

***WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT***

***PROGRAM YEAR 2011 ANNUAL  
REPORT***



***SUBMITTED BY THE  
STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD***

***OCTOBER 2012***

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What follows in this document is the performance data related to Workforce Investment Act Program Year 2011 activity in Maine.

## **INTRODUCTION**

***“It is time for us to take bold action. Maine has the best and brightest people to move the state forward and there is no better time to start the movement. All hard working Maine families deserve to have access to the tools that will help them realize their dreams and achieve them. My vision for Maine is one where all of our citizens prosper now and into the future.”***

### ***Governor Paul R. LePage***

Program Year 2011 has been a challenging year for Maine’s Workforce Development System. The weak national economy and sluggish job market has impacted Maine with an unemployment rate that has hovered around 8% all year. Given the tough environment, the workforce system partners have performed admirably. However, the biggest impact to the workforce development system this year has been the proposed changes to the structure of the system itself by Governor LePage.

The Governor has asked the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) to develop new strategies and governance structures for federal and state job training funds.

As evidenced by the quote from the Governor above, the LePage Administration is determined to create a more prosperous economic environment for all Maine citizens. The Governor has established the following objective and goals for next year;

#### Objective:

Maximize the Return On Investment for Federal and State job training funds for Maine’s Citizens and Employers.

#### Goals:

- Expand funding for Job Training; increase the numbers of individuals who would otherwise be served by reducing administrative overhead;
- Be more relevant to businesses; Increase involvement of private sector job creators with the Workforce Development System;
- Expand input at the local level, and to the State Workforce Investment Board;
- Increase consistency of state-wide customer service and policies, and;
- Increase coordination with local economic development activity.

The three key components of the Governor’s Workforce Development Strategy are:

#### ***1) A revitalized State Workforce Investment Board***

- Private sector demand and data driven;
- New membership including a Business Majority (currently 61%);
- Leadership from the Governor’s Office;

**2) *A restructured workforce development system:***

- Increases involvement of private sector job creators by utilizing natural business intermediaries like the sixty-eight (68) Chambers of Commerce;
- Expands input at the local level, and to the State Workforce Investment Board by increasing the number of local areas from four (4) to eight (8). The result is smaller areas that are much more reflective of the local labor market versus huge areas of five and six counties clumped together;
- Increases consistency of state-wide customer service, policies, and accountability. Currently there are varying policies developed by the four different Local Boards.

A team comprised of the local Career Center Managers, Governor's Account Executives from the Department of Economic & Community Development, and Chamber Executives in each Region, will work together to convene the business community, identify their workforce development needs, and communicate that aggregated demand for service to the workforce system partners at the local level as well as at the State level. We do not expect every Chamber to do everything alone. We expect the Chamber Executives in the region to work together, connecting with all the business in that region.

**3) *Industry Partnerships as a cornerstone of Maine's workforce development strategy;***

- Industry Partnerships will drive the system, by identifying skill gaps and human resource needs in targeted industries and high priority occupations;
- As Partnerships work to solve workforce challenges within their industries, they are helping to improve the local, regional and statewide economies;
- IP activity is directed by the needs of the business community.

The Governor's proposed changes will have a tremendous impact on workforce development activity by involving more employers, and brokering more skills training that is connected to actual jobs in demand in Maine.

## **MAINE LABOR MARKET REVIEW**

### **ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS**

Maine's economy has stabilized following the worst downturn in 80 years. Modest job growth in some sectors continues to be offset by job losses in other sectors. Payroll employment has not changed appreciably the last two years, remaining well below pre-recession highs. Unemployment remains high and the Consensus Economic Forecasting Commission does not expect a return to peak levels of employment until 2017, ten years after the onset of the national recession and eight years after the recovery began.

Maine faces major workforce development challenges in the years ahead from the demographic trends that are slowing labor force growth. The population decline already occurring in several regions, combined with the restructuring of employment that continues to reallocate the knowledge, skill and other performance requirements of jobs are two examples.

The future direction of our economy depends on how the state manages these challenges to assist both individuals to be productive and earn good wages, and companies to effectively staff operations to meet product and service demand. If employers are unable to identify sufficient staff with the appropriate education and skills, they will locate elsewhere.

#### **Demographic Trends**

Maine has the oldest population in the nation. The large baby boom generation, currently in their 50s and 60s, is aging toward retirement. The number of births per year has trended so low that we have very little natural increase (births minus deaths). In the near-term, modest labor force growth is expected, but in less than a decade more people will age out of the labor force than the number of young people entering the labor force.

Compounding this situation is the fact that older workers generally have more experience, higher earnings, higher labor force participation rates, and lower unemployment rates than younger workers who are still developing the discipline and experience necessary for success. Employers will be challenged by this loss of high-value experience in their workforce. These circumstances and potential consequences make it imperative that Maine fosters an environment that will entice higher rates of in-migration to stem the demographic tide.

#### **Structural Shifts in Employment**

Restructuring of employment is causing massive displacement in the ranks of those with limited education. Jobs in production, construction, administrative support and associated functions that have been the primary source of a middle-class lifestyle for those without a college education are declining or growing very slowly. The supply of these workers has not declined as fast as demand for their services has, causing wage stagnation for those who continue to work in these fields, high unemployment for those displaced from them, and re-employment in lower-skill, lower-paying occupations for many who have little choice but to settle for whatever job they can find.

The economy of many communities was built on industries that once thrived but are virtually gone today. Footwear manufacturing moved to the Caribbean and other parts of the world, textile manufacturing moved closer to the source, and agriculture and forestry were heavily mechanized, requiring fewer workers per unit of output. The result has been economic stagnation or decline for many communities, especially those in counties bordering Quebec and New Brunswick. Growth has been concentrated in urban centers, especially communities with a hospital and the associated medical services that cluster around them.

Even as the economy recovers, many of the production, construction, maintenance, administrative support and other related jobs that have been lost will not come back. Absent significant re-skilling for much of this population, the adverse demand situation for those workers is unlikely to improve. Without well-directed job training resources, the situation for those without post-secondary education is likely to worsen in the years ahead.

In addition to the challenges for those whose skills have become less in demand, returning veterans face higher than average unemployment rates, and immigrants from Somalia, Ethiopia, and other war-torn nations face cultural, language, educational, and work skills barriers. Special attention is warranted for those who served and risked their lives to protect our freedom and for those who escaped persecution to come here to live in freedom.

While many individuals find their years of accumulated experience are no longer in demand, many employers are challenged to find the workers with the education, experience, or skills needed to perform functions critical to their operations. Demand for workers in health care, information technology, social, professional and other services is rising. The staffing needs of those industries are primarily for professional and technical functions—which generally require post-secondary education or training and offer higher-than-average earnings—and for service, sales, and administrative support functions—which generally do not require post-secondary education or training and offer lower than average earnings. The result is job growth concentrated at both the upper and lower ends of the education and earnings spectrum. We have many individuals who need a job, are under-employed, or need a better job, as well as many businesses that need qualified staff. Yet mismatches between the two groups create a major missed opportunity for prosperity.

