Workforce Investment Council.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission remains committed to its vision of being the indispensable provider of workforce solutions by leading the development of the system that delivers the workforce that Louisiana’s current and future employers need. Finding qualified candidates remains a significant obstacle to business growth in Louisiana, with more than 70 percent of all business development prospects identifying workforce worries as a top concern. Consistent with the pursuit of its vision, LWC has undertaken both short-term and long-term strategies that include targeting and expanding the community and technical college system and improving the alignment of postsecondary educational institutions with student exposure to job opportunities while still in high school. LWC’s goal is to prepare these students and all workers to compete in positions in demand occupations while cultivating alternative career pathways, enhancing rapid response capacity to assist business in expansion and relocation activities and increasing workforce participation of the under-engaged and unemployed population. In order to attract, retain and grow business, Louisiana is committed to enhancing the state’s economic competitiveness by cultivating its top regional economic development assets, boosting economic vitality and competitiveness at the community level and developing national-caliber business recruitment capabilities.

Central to Gov. Jindal’s plan for maximizing the impact of state and federal resources on workforce delivery was the realignment of the Workforce Investment Council (WIC). Legislatively, Act 743 emphasized the oversight authority of the WIC for service integration and made the LWC, by statute, the leader of statewide workforce development efforts with the legal authority to carry

out integration activities across all state agencies. The enactment of Act 743 ensures that the impact of these activities will be aimed at meeting the needs of our customers – employers and other taxpayers.

Initial integration efforts have centered on an **interagency collaboration** between LWC and the Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS). The focus of this collaborative effort has been the design and pilot testing of a practical operations model to effectively utilize available LWC and DSS resources to identify job-ready customers and efficiently place them into jobs that offer a reasonable opportunity/career path. Key collaborators include the business community and employers in the greater Lafayette metropolitan area, providing information and insight to help define market demand for particular job skills and abilities. Initially, this pilot project, which began in September 2009, will be limited to the populations served through DSS and/or LWC offices in Lafayette Parish with a statewide rollout anticipated in early 2010.

In addition to its efforts in the area of interagency collaboration, LWC is actively participating in the creation and expansion of a **Neighborhood Place initiative**, a collaborative effort by LWC, DSS, the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), local stakeholders and several other statewide agencies to co-locate a broad array of programs that share the same client base in a readily accessible location. The initial pilot began in the summer of 2009 in Sabine Parish in western Louisiana. Additional expansion of the program is targeted for the Greater New Orleans area in late 2009.

Further statewide initiatives include **soft-skills training** for approximately 1,600 inmates in pre-release centers across the state. This initiative also includes the acquisition of two mobile units outfitted for training on the skills necessary to compete for employment in building trade occupations.

In response to the recognized challenge of excessively high dropout rates among high school students, LWC, along with participation from the Local Workforce Investment Areas, is supporting **EMPLoY**, a program aimed at preparing struggling students for further education and employment opportunities. In recognition of the overlapping issues created by a high number of dropouts, leaders from various agencies, including DOE, the Governor's office, LCTCS, DPS&C and the Office of Juvenile Justice, along with LWC and DSS, collaborated to develop a model built on shared resources and coordinated efforts in order to maximize successful outcomes.

Louisiana Workforce Investment Council

Gov. Jindal's comprehensive workforce development reform, signed into law in July 2008, created the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council. This 41-member council, created within the Louisiana Workforce Commission as the state workforce investment board, has as its purpose:

- Meet the requirements of the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) so that the state may receive funds relevant to workforce activities authorized by the law.
- Advise the governor on the needs of the state's employers and the state's workforce, along with strategies for its continued improvement.
- Create a common vision, a strategic state plan and outcomes that will coordinate and integrate a workforce development delivery system to assure the greatest cooperation between public and private entities.
- Direct the Occupational Forecasting Conference in determining the official information that is necessary for planning and budgeting with respect to workforce development.

The Louisiana Workforce Investment Council has representation of all required entities on the State Board outlined in WIA legislation. Representation on the council consists of:

- The Governor
- Lead State Agency Officials representing:
 - The executive director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission
 - The secretary of the Department of Social Services
 - The secretary of the Department of Economic Development
 - The state superintendent of education
 - The president of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System
 - The commissioner of higher education
 - The secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections
 - The executive director of the Office of Elderly Affairs
- Twenty-one members representing business and industry:
 - One member representing the retail and wholesale sector
 - One member representing the energy sector
 - One member representing the medical services and biotechnology sector
 - One member representing the entertainment and tourism sector
 - One member representing the information technology sector
 - One member representing the durable goods and manufacturing sector
 - One member representing the construction sector
 - One member representing the agriculture and forestry sector
 - One member representing the financial and insurance sector
 - One member representing the logistics and transportation sector
 - Eleven members representing the general business community
- Two members representing parish and city government who are chief executive officers of a parish or city
- Four members representing organized labor
 - One of the four shall be a certified training director for an apprenticeship program.
- Two members of the Louisiana Senate appointed by the president of the Senate
- Two members of the Louisiana House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House

In appointing the members of the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council, the Governor considered nominations from state business and trade associations, statewide associations representing chief local officials, the AFL-CIO, and statewide community-based organizations, among other entities. WIC membership is representative of the state's population. This includes both urban and rural representation; local government; small, medium, and large business; women- and minority-owned businesses; and community-based youth programs. This diverse membership allows for the broadest possible input regarding policy development for Louisiana's workforce development system.

The Louisiana Workforce Investment Council meets monthly to discuss broad policy issues. The Council serves as the entity to define and forecast workforce priority needs so that appropriate training opportunities can be developed to meet demand and all programs over which the state has control or influence can be aligned.

