



ANNUAL REPORT on the [Workforce Investment Act](#)
State of Arkansas ♦ Program Year 2010



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U.S. Department of Labor

Prepared by the
Arkansas Department
of Workforce Services

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VISION

A highly trained and diversified workforce that meets the needs of high growth industry, which drives a statewide regionalized economy that is competitive in the global market.

MISSION

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board will strive to ensure an innovative and demand-driven workforce investment system, in collaboration with education, business, industry, labor and state agencies, that effectively leverages employment and training resources and collectively responds to the needs of local and regional economies.

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INTRODUCTION

The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was signed into law in August 1998 and became effective in Arkansas on July 1, 2000. This summary report focuses on eleventh year accomplishments in Arkansas relative to the provision of WIA Title I-B services. For Program Year 2010 (July 2010 through June 2011), the United States Department of Labor (DOL) allotted approximately \$23.3 million in WIA Title I-B funds to Arkansas. These funds enabled a continuation of employment and training services designed to benefit our youth, adults and dislocated workers, as well as our employers. Due primarily to economic conditions that were comparatively better than many other states, funding for PY 2010 was just over \$2.1 million less than the previous year's funding.

This report describes how WIA Title I-B is organized in Arkansas, highlights state and local accomplishments, and concludes with WIA Titles I-B and III performance results.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM VISION AND GOALS

Arkansas' strategic plan for workforce development was extended for the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs through June 30, 2011. The plan communicates the state's vision, goals, objectives and strategies for the workforce development system. WIA Title I-B programs are a critical part of realizing this vision and accomplishing our state's workforce development goals. In addition, the state received approval of a one-year extension to the following waivers as well.

Waivers

As part of Arkansas' state plan modification for Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Wagner-

Peyser Act, in compliance with WIA Section 189 (i) (4)(B) and 20 CFR 661.420 (c), the state submitted a plan to request approval of selected waivers through Program Year 2010.

[Waiver of the prohibition at CFR 664.510 on the use of Individual Training Accounts for older and out-of-school youth](#)

The ability to use Individual Training Accounts for this hard-to-serve population enhanced the ability of local areas to expedite entry into the workforce through occupational skills training and eliminated the duplicative efforts inherent to dual-enrollment.

[Waiver to replace the performance measures at WIA Section 136 \(b\) with the common measures.](#)

The common measures provide a simplified and streamlined performance measurement system and have become the basis of the workforce system's performance accountability. Approval of this waiver positively impacted all customers of Arkansas' workforce investment system by simplifying program management and performance measurement.

[Waiver of the provision at 20 CFR 663.530 that prescribes a time limit on the period of initial eligibility for training providers.](#)

By alleviating provider concerns with the types and amount of information to be collected and reported, the state was able to retain approved providers and continued to increase their numbers. This facilitated quality customer choice for Arkansans in need of occupational skills training.

[Waiver of WIA Section 133 \(b\) \(4\) to increase the allowable transfer amount between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams allocated to a local area to fifty \(50\) percent.](#)

This waiver provided greater flexibility in the design of local area adult and dislocated worker service delivery plans and enhanced the ability of local boards

to respond to changing workforce and economic dynamics. Local boards were able to provide targeted assistance in response to customer needs. The vast majority of requests were to transfer dislocated worker funds to the adult funding stream because a large number of dislocated workers qualified for training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The ability to transfer funds enabled local areas to serve more adults that were not trade impacted.

WORKFORCE SYSTEM EVALUATION

In February 2011, Kaiser Group, Inc. was hired by the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services to conduct an evaluation of the Workforce Investment System in Arkansas. The contract period was February 1, 2011 to June 30, 2011. The evaluation was designed to be a process review, not a data or compliance review. The focus of the evaluation was to highlight process improvement opportunities, review a sample of the Arkansas Workforce Centers (AWCs) against the State's certification criteria, and to create a framework for action for regional and state leaders.

During the contract period of February 1, 2011 to June 30, 2011, the Kaiser Group evaluation team visited seven workforce regions in Arkansas and eighteen workforce centers (this was a mixture of comprehensive, satellite and affiliate centers).

At each site, interviews were arranged with all levels of staff from key partner agencies. Structured interview questions were used to explore progress in the regional Arkansas Workforce Centers toward service integration and collaboration between partners.

The focus was not a compliance review of each region, but a systems review of the value, quality improvement aspects and functional application of the criteria in the certification standards. The evaluation included

a review of the business plan and an operational review with seven areas of focus. The seven areas were Organizational Structure, Service Integration and Collaboration, Customer Satisfaction, Performance Management, AWC Brand, Business Services/Services to Employers, and a checklist review of Facilities and Resource Rooms.

A summary of the workforce system recommendations made by the evaluator includes:

Organizational Structure

- Update the Arkansas Workforce Center certification policy to focus on continuous improvement
- Define and strengthen the regional organizational structures
- Continue with regional and statewide workforce manager meetings and develop agendas that maximize "face time" and creates networking opportunities
- Strategic refocus of leadership on Arkansas Workforce Center system vision and operational priorities.

Service Integration

- Cross training needs to focus on key workforce center-wide processes
- Develop an acronym dictionary and place online to assist center staff in understanding terms
- Use the Line of Sight exercise as part of local planning efforts to develop an integration strategy that will improve outcomes
- Incentive funding should be tied to system benchmarks rather than program goals

Customer Service

- Develop a consistent approach to more formally and routinely collect, compile, and share customer satisfaction data

Performance Management

- Develop an Arkansas Workforce Center scorecard to track progress toward outcomes
- Develop a process for all workforce center staff to understand all performance goals of the other programs
- Renegotiate the WIA standards with U.S. Department of Labor - Arkansas's are among the highest in the nation
- Develop local service integration and collaboration benchmarks
- Consider moving the WIA monitoring unit in DWS to the program section and out of fiscal, or review other ways to improve the effectiveness of the process

Arkansas Workforce Center Brand

- Review all Center designations
- Build on the statewide marketing campaign and strengthen regional marketing of the AWC brand
- Explore website options that are consistent with the AWC brand identity

Business Services

- Business service teams need to be connected to regional economic development efforts
- Develop an employer-friendly website
- Increase staff awareness of sector strategies
- Better track and document Individual Training Accounts and subsidized employment to leverage customers into market demand areas

Customer Flow

- Establish one common focal point of entry in each Arkansas Workforce Center
- Focus on importance of receptionist function
- Establish and maintain a single resource room for use by customers of all programs
- Provide consistent training for resource room staff
- Explore more customer friendly options for Career Readiness Certification assessment

The final evaluation report can be found online at www.dws.arkansas.gov/AWIB/Information.htm and includes information on the evaluation methodology used, findings, promising practices, and recommendations.

STATE WORKFORCE BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING

In preparation for the next state workforce development plan, which will be in place by July 1, 2012, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board conducted strategic planning sessions during program year 2010. From December 2010 through April 2011, the board held four strategic planning sessions to develop new objectives and strategies for the state's workforce development system.

The strategic planning was conducted with consideration of the Governor's Economic Development plan for the state and specifically the workforce development component of that plan.

Below is a summary of the objectives that were developed and are being fine-tuned for inclusion in the next plan.

Serve the range of job seekers

- Identify, provide and leverage services for adults, youth, dislocated workers, incumbent workers, people with disabilities, ex-offenders, mature workers, returning military, and other veterans

Serve the range of employers

- Develop and deliver services in support of small businesses, regional priority sectors, existing companies
- Understand industry skill needs locally, statewide and regionally
- Track business impact

Serve the range of job economies

- Address local businesses' skills needs
- Support skill development infrastructure
- Create industry skills task forces in each workforce investment area
- Certify Arkansas communities as "career ready"

Ensure that the population is ready for work

Increase the effectiveness of local WIBs

Maintain collective accountability

Gain efficiencies across the system

- Create statewide workforce asset inventories
- Create joint diversified communication strategy
- Create joint tracking function across programs

Re-imagine learning

- Create mechanisms to integrate learning and work
- Improve remediation
- Provide new learning opportunities

Diversify funding

- Leverage new funding sources
- Explore cost sharing with job seekers, employers

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

President Obama signed The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) into law on February 17, 2009. The ARRA provided Arkansas with additional funding to expand services to individuals affected by the downturn in the economy. The ARRA provided Arkansas with \$3.3 million in funding for employment services and reemployment services, \$12.1 million for youth services and \$12.6 million for services to adults and dislocated workers.

At the close of PY 2010, 10 Reemployment Services

Specialists were on board providing services such as job search workshops, counseling, resume review, counseling, referral to education services and intensive case management in workforce centers across the state. The Reemployment Services program referred 9,347 Unemployment claimants in PY 2010. The ARRA program was completed this program year with a priority for summer employment opportunities for youth ages 16-24. This led to 4,041 youth placed in summer employment with 990 employed beyond the summer. A total of 4,182 youth were served as well as 1,258 Dislocated Workers and 176,896 Adults.

DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICES

Arkansas continues to create economic growth through attracting new employers and by working to retain the businesses we already have. Unfortunately, some businesses must downsize or even close their doors, and their workers become displaced through no fault of their own. When this happens to our citizens, it is a terrible blow to the community and the families affected. The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force provides rapid response services to workers affected by layoffs through worker assistance workshops that provide information and services dealing with many issues including:

- Claiming Unemployment Insurance
- Retraining and Educational Opportunities
- Social Service Programs
- Stress Management
- Credit Counseling
- Insurance Needs
- Job Search Tips

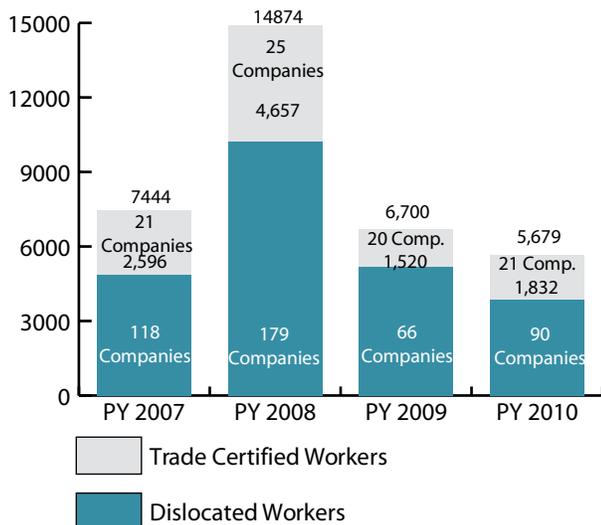
Immediately upon receiving notice of a permanent closure or a substantial layoff, the Task Force contacts company officials.

PY 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Whenever possible, a community meeting is scheduled with elected officials and business leaders to assist in creating action plans to aid both the community and the affected dislocated workers.

In Program Year 2010, the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force was informed of 90 company closures or layoffs impacting 5,679 workers.

- 21 companies were certified as trade-affected representing 1,832 workers.
- 837 eligible workers enrolled in the Trade Program.
- 1,391 clients exited the Trade Program.
- 50 worker assistance workshops were held attended by 4,306 workers.
- The Task Force Participated in or sponsored 17 job and opportunity fairs to connect dislocated workers with jobs and supportive services.



NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANTS

In April of 2011, Arkansas experienced a stream of severe storms, tornadoes and flooding which led to a FEMA disaster declaration.



On May 2, 2011, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded a grant to the state of Arkansas in the amount of \$3,758,327 to create temporary jobs linked to cleanup and recovery efforts for National Emergency Grant AR-19, Severe Storms, Tornadoes and Flooding. Western Arkansas Planning & Development District, representing Central local area, was sub-granted \$150,456 to employ 10 participants in labor positions in Saline County. White River Planning & Development District, representing North Central local area, was su-granted \$518,399 to employ 30 participants in Cleburne, Fulton, Independence, Izard, Sharp, Stone, Van Buren and White Counties. The Northeast LWIA was sub-granted \$302,441 to employ 32 participants in labor positions in Clay, Greene, Lawrence and Randolph, Counties. The Northwest LWIA was sub-granted \$1,835,000 to employ 124 participants in Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Madison, Marion, Newton, Searcy and Washington Counties. The Southeast LWIA was sub-granted \$392,415 to employ 30 participants in Chicot and Lincoln Counties. The Southwest LWIA was sub-granted \$85,831 to employ 5 participants in Dallas County. The West Central PDD was sub-granted \$149,331 to employ 12 participants in Garland and Conway Counties. The Western LWIA was sub-granted \$268,912 to employ 14 participants in Crawford and Franklin Counties. A modification to add five additional counties (Mississippi, Poinsett, Craighead, Nevada and Howard Counties) to the project and



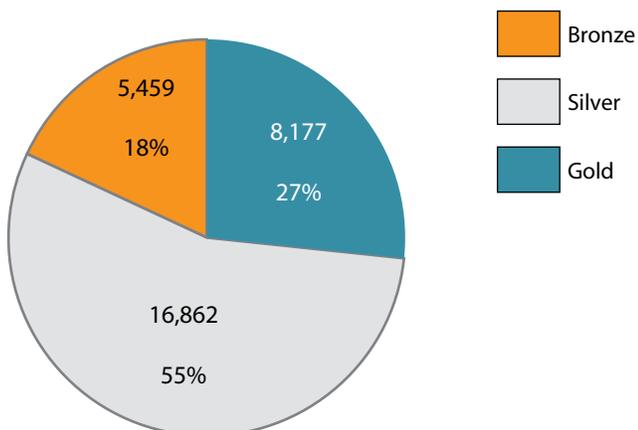
create 16 extra temporary jobs has been submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor, and is awaiting approval.

On February 4, 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded a grant to the state of Arkansas in the amount of \$341,844 to create temporary jobs linked to cleanup and recovery efforts for National Emergency Grant AR-18, December 2009 Storms. The Western Arkansas PDD (Central) was sub-granted \$239,480 to employ 16 participants in labor positions in Monroe and Prairie Counties. The Southwest LWIA was sub-granted \$97,312 to employ 7 participants in Dallas, Lafayette and Nevada Counties. A second modification to extend the grant period was approved on June 15, 2011 and the grant will end December 31, 2011. To date, eight (8) participants have obtained permanent employment.

CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATION

In program year 2010, 9,154 career readiness certificates were awarded to Arkansas job seekers making the total number of CRC awards 30,498 since the inception of the program in 2008.

Sixty-five employers have signed commitment forms to use the Arkansas CRC program as part of their hiring process. Additionally, 7,593 employers reported 17,457 CRC holders earning a wage in 2010. An additional 680 employers from across the nation are recognizing the Career Readiness Certificate programs.



ARKANSAS ENERGY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

In January 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded Arkansas an Energy Sector Partnership grant of \$4,866,479 from ARRA funds. The Arkansas Energy Sector Partnership (AESP) will provide funding to enable Arkansas workers statewide to be trained in the skills required to succeed in green jobs. The AESP selected three areas of focus that will most likely result in job growth over the next few years. Those industries of focus are:

- Energy Efficient Building, Construction, and Retrofitting;
- Renewable Electric Power;
- Energy Efficiency Assessment

AESP partnered with the state's two-year colleges as well as the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition to develop and deploy curriculum and programs that prepare participants for careers in the targeted industries. Training activities include high school concurrent credit programs, college certificate and degree programs, incumbent worker training, apprenticeship programs, workshops for employed workers to gain green skills, and training for disadvantaged populations.

Special efforts have been made to recruit participants from the priority populations of high school dropouts, offenders, unemployed workers, and other disadvantaged, at risk individuals. In addition, special efforts have been made to recruit individuals residing in the auto-impacted counties of Cleburne, Desha, Greene, and Logan Counties.

Key partners in implementing the AESP include the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission Energy Office, the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, the

Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition, the Arkansas State Office of Apprenticeship, Winrock International, Arkansas Department of Career Education, nine regional partnership teams which include all ten local workforce investment boards, non-profits, and energy efficient and renewable energy industries.

PY 2010 Grant Accomplishments:

- Subgrants made to 20 Two-Year Colleges
- Completed training work plan coordination meetings with partner colleges
- Conducted technical assistance training webinars for both programmatic and financial grant issues
- AESP training activities initiated at two-year colleges and Registered Apprenticeship programs
- Purchased equipment for training classes and mobile Registered Apprenticeship unit
- Engaged business and industry concerning skill needs and local training and employment opportunities
- Developed data collection instruments
- Established referral process for target populations to access supportive services
- Continued the development of collaborative partnerships/stakeholder relations with Arkansas Economic Development Commission Energy Office and Energy Efficiency Arkansas, as well as many others
- Contracted for the independent evaluation of the project



GOVERNOR'S WORK-LIFE BALANCE INITIATIVE AWARDS COMPANIES FOR HIRING MATURE WORKERS

For the fourth year in a row, the Arkansas Mature Worker Initiative, led by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, partnered with the Governor's Work-Life Balance Initiative to recognize three employers for their commitment to hiring and retaining mature workers (those age 50+).

The Mature Worker Friendly Awards were presented at the 9th Annual Work-Life Balance Awards ceremony May 9, 2011, at the Peabody Hotel. The Arkansas Educational Television Network, St. Vincent Health System and White County Medical Center were this year's winners. Bank of the Ozarks, a previous three-time winner, was inducted as an ambassador. AETN, a three-time winner this year, will be inducted as an ambassador in 2012.