## **Regional Trends**

Restructuring of employment is exacerbating the economic divide between rural and urbanized regions of the state. Displaced production workers from rural regions face the dual challenge of qualifying for good jobs in growing sectors and lengthy commutes to work in service-center communities where those jobs are located.

## **Education**

A look at employment rates (the share of the population that is employed) of the working-age population is illustrative of the very different outcomes those with limited education face compared to those with higher attainment. Among the population age 25 to 64 in Maine, only 43 percent of those who do not have a high school diploma are employed, compared to 70 percent with a high school diploma. The situation they face contrasts significantly with those having higher educational attainment. Nearly 77 percent with some post-secondary education or an associate's degree are employed, with rising employment rates for higher levels of attainment: 84 percent with a bachelor's; 84 percent with a master's; and 90 percent with a professional or doctoral degree.

## **Current Demand and Outlook**

Job postings provide an indication of current occupational demand. About half of the postings are for occupations that require post-secondary education or training, and a high share of those positions require a specific degree or credential. Healthcare technician and practitioner positions, for example, typically account for one-quarter of all postings. To qualify for those positions one must have a specific degree and clinical training; a degree in English or anthropology will not suffice. There are few postings for jobs in construction, production, administrative support or other declining occupations.

The long-term occupational job outlook is largely for a continuation of trends that have been on-going for some time. Projections to 2020 indicate that 68 of the 100 fastest growing jobs will be in occupations that require some form of post-secondary credential; 22 of the 40 fastest growing occupations will be healthcare-related; and business, financial operations, computer, mathematical, science and legal occupations will grow faster than average. On the other end of the spectrum, of the 40 occupations expected to lose the most jobs, 21 are in production occupations and eight are clerical.

In addition to the trend toward jobs at the upper and lower ends of the education and earnings spectrums, the flattening of organizations in all sectors puts a premium on self-organization, self-management, and personal initiative by workers at all organizational levels. Specialization of functions is becoming a thing of the past as workers increasingly are given more diverse sets of responsibilities, not only requiring higher knowledge and skills but also raising occupational qualifications. Jobs that once required little more than a strong back or manual dexterity now require higher levels of reading comprehension and skills in communication, critical thinking, and decision making.

This has been especially true in manufacturing, a sector in which employment has been cut in half over the last 25 years. With so many displaced manufacturing workers, one might expect an abundant supply, but too often employers are not able to find qualified applicants. In fact, manufacturers that have survived and thrived are those that introduced capital-intensive production systems. Performance requirements of these production jobs go well beyond what was required on the assembly line jobs of yesterday. Most production occupations do not require degrees, but they increasingly do require strong math, reading, writing, problem-solving skills and sometimes specialized training of as much as two years.

## **Skill Gaps**

State workforce agencies that are able to specify exact areas of knowledge and skill gaps are those with on-going job vacancy surveys that allow them to identify occupations with persistently high rates of openings. The Maine Department of Labor is seeking funding to survey employers so we can identify occupations in which employers are persistently challenged to find staff. In conjunction with occupational projections, vacancy information will provide another important tool to target limited training and educational resources to better serve both employers and job seekers.

Lacking current job vacancy data, we can generalize that the primary performance attributes of jobs in growing occupations are concentrated around critical thinking and problem identification, mathematics, reading comprehension, active listening, oral communication, instruction, coordination and monitoring, and decision making. Those contrast with the primary work activities or knowledge requirements of occupations that are expected to experience the highest rates of job loss, which include handling and moving objects, controlling machines, repairing and maintaining equipment, clerical functions, and construction functions.

## **Bottom Line**

Maine, along with the rest of the nation, has struggled over the past year with a lagging economy, and faces many challenges in the new global economy. Business cycles have changed, and Maine's workforce development system must respond to those changes. The Governor's new vision for workforce development in Maine is timely and desperately needed to modernize a fourteen year old system design that is no longer as effective and efficient as it needs to be.

## Maine's Workforce System Performance Highlights

Working with Maine's four Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), the State Workforce Investment Board, the Maine Department of Labor and the service providers who deliver the programs funded by WIA through the CareerCenter system, Maine maximizes its WIA revenue by establishing an infrastructure to deliver employment and training programs for both citizens and employers. This infrastructure is not administrative; it is the street-level presence of services available in every county in Maine.

The following summary of other federal and state programs and outcomes for Program Year 2011 illustrates the extent to which WIA funds help to leverage resources and contribute to workforce development:

### Trade Adjustment Assistance

The number of individuals enrolled and the number of companies certified in the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) program increased in the last year. Funds from the TAA were used towards training expenses for **1,161** workers. Overall, the TAA program provided reemployment services to **2,057** individuals.

#### TAA program outcomes for PY 2011:

Entered employment rate:	<b>73.33%</b>
Retention rate:	<b>91.83%</b>
Average earnings:	<b>\$16,549</b>

### National Emergency Grants

In PY 11, The Bureau of Employment Services and local workforce boards responded to significant downsizing and closure events but none resulted in the need to apply for National Emergency Grants (NEGs).

Throughout the year, the Bureau of Employment Services and local workforce boards continued activities to assist workers who were affected by downsizing and closures through NEG funded projects awarded in prior years including:

- Maine Military Authority
- Katahdin 2011
- Associated Grocers
- BRAC Implementation
- Formed Fiber
- RR Donnelley
- Westpoint Homes
- GE Security
- Hinckley Co.

Through PY 11, a total of 327 workers received work search assistance and training in these NEG projects, with a 64.47% entered employment rate.

### Maine's Registered Apprenticeship Performance:

MDOL develops apprenticeship programs and standards in cooperation with employers and employees to prepare future workers in skilled labor occupations under standards which ensure complete training in all aspects of an occupation, supplemented by the necessary technical instruction in related subjects.

