

Annual Report on the Workforce Investment Act

to

The United States Department of Labor

Program Year 2012

July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

Russell L. Fry, Acting Executive Director

Submitted November 15, 2013

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An agency of the Department of Commerce

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www.workforcewv.org

Message from the Governor:

It is my pleasure to present West Virginia's annual report on the Workforce Investment Act for program year 2012.

This report details West Virginia's efforts to deepen relationships with several partners in order to address the need for more middle-skilled individuals across the state. Highly technical work environments have become a part of middle-skill industries and the promotion of technical training and education is needed to adequately prepare West Virginia workers for these in-demand career opportunities. West Virginia is also increasing the number of credentials awarded through Individual Training Accounts by 10 percent in order to meet the emerging demand of middle-skill occupations.

Through Executive Order 3-13, I reestablished the West Virginia Workforce Planning Council. To help ensure our high school graduates are ready to either enter the workforce, or transition into college or vocational school, we must align classroom learning with specific workplace needs; as well as incorporate occupational training and life skills into curriculum. Through this council, we can meet the needs of business and industry, while also ensuring our children are prepared to lead successful careers.

I'm pleased to note, this year, West Virginia employers have posted more than 14,000 jobs representing more than 33,500 positions with WorkForce West Virginia, an increase of 10 percent from the prior year. Marcellus Shale activity is steadily increasing across the state. Employment, across all seven Workforce Investment Act regions in West Virginia, is growing in six core oil and gas industry sectors. By broadening the pool of skilled individuals for the natural gas and supporting industries, West Virginia is supplying a skilled workforce for a growing area of our economy. We are working to increase WorkKeys® Work Readiness Certificates throughout the next five years by 20 percent in an effort to document the skills of our current workforce as well as to focus on skill gaps in the state.

These successes are made possible with assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor under the Workforce Investment Act. We appreciate your support of workforce development in West Virginia and look forward to continued successes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Earl Ray Tomblin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor

A Word from the Acting Director:

On behalf of WorkForce West Virginia, I am pleased to provide you with our annual report on the Workforce Investment Act for program year 2012. Through expanded partnerships with state employers and economic development, WorkForce West Virginia's many accomplishments in the past year include the following:

- WorkForce West Virginia secured 36,726 job openings with 15,545 job orders. The increase is a direct result of successful cross training models for WorkForce West Virginia field staff and partners.
- WorkForce West Virginia served 125,254 job seekers, with 74,746 (60%) receiving Staff Assisted Services and 27,141 (22%) referrals to Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs. Additionally, 30,680 (25%) customers were referred to employment opportunities.
- WorkForce West Virginia continues to expand marketing and online services that saw an average of 227,000 page views per month or 1.82 million by the end of August 2012.
- The West Virginia version of the Mid Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) is the centerpiece for the State's comprehensive employment services case management information system. Job seekers that received staff service or referral in PY12 totaled 157,958 and 36,427 received self-service.
- The total number of WIA participants served was 11,811 (including self-service participants).
- Several successful remote interviews were accomplished using the Skype stations and automated WorkKeys testing is now possible in even more locations. Statewide average weekly usage exceeded 6,700 user sessions in the second quarter of 2013 – a nearly 70% increase over the same period in 2012.
- As of August 14, 2013, 3,796, or 14% of active employers have registered for online contribution reporting for unemployment compensation. That is a 300% increase from a year ago.
- The WOTC (Work Opportunity Tax Credit) Unit continued to process applications throughout 2012 in hopes that the targets would be extended. All WOTC targets were extended, retro-active, on January 2, 2013 until December 31, 2013. Certifications (for those processed during 2012) to employers were issued by the end of January 2013.
- WorkForce West Virginia implemented a drug testing policy in July 2012, collecting a total of 1,276 tests from July 16, 2012-June 30, 2013. We are pleased to report that we experienced only a 1.3% failure rate.

WorkForce West Virginia appreciates the guidance and support of the United States Department of Labor as we continue to build a highly skilled and employable workforce.

Sincerely,



Russell L. Fry
Acting Executive Director

New Initiatives Promote Training and Jobs in Emerging Industries

WorkForce West Virginia has fostered initiatives to promote training and job opportunities in emerging industries. Marcellus Shale natural gas production is rising even faster this year than energy experts had predicted. Production from West Virginia is on track to increase by about 50 percent this year. This has generated growth in related industries such as civil engineering and construction. WorkForce West Virginia has significantly increased their testing across the state for all construction apprenticeship trade programs, specifically Laborers.

Workforce West Virginia is an active member of the industry coalition, Just Beneath the Surface Alliance, that promotes workforce training for Marcellus Shale. As a founding member of the Training Steering Committee of the Alliance, Workforce West Virginia works with employers to educate local high school students and teachers about the many career opportunities in the oil and gas industry and the training available through the State's Community and Technical Colleges and Career Technical System.

West Virginia Northern Community College – Weirton campus graduated five students in mechatronics with four of them obtaining employment.

Pierpont Community & Technical College offers training sessions, classes, and programs that are specialized for certifications required for employees in the oil and gas industry. For example, they provide the IADC Rig Pass/SafeLand USA, which is a 1 day (8 hrs.) course designed to provide a basic orientation of rig operations and safe work practices. This Rig Pass training includes:

- General safety procedures
- Hazard communications
- Transportation rules and regulations
- Rig Environment
- Emergency response techniques

Students receive a certificate of completion from Pierpont Community & Technical College and Continuing Education Units equivalent to the curriculum of the training. Most of their students successfully obtain employment and/or advance in their careers at an oil & gas company.

Energy Experts report that the formation known as the “Devonian Shale” is quickly becoming a major source of natural gas in the Appalachian region, joining the Marcellus and Utica shale. It is reported the Upper Devonian is a mix of sandstone and other forms of rock, and lies just above the Marcellus Shale, which underlies much of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Extraction in the Devonian Shale is considerably cheaper to drill than other formations.