The Arkansas Mature Worker Initiative was designed to increase the awareness of the need to hire and retain mature workers. The initiative also serves to connect mature workers to employers through the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

The Governor's Work-Life Balance Initiative recognizes Arkansas employers for establishing and providing resources that support employees in balancing the needs of both work and family.

OUTREACH TO COMMUNITIES

In PY 2010, the state coordinated or supported many events designed to assist dislocated workers, job seekers and the workforce development system. Several Opportunity Fairs were held for specific communities experiencing significant layoffs. An example of these Opportunity Fairs or other

community outreach initiatives include:

- White County Business Expo (Searcy)
- Paragould 1st Annual Chamber of Commerce Job Fair
- Arkansas Economic Development Conference (Hot Springs)
- West Central Arkansas Society of HR Management, Inc.'s 2010 Managers' Seminar (Hot Springs)
- 2010 Low Income Advocates Leadership & Community Development Conference (Little Rock)
- "Hola Arkansas" Career and Business Expo (Little Rock)
- SEARK Workforce Opportunity Exposition (Monticello)
- ATU-Ozark: Bridges out of Poverty Workshop
- Career Opportunity / Job Fair Sponsored by Sen. Tracey Steele & STAND FOUNDATION
- Fall Opportunity Fair (Fort Smith)
- 2010 Career Expo (North Little Rock)
- Pulaski Heights FUMC Unemployed/ Underemployed Workshop
- St. Edward's School – Octoberfest/Community Event
- "Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities" Forum
- Welcome Home Event / Job Fair for returning military
- Northwest Arkansas Job Fair. John Q. Hammons Convention Center. Rogers
- Martin Luther King Day Celebration. UALR Campus
- Arkansas Department of Career Education Conference
- Hope Migrant Farm Labor Center Open House
- State-Wide Vets Training (Fayetteville, Hope, Jonesboro & Pine Bluff)
- Central Arkansas Human Resource Management Conference
- Arkansas Democrat / Central Arkansas Human

Resource Association Job Fair

- Polk County Job Fair
- AR Health Dept. Community Health Fair (Linking the Community to Health Services)
- Veteran's Reintegration Initiative
- Jacksonville, COC Community Expo
- Armed Forces Day
- Construction Career Day hosted by the Highway & Transportation Department
- 2nd Annual Paragould Job Fair
- AR Dept. of Career Education, Community Forum Event
- National Career Development Association Mini-Conference
- NLR Neighborhood Works Week Celebrations
- Employment Assistance Workshop for National Guard and reserve members

In addition, the Department of Workforce Services contracted with a marketing firm to create a statewide outreach campaign for the Arkansas Workforce Centers targeted at educating both employers and jobseekers about the many services available through the workforce centers in Arkansas. This campaign focused heavily on outdoor, radio, television and print ad advertisement.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS CAREER EXPO

For the second year, the Arkansas Workforce Centers held a Career Expo at Verizon Arena in North Little Rock on November 3, 2010. It was a huge success, with a turnout of more than 3,200 job seekers and 116 employers and educational providers. The turnout far exceeded the 2009 turnout, which had 98 exhibitors and about 1,900 job seekers.



In addition to visiting with employers, attendees received resume assistance, attended various workshops and received Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate assistance at the Mobile Resource Unit. A mini-Arkansas Workforce Center also was available. The center was equipped with computers, where job seekers could browse for jobs and prepare resumes. Some employers also conducted interviews on-site.

ARKANSAS INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING PROGRAM

In PY 2009, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board approved an updated Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) application and instructions. As a result of the funding opportunity, Arkansas employers submitted 245 applications for consideration. Of the 245 applications, 121 applications were approved for funding totaling just over \$3.4 million to increase the skills of 7,166 Arkansas workers, with a 100% match of funds from employers. In PY 2010, awarded employers conducted approved training for these workers expended more than \$2.18 M.

The incumbent worker training program funds may be used for:

- Training to prepare participants for productive, high demand employment;
- Work-site-based learning strategies using cutting-edge technology and equipment;
- Training programs incorporating technological changes in the workplace;
- Training programs designed to impart learning to meet employer-specified or industry-specific skills;
- Train-the-trainer instruction to build the capacity of Arkansas businesses to effectively respond to the challenges of an increasingly diverse workforce.

Projects that met the following criteria were given priority in funding.

- Will avoid a significant layoff

- Employees will receive a significant upgrade in skills
- Companies with 50 or fewer employees
- Training of workers in distressed area (based on unemployment rate, poverty rate, per capita income, and growth rate)
- Training will be replicated
- Train-the-trainer projects
- Utilizes Arkansas training providers

Some examples of the types of training that will be conducted through IWTP funding include:

- Lean Manufacturing
- Supervision, Management and Leadership Training
- Value Stream Mapping
- Strategic Planning and Decision Making
- Computer Skills
- Electrical and Mechanical Maintenance
- Total Quality Management
- Six Sigma

DISABILITY PROGRAMS

In PY 2010, DWS operated two projects aimed at serving the community of persons with disabilities: the Disability Program Navigator Initiative (DPN) and the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI).

The DPN project focus was statewide and sought to improve the employment outcomes of all individuals with disabilities, while DEI focuses mainly on addressing the employment and educational needs of youth with disabilities. Both, however, seek to promote effective access to the workforce centers; increase job opportunities; and create systemic change in the workforce system.

The DPN Initiative is the older of the two programs, and although DPN funding concluded with the close of the fiscal year, this project ended on a high note, with the staff of five navigators assisting over 40 customers to find jobs. To build upon the success of the various

national disability projects, in October 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded nine states cooperative agreements for a three-year period. Arkansas was one of those states. With a view to long-term economic self-sufficiency and in anticipation of a shortage in the skilled labor workforce, which the Arkansas DWS feels can be filled by connecting youth with disabilities to workforce trends during their formative years, the newly funded DEI project will mainly target youth, ages 14-24.

The DEI project staff is comprised of five Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs) who are serving customers in the Northwest, West Central, Southeast, and Eastern local workforce areas. The fifth DRC works in conjunction with the newly instituted Arkansas Employment Network, a partnership with the U.S. Social Security Agency (SSA) to aid DWS customers who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits because they are disabled or blind.

The DEI staff has identified three strategies to assist job seekers with disabilities to navigate and use the workforce center system. They are:

1. Guideposts for Success – to help youth with disabilities successfully transition into adulthood through milestone directives;
2. Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs) – representatives from different agencies and service organizations coordinate services and leverage funding to meet educational and employment needs;
3. Customized Employment – a relationship between an employer and an employee that is negotiated and personalized in a way that meets the needs of both.

Highlights for the first year of DEI include:

- Receipt of three-year grant from U.S. Department of Labor and staffing of the DEI project
- Town Hall Meetings in key workforce areas, an opportunity for DWS to formally introduce the program to potential customers and stakeholders
- Establishment of Arkansas Employment Network

CAREER DEVELOPMENT FACILITATORS

In PY 2010, more than 100 Arkansas Workforce Center staff completed the Career Development Facilitator training.

The Career Development Facilitator training is a nationally-recognized program that helps workforce center staff provide more in-depth assistance to employers and job seekers.

The 20-week program was developed by the National Career Development Association. As a result of completing the program, Workforce Center and DWS staff are able to provide comprehensive career development services such as the following:

- Administering assessments to determine clients' career and educational needs and skills
- Developing Individual Education Plans that identify clients' goals, barriers to employment and services to help them achieve their employment objectives
- Providing career planning guidance and assistance
- Working with employers and referring qualified job seekers to other agencies for services
- Maintaining continuous contact with job seekers

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTER TRANSITIONS

In program year 2010, Arkansas had 65 total Arkansas Workforce Centers, including 18 comprehensive, 19 satellite, and 28 affiliate centers. In program year 2010, three Arkansas Workforce Centers were moved to new locations, experienced improvements to their locations, or were established as new centers.

Camden, Arkansas



In June 2011, the Arkansas Workforce Center at Camden was relocated to 237 Jackson Street to provide more space for the center. This move was done in partnership with Southern Arkansas University Tech and their downtown location. The center was made possible through the assistance of a grant approved by the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board to encourage local workforce investment areas to partner with their two-year colleges when establishing workforce center locations.



Partner Programs: Workforce Investment Act, Veterans, Wagner-Peyser, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Career Readiness Certificate, Career Pathways, Adult Education, SAU Tech, and Unemployment Insurance.

Brinkley, Arkansas

The Arkansas Workforce Center at Brinkley moved to a new location at 401 West 4th St. in Brinkley in December 2010. Workforce Center partners include the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc., Workforce Investment Act, Experience Works, the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Tri-County Rural Health.