Total Apprentices	<b>1,696</b>
Total New in 2012	<b>488</b>
Increase over 2011	<b>193</b>
Average 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Wage	<b>\$12.11</b>
Average Completion Rate	<b>\$19.64</b>
Average Completion Rate Women in NTO	<b>\$21.94</b>
Percentage of Apprenticeships in Precision Mfg	<b>64%</b>
Percentage of Apprenticeships in Construction	<b>20%</b>
Percentage of Apprenticeships in Service	<b>15%</b>

### Wagner-Peyser and WIA Performance Highlights:

During PY 11, **85,965** individuals registered with the Maine Job Bank. Overall Maine Job Bank activity is summarized in chart below:

Job Bank Statistics	PY 2010	PY 2011	% Change
<b>Jobs Opened</b>	14,807	18,126	+22%
<b>Total Positions Opened</b>	30,480	36,719	+20%
<b>Jobs Closed</b>	14,238	17,872	+26%
<b>Total Positions Closed</b>	29,273	36,559	+25%
<b>Job Seeker Accounts Activated</b>	50,232	49,524	-1%
<b>Employer Accounts Activated</b>	1,465	1,377	-6%
<b>Job Notices Sent</b>	3,314,056	4,000,974	+21%
<b>Referrals Accepted</b>	250,230	263,124	+5%

- The top 20 job openings by occupational category were:

Occupational Category	Total Job Openings
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	999
Healthcare Support Occupations	997
Sales and Related Occupations	733
Production Occupations	580
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	535
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	522
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	509
Personal Care and Service Occupations	479
Community and Social Services Occupations	414
Construction and Extraction Occupations	327
Management Occupations	293
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	241
Installation, Maintenance and Repair Occupations	193
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	136
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	119
Protective Service Occupations	111
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	109
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	104
Education, Training and Library Occupations	104
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	84
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media Occupations	33

- With limited training dollars, we were able to serve **1,098** adults, **1,482** unemployed workers and **1,102** youth:
  - On average, approximately **75%** of all those enrolled found jobs;
  - **85%** of the adults served were still working more than six months after placement;
  - Approximately **84%** of the older youth (ages 19-21) served were still working six months after placement.
- Training services focus on providing a skills-based credential such as a diploma or equivalency, certificate or degree:
  - **59%** of the adults served received a credential;
  - **52%** of the youth served received a credential.

- We measure skill attainment for youth when they successfully complete a goal such as improving basic skills (reading and math), work readiness skills (resume', interviewing, time management, budgeting) and/or occupational skills (medical assistant, welder, and accountant). In 2011, **90%** of the youth served successfully completed some type of skill goal.

### **MAINE'S HEALTHCARE GRANT**

Employer led initiatives and early involvement of employers to best define their needs has become a cornerstone of our State's WIA strategy going forward. The success of the Healthcare Grant as an ongoing model for Industry Partnerships has been a perfect example of this. Some thirty hospitals and long term care providers partnered with Adult Education, the University System, Community Colleges and DHHS to identify the various required skill sets and build the necessary training curriculum to meet their needs. By breaking down existing silos through effective collaboration between healthcare providers, service providers, job seekers and other interested parties, the State of Maine has filled a short term hiring gap/need, while effectively putting in place the mechanisms to assure the ability to continue to feed the future pipeline of demand for certain nursing positions.

Two additional offshoots of this program have been: (1) the development of new sponsors and standards for a nurse apprenticeship program and (2) a train the trainer component to address the shortage of Simulation lab instructors and to increase the utilization of existing Sim lab facilities.

Through the testing and success of this industry partnership model, with employers taking on the new role in the development of their future workforce needs, the short term "fire" of nursing shortages has been put out, while simultaneously building the fire prevention system of tomorrow.

### Workforce Investment Cost Data

Maine allocates approximately 85% of the WIA Title I funds it receives to four Local Workforce Investment Areas. The WIA Title I funds allocated to adults, dislocated workers and youth had a direct impact of the range of strong performance outcomes for each of these groups.

The CareerCenters have been working as effective teams consisting of Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser, and to some extent Bureau of Rehabilitation service providers, to offer registered customers the highest level of support necessary to gain access to employment.

<b>UNIT COST DATA</b>	<b>Cost-Efficiency RATIO</b>	<b>TOTAL OBLIGATIONS*</b>	<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED</b>
<b>Overall, All Program Strategies</b>	\$2,859	\$9,896,761	3,462
<b>Adult Program</b>	\$2,299	\$2,471,794	1,075
<b>Dislocated Worker Programs</b>	\$2,314	\$3,050,003	1,318
<b>Youth Programs</b>	\$2,401	\$2,566,515	1,069

\*Unit Cost Data is based only on WIA Formula Funded Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs. Table N includes both WIA Formula and WIA American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

Table A – Workforce Investment Act Customer Satisfaction Results						
Customer Satisfaction	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level - American Customer Satisfaction Index	Number of Completed Surveys	Number of Customers Eligible for the Survey	Number of Customers Included in the Sample	Response Rate
Participants	80%	79%	500	2,015	675	74.1%
Employers	76%	72%	500	855	655	76.3%

Table B – Adult Program Results				
	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		
Entered Employment Rate	82%	81.6%	Numerator	240
			Denominator	294
Employment Retention Rate	81%	86.3%	Numerator	259
			Denominator	300
Average Earnings	\$10,000	\$10,345	Numerator	\$2,658,725
			Denominator	257
Employment and Credential Rate	68%	66.1%	Numerator	218
			Denominator	330

Table C – Outcomes for Adult Special Populations								
Reported Information	Public Assistance Recipients Receiving Intensive or Training Services		Veterans		Individuals With Disabilities		Older Individuals	
Entered Employment Rate	82.5%	132	76.9%	20	88.5%	23	68.0%	17
		160		26		26		25
Employment Retention Rate	87.5%	144	85.0%	17	63.0%	17	83.3%	20
		168		20		27		24
Average Earnings	\$9,806	\$1,392,519	\$10,976	\$186,590	\$8,077	\$129,230	\$9,315	\$186,306
		142		17		16		20
Employment And Credential Rate	69.8%	125	66.7%	18	64.0%	16	68.2%	15
		179		27		25		22

Table D – Other Outcome Information for the Adult Program				
Reported Information	Individuals Who Received Training Services		Individuals Who Received Only Core and Intensive Services	
Entered Employment Rate	82.8%	212	73.7%	28
		256		38
Employment Retention Rate	87.6%	218	80.4%	41
		249		51
Average Earnings	\$10,720	\$2,315,587	\$8,369	\$343,138
		216		41

Table E – Dislocated Worker Program Results				
	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		
Entered Employment Rate	87%	83.5%	Numerator	456
			Denominator	546
Employment Retention Rate	90%	90.2%	Numerator	451
			Denominator	500
Average Earnings	\$12,000	\$14,503	Numerator	\$6,468,268
			Denominator	446
Employment And Credential Rate	69%	60.3%	Numerator	288
			Denominator	478

Table F – Outcomes for Dislocated Worker Special Populations								
Reported Information	Veterans		Individuals With Disabilities		Older Individuals		Displaced Homemakers	
Entered Employment Rate	75.0%	48	85.7%	24	73.8%	79	83.3%	5
		64		28		107		6
Employment Retention Rate	83.7%	41	82.1%	23	83.5%	81	100.0%	5
		49		28		97		5
Average Earnings	\$16,603	\$658,603	\$11,198	\$257,554	\$12,774	\$1,021,942	\$17,504	\$87,518
		41		23		80		5
Employment And Credential Rate	56.6%	30	53.8%	14	48.2%	40	83.3%	5
		53		26		83		6