WorkForce West Virginia sent a representative to the following events:

- Elected Officials Oil & Gas Forums in Wheeling and Parkersburg
- WV IOGA Winter Meeting
- Oil & Gas Job Fairs
- NGA Institute, Pittsburgh, PA
- ShaleNet Conference, Seven Springs, PA

Drug Testing

On July 11th, 2012, WorkForce West Virginia issued Guidance Notice 15-12, and subsequently issued Guidance Notice, Change 1 on July 20th, 2012. The purpose of this policy was to provide guidance to local workforce investment boards and their operators regarding mandatory drug screening for Workforce Investment Act training-level participants.

Section 181(f) of Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) specifically provides the states the authority to test and sanction WIA participants for the use of controlled substances. On April 24, 2012, the Governor of West Virginia signed Executive Order 8-12, charging WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) to develop and implement a drug screening policy for Workforce Investment Act Title I training-level services.

Effective July 16, 2012, all participants that entered into training-level services funded by WIA Title I, individual training accounts and on-the-job training, were required to be screened utilizing urinalysis for the use of the following controlled substances prior to the beginning of training:

- Amphetamines
- Cannabinoids/THC
- Cocaine
- Opiates
- Phencyclidine (PCP)
- Benzodiazepines
- Propoxyphene
- Methadone
- Barbiturates
- Synthetic narcotics

WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificates

Employers need documentation of worker skills, and West Virginia is issuing the National Career Readiness Certificate statewide to provide measurable skill levels of workers. In partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education and West Virginia Career and Technical Colleges, WorkForce West Virginia has issued more than 46,600 WorkKeys® Career Readiness Certificates. WorkKeys® measures skills in the areas of Locating Information, Reading for Information and Applied Mathematics—basic skills that are required in the workplace.

More than 110 West Virginia employers have used WorkKeys® as part of their hiring process. The WorkKeys® process helps employers save time by interviewing only applicants who have the skills required for positions. A WorkKeys® Career Readiness Certificate can be used as a "plus" factor to help employers make selection and promotion decisions, and target their training budget on employees with skill gaps.

WorkForce West Virginia issues National Career Readiness Certificates signed by the Governor. In doing so, West Virginia is now identified on ACT's Work Ready Community site (www.workreadycommunities.org). The site gives current and prospective employers an on-line

tool to identify communities and counties that have National Career Readiness Certificates in their workforce.

Division of Corrections Initiative

As a result of an Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) meeting, WorkForce West Virginia and local workforce investment boards continues to partner with the Division of Corrections (DOC) in their respective regions to identify and work with ex-offenders being released to participate in the work release programs in one of four locations (Beckley, Charleston, Huntington and Parkersburg) to assist ex-offenders transition into employment. WorkForce West Virginia staff assist DOC staff in placing ex-offenders into employment through the utilization of core services and refer ex-offenders with barriers to employment to mandated partners for additional services.

Increasing employment awareness and partnering with DOC staff and other One-Stop partners allowed One Stop Career Centers to establish goals and objectives for this program. The primary goals were to prevent ex-offenders from re-offending; enhancing public safety and save tax payers/ money; making better use to the limited resources by heightening awareness ; and establishing more coordinated and comprehensive care-managed methods of supervision. This integrated approach has been achieved by leveraging resources from mandated partners in day-report centers, which assists ex-offenders in transitioning back into society.

WorkForce West Virginia continues to strengthen our partnership with the Division of Corrections (DOC) by assisting offenders prepare for employment upon release. WorkForce staff participates in mock job interviews, job fairs and provide information on services available thru the WorkForce system. WorkForce has made a concerted effort to reach out to veterans in half-way houses, recently released and those currently incarcerated to assist with overcoming barriers to secure employment and/or training. An emphasis has been placed on educating corrections staff and ex-offenders on the Free Fidelity Bonding program and how the availability of bonds can be marketed during the application process. A generic introduction letter has been developed to let the employer know the individual is eligible for a bond and briefly explains the bonding process.

The Division of Corrections continues to use WorkForce West Virginia to conduct testing in all WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers. This initiative has allowed the One-Stop delivery system to recruit and test applicants interested in becoming a Correctional Officer in a State Prison.

WorkForce West Virginia Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) Grant

WorkForce West Virginia was the recipient of nearly \$2 million in competitive grant funding from the United States Department of Commerce's Broadband Technologies Opportunity Program (BTOP) in 2010. This grant was to modernize and convert the existing WorkForce resource centers in most field offices into Public Computer Centers (PCCs) throughout the State over a three year period. At each One-Stop location, this modernization effort includes:

- New personal computers equipped with Microsoft Windows 7 and Microsoft Office;
- Software for resume creation and keyboarding skills improvement;

- A high-speed Internet connection (over six times faster than the current connections);
- One multifunction printer that can scan to e-mail, copy, and fax;
- One dedicated Skype™ video-conferencing machine;
- One dedicated machine with specialized hardware/software for the disabled; and
- A publicly accessible Wi-Fi wireless network.

In addition to these technology upgrades, WorkForce West Virginia partnered with AARP to provide volunteers in many offices to assist job seekers in the PCCs. There were also grant-funded marketing efforts to enhance the visibility of the PCCs within the One-Stops. Although this equipment was provided for general public use, it was, and continues to be prioritized for WorkForce tasks such as job search activities, resume creation, KeyTrain preparatory work, and WorkKeys testing.

In a cooperative effort to leverage the resources provided by the grant, additional partners were added to the project in 2012. As a result, WorkForce was able to provide public use equipment to many public libraries, National Guard sites, and Veterans Assistance centers across the state. Although this equipment can be used for any purpose, it is also being prioritized for job search and preparation activities. These locations largely target veteran and youth populations.

The deployment of this new technology has resulted in new possibilities for job seekers at WorkForce sites. For example, several successful remote interviews were accomplished using the Skype stations and automated WorkKeys testing is now possible in even more locations. Statewide average weekly usage exceeded 6,700 user sessions in the second quarter of 2013 – a nearly 70% increase over the same period in 2012.

Although the grant was extended earlier this year, it will officially end on September 30, 2013. By that time, it will have provided for the installation of 500 new public use computers across the state.