WIC serves to develop a strategic plan to coordinate and integrate a workforce development delivery system to assure efficiency and cooperation between public and private entities by advising the Governor on the needs of Louisiana's employers and its workforce. Its goals:

1. Promote the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce through a comprehensive system.
2. Advocate for an integrated workforce development system.
3. Develop strategies to address upgrading workforce skills.
4. Ensure that resources are equitably distributed statewide.

The Workforce Investment Council steers the state's workforce development programs toward these goals through oversight of the occupational information system and the comprehensive state plan that establishes strategic goals, objectives and measures that provide direction for the provision of services and coordination of resources by the state's workforce development delivery system. WIC has taken an active role in providing leadership for the establishment of the state's workforce development system and implementation of the Workforce Investment Act. The council views its role as a policy-making body that establishes "guiding principles" for the state's workforce investment system.

Integration

During the 2008 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, Gov. Jindal successfully led the effort to adopt comprehensive reform legislation by promoting the passage of Act, which addressed the state's ailing workforce development system. The previous Department of Labor has become the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). Act 743 charges LWC with integrating, to the extent practical, the administration and functions of the various workforce development programs of the state to achieve efficient, effective and demand-driven delivery of services.

Through the process of inter-agency collaboration and project integration, services provided to the most vulnerable of Louisiana's citizens will be improved and streamlined, resulting in improved efficiency and effectiveness. LWC's integration goals include:

- Establish integration of workforce training programs throughout different agencies to align resources, avoid duplication of administrative processes and improve performance.
- Emphasize the integration of programs that focus attention on prioritizing services, based on client needs, to better align workforce development services.
- Create a regional, skills-based workforce system that will move each Business and Career Solutions Center customer through a series of training and services to increase their employability and success in their jobs.
- Realign existing programs in order to enhance career path outcomes for Louisiana citizens.

Current activities include the formulation of collaborative arrangements between LWC and other partner agencies to enhance the integration of current services, strengthen inter-agency relationships, further streamline government and provide government services in a more seamless fashion. LWC has started collaborative efforts with the Department of Social Services (DSS). This collaborative arrangement includes **The Taskforce to End Homelessness in Louisiana, Neighborhood Place, STEP** and **LaJET** programs, among others.

LWC/DSS-Lafayette Pilot

LWC and DSS are working together on a pilot integration program designed to more effectively use available resources of each agency to identify job-ready customers and efficiently place them into demand jobs with opportunity for career growth. *Connections to Work* has been implemented in the Lafayette metropolitan area. **This pilot will streamline and improve employment and job training services such as food stamps, welfare-to-work job training, vocational rehabilitation job training and foster care transition into the workforce.** In the initial phase of the pilot, job-ready clients receiving services from DSS who need minimal support to enter the workforce will be connected with staff members at LWC's Business and Career Solutions Center. Job-ready clients are those who are determined as able to enter the workforce within 90 days. LWC staff will determine the best course of action for these clients, with the ultimate goal being job placement, job retention, career advancement and financial stability. A second phase of the pilot will expand the program throughout the Acadiana region. Future expansions of the program will include two additional target groups: those needing mid-term supports to become job ready, and those who require long-term, intensive supports to achieve physical and mental stability prior to preparing for job-ready services.

The following specific customer/program populations within LWC and DSS are participating in the pilot project:

- DSS – LRS-Vocational Rehab Job Ready
- OFS – STEP, LaJET
- OCS – Foster Youth
- LWC – UCB (unemployment)
- One-Stop Job Ready in Lafayette
- Youth Training and Employment

Current accomplishments of the integration include the development of the pilot and its implementation. Initial pilot progress reports will be forthcoming in January 2010. These initial reports will provide findings and lessons learned necessary to create recommendations on the feasibility of expanding integration statewide. A final report containing these recommendations will be drafted and presented to LWC and DSS leaders.

Neighborhood Place

Neighborhood Place is a joint effort among several state agencies, including LWC, focused on providing in one location blended and accessible health, education, employment and human services that support children and families in their progress toward self-sufficiency. The principles of the collaboration include:

- Improve access to services near where people live
- Provide multiple services in one location
- Build relationships to solve problems and strengthen responses

Regional Sector Strategy

Regional Sector Strategies are policies that promote regional partnerships of employers, educators, workforce developers and other stakeholders that address the skills needs of critical industries in a region. Each strategy focuses on one critical industry, is led by a strategic partner who coordinates dialog and action, and results in customized solutions to the workforce needs of employers in the industry. These Regional Sector Strategies are a proven mechanism for meeting the needs of workers seeking good jobs and the needs of employers seeking skilled workers. Regional Sector Strategies significantly enhance effectiveness and efficiencies in leveraging existing resources while targeting identified priorities.

LWC has begun identifying the most significant regional economies and mapping the existing resources available to support them. Next step will be funding strategies to direct investments while also establishing the mechanism to sustain efforts. Also in development are regional metrics that will enable data-driven decisions to continue to refine strategies and align resources to best meet the demand and supply needs of the state's most significant regional economies. Sector Strategies have commonly generated decreased skill and labor gaps, aided in the retention, expansion and attraction of higher wage employers, helped reduce poverty and unemployment, increased regional cooperation and collaboration, and provided more efficient and effective use of public resources.