Table G – Other Outcome Information for the Dislocated Worker Program				
Reported Information	Individuals Who Received Training Services		Individuals Who Received Only Core and Intensive Services	
	Entered Employment Rate	84.3%	382	79.6%
		453		93
Employment Retention Rate	92.3%	360	82.7%	91
		390		110
Average Earnings	\$14,560	\$5,183,309	\$14,277	\$1,284,959
		356		90

Month (14-21) Program Results				
	Negotiated Performance Level		Actual Performance Level	
			Employment or Education	80.0%
			Denominator	274
Degree or Certificate	65.0%	70.1%	Numerator	197
			Denominator	281
Literacy Gains	N/A	7.7%	Numerator	10
			Denominator	130

Table H.2 – Youth (19-21) Results				
	Negotiated Performance Level		Actual Performance Level	
Entered Employment Rate	80%	78.9%	Numerator	60
			Denominator	76
Employment Retention Rate	80%	86.7%	Numerator	78
			Denominator	90
Six Months Earnings Increase	\$4,000	\$5,323	Numerator	\$452,470
			Denominator	85
Credential Rate	59%	64.4%	Numerator	91
			Denominator	137

Table I – Outcomes for Older Youth Special Populations								
Reported Information	Public Assistance Recipients		Veterans		Individuals With Disabilities		Out-of-School Youth	
	Entered Employment Rate	71.4%	30	100.0%	1	83.3%	10	83.3%
42			1		12		60	
Employment Retention Rate	90.2%	37	0.0%	0	76.5%	13	83.1%	59
		41		1		17		71
Average Earnings	\$4,185	\$171,572	\$0	\$0	\$4,114	\$61,708	\$4,335	\$290,440
		41		1		15		67
Credential Rate	66.7%	48	100.0%	1	36.8%	7	63.3%	68
		72		1		19		107

Table J – Younger Youth Results			
	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	
Skill Attainment Rate	99%	88.5%	392
			443
Youth Diploma or Equivalent Rate	66%	90.3%	167
			185
Retention Rate	69%	70.0%	145
			207

Table K – Outcomes for Younger Youth Special Populations						
Reported Information	Public Assistance Recipients		Individuals With Disabilities		Out-of-School Youth	
Skill Attainment Rate	91.6%	197	83.2%	139	86.8%	105
		215		167		1121
Youth Diploma or Equivalent Rate	91.4%	74	90.0%	63	81.5%	22
		81		70		27
Retention Rate	67.1%	57	67.8%	40	65.5%	57
		85		59		87

Table L– Other Reported Information										
	12 Mo. Employment Retention Rate		12 Mo. Earnings Change (Adults and Older Workers) or Replacement Rate (Dislocated Workers)		Placements for Participants in Nontraditional Employment		Wages At Entry Into Employment For Those Individuals Who Entered Unsubsidized Employment		Entry into Unsubsidized Employment Related to the training Received of Those Who Completed Training Services	
	Adults	80.9%	228	\$2,431	\$673,251	5.4%	13	\$5,287	\$1,247,657	63.2%
		282		277		240		236		212
Dislocated Workers	89.0%	504	90.0%	\$7,649,001	7.5%	34	\$6,721	\$3,017,802	60.5%	231
		566		\$8,496,201		456		449		382
Older Youth	74.1%	63	\$4,713	\$372,346	6.7%	4	\$3,797	\$220,205		
		85		79		60		58		

Table M – Participation Levels		
	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
Total Adult Customers	30,516	31,130
Total Adult (self-service only)	28,168	30,011
WIA Adults	29,243	30,472
WIA Dislocated Workers	1,318	689
Total Youth (14-21)	1,069	449
Younger Youth (14-18)	659	298
Older Youth (19-21)	410	151
Out-of-School Youth	530	204
In-School Youth	539	245

Table N– Cost of Program Activities		
Program Activities		Total Federal Spending
Local Adults		\$2,471,794
Local Dislocated Workers		\$3,050,003
Local Youth		\$2,566,515
Rapid Response (up to 25%) §134 (a) (2) (b)		\$880,056
Statewide Required Activities (up to 15%) §134 (a) (2) (b)		\$577,093
Statewide Allowable Activities §134 (a) (3)	10% of Adult, Youth, and DW funds for State Activities	\$351,300
Total of All Federal Spending Listed Above		\$9,896,761

Table O		Statewide	
	Total Participants Served	Adults	1,075
		Dislocated Workers	1,318
		Older Youth (19-21)	410
		Younger Youth (14-18)	659
	Total Exiters	Adults	461
		Dislocated Workers	689
		Older Youth (19-21)	151
		Younger Youth (14-18)	298
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level
Customer Satisfaction	Participants	80%	79%
	Employers	76%	72%
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	82%	82%
	Dislocated Workers	87%	84%
	Older Youth	80%	79%
Retention Rate	Adults	81%	86%
	Dislocated Workers	90%	90%
	Older Youth	80%	87%
	Younger Youth	69%	70%
Average Earnings (Adults/DWs) Six Months Earnings Increase (Older Youth)	Adults	\$10,000	\$10,345
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,000	\$14,503
	Older Youth	\$4,000	\$5,323
Credential/Diploma Rate	Adults	68%	66%
	Dislocated Workers	69%	60%
	Older Youth	59%	66%
	Younger Youth	66%	90%
Skill Attainment Rate	Younger Youth	99%	88%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	80%	65%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	65%	70%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	0	7.7%
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			
Overall Status of Local Performance		Not Met	Met
		0	9
			Exceeded
			8

Table O		Aroostook/Washington LA	
	Total Participants Served	Adults	163
		Dislocated Workers	152
		Older Youth (19-21)	99
		Younger Youth (14-18)	85
	Total Exiters	Adults	78
		Dislocated Workers	88
		Older Youth (19-21)	23
		Younger Youth (14-18)	40
		Negotiated	Actual
		Performance Level	Performance Level
Customer Satisfaction	Participants	80%	87%
	Employers	76%	72%
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	82%	86%
	Dislocated Workers	87%	81%
	Older Youth	80%	100%
Retention Rate	Adults	81%	91%
	Dislocated Workers	90%	97%
	Older Youth	80%	100%
	Younger Youth	69%	75%
Average Earnings (Adults/DWs) Six Months Earnings Increase (Older Youth)	Adults	\$10,000	\$9,211
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,000	\$11,784
	Older Youth	\$4,000	\$8,280
Credential/Diploma Rate	Adults	68%	79%
	Dislocated Workers	69%	52%
	Older Youth	59%	89%
	Younger Youth	66%	92%
Skill Attainment Rate	Younger Youth	99%	100%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	80%	71%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	65%	66%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	0	3
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a
Overall Status of Local Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	1	6	10