Dumas, Arkansas



The Arkansas Workforce Center at Dumas opened in November 2010. The center is located in the new Delta Technology Education Center, which houses the workforce center, classrooms used by area colleges, and entrepreneurial and youth services.

The center provides employment services including job placement, unemployment insurance, services to veterans and migrant farm workers, labor market information and Workforce Investment Act services. This center was also made possible by funding approved by the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board to support workforce center and two-year college partnerships.



Partner Programs: Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser, Career Readiness Certificate, Adult Education, Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers program, Phillips Community College, University of Arkansas at Monticello-McGehee campus, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, and Southeast Arkansas College.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Outreach to the employer community is critical for the Arkansas Workforce Centers in meeting the employment needs of the community. Each local workforce investment area conducts business engagement activities in a customized way in order to meet the needs of their employers. Below is a summary of some of the outreach activities and programs and strategies for serving the employer community in Arkansas.

- Statewide implementation of the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program at no cost to employers or job seekers.
- Coordinated outreach among all partner programs through the use of Business Liaison Teams to employers to prevent duplicate contact.
- Speaking with a common message for the center rather than program specific messages.
- Use of Business Service Coordinators to focus on services to the employer community.
- Communication, both verbal and written, with local community leaders. Community leaders and local

businesses are provided with pamphlets, brochures, business cards, and other reading material that gives a brief description of services.

- Conduct job fairs, opportunity fairs, and career expos at no cost to employers and jobseekers.
- Conduct open houses for community members to learn more about the workforce centers.
- Make mobile workforce center units available to employers that are having mass hiring or training.
- Allow employers to recruit and conduct interviews onsite at workforce centers.
- Work closely with chambers of commerce, economic and community development organizations to establish strong working partnerships, attend and participate in after-hours business networking events.
- Educate employers about incentives for hiring targeted populations through the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program and Federal Bonding program.
- Follow up with employers about the quality, timeliness, and efficiency of services provided.
- Partners share information about job openings and use a common database to record job orders throughout the state.

MOBILE WORKFORCE CENTERS

With support from Governor Mike Beebe and the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, the State was able to purchase two mobile Arkansas Workforce Center units with ARRA Workforce Investment Act statewide activities funding. The units are used to assist with employment services at job fairs and other events. The units, which are in high demand around the state, are available to training providers, educational institutions, and other state and federal agencies.

For Arkansans who lack access to reliable transportation this is often the critical factor in obtaining and maintaining employment. With the use of the mobile workforce centers, many more Arkansans

will have access to workforce services. Each mobile workforce center contains 13 computer stations, an interview room, interactive smartboard, sound system, and are handicapp accessible. Each comes equipped with an outside monitor that can display videos and presentations that can be provided to larger audiences.

In program year 2010, the mobile units were used at 59 events statewide to assist jobseekers and employers.



PERFORMANCE DATA

Wagner-Peyser Performance

Because of the economy, this has been a record year for serving job seekers. In excess of 216,000 individuals visited the state’s workforce centers for a wide variety of reasons: seeking employment, to develop a resume, apply for training funds, or secure labor market information. Of this number, 189,916 or 87% were unemployed.

Just under 136,000 registered with Arkansas JobLink, the state’s internet-based job matching system. During the year, there were 107,599 job openings posted in Arkansas JobLink with an average of five-six thousand jobs available each day.

Arkansas JobLink’s spidering technology has given the jobseeker access to job vacancies pulled from multiple job search engines. This has virtually doubled our capacity to make jobs visible to Arkansas’ job seekers.

Of the jobseekers who became employed and are tracked in Arkansas JobLink for federal performance measurements, slightly over seventy-six percent remained employed for at least six months.

Wagner-Peyser Program Results

Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual
Entered Employment Rate	71.5	55.29
Employment Retention Rate	80.5	76.77
Average Earnings*	\$9,500.00	\$11,205.00

*Average Earnings measure represents two quarters of earnings.

Workforce Investment Act Title I-B Performance

The data tables included in this report represent Arkansas’ Title I-B performance measure results for Program Year 2010. Arkansas has the highest performance measure goals amongst all states in four (4) categories (Adult Entered Employment, Adult Employment Retention, Dislocated Worker Employment Retention, and Youth Attainment of a Degree or Certificate). In addition, the state has the second highest goals in two (2) other categories (Youth Placement in Employment or Education and Dislocated Worker Entered Employment Rate).

The results of Arkansas’ rigorous performance measures were calculated in varying timeframes, meaning every measure was not calculated within the same twelve-month time period. For example, Average Earnings and Retention Rates were measured by customers who exited between April 2009 through March 2010. Entered Employment Rates were measured by customers who exited between October 2009 through September 2010. The 12-month Retention Rates and 12-month Average Earnings Rates were calculated based on customers who exited between January 2009 and December 2009. The Participant Counts were calculated from July 2010 through June 2011.

A performance table is presented for each of the state’s ten (10) local workforce investment areas. Each table contains a section that illustrates the performance successes and/or challenges of each local area. The results serve as an evaluation tool to indicate the overall success rate of the statewide Title I-B system.

Adult Program Results At-A-Glance

ETA-B

Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual	Numerator Denominator
Entered Employment Rate	91.0	89.9	793 882
Employment Retention Rate	92.0	95.2	979 1028
Average Earnings*	\$12,530.00	\$12,583.00	\$10,531,887.00 837

Outcomes for Adult Special Populations

ETA-C

Performance Items	Public Assistance Services	Numerator Denominator	Veterans	Numerator Individuals		Older Numerator	
				Disabilities	Denom	Individuals	Denom
Entered Employment Rate	88.8	430	84	42	58.3	7	87.5
		484		50		12	
Employment Retention Rate	95	472	95.9	47	72.7	8	92.3
		497		49		11	
Average Earnings*	\$11,255.00	\$4,445,667.00	\$10,374.00	\$404,589.00	\$7,954.00	\$47,726.00	\$10,662.00
		395		39		6	

Other Outcome Information for the Adult Program

ETA-D

Performance Items	Individuals Received Training	Numerator Denominator	Individuals Core/Intensive Services	Numerator Denominator
Entered Employment Rate	90.4	666 737	87.6	127 145
Employment Retention Rate	95.6	827 865	93.3	152 163
Average Earnings*	\$13,227.00	\$9,497,314.00 718	\$8,694.00	\$1,034,573.00 119

*Average Earnings measure represents two quarters of earnings.

Dislocated Worker Program Results At-A-Glance

				ETA-E
Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual	Numerator Denominator	
Entered Employment Rate	93.5	94.5	533	564
			475	489
Employment Retention Rate	95.5	97.1		
			\$5,432,908.00	398
Average Earnings*	\$13,200.00	\$13,651.00		

Outcomes for Dislocated Worker Special Populations

									ETA-F
Performance Items	Veterans	Num Individuals Denom Disabilities		Num Denom	Older Individuals	Num Denom	Displaced Homemakers	Num Denom	
Entered Employment Rate	95.1	39	100	1	91.4	32	0	0	
		41		1		35		0	0
Employment Retention Rate	93.8	30	0	0	100	26	100	2	
		32		0		26		2	
Average Earnings*	\$15,360.00	\$353,279.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,951.00	\$251,882.00	\$14,311.00	\$28,621.00	
		23		0		23		2	

Other Outcome Information for the Dislocated Worker Program

						ETA-G
Performance Items	Individuals Received Training		Numerator Denominator	Individuals Core/Intensive Services		Numerator Denominator
Entered Employment Rate	94.1		476	98.3		57
			506			58
Employment Retention Rate	97.2		423	96.3		52
			435			54
Average Earnings*	\$13,641.00		\$4,842,409.00	\$13,733.00		\$590,499.00
			355			43

*Average Earnings measure represents two quarters of earnings.