II: Statewide Activities

Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program

STEP is a requirement of work-eligible FITAP recipients to assist them in preparing for and obtaining employment. The TANF regulations and state policy list 12 work activities that count in various degrees toward the participation rates. For the 2009 State Fiscal Year, LWC exceeded six of the seven STEP performance measures:

Table 1: 2009 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%	103%
50% of participants completing Job Ready will complete an exit assessment	50%	57%
35% of STEP participants referred/accepted by One Stop Center placed in employment	35%	35%
Number of Emerging Readers completing the first week	180	210
Number of STEP participants enrolled in Job Ready with TABE results above 6.0 grade level	2160	2654
Total number of Emerging Readers enrolled in Job Ready component	240	213
Number of Job Ready participants served	2400	2867

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 SNAP benefits. Currently, LWC runs the LaJET program in four parishes: Bossier, St. Tammany, Lafayette and Jefferson.

For State Fiscal Year 2009, 2,276 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.)

LAVOS/Webinars

The Louisiana Virtual One-Stop (LAVOS), which serves as the case management system for Wagner-Peyser, Workforce Investment Act funding streams, National Emergency Grants, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding and the state's labor exchange system, experienced two major upgrades in PY 2008.

Of the utmost priority was the implementation of ARRA. The deployment of ARRA and ability to capture "green job" data were implemented expeditiously. These upgrades effectively allowed for timely federal ARRA reporting as well as the ability to collect information regarding employment outcomes of participants placed in "green jobs."

Upgrading to Version 10.0 of LAVOS was done in late May 2009 and included numerous enhancements for job seekers, employers and staff users. A consistent, tabbed interface was incorporated for many of the navigational screens to provide a more visible and consistent look and feel throughout the system. The Resume Builder Component included many improvements, such as manual formatting, extracting data from users' resume fields and a quick resume feature built from background data.

Integration of the Provider Services Component was another major improvement to LAVOS. This component is used by administrative staff to create and maintain service providers throughout the state. The new Manager Provider component integrated providers that apply and are placed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) with providers offering other services. Previously, these categories of service providers were maintained in separate system databases. This integration eliminated duplication and provided for a single repository of providers for all services.

Many of LAVOS' standard reports include a mapping feature that allows staff users to visually see data results on a geographic map. For example, if staff are retrieving information on resumes from individuals whose last job experience was welding, the data output can be formatted into a map identifying the place of residence. These types of reports will be a valuable tool in assisting the state's Department of Economic Development to attract new businesses needing specific job skills.

With the rollout of the numerous changes in LAVOS in a short period of time, the MIS unit inaugurated using webinars for training, meetings and presentations. Because of the urgency to implement ARRA, the webinars were valuable and very cost-effective, with savings in training and travel funds. The webinars enabled participation of a broader staff audience at a single time given limited training staff and fiscal resources. The feedback from Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) staff has been positive, encouraging continued future training, meetings and presentations in this manner.

Educational Mission to Prepare Louisiana's Youth (EMPLoY)

The Educational Mission to Prepare Louisiana's Youth (EMPLoY) is a Governor's initiative and Louisiana Department of Education and LWC collaboration that identifies and serves at-risk youth through the use of an expanded Jobs for American Graduate (JAG) model that includes work experiences. This initiative was introduced in 14 parishes for the PY08 program year with the intended purpose of engaging potential dropouts in grades 6-9 to provide interventions to make them successful to include a meaningful credential. The model encompassed five components:

1. Relevant basic skills training
2. Industry-based certifications or dual enrollment in high-wage/
high-demand occupation training
3. Paid work experience/internships
4. Adult mentors
5. Soft-skills competency training

EMPLoY targeted approximately 500 students, with 259 participating in the work-based learning component. LWC provided internships to 167 of those students, of which 80 were WIA-eligible and 87 were above WIA income criteria and were supported by ARRA funding. Most have concluded their internships, with approximately 20 percent to continue working part time until funds are exhausted.

WorkKeys® Initiative/National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)

WorkKeys® and the National Career Readiness Certificate were developed by ACT, Inc., an internationally recognized assessment and research company. ACT is best known for the ACT assessment, which helps students transition into college. ACT is equally committed to helping individuals transition into and within the workplace using WorkKeys. The NCRC is designed to complement other traditional credentials, such as a high school diploma, community college degree or college degree. While these educational credentials mark the fulfillment of an individual's classroom learning experiences, the NCRC confirms the person's competence in a specific set of workplace skills. ACT has profiled more than 16,000 individual jobs across the country to determine the skills and skill levels needed to succeed in them. According to their findings, three skills are highly important to most jobs -- Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics and Locating Information. A solid foundation of these three skills is essential for a well-qualified workforce. The NCRC is a very good predictor of job performance based on the composite of these three assessments.

Louisiana has adopted the NCRC as a statewide initiative that's supported by all workforce-related providers. LWC is providing a remedial tool, Career Ready 101 by Keytrain, that is aligned with the NCRC and enables many more individuals the opportunity to acquire the certificate. LWC is initiating a marketing campaign targeting employers to enhance awareness of the significant benefits of the NCRC, such as the identification of specific skills and reduced personnel turnover. LWC is also investing in a Career Coaches model that uses the NCRC as the core tool toward developing and outlining streamlined employment action plans for individuals.

Apprenticeship

The Apprenticeship Division is responsible for providing oversight, guidance 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 in the classroom
- 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

Seven new programs, a 17 percent increase, were developed and approved in PY08. It should be noted that historically, only one or two programs per year are developed. Consequently, there has been a 12 percent increase in the number of registered apprentices in this state from previous years, totaling approximately 4,500. Some 65 percent of the Business & Career Solutions Centers throughout the state received staff development workshops about effective utilization of the Registered Apprenticeship Program.

Registered Apprenticeship effectively converted all of its program sponsor/apprentice data in January 2009 to the internet-based, USDOL-sponsored Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS). This has significantly reduced transaction times, combined all information into one database, allows for program sponsors to have their own accounts in the system and provides an electronic means to conduct transaction requests/approvals.