Table O		Tri-County LA	
	Total Participants Served	Adults	268
		Dislocated Workers	284
		Older Youth (19-21)	79
		Younger Youth (14-18)	128
	Total Exitors	Adults	141
		Dislocated Workers	183
		Older Youth (19-21)	47
		Younger Youth (14-18)	96
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level
Customer Satisfaction	Program Participants	80%	77%
	Employers	76%	72%
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	82%	80%
	Dislocated Workers	87%	85%
	Older Youth	80%	74%
Retention Rate	Adults	81%	82%
	Dislocated Workers	90%	86%
	Older Youth	80%	94%
	Younger Youth	69%	62%
Average Earnings (Adults/DWs) Six Months Earnings Increase (Older Youth)	Adults	\$10,000	\$9,506
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,000	\$14,069
	Older Youth	\$4,000	\$5,033
Credential/Diploma Rate	Adults	68%	63%
	Dislocated Workers	69%	71%
	Older Youth	59%	64%
	Younger Youth	66%	90%
Skill Attainment Rate	Younger Youth	99%	80%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	80%	65%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	65%	82%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	0	19%
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a
Overall Status of Local Performance		Not Met	Met
		0	10
		Exceeded	7

Table O		Central/Western LA	
Total Participants Served	Adults		294
	Dislocated Workers		365
	Older Youth (19-21)		104
	Younger Youth (14-18)		316
Total Exiters	Adults		127
	Dislocated Workers		172
	Older Youth (19-21)		42
	Younger Youth (14-18)		118
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level
Customer Satisfaction	Program Participants	80%	77%
	Employers	76%	72%
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	82%	81%
	Dislocated Workers	87%	74%
	Older Youth	80%	67%
Retention Rate	Adults	81%	88%
	Dislocated Workers	90%	90%
	Older Youth	80%	91%
	Younger Youth	69%	81%
Average Earnings (Adults/DWs) Six Months Earnings Increase (Older Youth)	Adults	\$10,000	\$11,367
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,000	\$15,072
	Older Youth	\$4,000	\$5,121
Credential/Diploma Rate	Adults	68%	68%
	Dislocated Workers	69%	55%
	Older Youth	59%	65%
	Younger Youth	66%	94%
Skill Attainment Rate	Younger Youth	99%	97%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	80%	54%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	65%	58%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	0	14.8
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a
Overall Status of Local Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	0	9	8

Table O		Coastal Counties LA	
	Total Participants Served	Adults	352
		Dislocated Workers	526
		Older Youth (19-21)	129
		Younger Youth (14-18)	130
	Total Exiters	Adults	117
		Dislocated Workers	250
		Older Youth (19-21)	39
		Younger Youth (14-18)	44
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level
Customer Satisfaction	Program Participants	80%	79%
	Employers	76%	72%
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	82%	81%
	Dislocated Workers	87%	91%
	Older Youth	80%	88%
Retention Rate	Adults	81%	84%
	Dislocated Workers	90%	91%
	Older Youth	80%	72%
	Younger Youth	69%	61%
Average Earnings (Adults/DWs) Six Months Earnings Increase (Older Youth)	Adults	\$10,000	\$10,576
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,000	\$14,847
	Older Youth	\$4,000	\$4,017
Credential/Diploma Rate	Adults	68%	57%
	Dislocated Workers	69%	62%
	Older Youth	59%	56%
	Younger Youth	66%	80%
Skill Attainment Rate	Younger Youth	99%	86%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	80%	84%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	65%	77%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	n/a	0%
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a
Overall Status of Local Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	0	10	17

## Monitoring and Evaluation Activities

During PY 11 the Bureau of Employment Services conducted Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser and Trade Adjustment Assistance monitoring and evaluation of each of the four Local Workforce Investment Boards and Service Providers for PY 10.

Program monitoring has two main purposes: 1) to ensure that the CareerCenter system is in compliance with the intent and substance of the rules governing funding streams, and; 2) to provide an understanding of the systems operating to achieve the overall workforce investment goals.

The first purpose satisfies the mandate of the State oversight agency to ensure that statutes, regulations, and policies are being followed. While comparatively narrower in scope than the second purpose, monitoring for compliance supports the State Workforce Investment Board's goal of accountability and meets legislated oversight requirements.

The second purpose allows the monitoring effort to take a strategic perspective. Monitoring becomes a way to develop an understanding of the systems the CareerCenters draw upon to deliver information and services to customers. Presumably, the systems in place are a result of efforts to achieve State and local board goals. The systems are composed of the working relationships with public and private entities and may take forms such as partnerships, agreements, collaborations, coalitions, and protocols. Working relationships may be internal or external to the CareerCenter facility. They may have been established by a local board for the entire area or established independently by a CareerCenter.

The monitoring plan this past year included a thorough review of both programmatic and fiscal/administrative compliance for the previous PY 10 period. The following represents a schedule of specific Local Area monitoring activity:

### **Programmatic Monitoring Review**

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Local Area 3: Central/Western Workforce Board  
Site Visit: September 19-22, 2011  
Site: Lewiston CareerCenter

Local Area 2: Tri-County Workforce Board  
Site Visit: November 14-17, 2011  
Site: Bangor CareerCenter

Local Area 1: Aroostook/Washington Workforce Board  
Site Visit: January 16-19, 2012  
Site: Presque Isle CareerCenter

Local Area 4: Coastal Counties Workforce Board Inc  
Site Visit: April 16-19, 2012  
Site: Portland CareerCenter

## **Financial and Administrative Systems Review**

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Local Area 3- Central Western Maine Workforce Investment Board (CWMWIB)

Site Visit: September 12-16, 2011

Site: Lewiston

Local Area 2- Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC)

Site Visit: February 13 – 17, 2012

Site: Bangor

Local Area 1- Aroostook and Washington County Workforce Investment Board

Northern Maine Development Commission (Fiscal Agent)

Site Visit: October 3-7, 2011

Site: Caribou

Local Area 4- Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.

Site Visit: April, 2-6, 2012

Site: Brunswick

The monitors have completed their report of the programmatic and fiscal findings and areas of concerns and corrective action plans have been developed.

In addition to regular monitoring as described above, the Bureau of Employment Services completed an evaluation response to the analysis of the Program Year 2010 WIA Annual report by USDOL, Region I. (Attached)

## WAIVERS

In PY 10, Maine had one approved waiver related to the Implementation of Subsequent Eligibility of Training Providers. We will ask for this waiver to be extended in PY 11.

### **Maine Dept. of Labor Workforce Investment Act**

#### **Request to Waive Implementation of Subsequent Eligibility of Training Providers**

The Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services, the state administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Act is currently operating under an approved waiver to delay the application of “Subsequent Eligibility of Training Providers” requirement for all students expires on July 1, 2012. The state is requesting an extended waiver to postpone the application of “Subsequent Eligibility of Training Providers” requirements for “all students” until June 30, 2013.

The basis for this request is to allow Maine additional time to establish a statewide system for consistently and uniformly collecting performance information among all training providers. Despite that an aggressive effort has been underway since July 2001 to design a system that promotes the intent and spirit of WIA to provide informed customer choice and provider accountability, training providers are struggling to adopt uniform systems for collecting and reporting performance information for “all students”. In consultation with the state’s relatively small training provider community we are committed to fulfilling the requirements of the Act and will continue in accordance with Maine’s plan to implement a Subsequent Eligibility application, review and approval process.