The WorkForce West Virginia System

One of the goals of WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers is to offer job seekers and employers ready access to the many workforce development resources available in a local region. A brief description of the seven local Regions and the WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers follows:

Region One consists of five comprehensive centers, three satellite centers, and one affiliate site. The Region One Workforce Investment Board administers 11 southeastern counties. The region, indicative of many areas of the State, is mountainous and rural, and is host to an assortment of industry sectors. Industries expecting growth through 2018 include jobs in the medical field, leisure and hospitality, data communications, computer engineering, social and human services, and educational administration will experience the greatest growth.

Region Two consists of one comprehensive Center (Huntington/Cabell), one Satellite Center (Logan/Logan County), and Five affiliate sites. The Southwestern West Virginia Workforce

Investment Board oversees service delivery in this region which last year included nine sites. This program year the region consists of a total of seven sites.

Region Three consists of one comprehensive center and three affiliate sites. We have, and will, add a Rapid Response as needed. Service-providing jobs have replaced the disappearing goods-producing jobs. The third largest private employer in the State, a hospital group, is located in Region Three. The region also has a vibrant banking industry.

Region Four consists of one comprehensive center, three satellite centers, and four affiliate sites. Nine counties comprise a region of rural and urban population that includes the Ohio River as its western border. While health care is a significant industry in Region Four, and will continue to expand, other key parts of the economy include food services and drinking places, general merchandise stores, and oil and gas extraction.

Region Five consists of two comprehensive centers and one satellite center. Six counties comprise the area overseen by the Northern Panhandle Workforce Investment Board, Inc. Historically, the region had been heavily reliant on manufacturing, steel, etc. industries. That dependence has been shaken by significant job losses in these industries over the years. However, natural gas drilling in the region is expected to greatly help in its economic recovery.

Region Six consists of two comprehensive centers, two satellite centers, and nine affiliate sites. Made up of 13 counties in North Central WV, Region Six consists of mostly rural areas, but contains sizeable municipalities as well. The dominant influence the regional economy but are expected to contribute to additional growth in leisure, hospitality, and business services. The I-79 High Tech Corridor, home to the largest cluster of biometric and identity security firms, attributes a large influence to the region's overall economy.

Region Seven consists of two comprehensive centers and one affiliate site. Eight counties are served by the Region Seven Workforce Investment Board. Region Seven offers a contrast between rural life in the western counties and the growing eastern counties that are heavily influenced by the Washington D.C. metro area. As the national economy continues its recovery from the recession, Region Seven is expected to add population and continue employment growth in health services, professional and business services, trade, and finance.

The WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers

Acquiring new and increasing the number of job openings is a vital component to West Virginia's strategic plan goal attainment. This required collaboration with mandated partners to educate employers on available services and promotion of the Career Center. To that end, WorkForce West Virginia secured 36,726 job openings with 15,545 job orders in PY2012. The increase is a direct result of successful cross training models for WorkForce West Virginia field staff and partners.

To further this initiative, each WorkForce West Virginia Career Center continues to enhance the job seeker experience to include resume development and employer testing services in the Public Computer Centers. In addition, staff will provide soft skills (interviewing, test preparation, etc.), career counseling/guidance, networking opportunities, job and apprenticeship referrals and follow-

up services. A value added service, ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate, is utilized to boost the placement opportunity. 5,481 customers were provided with WorkKeys testing in PY2012.

Early intervention strategies are in place for unemployment compensation claimants. In depth, in person interviews can begin at week four of the claim cycle applying the Reemployment Assistance and the Eligibility Review programs. Employability development plans that identify barriers and action/s to overcome are developed and referrals made to Center partners. Regional labor market information and local resource guides are distributed. Available job orders are reviewed and customers referred to openings for which they qualify.

To achieve the Governor's vision for a skilled workforce that meets emerging employer needs in the Oil & Gas industry, the Career Center's refer job seekers to related technical training to expand the pool of prepared workers. Center staffs relay fundamental job seeker data and contribute to the goals by serving on Councils or technical education committees. Further, the Centers are serving downstream employers who are experiencing substantial increases in their need for registered apprentices, construction workers, and service employees.

Based on the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) 9002A ending June 30, 2013, WorkForce West Virginia served 125,254 job seekers, with 74,746 (60%) receiving Staff Assisted Services and 27,141 (22%) referrals to Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs. Additionally, 30,680 (25%) customers were referred to employment opportunities during this period. These outcomes are realized through a fully cross trained labor exchange/unemployment compensation workforce who performs both functions.

Each Career Center offers a menu of both mandated and non-mandated partner services to every customer. WorkForce West Virginia met the negotiated labor exchange performance measures.

Initiatives and Activities Outlined in the WIA and Wagner Peyser Act State Strategies Plan to Improve Performance

WorkForce West Virginia was granted a waiver several years ago that permitted the State to replace the performance measures at WIA Section 136(b) with the common measures. West Virginia continues to rely on the MACC system to capture and track all information related to program performance. The collection of real-time data provided comprehensive, integrated labor market, workforce and economic development information. This allowed decisions to be made based on real-time data and facts based on a regional perspective.

State performance staff requires the LWIBs to submit quarterly fiscal and programmatic reports for comparison against the planned outcomes identified in the West Virginia State Strategic Plan. Any concerns of significance were forwarded to the LWIB for discussion and/or corrective action. For PY11, WorkForce West Virginia met or exceeded all the negotiated performance measures, and consequently received an incentive for our achievements. Again, the primary reason for these outcomes is continuous improvements to the agency's system which was designed to capture and track all information related to program performance.

Workforce Investment Council Briefings Lead to New Initiatives

West Virginia's Workforce Investment Council (the Council) has been very active in workforce development in the State. The Council meets quarterly and had a quorum at every meeting in PY2012.

In the past year, the Council heard from experts in several issues affecting West Virginia's workforce. Those briefings were the impetus for new initiatives to address these concerns. In October 2012 Chancellor James Skidmore of the West Virginia Community and Technical College System presented on the multi-media EarnMoreWV campaign. EarnMoreWV (www.earnmorewv.org) promotes West Virginia's in-demand manufacturing careers and the two-year training programs that can help students get them. The campaign is a ground-breaking collaboration with WorkForce West Virginia, the State Development Office and the West Virginia Community and Technical College System.