Some 105 employers used the Registered Apprenticeship program over the fiscal year with 1,300 apprentices claimed, which equates to approximately \$985,000 in tax credits granted and 985,000 hours of OJT work performed by apprentices in this state.

One success for the Apprenticeship program is reflected in the comprehensive Louisiana Registered Apprenticeship System Redesign Action Plan, which was developed and implemented in PY08. This plan focuses primarily on growth and partnership opportunities for Registered Apprenticeship through specific integration efforts. Recognition of the worthy goals outlined in the plan occurred when Registered Apprenticeship was awarded a \$100,000 grant by USDOL to be used to implement new federal apprenticeship regulations on the state level and further the goals and objectives in the action plan.

Rapid Response

Rapid Response is a federal strategy designed to avert potential layoffs when possible and to provide readjustment services in collaboration with other workforce development agencies 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 reduce the length of time that dislocated workers would normally draw unemployment insurance.

Louisiana experienced significant increased layoffs in the manufacturing industry in the past year. In PY08, the Rapid Response Unit reacted to 94 Extended Mass Layoff Actions taken by employers that resulted in the separation of 7,474 workers from their jobs for at least 31 days. These numbers are up from PY07-PY08, where the state responded to 57 mass layoffs, impacting 5,850 workers. Rapid Response provided re-employment services to 3,801 workers in PY08, an increase from the 1,950 re-employment services provided in PY07.

An example of the importance of this program occurred in December 2008. At that time, International Paper announced the closing of its Bastrop paper mill to occur on January 20, 2009. Rapid Response coordinators were deployed to the area to provide re-employment services to the workers. Spencer, a machine operator at International Paper for 13 years, received core and intensive services upon visiting the worker transition center established at the facility. Rapid Response staff prepared a customized resume and assisted him with job search and placement opportunities. As a result of these re-employment services, Spencer secured employment with a manufacturer in the area and was released early by International Paper to begin his new job. Spencer was able to transition into new employment without entering the rolls of unemployment insurance.

Trade Adjustment Assistance

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, job search and relocation allowances, income support and other re-employment services. Certified individuals may be eligible to receive one or more program benefits and services depending on what is needed to return them to suitable employment.

In PY08, a total of 22 petitions were filed on behalf of 3,294 dislocated workers, up from 10 petitions the previous year. A total of 19 petitions were certified for TAA/ATAA services and allowances through USDOL. More than 277 dislocated workers have enrolled in approved training under TAA, and 61 workers have returned to work under Alternate Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA).

Successes for the program this year include the re-employment services and benefits provided to dislocated workers affected by two significant layoffs: General Motors Corporation in Shreveport and International Paper in Bastrop.

National Emergency Grants

National Emergency Grants (NEG) are discretionary awards from USDOL that temporarily expand service capacity at the state and local levels through time-limited funding assistance in response to significant dislocation events. Significant events are those that create a sudden need for assistance that cannot reasonably be expected to be accommodated within the ongoing operations of the formula-funded Dislocated Worker program. NEG funds may be used to provide assistance to dislocated workers in a number of circumstances, such as plant closures, mass layoffs or emergencies and disasters that have been declared eligible for public assistance by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

In PY08, LWC applied to USDOL for four grants and received \$31,200,000.00 in NEG funding. In addition to this year's requests for funding, LWC effectively administered \$22,847,661.00 in existing grants. Assistance was provided to 3,380 new dislocated workers in PY08.

In response to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008, the NEG program successfully provided services to 1,389 dislocated workers and created 707 temporary jobs that provided clean-up, restoration and humanitarian assistance to the communities that were affected by the disasters. The NEG program also offered assistance to 216 workers dislocated after the plant closures of General Motors in Shreveport and International Paper in Bastrop.

Customized Workforce Solutions Team

The Customized Workforce Solutions Team (CWST) was not operational during PY08. As a general overview, the primary function of the team will be to address the workforce challenges of large employers, industry sectors, regions and agencies across Louisiana. This team will strive 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 will work to maximize the abilities and resources of LWC and other state agencies, as well as private and non-profit organizations, in order to develop customized workforce plans at the speed of business. Each plan will identify specific challenges and include a detailed action plan consisting of stakeholder responsibilities, timelines for execution and anticipated outcomes. The CWST will draw from its full complement of available resources in the areas of employee recruitment, training and development, and funding.

Business Services Representatives Initiatives

The Business Services Team (BST) is a statewide group of employees serving as a liaison 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 it 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 services and products provided by LWC. It also serves as a quasi supervisor of the Recruitment and Placement Team (R&P). The Business Services Team meets regularly with R&P to ensure that employer job vacancies, OJT contracts, etc. are being properly managed and 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 in the state. Since that time, strategic initiatives have been implemented and employer visits have been 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 a continuous, ongoing and comprehensive review of LWC's collaborative efforts primarily with DOC, as well as other agencies, LWC has begun to evaluate the entire 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. 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, on to the One-Stops, and ultimately, to gainful employment.
2. Provided a strategic level of examination, inspection, investigation and tracking of outcomes for the St. Landry Adult Court (CHANGES) to the Workforce Development Program Officers.
3. 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. Through offender employment specialists, provided direct information and consultation to offenders who call with questions related to bonding, WOTC's outlined requirements and benefits, procedures in the optimal utilization of the One-Stops, and other offender re-entry issues.
5. Reviewed and evaluated C-Tech's copper-based network cabling certification programs as a necessary prerequisite for the purpose of potentially replicating their operations in other institutions. The review and evaluation also provided information to other administrative and/or field staff who assist program graduates obtain gainful employment.
6. Served as a lead in the development of an Expungement and Job Fair, which serves, in the short-term, as a grassroots marketing opportunity promoting the expungement process as well as the department's other services. In the long-term, the refinement and implementation of this process will be a key component in a comprehensive re-entry program.
7. Continued to assist, develop and nurture relationships with grassroots organizations, community agencies, the faith-based community, 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.