Youth (14 - 21) Program Results

ETA-H1

Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual	Numerator Denominator
Placement in Employment or Education	79.7	86.4	777 899
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	76.9	83.1	745 897
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	48	75.3	110 146

Other Reported Information

ETA-L

Program	12 Mo.		12 Mo.		Place. Nontrad	Num Denom	Wages		Unsub Trng	Num Denom
	Employ Retention	Num Denom	Earn Change	Numerator Denominator			Unsub	Num Denom		
Adults	90.8	870 958	\$7,535	\$6,238,878 828	2.9	23 793	\$4,611.00	\$3,181,382.00 690	67	443 666
Dislocated Workers	93	411 442	\$113.70	\$5,135,092 4517284	3.8	20 533	\$6,120.00	\$2,857,816.00 467	63	298 476
Older Youth	84.5	98 116	\$3,909	\$355,692 91	2.4	3 123	\$3,333.00	\$329,930.00 99		

Participation Levels

ETA-M

Program	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
Total Adults	122,584	84,940
Total Adults (self)	119,539	82,942
WIA Adults	121,421	84,284
WIA Dislocated Workers	1,169	660
Total Youth (14 - 21)	2,304	1,106
Younger Youth (14 - 18)	1,982	892
Older Youth (19 - 21)	322	214
Out-of-School Youth	381	251
In-School Youth	1,923	855

Cost of Program Activities

		ETA-N
Program Activity		Total Federal Spending
Local Adults		\$5,084,859.35
Local Dislocated Workers		5,555,280.99
Local Youth		6,798,986.19
Rapid Response		2,243,965.69
Statewide Required Activities		878,739.54
	Description	
	ARRA Asst to Local Area for WIA Activities	463,365.08
Statewide	ARRA GAE Administration	435,508.71
Allowed	IWTP ARRA	1,990,579.00
Activities	GAE Administration	1,776,239.37
	IWTP ARRA	335,094.11
	Additional LWIA PRAdult	218,285.85
	Capacity Building & Technical Assistance	114,219.96
	Asst in Estab and Operation of Workforce Ctrs.	166,436.90
	Reallocation of Recaptured Local	327,654.00
	Reallocation of Administration	32,765.00
	Outreach	235,177.63
Total of All Federal Spending Above		\$26,657,157.37

Arkansas has analyzed the cost of workforce activities for the program year using the “cost per participant” methodology used in previous years. The analysis indicates that the value of services has increased and that overall costs of providing services have declined, considering inflationary factors.

For Program Year 2009, Arkansas provided a cost efficient program that provided a wide variety of services meeting the needs of all stakeholders. Data for PY 2009 are shown in Figure I.

Figure 1 - Cost Analysis

ETA-Figure 1

Target Populations	PY 2009 Expenditures*	PY 2009 Participants Receiving Services	Cost Per Service Provided
Adults			
Core	\$1,703,701.57	1,781	\$955.60
Intensive	\$2,586,856.04	1,877	\$1,378.19
Training	\$2,305,645.76	1,723	\$1,338.16
Dislocated Adults			
Core	\$1,756,475.98	1,132	\$1,551.66
Intensive	\$2,903,777.84	1,169	\$2,483.98
Training	\$1,444,626.11	1,069	\$1,351.38
Youth	\$6,220,425.49	2,304	\$2,699.84

*Expenditures were from all available funding periods and sources, i.e., ARRA, PY 2009, and PY 2010. Expenditure period covers July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

CENTRAL ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

National Emergency Grant Subsidized Employment Program - Monroe/Prairie County

This grant allowed the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc. (CAPDD) to provide temporary employment for ten (10) community residents during the 2010 Program year. These individuals were employed to assist with the clean-up and debris removal efforts as a result of the flooding that occurred in the area in 2009 and were assigned to work with the Mayor of Brinkley. To date, twenty-two (22) individuals have been assigned temporary employment with funding that this grant provided and three (3) remain employed. This grant is scheduled to end in December 2011.

National Emergency Grant (NEG) Program – Saline County

This grant has allowed CAPDD to provide temporary employment for nine (9) community residents in Saline County during the 2010 Program Year. Seven (7) of these individuals are currently employed to assist with the clean-up and debris removal efforts as a result of the storms that occurred in the area in 2011 and are assigned to work with the Saline County Road Department. This grant was awarded in June 2011 and is scheduled to end on June 2012.

United States Census 2010

The U. S. Census Bureau recognized the Arkansas Workforce Center in North Little Rock as a valued partner and offered recognition for support in raising awareness of and inspiring participation in the 2010 Census. The City of North Little Rock was designated as one of only twenty (20) entities in the State for excellence in efforts to promote a complete count. The North Little Rock Workforce Center received a plaque and a

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
	Adults	16775		
	Dislocated Workers	74		
	Older Youth	37		
	Younger Youth	118		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	11419		
	Dislocated Workers	56		
	Older Youth	37		
	Younger Youth	61		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	90.0	93.5	
	Dislocated Workers	94.5	96.2	
Retention Rate	Adults	92.5	93.3	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	97.4	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,900	\$14,871	
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,250	\$15,444	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	83.1	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	77	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	56.7	
Overall Status of Performance				
		Not Met	Met	
		0	0	
			Exceeded	
			9	

letter of appreciation for the collaborative assistance that was provided and the North Little Rock City Council recognized the accomplishments of the North Little Rock census committee on September 13, 2010 at the North Little Rock City Hall Chamber.

CITY OF LITTLE ROCK HIGHLIGHTS

Making the Little Rock Workforce Center a true community resource – Over 92,000 Visitors in 2010

The Little Rock Workforce Center welcomed more than 92,000 separate visits in 2010. The partnership at the LRWFC consists of 14 organizations that represent local, state and federal government, non-profit and for-profit corporations, as well as grant-funded programs. These organizations provide a variety of services and resources to customers seeking all different kinds of assistance and information. Certainly, in the present economy, the Unemployment Insurance division was a key driver in creating this customer flow. However, each partner generated its share of innovative outreach efforts to meet the many needs of Little Rock residents – by offering community and business meeting space, free individual tax preparation and filing assistance, utility payment assistance, financial literacy and family budgeting programs, mini job and career fairs, and several youth training and employment programs, to name just a few.

Clinton Climate Initiative HEAL AR Project and the LRWIA

LRWIB partnered the Clinton Climate Initiative HEAL AR Project, a carbon emissions-reduction initiative led by the William J. Clinton Foundation and AmeriCorps to recruit laborers and supervisors. The Home Energy Affordability Loan program (HEAL AR) brought with it 31 “green collar” positions to the State of Arkansas. The labor force would at first be made up of AmeriCorps Service volunteers who have an interest in working in the Green Energy Industry that is being developed in the country. Participants would learn cutting-edge skills in the field of energy efficiency buildings, weatherization, and energy auditing. In some cases they can complete curriculum that is accepted by recognized

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants		ETA-O
Little Rock	Adults	10618	
	Dislocated Workers	100	
	Older Youth	40	
	Younger Youth	194	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	7461	
	Dislocated Workers	44	
	Older Youth	24	
	Younger Youth	84	
		Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	85.6
	Dislocated Workers	92.5	93.1
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	94.3
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	95.7
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,900	\$10,753
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$16,443
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	89.6
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	85.3
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	76.2
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	2	0	7

professional apprenticeship programs and can challenge LEED-certified testing.

Four youth participants were enrolled and completed the one-year commitment and earned: \$14,700 in stipends; an Education Award worth \$4,750; health, life, and dismemberment insurance; eligibility for loan deferral and forgiveness programs both during and after their year of volunteer service; and training alone that ended up being valued at approx \$7,500 to \$11,000 per participant on the open market. In addition, upon completion of their year of service, participants receive nationwide hiring preference with all available government positions. However, all 4 graduates opted instead to take advantage of a 2nd year AmeriCorps enlistment and will serve as peer supervisors and crew leaders for the incoming class.

EASTERN ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

The Workforce Investment Board of Eastern Arkansas (WIBEA), National Apprenticeship Training Foundation (NATF), and East Arkansas Community College (EACC) partnered to sponsor WIA Youth - Apprenticeship Day on June 24, 2011, at the Fine Arts Center at EACC in Forrest City, AR. The event gave 143 Eastern WIA Youth the opportunity to learn about Apprenticeship programs in Arkansas.

Forrest City Mayor, Larry Bryant, welcomed the youth and encouraged them to seek opportunities for careers through Apprenticeship which are in demand. NATF President and CEO, Karen Breashears, explained the purpose of Apprenticeship, the process for applying for Apprenticeship programs and encouraged the youth to prepare now for their careers by applying themselves while in high school.

Breashears also compared the wages for Apprenticeship Occupations to different Associate and Bachelor's Degree Programs offered through colleges to show that you do not have to have a college degree to have a good income and to also show that Apprenticeship and Higher Education do not compete with one another but can both be utilized in career development. For an added attraction, the Apprenticeship Mobile Unit was on-site so that youth could observe and participate in demonstrations associated with Apprenticeship occupations. Also attending the event were the SERCO Career Advisors from each county who also assisted with answering questions about the various programs.



Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
	Adults	8559		
	Dislocated Workers	23		
	Older Youth	26		
	Younger Youth	259		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	5598		
	Dislocated Workers	10		
	Older Youth	23		
	Younger Youth	113		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	89.0	96.7	
	Dislocated Workers	91.5	100	
Retention Rate	Adults	84.5	94.4	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	100	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$9,500	\$11,550	
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$14,426	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	87.5	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	81.1	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	70.6	
Overall Status of Performance				
		Not Met	Met	
		0	0	
			Exceeded	
			9	

Regional Career and Job Expo

Approximately 650 jobseekers participated in the Regional Career and Job Expo hosted by the Arkansas Workforce Centers and East Arkansas Community College (EACC) on October 28, 2010. The Job Expo, held at EACC, attracted 59 vendors who had various job openings they were filling. The EACC Career Pathways program staff began the event by hosting a breakfast for all vendors. During this time Career Pathways staff explained their program and benefits to employers and other vendors. Youth from the West Memphis High School attended the expo and were encouraged to wear dress clothes and be prepared to meet potential employers. "Both vendors and event organizers were pleased with the quality of the jobseekers who attended," said Lori Malone, Business Services Coordinator for the Eastern Workforce Investment Area. "This was a group effort so special thanks goes to Tiffany Billingsley, EACC Director of Continuing Education and Workforce Development, Department of Workforce Services for their financial support, and Boars Head for donating the food for lunch," said Malone. "This was a true example of how collaboration between an Arkansas Workforce Center and local community college can be extremely beneficial to the residents of Eastern Arkansas and our region," she added.

NORTH CENTRAL ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

North Central Arkansas Local Workforce Investment Area reported three significant activities in their area for program year 2010, which include:

1. Seeking additional funding grants for youth services.
2. Conducted a Youth Career Day at the Comprehensive Workforce Center in Batesville and plan to make this an annual event to include the Comprehensive Workforce Center in Searcy.
3. Due to the increasing number of hispanic population in the local area, they are advertising in local churches and businesses to make this group more aware of workforce center services.

Local Area Performance			
Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O	
North Central	Adults	8948	
	Dislocated Workers	108	
	Older Youth	20	
	Younger Youth	238	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	6575	
	Dislocated Workers	59	
	Older Youth	11	
	Younger Youth	206	
		Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.5	96.2
	Dislocated Workers	97.5	93.2
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	94.4
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	97.9
Average Earnings	Adults	\$11,000	\$13,396
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$12,494
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	84.3
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	84.2
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	100
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	1	0	8

NORTHEAST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

Additional Training

Three WIA staff members participated in training to become certified Career Development Facilitators. This was an intensive process, requiring several days of classroom training and numerous weeks of work on their own, to complete. Teresa McDonald, Donna Sanford, and Judith Blevens successfully achieved the Career Development Facilitator designation.

Streamlined Services

Services are streamlined to make services easily accessible to customers. Workforce Center partners coordinate and integrate activities and the provision of information, so that the system is viewed as comprehensive, coherent and accessible by both business and individual customers.

Improved Year-Round Youth Programs

Youth programs are linked closely to local market and community needs, and link academic and occupational learning. Youth programs include activities that promote youth development and citizenship, and provide opportunities to develop work skills, earn a paycheck, and increase self-reliance and self confidence for participants.

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O	
Northeast 	Adults	19285	
	Dislocated Workers	173	
	Older Youth	55	
	Younger Youth	308	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	13725	
	Dislocated Workers	102	
	Older Youth	31	
	Younger Youth	111	
			Negotiated Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.5	97.3
	Dislocated Workers	92.5	97.9
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	99
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	99
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,900	\$13,606
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,500	\$13,870
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	96.3
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	86.8
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	95.5
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	2	0	7

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

Youth Services

After two years of very large summer youth work experience programs, having a smaller group of youth this year has allowed more focused work with the individuals and opportunities to explore new things. For example, this year, as part of the Career and College Days, all youth in the summer program experience included an all day visit to one of the two-year post-secondary schools in their area. Arkansas State University at Mountain Home hosted youth from Baxter and Marion counties; North Arkansas College hosted youth from Searcy, Newton, Boone and Carroll counties and Northwest Technical Institute hosted Washington, Benton and Madison county's youth. Besides tours of the schools at each location the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition brought the Arkansas Going Green training trailer and apprenticeship staff spoke with the youth about the opportunities available through apprenticeships. Many youth were very excited to learn about a different way to move forward with their futures, one where they would be earning money as well as learning a skill. Questions and answers flew through the groups furiously.

Northwest Arkansas Youth Development Collaborative

Begun as a pilot project of the Youth Council nearly two years ago, the Northwest Arkansas Youth Development Collaborative is now in the process of expanding and growing beyond the original site. Original efforts focused on working with youth at the Springdale Alternative Learning Environment (ALE), Youth Strategies and Workforce. Mike Fohner, President of Youth Strategies, is

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
Northwest 	Adults	19607		
	Dislocated Workers	332		
	Older Youth	47		
	Younger Youth	292		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	13534		
	Dislocated Workers	193		
	Older Youth	26		
	Younger Youth	88		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	92.4	
	Dislocated Workers	92.5	93	
Retention Rate	Adults	94.0	94.9	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	93.8	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,700	\$10,077	
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$12,867	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	89	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	93.8	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	50	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	2	0	7	

the Youth Council Chair and lead for the Collaborative.

Partnering with Youth Strategies added the great benefit by being part of the Jones Center for Families. This has allowed the many agencies and non-profits serving economically and socially disadvantaged individuals at the Jones Center and beyond to work together to help our Youth of Promise succeed. Initially ARRA funds through the Workforce Investment Act and last year the addition of TANF funds provided summer work experiences for many youth. This year with less funding it has been necessary to think outside the box and find other sources to help. A Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG) grant to ALE, partnering with Camp War Eagle and businesses have allowed us to continue to transform lives and help our youth have a dream for the future.

SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Centers assisted 261 individuals with training funds during PY 2010. Of those individuals, 104 were able to graduate and most of those graduates are currently working in their field of study. The high graduation rate of those clients contributed to the overall performance of the Southeast WIA Area, in which 8 out of 9 performance items were met. The Southeast Workforce Centers enrolled and provided services to approximately 500 youth during PY 2010 and there were over 1,700 documented cases of clients obtaining jobs as a result of them visiting the Workforce Centers. The Workforce Centers in Southeast Arkansas logged over 71,000 visitors during PY 2010; this high number demonstrates that the services provided by the Centers are very much needed in Southeast Arkansas and across the State.

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O	
Southeast 	Adults	5295	
	Dislocated Workers	61	
	Older Youth	16	
	Younger Youth	342	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	3646	
	Dislocated Workers	27	
	Older Youth	6	
	Younger Youth	98	
			Negotiated Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	88.0	88.5
	Dislocated Workers	93.5	95.2
Retention Rate	Adults	91.5	94.7
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	100
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,000	\$13,537
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,650	\$12,708
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	80.8
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	86.9
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	50
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	1	0	8

SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

In an effort to enhance the functionality of the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, Chairman James Baine and SWAWIB staff worked diligently to ensure that member participation was at its highest. SWAWIB members were contacted when meetings were missed and commitments/ re-commitments were made to work as a cohesive unit, thereby benefiting the customers and consumers of the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Centers.

Chairman Baine worked with the AWIB staff to locate new partner representatives as needed, and the current complexion of the SWAWIB is that of a working board, meeting on critical workforce issues and initiatives and setting and meeting goals that benefit all involved. SWAWIB members focus on goal setting and addressing the needs in Southwest Arkansas from a more proactive perspective. The needs of the employer/business customer have really taken “primary” status as this group is the driving force of the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

The Southwest area participated in three National Emergency Grants during the 2010 program year. They were AR-17 Storms, AR-18 December Floods and AR-19 2011 Storms and Floods. The primary purpose of a disaster project is to create temporary employment to assist with clean-up activities in counties that have been affected by severe storms. The areas in the Southwest region that have participated in the NEG grant include Dallas, Lafayette and Nevada counties. The participants are tasked to perform different duties related to the storm damage. These duties include, but are not limited to:

- Road repair.
- Removal of uprooted trees.
- Cleaning culverts and drain areas.
- Assisting in repair of certain structures

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O	
	Adults	10106	
	Dislocated Workers	77	
	Older Youth	14	
	Younger Youth	103	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	6905	
	Dislocated Workers	54	
	Older Youth	11	
	Younger Youth	75	
			Negotiated Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	70.5
	Dislocated Workers	92.0	95.1
Retention Rate	Adults	91.5	92.3
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	88.9
Average Earnings	Adults	\$11,500	\$11,785
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,600	\$12,250
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	78
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	75.5
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	25
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	6	0	3

- damaged by the storms.
- Filling potholes.

The participants also gain knowledgeable work experience while participating on these grants.

Judge Mark Glass, (Nevada County), was able to hire one worker full-time with the county on February 17, 2011. Judge Glass stated “With the WIA program, I have had some great workers. They have learned a lot while working on this NEG grant. They are very dependable and are very hard workers. If my county had any more openings, I would definitely hire these workers. They have done an excellent job helping Nevada County and I am very happy with the Southwest area WIA program”.

Judge Jimmy Jones (Dallas County), stated “ I am proud that the City of Fordyce is so closely linked to the WIA program. The collaboration has helped the people of the community and I am more than happy to assist WIA in any way possible”.