Also presenting at the October 2012 meeting was Dr. Sherri Nash, West Virginia's Strategic Compass Coordinator for the West Virginia Department of Education. West Virginia's Strategic Compass (www.westvirginiastategiccompass.org) is an online career readiness tool available to anyone, but focuses on middle school students.

In January 2013, the Council was updated on the findings of the Governor's Advisory Council on Substance Abuse by Victoria Jones, Commissioner of the Bureau of Behavioral Health and Health Facilities West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. Mrs. Jones gave an update on recommendations and accomplishments from the Governor's Advisory Council on Substance Abuse.

Employers on the Council confirmed that drug abuse is a major deterrent in filling job openings in the State. As a result of these concerns, WorkForce West Virginia worked with the Commerce Secretary and the Governor to create an employer coalition to highlight the negative impact that drug abuse has on job seekers in the State, resulting in the website www.faceyourfuture.com.

In April 2013, the Council heard a presentation on Education Reform Legislation by Senator Erik Wells (D-Kanawha) Vice Chair of the Senate Education Committee. Sen. Wells outlined the impact that SB 359 will have on instructional days and hiring practices of education employees.

In July 2013, Debra Kimbler, GED Coordinator West Virginia Department of Education presented on the changes in West Virginia's GED program. West Virginia is converting to computer-based testing and will phase out the paper and pencil tests. More people pass the GED on a computer than with paper and pencil. Another emerging GED program is Option Pathway, which allows students to receive their GED and graduate with their high school class.

On-line Marketing and Services

WorkForce West Virginia continues to expand marketing and services online. From July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013, the agency website at www.workforcwv.org had 2.16 million page views - an

average of 180,000 page views per month. The WorkForce West Virginia site has the highest traffic on West Virginia Commerce's Web platform. Website visitors spent the most time on our Find a Job pages.

From July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013, West Virginia employers posted over 15,000 job orders with WorkForce West Virginia resulting in over 36,500 positions on the online job searching database the MACC (Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium).

As of August 14, 2013, 3,796, or 14%, of active employers have registered for online contribution reporting for unemployment compensation. That is a 300 % increase from a year ago.

The www.workforcewv.org homepage is updated each week with available middle-skill jobs open in the MACC system. New to 2012, the Did You Know? section of the homepage highlights programs and services available through WorkForce West Virginia.

Career transition and planning is also available on the WorkForce West Virginia homepage. There is a transition assistance module available for anyone from middle school students to returning veterans and their families.

WorkForce West Virginia also has a Facebook (www.facebook.com/wvjobinfo) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/wvjobinfo) accounts, where job openings posted with WorkForce West Virginia are updated weekly.

Milestones and Achievements of the Program Year

The increased domestic oil and gas production within the State and region generated greater activities in the construction trade with interest in constructing world-class ethane crackers, providing a strong competitive boost to local manufacturing, opportunities for entrepreneurship and a high demand for a skilled workforce. Workforce West Virginia is working with the Community and Technical College System to train and develop the skilled workers that are needed to meet the growing demand for oil and gas products. Our agency is participating on the Just Beneath the Surface Alliance Educational steering committee.

The committee focused on the following four initiatives:

- 1) A Graduate Assistant to assist the committee and research this project.
- 2) A "Teach the Teachers Program" was held September 26, 2012 in Morgantown sponsored by the "Just Beneath the Surface Alliance" titled "Energy Speaks: Education – Teach the Teachers" This education seminar was held in partnership with the EdVenture Group, the West Virginia Department of Education and the West Virginia University petroleum Engineering Department. The one day seminar hosted more than 40 teachers from 17 counties to provide awareness of career opportunities related to the oil and natural gas industry for students as it applies to a wide array of jobs across the state.
- 3) A "Real World Career Day" targeted four counties (Harrison, Wetzel, Marshall, and Randolph) to educate high school students on the training, knowledge, and experience needed to have a career in the oil and gas industry.

- 4) The Tom Dunn Energy & Leadership Academy honors first class. Founded by the Independent Oil and Natural Gas Association of West Virginia in August 2012, Oil and Natural Gas Association of West Virginia in August 2012, they hosted high school students from across the state in their inaugural class from July 9-11, 2013 at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, West Virginia. Thirty-three high school students representing 20 high schools had the unique opportunity to learn more about natural gas, regional career opportunities and leadership skills.

WorkForce West Virginia has been diligent in their WOTC (Work Opportunity Tax Credit) work. The WOTC unit at WorkForce processes applications received from Consultants as well as independent employers in a timely manner. The WOTC program is quite an incentive for employers to hire from the ranks of the unemployed.

Many of the WOTC targets had expired December 31, 2011, which left many applications no longer eligible for the tax credit. The WOTC Unit continued to process applications throughout 2012 in hopes that, as in the past, the targets would be extended. All WOTC targets were extended, retroactive, on January 2, 2013 until December 31, 2013. Certifications (for those processed during 2012) to employers were issued by the end of January 2013.

Improved Services for Veterans

WorkForce West Virginia hosted several Veterans' Resource and Job Fairs aimed at assisting veterans with connecting with local employment and resource opportunities. In addition we have participated and partnered with the US Chamber of Commerce, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, Department of Labor Veteran's Employment and Training, US Department of Veterans Affairs and other partners in hosting three Hiring Our Heroes Events located in Charleston, Chester and Martinsburg, WV. As a result of these some veterans were offered employment at the event, while other veterans learned of unknown services available to them.

This year in addition to serving our normal veterans population, WorkForce West Virginia has made an increased effort to target those veterans who are at a higher risk of not finding suitable employment. Such veteran target populations included the Homeless and Ex-offenders. Over the past year our partnerships have grown specifically with Correctional Facilities, Work Release Programs and Halfway houses. As a result, we have been successful in assisting several veterans with finding suitable housing and employment, as well as preparing them for post-secondary training.