Disability Program Navigator

The **Disability Program Navigator (DPN)** Initiative was initially funded in 2003 to expand the capacity of the One-Stop Career Center system to serve customers with disabilities by providing accessible, seamless and integrated services. There are now more than 420 Navigators in 42 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 One-Stop Career Centers to develop an integrated resource 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 Disability Program Navigator (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 and 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 work group meetings organized by various statewide groups dedicated to the Prisoner Re-entry Initiative, **Communities Committed to Re-entry**. From the 2009 ARRA Summer Youth Program, Navigators were able to secure 10 percent of the funds in Region 8 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 Workforce Investment Areas (WIAs) with becoming Employment Networks (ENs) 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 second year in a row, Navigators worked 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. The annual Disability Employment Symposium was held on Oct. 31, 2008, in Lafayette, Louisiana. 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 for a day of information sharing and network building.

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 one tool in a diverse toolbox of flexible strategies designed to help move people into gainful employment and obtain on-the-job experience. Currently, there are 12 ways for employers to obtain the federally funded tax credit. On February 17, 2009, The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 added two new target groups: unemployed veterans and disconnected youth. Because of employer participation, more than 15,000 individuals have been impacted by the program, which has provided an average of \$36,000,000 in credits per year.

Foreign Labor

The Foreign Labor Certification Unit (FLC) provided services to Louisiana employers. 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 298 farmers were certified by USDOL for the H-2A Program in PY2008.

CDBG/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 Louisiana Workforce Commission. The RWTP provides funding to create sector strategies or sector-based initiatives to 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 & gas, and transportation. The RWTP program is largely based on partnerships that bring together local education and training, business services and social services entities to target these six sectors.

In the first quarter of 2008, the RWTP program was moved to the current Louisiana Workforce Commission from the Office of the Governor. The transition fostered efficiency within the program from a fiscal perspective. In the second quarter of 2008, the current contracts that were in place were renegotiated to increase or decrease program deliverables and to align program functions with federal objectives. During the third quarter of 2008, a new program director was named and two program managers were added to the staff to better meet the demands of the program.

RWTP has 5,769 participants who have completed the training programs. Seventy-one percent of the initial sub-recipients projected to complete the 18 training programs have done so. The program currently has 2,625 participants placed in employment, with an average placement rate of 54 percent among all 18 sub-recipients. As of June 30, 2009, five of the 18 sub-recipients have exceeded their initial projections for the number of participants completing training.

Success of the RWTP program is demonstrated by well-trained people who are making a difference in communities most severely impacted by the hurricanes. Through a letter of thanks from Touro Medical Center to Delgado Community College, the medical center said that the healthcare training program at Delgado has produced well-rounded, knowledgeable and meticulous employees. The Louisiana Department of Corrections has worked diligently to train inmates and prepare them for re-entry into society. More than 89 percent of inmates who have been trained and are released from custody have been placed in employment.

National Emergency Grant (Youth)

Through the National Emergency Grant, Louisiana continues to recover and rebuild its local communities devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. The **YouthROC** project (formerly known as the Youth Career Development Project) provides training and jobs in construction, coastal restoration, environmental and other recovery-related fields in Region I LWIA: First Planning District, Jefferson Parish, St. Charles Parish Consortium, and Orleans Parish. The grant is designed to serve youths ages 16-24 with multiple barriers to employment. The goal is to link these youth to educational opportunities through hands-on learning while assisting to rebuild their communities.

LWC's efforts focus on rebuilding businesses by finding qualified workers to fill available positions, rebuilding communities with short-term training focused on vocational skills, 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 skills for high-demand jobs.

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

Grant Activities from May 2008 through June 30, 2009

Total Number of Individuals served through NEG: 1,238

Placed in Temporary Jobs: 248

Placed in Post Secondary Education/Training: 269

Received Supportive Services: 1,238

Louisiana ARRA Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

Louisiana was able to employ 5,154 youths, ages 14-24, in the ARRA Summer Youth Program. A total of \$17,010,431 was distributed to 18 Workforce Investment Areas. Some of the industries that employed youth included healthcare, service, environmental, government and green jobs. Healthcare, service and green job sectors were specifically targeted as both a core and a growth-oriented sector of employment in Louisiana.

LWC had six main goals of their ARRA SYEP, of which two were published performance measures. The two published performance measures are an increase in Work Readiness scores and a high percentage of youth participants that complete their job assignment. As of June 30, 2009, the LWC anticipates a high percentage of youth participants will score higher on their Work Readiness test and a high percentage of youth participants will complete their job assignment.

The four remaining goals are to place the youth participants in meaningful, career-oriented jobs, reach a 50/50 percentage goal of placing in-school and out-of-school youths, attempt to place more youth participants in private-sector jobs and for the WIAs to spend at least 70 percent of their funds. The LWIAs were able to obtain a 53/47 percentage placement of in-school and out-of-school youth participants, and also placed 40 percent of the youth participants in private-sector jobs. The LWIAs anticipate spending at least and probably greater than the LWC goal of 70 percent expenditures.