WEST CENTRAL ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

West Central Arkansas Local Workforce Investment Area reported three significant activities in their area for program year 2010, which include:

- Green Jobs Initiative - to help workers receive job training in green industry sectors and occupations, as well as access green career pathways. We seek to increase the number of individuals completing training programs who receive industry-recognized credentials and to increase the number of individuals completing training programs for employment in green jobs.
- Apprenticeship - forge linkages between Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, and integrate the delivery of technical and basic skills training through community-based partnerships.
- Disability Employment Initiative - enhance promising practices geared toward integrating youth with disabilities into employment.

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
West Central	Adults	14074		
	Dislocated Workers	37		
	Older Youth	33		
	Younger Youth	58		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	9575		
	Dislocated Workers	12		
	Older Youth	26		
	Younger Youth	20		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	89.5	97.1	
	Dislocated Workers	94.5	77.8	
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	97.6	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	100	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,500	\$17,559	
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$15,459	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	85.3	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	68.8	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	87.5	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	2	0	7	



WESTERN ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

National Emergency Grant Leads to Permanent Jobs

Western Arkansas was granted a National Emergency Grant to assist with the recovery efforts from severe storms in our area. These much needed funds went toward the clean-up and restoration efforts of the affected counties as well as providing jobs for dislocated workers. Even though this grant was intended to provide temporary disaster relief jobs, fourteen of the nineteen individuals served by the grant went directly into full-time, permanent positions once the grant was exhausted. Seven of the workers were hired by the counties they were working for, five found permanent positions in the private sector, and two joined the military. As unpredictable disaster events occur, we continue to apply for and receive these National Emergency Grants to serve our communities and citizens with a positive ending to unfortunate circumstances.

Western Arkansas Board Sponsors Local Job Fairs – Youth & Adult Clients Benefit

The Workforce Investment Board of Western Arkansas in partnership with the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith sponsors the Spring and Fall Job Fairs on the UAFS Campus. These events feature a multitude of exceptional companies seeking quality employees.

Area high school students, college students, and adults from the six-county area

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O	
Western	Adults	8154	
	Dislocated Workers	184	
	Older Youth	34	
	Younger Youth	70	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	5846	
	Dislocated Workers	103	
	Older Youth	19	
	Younger Youth	36	
			Negotiated Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	95.3
	Dislocated Workers	93.5	94.2
Retention Rate	Adults	91.5	100
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	99.1
Average Earnings	Adults	\$11,400	\$11,521
	Dislocated Workers	\$13,000	\$13,811
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	93
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	78.6
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48	100
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	0	0	9

attend these events. The Workforce Center at Fort Smith hosts a booth which exhibits partner agency information and literature for all attendees. WIA participants attend these Job Fairs as part of their training. Prior to the event they are instructed on how to prepare a resume and accurately complete a job application as well as how to present themselves - and their documents, to a potential employer. They use these events as practice for introducing themselves in a formal setting, making eye contact, dressing appropriately for an interview, and developing their networking skills. Especially for our young clients, these opportunities serve as invaluable tools to help them gain the confidence needed to succeed in the job market.

SUCCESS STORIES

JESSICA ELLIS

I came to this program in August 2010. I was 8.5 months pregnant, a drop-out, and had no work experience. I could see no future for my daughter or myself. The YES program gave me the opportunity to achieve, be a better person and to improve my future. I was given the opportunity to complete my education by enrolling in Adult Education classes at National Park Community College. Within a few weeks through the YES program, I was able to obtain my GED and have financial support, in the process which allowed me to focus on my education.

After obtaining my GED, through the YES program I was enrolled in the work experience training. I worked in the Resource Room at the Hot Springs Arkansas Workforce Center, where I learned how to interact with the public as well as discovering the true meaning of responsibilities and respect.

Now, I am working for West Central Arkansas Career Development Center Services as the Youth Intake Specialist. I plan to start college at National Park Community College next semester. I want to enter the Human Services Field of work so that I might give others the same opportunities I was given.

Without this program and the extraordinary help that was given to me, I am not sure where I would be today. My future looked very bleak and I did not have time to waste. This program opened up doors through guidance, counseling and assistance. It has given me the self assurance to be able to achieve a better future for myself and my child.

CLARA FULLER

Clara Fuller was a single mother of one child, receiving SNAP benefits when she came into the WAEDA office to apply for assistance. Being 23 years old and

a mother she was becoming overwhelmed at the cost of making a living for two. She decided she could not support her child on the amount of money she was earning as a Certified Nurse Assistant. She knew she had to have a degree to earn a decent wage, so she enrolled in college at ATU-Ozark. Since she loved working in the medical field she decided she would go for an Associate of Applied Science/ Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

She knew she had to support herself and her child while earning her degree, and although she received Pell Grant funds, she still needed additional assistance in order to stay in college. She says she could not have made it if she had not come to WAEDA, the Western Arkansas Workforce Investment Act provider, for assistance to help pay her tuition and books.

Once she was enrolled in the Adult program the workforce center staff watched her flourish. She was so happy to be in school and excited to be learning a new skill. She made good grades, even though at times she did not know if she could go on from the stress of school and being a mom. Despite all the demands on her, she made it through the struggles and completed on May 14, 2011, with an AAS in Allied Health/LPN. She found employment right away and went to work at Pointer Trail Health and Rehab earning \$19.00 per hour. This position involved a lot of nights and weekends so she decided that, with the full responsibility of her child, she needed a day shift and went to work at Copper Clinic in Fort Smith. She is now earning \$12.88 per hour, which was a substantial pay cut, but she felt that the schedule to accommodate her child was well worth it.

The fourteen months Clara was on our program, she was always smiling and confident she would somehow get through her training. She knew that one day it would be worth all the sacrifices she had to make.

Today she is very glad she had the opportunity to return to school and get a degree and could not have made it without the assistance she received through WAEDA.

RAYLON MIXON

Raylon Mixon was recently awarded the WIA Youth Scholarship Award in the amount of \$500. He is the only recipient of the award in Columbia County. Raylon was enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act Youth program through ARRA funding in 2009. He has proved throughout his time in the program that he is a hard worker, is dedicated to his tasks, and is a positive role model for his peers. He graduated from Magnolia High School with a 3.0 GPA. He will attend Southern Arkansas University this fall with a planned major in engineering. Raylon was featured in the Banner News on August 29, 2011.

KIFFANY GOLSTON

Kiffany Golston applied to the WIA program on May 4, 2009, as an Out of School Youth (OSY). Kiffany lives in Ozan, Arkansas, a very small community with a population of less than 100 people, with little job opportunities available. She knew that in order to make a living and to be able to reach her goals she would have to further her education. In order for Kiffany to enroll in school, she knew that she needed financial assistance. She realized that she was only steps away from beginning her journey to obtaining a degree. Kiffany was a very hard worker throughout the entire process for WIA; she never gave up no matter how hard it got for her.

Kiffany was able to enroll in UAMS' two (2) year fast track program for Nursing. Kiffany began her long journey to obtaining her degree. She endured many nights of studying and traveling back and forth to UAMS in Little Rock, Arkansas and Hope. She also had to complete clinical rotations at various hospitals in Magnolia, El Dorado, and Camden. No matter how

many times Kiffany thought that she would never reach her goal, she continued to strive and complete each semester.

By being dedicated to her future and her education, Kiffany was able to graduate from UAMS on May 20, 2011, with a Bachelors of Science degree in Nursing. Kiffany was eager to go out into the workforce and use the tools she learned while completing her education. On July 11, 2011, Kiffany began working at Christus St. Michael's Hospital in Texarkana, Texas. Her starting wage was \$23.09/hour.

Kiffany is excited and ready to begin her new journey; she stated that there are many healthcare opportunities that she could now seek after obtaining her degree. Kiffany is looking forward to whatever comes next and is grateful for the assistance from WIA. Without help from WIA, she would have had a difficult time or given up on her goal.

GARRICK OWENS

Garrick Owens, WIA Younger Youth Participant, was recently named Bradley County Young Citizen of the Year. The award was presented by the Bradley County Chamber of Commerce at its' Annual Chamber Gala, held in Warren, AR on February 22, 2011. The award holds a prestigious recognition status because the recipient is chosen from a very large group of people within the towns of Bradley County. Garrick was very active at Warren High School where he received national awards in FCCLA, and participated and held offices in the Student Council and several other clubs. Garrick is also very active in his church and his community.