A portion of the VOW To Hire Heroes Act of 2011 allowed select veterans to receive additional training through the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). From its inception, West Virginia has had 58 veterans to participate in and exit VRAP. These participants attended Community and Technical colleges across the state and received training in areas such as nursing, medical assistant, drafting, criminal investigations, and other areas of high demand. After completing the training, the veteran works with the WorkForce West Virginia Centers for assistance in, but not limited to resume development, interviewing, and job search assistance. Placement

statistics are not yet available; however continued follow-up is taking place and is being reported to the Department of Labor VETS.

Another improvement WorkForce West Virginia has made is distributing approximately 30 all in one computers to various National Guard armories, VA centers and other veteran organizations around the state. These computers give veterans high speed internet access so they can explore jobs opportunities, veteran resources, training opportunities, etc. These computers were purchased with monies received through a broadband grant.

Important Youth Program Aspects

West Virginia is using the Workforce Investment Act Section 503 Incentive Grant earned based on PY11 performance, to fund a pilot project encompassing a summer youth work experience program and a simulated workplace educational program.

WorkForce West Virginia and the West Virginia Department of Education will be utilizing West Virginia business and industry feedback, in addition to integrating effective strategies for facilitating the learning of career and technical education (CTE) students via the Simulated Workplace initiative. Simulated Workplace will assist high school students, ranging from fifteen to nineteen years old, with developing career and college readiness skills. While enrolled in the Simulated Workplace program, students will be required to maintain a portfolio documenting academic growth, job performance, projects completed, industry credentials, safety certificates, resume, and computer literacy skills.

The objectives of the Simulated Workplace initiative integrates numerous components of the WorkForce Investment Act, as well as supports career and technical education students by emphasizing strong business and industry partnerships which guide authentic workplace learning. The overall structure of the Simulated Workplace initiative is governed by a set of objectives and protocols to assure consistency and quality within the local implementation.

The objectives and protocols are:

- 1) Academic Growth – With the annual completion of high school seniors, they will complete a pre/post Work Keys exam in the areas of mathematics, reading literacy, and locating information;
- 2) Business Processes – With the annual completion of the project, students will have a better understanding of business ethics, communication skills, professionalism, and customer service;
- 3) Career & College Readiness – With the annual completion of the project, students will have been exposed to a variety of employable skills, which include:
 - a) resume/application writing; b) computer literacy; c) technical writing; d) OSHA/Safety training; e) leadership and team work experience; f) recognized industry certifications and credentials; and
- 4) Collaborative Partnerships – With the annual completion of the project and each year thereafter, collaborative partnerships will be established and updated as needed to expand and enhance the services to students.

Through collaboration between the Simulated Workplace initiative and WorkForce West Virginia, approximately four hundred students across twenty-six counties will be served and better prepared to meet the demands of West Virginia's business and industry employers. Expanding the relationship between the West Virginia Department of Education's Simulated Workplace initiative and the WorkForce West Virginia Office, students will experience:

- 1) A transformed career and technical education learning environment with business/industry and higher education partnerships that will ensure they are prepared for career and college demands;
- 2) An understanding and knowledge of ethics, work place processes and behavior integral to successful employment (business and industry partnerships will assist students in locating potential job placement);
- 3) Enhanced basic skills through the use of computer modules (WIN/Key Train) as well as hands-on job skill training which integrates reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking, problem solving, responsibility and ethics into everyday workplace training.

Simulated Workplace supports individuals with disabilities and/or who require assistance by helping them flourish within a teamwork setting, which is a key component to successfully completing the academic and industrial skill set curriculum. Furthermore, industry approved curriculum has been designed to be presented in a format that is relevant and purposeful to all individuals.

Simulated Workplace will be integrated into the West Virginia Division of Juvenile Services by incorporating a hands-on, real-world curriculum in a challenging and supporting way for students within these facilities. Students will be able to experience various career fields in a work place setting while achieving academic and industrial skills sets needed to gain post-secondary realization.

An essential component of the Simulated Workplace initiative is the creation of technical business teams composed of industry experts from West Virginia companies that represent a wide-variety of technical areas and experience. These teams will conduct onsite evaluations focusing on workplace procedures, expectations and protocols in place that reflect the realities of an actual working environment. Each business team's role will be to review and rate each Simulated Workplace site in a manner similar to how the Health Department rates restaurants. These business teams will also critique the curriculum, interview instructors and students; rate the classroom work environment, safety procedures, and general business procedures and processes. During this process, WIA students will be exposed to actual West Virginia employers, as well as being given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills first hand.

Throughout the year, surveys will be conducted and utilized as resources sharing on "lessons learned", effective practices and processes resulting from project implementation and evaluation. Focus groups will collect implementation and outcome data from students, instructors, business and industry partners, higher education, and community partners.

Simulated Workplace includes a strong dissemination component with documented implementation processes to serve as a consortium model for replication by other states. A

dissemination of an operational manual and website covering the objectives and protocols of the project are being developed for sharing with other states interested in incorporating Simulated Workplace sites to assist students in developing true career and college ready skills.

WorkForce West Virginia has also allocated incentive grant funds to each of the seven Local WorkForce Investment Boards to create and expand summer employment and work experience opportunities for eligible WIA youth ages 16 to 21. The funds will be allocated based on regular WIA funding formula allocations.

Work experience is an essential element in preparing WIA eligible youth for transition to adulthood and sustainable employment. It provides the WIA eligible youth with opportunities for career exploration and skill development. Potential benefits for youth participants and the communities they service include:

- Gaining career readiness skills including the “soft skills” that employers look for in entry level workers;
- Acquiring real-world work experience;
- Increasing knowledge of specific occupational skills and workplace settings;
- Developing an understanding of different occupations in order to make informed career choices;
- Improving interpersonal communication skills;
- Achieving a greater understanding of financial management;
- Receiving career choice advice and educational guidance;
- Establishing a work history and connections with employers that can aid in future job searches; and
- Gaining an excellent addition to resume for future jobs or college applications.