Outcomes /Success Stories

WIA 41 Lafayette Parish:	ECHO – Exploring Careers in Health Occupations
WIA 40 Fourth Planning District:	ECHO – Exploring Careers in Health Occupations
WIA 61 Rapides Parish:	HOPE – Health Occupation Possibilities Explored

ECHO is a program for youths to experience career opportunities in healthcare by taking part in classroom instruction, working/shadowing professionals at a local hospital, riding/observing on an ambulance and visiting local healthcare facilities such as a nursing home, blood bank, funeral home, rehab center and a forensic lab. The goal of the ECHO program is to provide the opportunity for youths to explore the possibility of a healthcare career. The program also serves in the capacity of increasing a participant's work awareness and positive work habits and attitudes that will assist in understanding the world of work and employer expectations. After completion of the ECHO program, the youth participants were given a certificate documenting their experience.

In addition, Louisiana has identified healthcare careers as a high-demand employment sector. Both the ECHO and HOPE programs are providing an opportunity for our youth participants to consider a healthcare career that they might not have otherwise been exposed to.

Statewide Youth Initiative – Louisiana Youth Advisory Summit

Each WIA sent 10 ARRA SYEP delegates to the Louisiana Youth Advisory Summit, held in August 2009. The summit consisted of a pre-event evening reception and an all-day celebration of Louisiana's youth participants. The program was entirely produced and planned by Louisiana's youth, including event management and selection of workshop topics.

The youth delegates gained knowledge in event planning, logistics, time management, decision making, leadership and teamwork. The youths were trained to return to their respective communities and take a leadership role in their local youth councils. The local youth councils aim to be a driving force in leading Louisiana's youth.

III: Workforce Intelligence (Labor Market Information)

Local Employment Dynamics

U. S. Census Bureau provided training for representatives of the LWIAs and staff from Louisiana Workforce Commission in PY08 on new time series data created under the federal-state Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Partnership that provide 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 and Workforce Investment Act (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 provide indicators for state and local authorities.

Job Vacancy Survey

In PY 2008, LWC contracted with Louisiana State University to conduct a job vacancy survey to help determine workforce needs in the state. The annual job vacancy surveys help to provide the workforce development system in gaining 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 2008:

The purpose of a Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) is to identify the number and types of jobs available in specific industries and regions of the state. The survey results provide a unique snapshot of the conditions in a given region and/or occupational labor market. The results of the survey assist educational institutions, employment and training providers, and local workforce councils in responding to industry needs.

There were approximately 77,500 job vacancies in Louisiana during the second quarter of 2008 resulting in a vacancy rate of 4.1 percent. This means that for every 100 jobs, approximately 4 jobs were vacant. The number of job vacancies decreased by approximately 18,000 since the second quarter of 2007, a 19 percent decrease.

The largest number of job vacancies was found in Office and Administrative Support (approximately 9,500) while the largest vacancy rate (8.3 percent) was found in the Installation, Maintenance and Repair occupational group. When looking at the results by Industry Group, Trade, Transportation and Utilities had the largest number of job vacancies (approximately 17,800). The highest vacancy rate of 9.6 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 65 percent of the job vacancies. Less than 32 percent of the job vacancies required more than a high

school education with 17 percent requiring vocational training, certification, or a two-year college degree.

Approximately 14 percent of all job vacancies offered a starting wage of \$6.55 per hour or less. Jobs paying \$6.56-\$7.55 accounted for nearly 12 percent of vacancies. However, 28 percent of vacancies were paying \$7.56-\$10.55; 12 percent of vacancies were paying \$10.56-\$13.00; 20 percent of vacancies were paying \$13.01-\$18.00; and 14 percent of vacancies were paying more than \$18.00 per hour.

The number of job vacancies in Louisiana for 2008 was approximately four-fifths of the number of vacancies in 2007. Nearly a third (29 percent) of the job vacancies were found in Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA 1), down from 35 percent in 2007.

IV: Performance Data

Program Costs

Program	Total Participants Served	Total Expenditures	Cost per Participant
Adult Programs <i>(Does not include Self Service Only)</i>	217,377	\$12,601,838	\$58
Dislocated Worker Program	9,290	\$8,713,659	\$938
Youth Program	3,755	\$13,773,612	\$3,668

PY 2008 WIA Financial Statement — Operating Results Table N: Cost of Program Activity

Fund Source	Available	Expenditures as of 6/30/09	Percent Expended	Balance Remaining
Adult Funds	\$14,306,394	\$9,852,199		\$4,454,195
C/O Funds	\$2,749,639	\$2,749,639		0
TOTAL	\$17,056,033	\$12,601,838	73.9%	\$4,454,195
Dislocated Worker Funds	\$5,828,766	\$3,684,440		\$2,144,326
C/O Funds	\$5,029,219	\$5,029,219		0
TOTAL	\$10,857,985	\$8,713,659	80.3%	\$2,144,326
Youth Funds	\$14,701,477	\$8,269,615		\$6,431,862
C/O Funds	\$5,503,997	\$5,503,997		0
TOTAL	\$20,205,474	\$13,773,612	68.2%	\$6,431,862
Rapid Response Funds	\$2,428,653	\$827,978		\$1,600,675
C/O Funds	\$735,625	\$735,625		0
TOTAL	\$3,164,278	\$1,563,603	49.4%	\$1,600,675
Statewide Activity Funds	\$6,576,225	\$3,649,450		\$2,926,775
C/O Funds	\$4,654,293	\$4,654,293		0
TOTAL	\$11,230,518	\$8,303,743	73.9%	\$2,926,775
TOTALS	\$62,514,288	\$44,956,455	71.9%	\$17,557,833

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, increasing service delivery to more individuals while maintaining quality outcomes.