This waiver request is being submitted in the format identified in WIA section 189(i)(4)(B) and WIA Regulations 661.420(c).

- A). Statutory Regulations to be Waived:** Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Section 122(c)(5) and WIA regulations 663.530 citing the provision that the time limit for initial eligibility may be waived for an additional year.
- B). Goals to be Achieved as a Result of the Waiver:** The goals to be achieved by the waiver are:
1. Improve efforts of data collection from training providers.
  2. Increase the amount and accuracy of WIA performance information for training providers by providing better technical assistance.
  3. Allow the CareerCenters more time to become more familiar with the Maine CareerCenter Consumer Report and Individual Training Account system.
  4. Continue to offer customer choice while working with the Department of Labor to identify possible revisions to this section of the Act.

- C). **State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers:** There are no existing state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing this request.
- D). **Description of the Waiver Goal and Programmatic Outcomes:** The purpose for requesting this waiver is to allow for the programs that are currently eligible to be available to CareerCenter customers who have been issued an Individual Training Account to get the skills training that they need. We are very concerned that a strict enforcement of Subsequent Eligibility guidelines would drastically reduce the limited number of training providers available to our customers.

Maine is a rural state consisting of four Local Workforce Investment Areas and 12 CareerCenter sites. Currently, the number of training providers that have been approved under the Initial Eligibility guidelines is 500. Collectively, these providers are approved for approximately 3,000 programs. Providers include all of Maine's community colleges, a significant number of public and private for profit schools, colleges and universities, Adult Education and Regional Vocational Education providers and non-profit community-based organizations.

The vast majority of providers do not have internal systems or capacity to produce the "all student" performance data in the specified timeframe to meet the re-certification requirements under Subsequent Eligibility. Moreover, for many of the programs that have been approved the data for the number of WIA supported students is grossly insufficient due to the timeframes that they received the training and the calculation of performance outcomes at exit. A complete list of eligible training providers is located at <http://198.182.162.220/mecrs/training.asp>.

The Maine Department of Labor has worked very closely with the four Local Workforce Investment Areas, the Center for Workforce Research and Information (formerly, the Division of Labor Market Information Services and the Department of Education) to market the concept of the Maine CareerCenter Consumer Report System. Throughout the past year we have met with representatives from most of the major educational institutions in the state. We have held several training provider local forums throughout the past year. In addition, the Bureau staff have spent most of the past year providing on-site technical assistance for providers. The Bureau is committed to continuing this work throughout the next program year.

Maine's experience with implementing the subsequent eligibility requirements of the Act mirrors that of most other states. During the series of regional provider forums held this year the concerns of the training providers were largely echoed throughout the state:

1. Maintenance and collection of the "all student" performance data prescribed by the Act will result in a level of financial and human

resource investment that does not come close to matching the return on investment.

2. The potential of violations of student privacy is not necessary protected under the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act.
3. Most public and private not-for-profit institutions are facing considerable budget issues and have been working on processes for streamlining student information gathering and record-keeping systems. The WIA requirements would necessitate adding a considerable amount of data collection and intrusive customer follow-up activity.
4. Many providers, including the adult and regional vocational education, technical college and university system offer non-credit course/programs that are usually the most appropriate for WIA supported student. The “all student” data collection requirements for these courses proves to be extremely cumbersome because students are only interested in obtaining the specific skill instruction and leaving the system.

We have listened to and emphasized with these legitimate concerns. At the same time, we fully support the spirit and intent of the Act to afford customer choice and to hold the system accountable for performance and outcomes. Granting this waiver request will provide Maine with the additional time necessary to work with the Department of Labor and the state’s training provider community to identify methods for collecting “substantially similar” performance indicators. In addition, we are committed to promoting and supporting initiatives that offers continued customer choice and system accountability through this waiver plan as follows:

1. Continue to promote the Maine CareerCenter Consumer Report system through an ongoing series of public meetings with training providers in an effort to increase the number of providers and programs that participate in the system (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012).
2. Provide training provider on-demand technical assistance to assist with navigating the internet-based application and subsequent performance reporting process. (Ongoing)
3. Continue working with the Center for Workforce Research and Information and training providers to develop an effective mechanism for gathering information and reporting data using the U.I. wage record system. (Ongoing).
4. Work collaboratively with the Local Workforce Investment Boards to develop a better understanding at the local CareerCenter level for utilizing the ITA process and Maine CareerCenter Consumer Report system through staff development and training (Ongoing)

- E). Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver:** The waiver will positively impact all customers. Individual customers will continue to have choices in selecting training programs that meet their skill development needs. Employers will be assured that they are receiving a skilled and trained workforce. Local Workforce Boards will have an opportunity to evaluate effective measures of training provider performance. Training providers will be given the opportunity to develop meaningful measures of student experiences and outcomes.
- F). Description of the Process to Monitor Progress:** The Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services will be the entity responsible to implement and monitor the goals and action plans outlined in this request. The BES maintains primary responsibility to meet the goals identified in this plan within the timeframes as established.
- G). Opportunity for Local Boards to Comment on Waiver Request:** The Bureau of Employment Services consulted with the four local board directors on March 21, 2011 and discussed the specific contents of this waiver request. Given that the local areas had routinely initiated a request for a waiver to extend the timeframe for initial eligibility, they unanimously support the contents of the waiver plan.
- H). Public Comment on This Waiver Request:** While there has been formal effort to solicit public input for this waiver request, the concerns that this request addresses have been the subject of local and state workforce board meetings that are open to the public.

## **OTHER REQUIRED INFORMATION**

In addition to the required components of the WIA Annual Report narrative, ETA encourages states to include the following information in its narrative:

*A. States also may want to include information from their strategic plans that highlights innovative service delivery strategies, including program activities that support dislocated workers, low-skilled/low-income adults and disadvantaged youth, the outcomes expected, as well as, the actual outcomes for their major customer populations. States may indicate actual federal outlays for selected activities, if such information is available.*

There were “wins” accomplished by our LWIBs this past year. Region I continued to build several effective employer/economic development/community partnerships with Aroostook Partnerships for Progress such an example. Region II, through its Mobilize Maine efforts has moved closer to the integration of workforce development and economic development activities. Region III has worked to address structural issues identified in the federal compliance review. Additionally, they were successful in registering positive results relative to the Healthcare Sector Grant. Region IV continued its ability to leverage funds for its region as the recipient of another new grant—the Midcoast Technology Occupations through Pathway Strategy (TOPS). Additionally, employer outreach was achieved through the utilization of OJTs as a way of incenting employers to hire new employees.