In addition, research studies suggest that work-based learning may increase school attendance, decrease dropout rates, reduce school suspensions, and increase school engagement. One study found students who participated in work-based learning were more likely to attend college or go to work compared to their peers. Due to these afore mentioned benefits, WorkForce West Virginia believes this program will strengthen the state’s ability to improve literacy levels, increase employment, and increase transitions to further education and training, and/or improve technical and academic skills.

At the end of the pilot project, WorkForce West Virginia will compare the performance levels of youth who participated in the work experience program which is authorized under WIA Title IB, with youth who participated in the simulated workplace program, which is authorized under the Perkins Act. This comparison will provide West Virginia with a better understanding of what methods/approaches are needed to successfully transition our youth into meaningful and sustaining employment.

Special Projects

National Emergency Grants

WorkForce West Virginia administered three National Emergency Grants during PY2012. A list of the grants and activities are as follows:

Statewide Coal Mining Mass Layoff Project No. WV-17: The U.S. Department of Labor has awarded a \$1.8 million National Emergency Grant (NEG) to WorkForce West Virginia to provide retraining and reemployment services to dislocated coal miners and displaced homemakers impacted by mass layoffs and coal mine closures. This grant is effective June 30, 2012 and is scheduled to end June 30, 2014. This grant will help participants find new career paths outside the coal mining industry and long-term reemployment opportunities. WorkForce West Virginia has contracted with the United Mine Workers of America Career Center (UMWACC), located in Beckley, WV, to serve as the project operator to assist 200 dislocated miners and their families with training options and employment opportunities. This grant has served 158 participants to date.

Severe Storm/Flood Disaster Project No. WV-16: In March 2012, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) published Disaster Declarations for the following West Virginia counties: Doddridge, Harrison, Lincoln, Marion, Mingo, Monongalia, Preston, Ritchie, Roane, Taylor, Logan and Wayne. These twelve (12) counties were approved for disaster relief and clean-up activities from April 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013. WorkForce West Virginia was awarded \$514,800 from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) to administer this project established to hire temporary workers displaced by the flood or who had been unemployed thirteen (13) consecutive weeks or more. These temporary workers perform severe storms/flood disaster clean-up activities such as: removal of debris and trash located in county streams and creeks; restoration to those streams and creeks to help reduce the threat of future flooding to the communities; and restoration of public properties affected by the flood disaster. Two Project Operators (South Western WV Region 2 WIB and Human Resource Development Foundation) completed all grant activities by March 31, 2013 and served 68 participants hired for temporary jobs for disaster clean-up activities.

HCTC Gap Filler Grant III Project No. WV-15: The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Reform Act of 2002 (Trade Act) created a Federal tax credit, the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) which subsidizes private health insurance coverage for individuals in the TAA program identified as "eligible TAA recipients" and Alternative/Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA/RTAA) recipients and PBGC retirees who draw a pension from the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC). These eligible participants could receive a 72.5 percent reimbursement for their private health insurance premiums up to three months, allowing continued coverage until their Federal IRS-HCTC benefits are approved. The Gap Filler Grant III was effective May 1, 2011 and scheduled to end September 30, 2013.

However, USDOL requested West Virginia assist Ohio RG Steel workers with 72.5 percent of their Health Care Premiums which extended the HCTC Grant until December 31, 2013 and added \$1,200,000 to serve an additional 500 participants (Ohio TRA/PBGC Eligible). As of June 20, 2013, this grant had processed 921 Premium Payments totaling \$869,634.49 (WV=724 for \$624,633.82; OH=197 for \$242,000.67) from this total award of \$1,700,000.

The West Virginia MACC System

The West Virginia version of the Mid Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) is the centerpiece for the State's comprehensive employment services case management information system. The MACC had over 227,000 user logins and provided the following levels of service in PY12:

Employers

Total Job Orders Posted	15,545
Cumulative Job Openings	36,726
Employers Receiving a Service/Posting an Order	4,212

Job Seekers

Receiving a Staff Service or Referral	157,958
Receiving a Self-Service	36,427

Training Providers

Providers Posting Courses	141
Courses Posted	1,464

In the past year, the MACC received several evolutionary system improvements. Some examples include:

- Added new tab to WIB Fiscal Reporting module to display Federal 9130 Report data online to assist the FAM unit in compiling ETA 9130 Financial Report.
- Made enhancements to Job Order and Job Seeker search pages, including button to create Excel version of search results.
- Released version 2.1 of IEP/ISS module for enhancements to printable page, IEP/ISS form sections and to resolve pop-up window errors.
- Streamlined several MACC user groups to make user account processing more efficient for help desk staff.
- Staff account management module was added:
 - Gives authorized program staff the ability to add or modify MACC system users.
 - Added the ability to change the level of access real time.
 - Integrated approval process to satisfy audit and security requirements.
 - Enhanced the login process for employers, training providers and job seekers.
 - Added additional financial reporting to the MACC and made enhancements to streamline the invoicing process.

These new features and upgrades to existing functionality were implemented to facilitate performance improvements, increase accuracy, and support more efficient use by state and local workforce investment offices, training providers, educational institutions, partner agencies, and program clients.

WorkForce West Virginia Collaboration and Partnering

The West Virginia Legislature has continued to work closely with the WorkForce West Virginia system during the previous program year. Through an oversight commission comprised of members from both the Senate and House of Delegates, legislators continue to receive updates

and information from various partners within the WorkForce West Virginia system. In 2007, legislation was passed that consolidated the “State of the One-Stop System” report and the “Funding Stream Report”. The consolidation allows WorkForce West Virginia to identify all Workforce Development Training Funds within the state and how they may or may not be distributed throughout the One-Stop delivery system. WorkForce WV continues to update the State of the State as appropriate.

Performance and Cost Relative to Effort Analysis

As evidenced by the annual report, West Virginia exceeded all negotiated performance standards for Program Year 2012 in the following areas: Adult Average Earnings, Dislocated Worker Employment Rate, Dislocated Worker Average Earnings, Youth Placement in Employment or Education, and Youth Attainment of Degree or Certificate. West Virginia is starting to see increased activities in employer’s hiring activities in the Construction, Educational and Health services, Leisure and Hospitality, Government, and Professional and Business occupations. Thus, WorkForce West Virginia staff will continue to closely monitor issues of performance and service delivery throughout Program Year 2013.