"Garrick is very deserving of this award; he is an outstanding young man who strives for excellence and is committed to achieving his goals. I am proud to have him in our program." –said Eddie Thomas, Career Connections Coordinator. Mr. Owens has been in

the WIA youth program for over two years and has participated in employability classes, college prep classes and summer youth employment, where he secured a permanent part-time position as Administrative Assistant at the Bradley County Chamber of Commerce after successfully completing the summer program. Mr. Owens was among the 20 Warren High School Senior Younger Youth participants who graduated on May 27, 2011, which he completed with a cumulative g.p.a of 3.60. As a result of his hard work and dedication, Garrick received in excess of \$40,000 in scholarships upon graduating. Garrick is now attending the University of Arkansas at Monticello where his goal is to attain his Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

Garrick's positive outlook on life and his determination to achieve his goals makes him a "shining star" in the Bradley County Younger Youth Program.

RANDI RUDDER

Going to college can be challenging but finding the financial support can be even harder. Thanks to the Workforce Investment Act, I was able to pursue a career in dental hygiene almost worry free. The WIA paid not only for my tuition, but my books and licensure tests were also covered. I am so thankful to this program for helping me financially and allowing me to focus on my classes. I know the Dental Hygiene program would be tough and competitive and time consuming. The financial support of WIA allowed me work toward my degree without having full-time job as well. I'm happy and proud to say that on May 21, 2011, I graduated from UAMS with highest honors and a bachelors of science degree in Dental Hygiene and on June 6 I began my career as a dental hygienist at Dalton Family Dentistry. The WIA is a huge part of all my accomplishments. I am so thankful to the knowledgeable and supportive staff at the Arkansas Workforce Center in Morrilton and all of their help over the last two years. I am so excited for what the future holds and so thankful to the WIA for helping to make my dream job my reality.

BRIAN BUCK

Brian Buck was a dislocated worker from Tenaris Corporation in Blytheville, where he was a machinist for five years. He was not sure what he wanted to do, but knew he needed to broaden his options for employment.

He attended a Governor's Dislocated Task Force meeting, where he learned he could apply for funding to further his education. He contacted the Jonesboro Workforce Center and spoke to WIA Case Manager, Donna Sanford, where he was enrolled in the WIA program. Donna also helped him get additional training funds by referring him to Sherry Faulkner with the TAA program.

He had an interest in culinary training and decided to explore his options in that field. Black River Technical College in Pocahontas offers a Dietary Training Program and that interested him. He was approved for training and enrolled in the Associates of Applied Science-Dietary Manager program. He started classes in the fall of 2009 and graduated with his Associate of Applied Science-Dietetics and a Certificate in Dietary Management in May 2011.

He is now working full-time for the Northeast Arkansas Baptist Hospital in Jonesboro as a Certified Dietetics Technician. He can move into a Registered Dietetics position as soon as one becomes available. He is really enjoying his new career and now had an opportunity for advancement into a Registered Dietetics position. His current plan is to continue working and in the fall of 2012 to enroll with Arkansas State University and complete the Bachelor of Science in Nutrition Science program.

He would like to thank the staff of the WIA program in Jonesboro for their assistance in completing his training. Without their help, he would not have been able to have attained his Associates Degree.

PATRICIA DANIEL

Patricia Daniel, age 48, came to the Arkansas Workforce Center in June of 2010 requesting assistance with her educational expenses in the Physical Therapy Assistant program at South Arkansas Community College in El Dorado. Patricia had completed her pre-requisites and was admitted to the program but was having financial issues that could have kept her from attending.

Patricia was aware of the WIA program because she had worked for Southwest Planning and Development in the Department of Workforce Development Department as a Career Training and Employment Specialist from October 2008 until April 2009. At that time, she stopped working full time in order to begin taking classes to prepare for the PTA program. Before working for SWAPDD Patricia had worked as a Branch Manager for Edwards Jones Investments in Conway until her family moved to Magnolia.

Patricia applied to the WIA program in August 2009 requesting assistance with two semesters of books, tuition, fees and transportation assistance, since the school commute was 80 miles per day. She was approved for these services and enrolled on August 23, 2010 into the ARRA Adult funding stream. Patricia entered the PTA program and did well. At the end of her first semester she had a GPA of 2.98. During her second semester in the program Patricia found herself and her family in financial straits. She had to quit working when she entered the PTA program and even though she was receiving transportation assistance, she was unable to meet her financial obligations.

In January 2011, Patricia began her clinical training in Little Rock at Baptist Health Care. She had to rent an apartment close to the hospital because she was unable to commute the 200+ miles per day from Magnolia to Little Rock. Her transportation allowance was reduced

due to the closeness of the apartment to the hospital.

On February 2, 2011 Patricia came in requesting Needs Related Payments until her graduation in May 2011. She said without the assistance she was unsure if she would be able to finish school due to the heavy financial burden of maintaining two households during the semester. Patricia was approved for Needs Related Payments on February 2, 2011 and began receiving the service on February 7, 2011.

Patricia graduated from South Ark with an Associate of Applied Science in Physical Therapy on May 13, 2011, making the Dean's List her final semester. Patricia then took and passed the Physical Therapy Assistant Licensure exam on June 24, 2011 and began working as a PTA at Ouachita Medical Center July 5, 2011, making more than \$25 per hour as a "PRN" employee.

JOSH DAWSON

Josh Dawson learned of the WIA program in his junior year of high school when he applied to work on the Summer Youth work program at the Hoxie School.

At the beginning of his senior year of high school, he learned that he would not graduate with his class and soon dropped out of school. With encouragement from his mother and case manager, Donna Sanford, he enrolled at the Walnut Ridge Adult Ed center at Black River Technical College in the GED program. During this time his girlfriend became pregnant and they married. He took the GED exam and failed to complete the math portion. Discouraged, he stopped attending classes and found a job that did not pay a self sufficient wage. He worked the following summer with the Youth program, with Donna continuing to encourage completing the GED.

After the birth of his son he realized that completion of the GED was a necessary step to better himself and

able him to support his wife and son. He knew that without an education he would not be able to earn a self sufficient wage. He did return to GED classes, and received notification that he passed.

He continues to work through the summer, but is currently working part time, due to enrollment at the Black River Technical College in Pocahontas, in the Business Associates Degree program. At this point his grades have been all A's—in college and when the degree is completed he would like to go into business for himself opening a greenhouse and landscaping business.

He is very thankful for WIA, for the continual encouragement, and his case manager's assistance in keeping him focused on completing the GED exam.

DONNY MCCOLLOUGH

Donny McCollough has focused on computers, to learn their inner workings, since he was an adolescent. Even during high school, he knew that a job in the computer industry was something he wanted to have. However, his visual impairment and lack of family support deterred him from his dream.

Donny came to the Workforce Center in Rogers in March. He moved to Arkansas from Tennessee and needed income. He was looking for information on how to apply for SSI. There he met with the Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) who explained to Donny that Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) was only a quick fix, if he was approved. She helped him navigate the Social Security Administration's website to apply for SSI and register for Arkansas JobLink. She encouraged him to start looking for work right away.

After several meetings and training sessions, Donny went to the local temporary staffing agencies. He used his newly gained interpersonal skills and resume

to help him convey that he was looking for a job to sustain (self-sufficiency) a middle-class lifestyle. Robert Half Technology, a temporary staffing agency, after some testing and standard reference checks, referred Donny to an employer. Donny tested above average in ALL software application tests and satisfactory on his hardware knowledge. Donny was excited and went into the interview with confidence.

Donny was offered and accepted the position. He is making \$10 per hour and has a contract through RHT for a full year. If positions are available, and if his evaluations are satisfactory, Donny will be offered a position permanently after the contract expires! This example is just one of the many ways the Disability Employment Initiative can work – a 24 year old, with no formal post-secondary education or support system can come into a local Workforce Center and receive the guided training to get a position in the field of his choice. This service is a win for the Arkansans with disabilities and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services.

ASHER ROSENZWEIG

Asher Rosenzweig is a 21 year old that had made some decisions in his past that inhibited his ability to obtain successful employment. He came into the Rogers Workforce Center to speak with me about overcoming his employment barriers to obtain a career. I assigned Asher a KUDER assessment and a TABE test to find out where his interests and skills were. After Asher completed the assessments, we looked very intensively over the results. Asher scored high in the maintenance and the electrical field.

We discussed the various different types of employment involved with those skills and we also discussed the possibility of an OJT with a local company to allow him to work and still gain a new career. As his case manager, I contacted Bill Towler, the owner

of AMP Electric & Maintenance and spoke with him about Asher. Mr. Towler was very interested in the OJT program that WIA offered and agreed to have Asher become a member of his crew as an apprentice electrician.

Asher was placed with AMP Electric & Maintenance on February 22, 2011. WIA also assisted Asher with schooling by giving him a scholarship to the Arkansas College of Electricity in Rogers, AR. From the initial contact with Asher to the present date, Asher has successfully gained employment at AMP Electric & Maintenance and is now making approximately \$20,000 per year and successfully overcame his employment barriers. Asher intends on continuing his education and gaining his Master Electrician Certification.