However, as a State we continue to encounter difficulty when attempting to leverage or cross pollinate “best practices” across the different LWIBs. This has been exacerbated by the structural changes that have occurred in both the global as well as in our local economies. As stated previously, the areas that have been hardest hit in terms of overall unemployment and the loss of jobs for older workers have been the shuttered mill towns which predominately existed in rural areas. It is for these reasons that we feel it is essential to recognize the paradigm shift that has occurred and accordingly restructure our WIA delivery system to one that is more consistent in terms of how it administers policies and shares successes (through the SWIB). In addition, our WIA programs will become more responsive to the needs of local communities, through an eight region configuration with a much better defined outreach in each business community through the Chambers of Commerce.

*B. A discussion of the state’s unique programs and recent accomplishments. Such a report can describe these accomplishments in the most advantageous manner to all stakeholders and partners, including Congress, governors, state legislators and workforce investment boards. States may want to highlight “success stories” that focus attention on successful programs for participants, employers, and communities.*

The highlight of activity for PY 10 in Maine has been the very successful Health Care Sector Grant. The grant was a collaborative effort of a group called the Health Care Workforce Forum. The group, which consists of health care employers, education and training professionals, workforce development and economic development practitioners,

worked on the grant proposal, and then implementation of activities across the state. Please refer to the grant highlights on page 13.

This grant has been a great learning experience for the system as it transitions to focusing on Industry Partnerships and sector strategies to address the workforce needs of Maine's employers. Many of the lessons learned from the grant will become best practices that are replicated in other sectors. Maine will follow the Pennsylvania model for Industry Partnerships which has been reported to be one of the best in the country.

*C. Messages from the governor or other contextual information about state workforce investment board members, market analysis, strategies for improvement, and effects on major industries may also be included.*

The message from Governor LePage is that the workforce development system in Maine must do a better job for Maine's citizens and employers. To that end, Governor LePage held a series of Job Creation Workshops with Maine's business community in 2011 and 2012. The seminars were designed to bring business leaders together to share ideas and concerns about government policy. There was a consistent message from the businesses at each of the workshops. Many businesses had open positions, but they were having trouble filling the jobs due to a lack of qualified applicants.

The Governor then asked what the publicly funded workforce development system was doing to address the skills mis-match impacting businesses looking for workers, and citizens looking for jobs. Upon closer examination of the workforce system's performance, the Governor was shocked to find out that less than twenty percent (20%) of the funding was being spent on training (tuition, OJTs, customized training) for participants. In addition, two of the four Local Workforce Investment Boards had been placed in "High Risk Grantee" status, based on federal monitoring of their fiscal performance. The Governor was also concerned about inconsistent program policies across the state, developed by four separate boards, as well as inconsistent customer service and accountability.

Governor LePage's message is that the workforce development system in Maine needs to do a better job by using more of the available funds for occupational skills training required by employers, and that the system is demand and data driven; the system needs to be responsive to opportunities created by the businesses, and we need to consistently monitor and evaluate the systems performance to maximize the return on investment for participants and taxpayers.

*D. A discussion of the activities funded by the state's discretionary ("5 percent") funds. In this section of the narrative report, states may describe activities undertaken in whole or in part with their discretionary funds, and how those activities directly or indirectly affect performance.*

In Maine, the WIA 5% funds were used to cover the cost of administering the program. Specifically, it funded personnel in the Bureau of Employment Services, to do Policy development, monitoring and evaluation activities and reporting.

*E. A discussion of programs and strategies for serving employers at the state and local level, including the performance metrics used by states or local areas to measure the effectiveness of such services and current available performance data. Effects on major industries may also be included.*

The tools to promote labor exchange are in place. They include the Maine Job Bank, OJTs and customized training programs. In spite of these tools a major skills mismatch exists between employers and job seekers, locally as well as nationally. The Governor's solution to this challenge is, through the SWIB, to become Employer led and data driven.

By engaging businesses locally and statewide through Industry Partnerships, earlier on in the process, as well as more consistently and systematically, Employers will more effectively play a role in better defining the skill sets required to meet their business' demands. Through uniform measurement of new metrics, both locally (our eight Chamber of Commerce Regions and statewide), we will be able to chart progress and highlight and implement best practices across the state, as well as put in place remedial fixes when required.

*F. A discussion of the initiatives and activities outlined in the WIA and Wagner-Peyser Act State Strategic Plan to improve performance.*

Maine is in the final phase of replacing its information management system to a more robust data warehouse that will be connected to the Department of Education's Student Longitudinal Data System. The new platform will give us better evidenced based data to make program and policy decisions from.

Maine has also invested in new on line tools like Burning Glass to serve Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth recognizing that brick and mortar Career Centers do not work for everyone.

The Governor has asked that the Departments of Labor, Education, Economic & Community Development and Human Services all work together to identify where their services overlap, and how to coordinate them better to the advantage of the participant. This effort is aided by the fact that all the Departments are represented on the SWIB's Program Policy Committee. The Committee will work to decrease duplication, leverage various resources, and develop state-wide systemic policies that benefit the participants of all the programs.

*G. A discussion of the programs, initiatives, and strategies for serving Veterans at the state and local level; including, the performance metrics used by states or local areas to measure the effectiveness of such services and current available performance data. Include a description of how veterans' priority of service is being implemented for all Department of Labor training programs. Please describe how the state has implemented the Gold Card Initiative, to provide intensive services to post 9/11 Veterans, including how the six month follow-up has been implemented.*

## **Veterans**

The LePage Administration has a strong focus on service to Veterans. Maine's First Lady, Mrs. Ann LePage, is a passionate advocate for soldiers and military families. She is constantly in attendance at events like Veteran's Memorial dedications, VFW conventions, and the Wreaths Across America effort. The First Lady rode with the Patriot Guard Riders who escorted tractor-trailers filled with Maine-made balsam wreaths. This is the twentieth consecutive year that Morrill Worcester, owner of Harrington, Maine-based Worcester Wreath Company, has traveled to Arlington to lay wreaths on gravestones, and it is the first time someone from Maine's first family has joined Morrill and Karen Worcester for the trip to honor deceased veterans at Arlington.

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant, (JVSG) is a non-competitive USDOL funded program that provides over \$800,000 annually to Maine, supporting 10.5 FTE veterans staff positions. Maine has three full-time and four half-time Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists (DVOPs), and four full-time and one half-time Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs), working within 12 CareerCenter offices in Maine. There is one LVER who serves as the state Veterans Program Manager based at the central office in Augusta. In addition, these veterans' representatives provide outreach to veterans at the numerous itinerant locations across Maine. The flow of veterans through our CareerCenters (One-Stop Centers) has averaged over 8,000 per year over the past few years, with almost one half of that count being unemployed. With only 12 (JVSG funded) Veterans' Representatives scattered throughout the Maine CareerCenters to serve this flow of veterans, it has been extremely challenging just to help the "walk-ins." No veteran coming to a Maine CareerCenter has ever been turned away.