	Program Year 2006	Program Year 2007	Program Year 2008
Adult			
Participants	108,652	151,874	224,395
Entered Employment Rate	67.4%	67.7%	66.2%
Job Retention Rate	83.6%	81.3%	79.8%
Earnings	\$12,082	\$12,537	\$12,613
Dislocated Workers			
Participants	2,892	3,780	9,290
Entered Employment or Education	78.6%	73.3%	72.1%
Job Retention Rate	85.7%	76.2%	83.4%
Earnings	\$13,459	\$14,554	\$18,417.60
Older Youth		Total Youth	
Participants	3,821	3,527	3,755
Entered Employment Rate	67.7%		
Job Retention Rate	82.2%		
Earnings Gain	\$4,947		
Credential Rate	40.2%		
Younger Youth			
Skill Attainment Rate	78.8%		
Diploma/Equivalent Attainment Rate	54.3%		
Retention Rate	56.9%		
Overall Customer Satisfaction			
Participant Satisfaction	90.0%		
Employer Satisfaction	77.0%		
Youth 14-21 (Common Measures)			
Placement in Employment or Education	64.0%	65.1%	66.8%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	52.1%	48.0%	51.7%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	52.2%	25.9%	43.4%

NOTE: Results for Program Year 2008 are based on U.S. Department of Labor Common Measures definitions. Areas shaded are intentionally left blank as they are not included in the common measures.

Program Year 2008 Workforce Investment Act Program Performance

	Negotiated Goal	Actual Performance	% of Goal Attained
Adult			
Entered Employment Rate	72.0%	66.2%	91.9%
Job Retention Rate	80.0%	79.8%	99.8%
Average Earnings Rate	\$12,100	\$12,613	104.2%
Dislocated Workers			
Entered Employment Rate	84.0%	72.1%	85.8%
Job Retention Rate	90.0%	83.4%	92.7%
Average Earnings Rate	\$13,900	\$18,418	132.5%
Youth Common Measures			
Placement in Education or Employment	57.0%	66.8%	117.2%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	44.0%	51.7%	117.5%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	52.0%	43.4%	83.5%

State Evaluation Activities

In Program Year 2008, Louisiana was granted a waiver to use the above common measures for performance evaluation. Performance standards were negotiated with USDOL. In PY 2008, Louisiana met all of the performance measures.

Adult Program

Louisiana met or exceeded the three adult measures; exceeding the Average Earnings measure. LWIAs served 224,395 job seekers placing over 66.2% of these customers. Over the past year, the state has increased participation from 151,874 job seekers to 224,395 while maintaining quality performance outcomes. An additional demonstration that the state is moving in the right direction is evidenced by the fact that the number of job seekers who have found employment, 79.8%, have retained jobs during the subsequent two quarters, meeting the state's goal.

Dislocated Worker Program

The State met or exceeded the three dislocated worker measures, exceeding the Average Earning measure. Louisiana is utilizing the waiver allowing the state to transfer funding from the Dislocated Worker program to the Adult program. While the amount of dedicated dislocated worker funding has decreased, through the leveraging of funds, the number of participants served has increased while maintaining performance.

As with the rest of the country, Louisiana is experiencing an increased number of layoffs from PY 07 to PY08. In particular, the Northwest region of the state has been impacted by several

large business closures in the manufacturing industry. Due to the nature of the layoffs, the state is increasing its Trade Adjustment Act funding, leveraging these resources with Dislocated Worker program funding. Utilizing these key resources in an integrated service model, the Business and Career Solutions Centers continues to provide the comprehensive services needed to assist these individuals becoming reemployed in high demand growth occupations. Due to the increased number of layoffs occurring in Louisiana, coupled with the transfer of dislocated workers to the adult program, performance goals may need to be re-evaluated.

In program year 2008, Louisiana increased the number of dislocated workers served from 3,780 to 9,290, which is a 146% increase from the year before. Along with the increase in dislocated workers served, the average earnings increased from \$14,554 in PY 2007 to \$18,417.60 in PY 2008. This represents a \$3,862.40 increase in average earnings.

Youth Common Measures

The State exceeded or met all three youth common measures: Attainment of a Degree or Certificate, Placement in Employment or Education and Literacy and Numeracy Gains. However, in PY 2007 the state failed to achieve the negotiated performance goal of 50% for the Literacy Numeracy Measure, but with the corrected action plan, Louisiana was able to meet this benchmark for PY08 at 43.4%.

Louisiana made the decision in PY2007 to require that at least fifty percent of all youth participants served under WIA are out-of-school youth. In PY08 Louisiana exceed this goal by serving 64% of the youth participants who were out-of-school youth. In addition, the LWC is assisting the LWIAs to better integrate WIA youth services with aging out of foster care and adjudicated youth programs. These hard-to-serve populations require a more intensive set of services.

While recognizing the importance of meeting the USDOL Common Measures, Louisiana 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 and 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

LWC has been using over the last few years nine scorecard measures that provide real-time information on how the Integrate Services Delivery System is operating. There are four job seeker measures (1 thru 4), four employer measures (5 thru 8), and one youth measure. The LWC administrative staff evaluates these measures each quarter with the WIB directors and local area coordinators (Program Staff) from the 18 LWIAs. By establishing benchmarks for each LWIA, the state can assess the workforce system and determine if technical help is need in any given area.

1. Members Obtaining Employment

Intent of Measure:

The intent of this measure is to provide an overall percentage of members who have entered employment as a direct result of Career Solutions services.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as the proportion of members completing services with a positive employment outcome.

2. Staff Referrals Resulting in Placement

Intent of Measure:

The intent of this measure is to gauge the effectiveness of the Business and Career Solutions services and staff in recommending job seekers to job vacancies.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as the percentage of staff referrals that result in placements recorded by staff.

3. Individuals in Training

Intent of Measure:

The intent of the measure is to evaluate the volume of people enrolled in WIA training programs.