General Analysis of Numbers Served and Cost Per Served

For PY 2012, the total number of WIA participants served was 11,811*. The total of WIA funds expended was \$13,841,347. This yields an average cost per participant of \$1,171. The following is pertinent data by funding stream:

WIA Adults Served*	8,705
WIA Dislocated Workers Served	1,923
WIA Total Youth Served	1,183
Total Number Served	11,811

** Includes self-service participants.*

Additional Analysis for Adults and Dislocated Workers

WorkForce West Virginia performance staff continually monitored for issues and opportunities related to improving performance within the workforce system. WorkForce West Virginia provided the local regions preliminary reports for each quarterly and annual report so that staff could review the data not only to ensure accuracy, but to address cases where data was missing. This is in addition to the tools already provided to the WIB’s (i.e. error reports and the existing MACC performance reports to which they have access). For participants served under WIA adult and dislocated worker programs, ongoing analyses determined the benefits associated with particular types of services. One analytical tool employed was a comparison of the benefits for those receiving training services versus those receiving only core and intensive services. Using the standard WIA performance measures for adults and dislocated workers as a means for analysis, a significant increase was noted in the outcomes for those receiving training services.

Measure	Received Training Services	Received Only Core and Intensive Services
Adult Entered Employment	82.5%	78.0%
Adult Employment Retention	88.3%	83.3%
Dislocated Entered Employment	84.8%	78.1%
Dislocated Employment Retention	94.0%	89.5%

When comparing this data with previous years, WorkForce West Virginia observed a trend that clearly indicated the increased benefits derived from training services. Many West Virginians who received workforce services were confronted with the obstacle of transitioning from more traditional employment in manufacturing and related industries to new economy opportunities in service, healthcare and other market segments requiring different skill sets. These individuals certainly benefited from training opportunities. The need for training services was reflected in the high percentage of individuals who participated in WIA programs and received training. Further examination of the training opportunities provided indicated the segments of the economy where adult and dislocated worker program participants pursued employment. Among the highest ranking occupations in terms of Individual Employment Plan (IEP) goals were: truck drivers, licensed practical nurses (LPNs), medical assistants, registered nurses (RNs), and mining machine operators. This reflected a shift toward healthcare and other careers that are part of the new economy.

Waivers

West Virginia had participated in a project to learn how states and local areas have implemented waivers of statutory and regulatory requirements established in the Workforce Investment Act to serve the workforce needs of their local populations. This study was conducted by Mathematica Policy Research on behalf of DOL. In recent years, DOL awarded more than 400 waivers to all 50 states and several territories. The ETA, which sponsored this study by using ARRA funds, was particularly interested in eight of the 56 waiver types, including those related to spending for on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, youth training programs, and customized training. The project examined how waiver implementation—which often resulted in the shifting of resources from one funding category to another—affected the services that were delivered, workforce system outcomes, and participant outcomes, both at a general level and in-depth.

During our last Comprehensive Review from DOL, WorkForce West Virginia received favorable comments on utilizing its OJT and ITA for Older Youth Waivers. Documentation revealed that Workforce Investment Board’s utilization of waivers changed the activities.

West Virginia received notification from DOL on April 30, 2013 approving the State Modified Plan. The WIA Title 1, W-P and TAA portions were approved for the period July 1, 2012-June 30, 2017 and included six waivers:

Replace the Performance Measures at WIA Section 136(b) With the Common Measures

The waiver-facilitated system integration and streamlined and simplified the performance accountability system. Placing a focus on integrated service and reporting only Common Measures reduced redundancies and lessened the burden of reporting 15 core measures and two satisfaction measures. A move to Common Measures allowed program staff to focus on providing quality services to employers and individual job seekers, rather than concentrating on an unwieldy methodology for tracking and reporting performance. Common Measures provided for accountability, improved program management, and reduced associated costs.

The Workforce Investment Act established 17 indicators of performance under Section 136(b) of WIA. By minimizing the different reporting and performance requirements, common measures fostered integration of service delivery, reduced barriers to cooperation among programs and enhanced the effectiveness of the workforce system. The common measure waiver simplified and streamlined the performance accountability system.

The essential benefit to common measures was a simplified and efficient performance measures system. The waiver resulted in a cost-effective and understandable methodology for partners and service providers to understand. The waiver also reduced paperwork and staff time associated with data collection, analysis, and reporting. Having an integrated system provided a more useful tool for administrative purposes and led to better coordination among partner programs serving the public.

Utilize Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for Older Youth Program Participants

WorkForce West Virginia requested a waiver to allow continued flexibility in utilizing youth funds to provide training services while retaining the limited adult funds to be used for adult training services. It increased efficiency and customer choices for older youth. The workforce development system offered a full array of services to older youth that benefited them in the decision-making processes, such as choosing a rewarding career in health care, law enforcement or the coal industry. The use of the waiver focused on the following goals and outcomes:

- Created additional opportunities for older youth who were unemployed or underemployed and desired to improve their skills for full-time employment.
- Increased older youth usage of the workforce system to secure training with educational institutions.
- Maximized the flexibility of the State to respond to local needs and to ensure the training needs of business and older youth were met.

Increase Employer Reimbursement for On-the-Job Training

WorkForce West Virginia requests a waiver to allow a sliding scale for reimbursement to employers utilizing an approved on-the Job Training (OJT) contract. The waiver will support an increased use of OJTs and help program participants move into good jobs. The request is to utilize a sliding scale of reimbursement to the employer of up to 90 percent of the wage rate and extraordinary cost as defined by the law.

The sliding scale increased employer's participation in OJTs and increased the training opportunities for WIA participants. WorkForce West Virginia issued policy guidance regarding

implementation of the sliding scale which will adhere to the principles of training workers in high-demand, higher skill, and higher wage occupations.