The LVERs and DVOPs are "Veteran Advocates" for employment and training opportunities with Maine industries, businesses, and community-based organizations. Over the past three years, they actively participated in job and resource fairs, where they promoted services for and the hiring of Maine Veterans. This is a core task of a LVER, along with monitoring of federal contractor job listings, and will continue to be into the future. Additionally, Maine LVERs provide and facilitate a full range of employment and training services (as appropriate) to meet the needs of newly separated Maine National Guard redeploying members and other veterans in the workforce development system. Some of these services include intake and assessment, counseling, testing, vocational guidance, job referral, coordination, and job search assistance workshops.

## **Priority of Service**

Maine has implemented the Veterans' priority of service as defined and required by 38 U.S.C 4215(b) and 20 CFR Parts 1001 and 1010. The Maine one-stop delivery system (Maine CareerCenters) is the core mechanism used to support, expand and maintain services to our Veteran population throughout the State. Disabled Veterans and eligible spouses are the group(s) that will receive "top priority." Priority of service applies to Workforce Investment Act Adult, Dislocated and Youth Grants, National Emergency Grants, Demonstration Grants, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Wagner-Peyser, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other core programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and administered in Maine by the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL).

Accordingly, MDOL has issued guidance to the State's Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) requiring local policy issuance to providers of the above applications to include priority of service for Veterans requirements in *agreements* (plans, contracts and subcontracts).

MDOL, in conjunction with our Director Veterans Employment & Training (DVET), will *monitor* LWIB issuance, implementation and compliance of the priority of service statute and policy. LWIBs are subsequently required to conduct the same monitoring with any and all contractors receiving Department of Labor funds. DVOP Specialists and LVERs are responsible for advocating for Veterans and monitoring the priority of service principle within the Maine's CareerCenter network. Any case where a Veteran or eligible spouse is denied services over a Non-Veteran will be documented and brought to the attention of the Bureau of Employment Services for review and further action as appropriate.

Priority of service for Veterans and eligible spouses will support the tenets of "precedence" and "awareness" as defined in 20 CRF 1010. With regard to precedence for all U.S. DOL core-funded programs, Maine Veterans and eligible spouses will receive access to services earlier than non-covered persons. Indeed, if limited resources restrict a particular service, then, a Maine Veteran or eligible spouse will receive access instead of or before Non-Veterans. Again, precedence will apply to every qualified job training program funded, in whole or in part, by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Under the tenet of "awareness," Maine will focus on points of entry for services, both physical and virtual modes. All Maine CareerCenters and itinerant sites will have signage in their entry ways that defines priority of service for Veterans. At the initial point of contact with CareerCenter staff at reception, Veterans' status will be determined and priority for services will be discussed. For all hard-copy products (pamphlets/brochures) describing U.S. DOL core-funded programs, priority of service for Veterans will be inscribed. On all MDOL web sites, priority of service for Veterans will be highlighted. This applies as well to the web sites of LWIBs, program operators and others receiving U.S. DOL core program funds. Early on in accessing the new Maine Job Bank, a screen will reflect what priority of service for Veterans means, particularly as it relates to precedence.

*How services are made available* to Veterans and eligible spouses within our CareerCenter network is standard practice. No Veteran or eligible spouse is turned away without receiving some service. DVOP Specialists and LVERs are stationed in each of our key CareerCenters. They are responsible for providing one-on-one assistance to Veterans and eligible spouses including case management, assessment, planning, advocacy, job development, job matching, referral to other state and federal programs and follow-up. To some degree, other CareerCenter staff assists in these functions as well. DVOP Specialists and LVERs work exclusively with Veterans and eligible spouses and facilitate their access to all programs and services for which they are eligible under the priority of service policy. Indeed, Veterans and eligible spouses may be referred to any available employment and training service open to the general public regardless of funding source. All CareerCenter staff are essential in supporting priority of service and expanding outreach to Veterans and eligible spouses through close-working partnerships with CareerCenter partners and by building and sustaining community-based partnerships and service networks.

Maine will take the necessary actions to ensure that priority of service opportunities are clearly visible and articulated to all customers who engage in CareerCenter services, but most importantly, to each and every Veteran and eligible spouse who inquires or accesses services. As such, Maine Department of Labor and Local Workforce Investment Board “priority of service to Veterans” *policy to service providers* will, at a minimum, include the methods of implementing Veterans’ priority of service as follows:

A. Outreach / Recruitment

- Inclusion of information regarding Veterans’ priority of service in printed materials targeted to customers and employers.
- Inclusion of information regarding Veterans’ priority of service in presentations made to customers and employers.
- Addition of Veterans’ priority of service information to LWIBs, service providers, Maine CareerCenters and Department of Labor web sites.
- Pro-active recruitment of Veterans by targeted contact strategies or other strategies, particularly when the region is not in compliance with Veterans’ priority of service performance measures.

B. Notification

- Addition of a Veterans’ priority of service rights statement to the complaint procedures provided to a Veteran customer; and/or
- Addition of a Veterans’ priority of service rights statement to the signature. Portion of the WIA (or other covered) program paper intake forms or applications.
- Inclusion of information regarding Veterans’ priority of service at front desk reception areas, as well as in universal access information center locations.
- Provide the opportunity for Veterans and eligible spouses to make known their Veteran status.

C. Intake/Registration for Services

- Written policies to establish that service providers who receive WIA funds for employment and training programs will be required to identify covered persons at the point of entry to programs and/or services, so that Veterans and eligible spouses can take full advantage of the priority of service.
- Written policies and procedures will be required to ensure Veterans and eligible spouses understand their entitlement to priority of service and the full array of employment and training services available. Such policies will address eligibility requirements that Veterans and eligible spouses must meet in order to gain entry into programs and be provided applicable services.

D. Eligibility for Services

- Written policies and procedures will be required to ensure Veterans and eligible spouses meet the statutory eligibility requirements applicable to the specific employment and training program.
- Written policies and procedures will be required to ensure Veterans and eligible spouses are given priority of service where statutory or mandatory priorities are in effect and particularly, where LWIBs have instituted mandatory priorities due to limited funds.
- Written policies and procedures will be required to ensure that Veterans and eligible spouses receive access to services or resources earlier than non-

covered persons, or before a non-covered person, if resources or services are limited.

- Written policies will be required that will target special populations of Veterans including Special Disabled Veterans, Campaign Badge Veterans, Disabled Veterans and eligible spouses when services or resources are limited.

Maine will coordinate with our sister organizations to help support Veteran service initiatives. We will incorporate Veterans' priority of service language into financial and non-financial working *agreements*. For example we have existing *agreements* with the Maine AFL-CIO, a key partner in the delivery of rapid response services and outreach to dislocated workers in Maine. We also have memorandums of understanding with local adult education and community college partners who all provide important career development services to Maine workers, including Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans. We will ensure that priority of service language is incorporated into these and additional working agreements as to go forward in "Keeping the Promise!"