Calculation of Measure:

Raw count of all individuals enrolled in training programs, broken down by workforce investment area.

4. Percentage of Members Employed in Jobs Earning Above Average Wages Compared to All Individuals

Intent of Measure:

Measure how effectively members are placed into high-paying, high-demand jobs.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as a percentage of members placed in employment by staff with jobs paying above a target wage, as determined by the workforce investment area.

5. Employer Market Penetration

Intent of Measure:

Gauge the presence and impact of Career Solutions Centers among local employers.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as a percentage of businesses with 10 or more employees that utilize Career Solutions Center resources.

6. Percentage of Job Listings Over \$10.00 Assigned to Recruitment/Placement that Receive Staff Referral

Intent of Measure:

Measure how effectively staff is referring high-paying jobs.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as a percentage of jobs paying greater than a determined target rate that receive a referral.

7. Referral to Hire Ratio

Intent of Measure:

Gauge the efficiency of the staff referral process.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as a ratio of members receiving a staff referral to members receiving a staff referral that were hired.

8. Number of Employers Providing Employer-Based Training

Intent of Measure:

Measure the level of participation by employers providing training.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as a raw tally of the number of employers providing training for Career Solutions members.

9. Number of Youth Enrolled in WIA Title I Who Enter Employment or Enrolled in Postsecondary Education

Intent of Measure:

Measure the overall effectiveness of WIA Youth programs.

Calculation of Measure:

The measure is calculated as a raw count, by workforce investment area, of youth who have completed services that are employed or have entered postsecondary education.

10. Business and Career Solutions System Assistance Resulting in U.I. Trust Fund Cost Savings.

Intent of Measure:

Measure how effectively the Career Solutions Centers reduce the cost pressures on the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

Calculation of Measure:

Under development

Waivers

In order to make the best use of resources, Louisiana was offered the opportunity to take advantage of federal waiver opportunities to seek relief from provisions that restrict flexibility and creativity or limit efficiencies. In PY 2008, Louisiana developed waiver requests covering a broad array of workforce issues. Following are the waivers obtained by Louisiana in PY 2008.

<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 100 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 Local Workforce Investment Areas 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 2008 to help meet the needs of the employers and job seekers in training specific needs.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the language that limits the authority to provide the activities identified in WIA Section 134 to the state to permit local areas to request the use of a portion of local area formula funds for adults and dislocated workers to provide incumbent worker training identified at WIA Section 134(a)(3)(A)(iv). The maximum amount of funds to be used for this purpose will be 25 percent.</i></p>	<p>Due to economic and timing issues, Louisiana did not utilize this wavier during the program year.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the language limiting the authority to provide the activities at WIA Section 134(a)(1)(B) to statewide reserve funds to permit the use of a portion of the funds reserved for rapid response activities at WIA Section 133(a)(2) to provide incumbent worker training.</i></p>	<p>Due to economic and timing issues, Louisiana did not utilize this wavier during the program year.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the reporting requirements at 20 CFR 667.300(a) to provide relief in the collection of certain participant data elements for incumbent workers trained with local area WIA formula funds.</i></p>	<p>Because the waivers for incumbent worker activities were not acted upon, the data elements wavier was not needed in PY 2008.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the reallocation provisions at WIA Sections 128(c)(2) and 133 (c)(2), and 20 CFR 667.160 to provide the state additional flexibility in the targeting of WIA funds.</i></p>	<p>LWC did not have to recapture and reallocate WIA funds in PY 2008 due to the Local Workforce Investment Areas meeting and exceeding their expenditures this past program year.</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 100 employees. For employees with 100 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 the limitation on the use of funds for capitalization of businesses at WIA section (181)(e) to permit the use of WIA funds to capitalize a small business up to \$5,000. This activity must be conducted in concert with entrepreneurial or micro enterprise training for the individuals benefiting from the capitalization.</i></p>	<p>The Louisiana Workforce Commission has used this program very successfully in the past. After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit Louisiana's coastline, Louisiana Workforce Investment Areas implemented this waiver. They worked to create a process with both the local Chambers of Commerce and private sector WIB members that allowed small businesses to receive valuable entrepreneurial and/or micro enterprise training that they would not normally have acquired. Also, the infusion of capital helped them to jump-start their businesses that were adversely affected because of the storms. With the current downturn in the economy, this is one of many services that local small businesses took advantage of in order to help keep them going. The focus of the \$5,000 was not to capitalize the business as much as to provide training, which was invaluable both to the businesses and the State of Louisiana.</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 and with the approval of the Workforce Commission.</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 Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, 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 Commission.</p>
<p><i>Waiver of the requirement that local programs provide each of the 10 youth program elements at WIA Section 129(c)(2) as options available to youth participants.</i></p>	<p>This waiver was not used in PY 2008. Even though the locals were adversely affected by the storms, they were able to provide the 10 youth program elements according to WIA Section 129(c)(2).</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>An exemption from the competitive procurement requirement for the follow-up and supportive service elements and inclusion of these elements in the design framework of youth services. (WIA Section 123, 20 CFR 664.405(a)(4), 20 CFR 661.305(3).</i></p>	<p>This waiver was utilized by LWIAs during the PY 2008. The goals for the youth program under this waiver were to provide greater effectiveness, efficiency and continuity of services, saving resources that can be spent on additional services and reducing administrative costs. By including the follow-up and support service elements in the design framework, local workforce centers were able to provide greater continuity of services for youth, resulting in higher retention rates. The waiver allowed LWIAs to experience greater effectiveness in quickly identifying the needs of the youth and offering assistance.</p>
<p><i>With the approval of state Workforce Commission, a 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>



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