Fund Transfer Authority

This waiver allowed local areas to transfer up to 50 percent of a program year allocation for adult employment and training activities, and up to 50 percent of program year allocations for dislocated worker employment and training activities between the two programs. The waiver provided local WIBs the ability to better respond to changes in the economic environment and the local labor market. Resources were channeled to the population with the greatest need. The Transfer Authority waiver empowered local boards to be more responsive to the volatile economic climate.

Granting authority to transfer funds between Adult and Dislocated Workers programs provided the flexibility for improving the statewide workforce investment system. This allowed the State to better manage resources in response to the needs of the workforce. The flexibility provided the best use of resources as the state strives to meet the growing demands on the employer community.

Extend the Period of Initial Eligibility for Training Providers on West Virginia's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)

This waiver allowed training providers to offer continuous, uninterrupted service to WIA customers who then had the ability to choose their training providers and access training services in their local WIA area with the highest degree of informed customer choice possible. The primary goal of this waiver was to ensure that the increasing numbers of adult and dislocated workers had a system that offered training options, which ensured maximum customer choice. The number of providers on the ETPL (215) allowed participants to choose the best possible program and provider to enhance skills and further their education and career goals.

Customized Training – Employer Contribution

This waiver required a 50 percent employer contribution for customized training to permit the use of a sliding scale for the employer contribution based on the size of the business. Under the waiver, the following sliding scale was permitted:

1. No less than a 10 percent match for employers with 50 or fewer employees, and
2. No less than a 25 percent match for employers with 51 to 250 employees. For employers with more than 250 employees, the current statutory requirements (50 percent contribution) continue to apply.

The State and local area may provide customized training to individuals over age 18 with WIA Adult funds and must provide priority to low-income individuals when funds are limited; the State and local area may provide customized training to dislocated workers with WIA Dislocated Worker funds. Customized training provided with statewide funds must serve WIA eligible individuals. The sliding scale increased employer's participation in customized training and increased the training opportunities for workers to upgrade their skills within the workplace. WorkForce West Virginia issued policy guidance regarding implementation of the sliding scale, which adhered to the principles of training workers in high-demand, higher skill, and higher wage occupations within the workplace.

Status of State Evaluation Activities

WorkForce WV will be conducting evaluations when LWIB's are awarded additional funds to provide training to participants on their ITA Waiting List. WorkForce WV, upon exit of the participants, will evaluate the participants' applicable performance as appropriate under common measures. At this time, only one LWIB has been awarded additional funding for their waiting list that was dated April 24, 2013. While required activities for this evaluation have already begun, we are unable to complete the evaluation at this time due to the participants still being registered and active in intensive and training services. We anticipate there will be a few participants completed with WIA services during PY13.

At this time, the questions the evaluation will be expected to address are the following:

- How many participants waiting for an ITA actually went to training?
- Of those participants that did not go to training, how many entered employment, retained employment if so, and what were their average earnings?
- Of those participants that did go to training, how many completed with a credential, entered employment, retained employment if so, and what were their average earnings?

Based on the outcomes of these questions, WorkForce WV will determine what further information and processes are needed in order to promote, establish, and implement methods for continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the statewide workforce investment system.

Ongoing State Evaluation of Workforce Investment Act Activities

Financial management and program operations reviews of workforce investment activities related to the statewide system were conducted annually on the seven workforce investment boards as well as the State Set-Aside sub-grantees, National Emergency Grant (NEG) project operators, and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) WV Growing Renewable and Efficient Energy Utilizing Partnerships (WV GreenUp) Grant sub-grantees. The reviews were conducted to evaluate activities to determine their compliance with federal regulations. The reviews were also conducted to evaluate fiscal solvency and accuracy. Work papers developed by State staff enabled reviewers to document specific information obtained from office staff for evaluation. Other related materials were also examined and office staff activities are observed for determining execution effectiveness. The results are then reported.

The financial management portion of the site visit was designed to determine if expenditures were made against the appropriate cost categories; if they were within the cost limitations specified; if there was compliance with other provisions, regulations and applicable laws; and to provide technical assistance as needed and appropriate. Other activities included assisting with correction of financial transactions; assisting with design and compliance; and budgeting process design and control.

The program operations portion of the site visit included State staff verifying and validating performance data prior to federal reporting by checking the accuracy of a sample of computerized records and comparing keyed entries against the original source(s). On-site visits also included a

review of WIA participant files, Workforce Investment Board Youth Council membership and equipment/inventory systems procedures to determine their compliance with federal provisions, regulations, and other applicable laws and to provide technical assistance as needed. Workforce West Virginia is committed to continuous improvement of its information and data system and ensuring the integrity of program operations. Program goals and progress toward meeting and/or exceeding performance standards were reviewed.

A comprehensive and thorough review documented effective practices used by the State workforce system and it identified the training and/or technical assistance needs of staff. Evaluations resulted in establishing and implementing methods for continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the statewide workforce investment system and improving employability for job seekers and competitiveness for employers.

State staff provided an overview of the results and recommendations of the evaluation during an exit meeting with the Workforce Investment Board director and staff. Compliance findings required submission of corrective action plans that offered solutions.

In addition to the monitoring reviews, Workforce West Virginia conducted the following meetings or site visits with the local workforce investment areas, State Set-Aside sub-grantees, NEG project operators and/or ARRA GreenUp sub-grantees to provide additional monitoring and technical assistance.

Conclusion

In working toward accomplishment of the goals outlined in West Virginia's state workforce strategic plan, WorkForce West Virginia continues to coordinate, link and blend multiple funding streams into a statewide Workforce Development System that is able to respond nimbly to changing economic conditions. Organizations within the WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers are coordinating with partners and stakeholders to create a workforce development system that strives to stream line and reduce duplication of services while also addressing end-goal issues, such as a drug-free workplace and expanded training opportunities for the oil and gas industries. Work will continue toward the continuous improvement of the delivery of workforce services in our state. While changes continue to be made and improvements undertaken, we remain cognizant of our commitment to serving the people of West Virginia.

For questions regarding this report and the information contained therein, please contact:

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