

State of Utah

PY 2015 Workforce Information Core Products and Services

Annual Performance Report

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This report is a description of the activities conducted by Utah's Workforce Research and Analysis Division (WRA) within the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) during PY2015 for each of ETA's core products. The goal of these activities was not only to meet the requirements of the PY2015 TEG 39-14, Change 1, but to also deliver quality customer service through the production and dissemination of labor market information. As demonstrated in this report, WRA strives to set a high standard in this endeavor. The activities performed and described below were performed with not just the Workforce Information Grant Funds only, but additional state and federal funding was necessary to complete the described PY2015 activities.

Workforce Information Database (WIDb)

WRA is currently operating WID_2.6 Annotated edition of WIDb software, including all the core tables as prescribed by ETA. During PY2015, all core tables were populated with current data in accordance with guidelines issued by the Analyst Resource Center. In addition, Utah also populated six non-standard WID tables—mostly geared toward O*NET and occupational skills. Additionally, eight Utah-specific WID tables were populated and updated. WRA updated the content of the database in a timely manner.

To exhibit data from the WID as an Internet product on the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) website, years ago Utah created its own presentation system called the Utah Economic Data Viewer (UEDV). This is a product within DWS that is exclusive to WRA and our task of making ALMIS data available to the public. DWS is responsible for the UEDV structure, maintenance, and enhancements. The WRA unit is supported by an IT designer and programmer in this process.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/default.do>

The UEDV consists of eight separate modules that present statewide and local level labor-related data. The eight modules are:

- Occupational Explorer—This module focuses upon occupational information, including occupational projections, wages, skill and education requirements, training programs, and presents statewide information along with regional information (Utah planning districts). Its focus is to thoroughly examine a profile

of a single occupation.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccinfo.do;jsessionid=EA8E2D2F39C201E76F9249421E116682>

- Wages and Occupational Openings Data (WOOD)—Occupations can be compared against each other, compared in regional environments, grouped together by educational needs or through Holland Codes. This is a tool custom built in response to Utah user feedback.
<http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/almiswage/wage-home/>
- County and Statewide Information—Economic and demographic profiles and publications for Utah counties including employment information, population, sales tax, and construction information.
<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/regions/county/index.html>
- Labor Force Data Viewer—Utah employment and unemployment data by county and statewide from 1990 to current.
<http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoLaborforce.do>
- Industry Employment and Wages—Industry employment and wage data is collected through the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. <http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoIndustry.do>
- Population Data Viewer—Utah population data is obtained from the Utah Population Estimates Committee. The Utah Population Estimates Committee prepares the official state and county population estimates for the State of Utah.
<http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoPopulation.do>
- FirmFind—This module provides names, addresses, phone numbers, industry, and employment size of virtually all firms in Utah. Information is available for specific county, groups of counties, or for the entire State. It draws its information from QCEW data. <http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/firmfind/welcome.do>
- Info Group Employer Database—Utah employer information provided by Infogroup. ® <http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoEmpdb.do>
- Licensed Occupations—this module lists occupations in Utah that require a professional license. It is presented in a Tableau visualization. It was updated November 2015 and Utah’s data was submitted to the Analyst Resource Center. <http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/licensedoccup/>

No new tools or products were added to the UEDV this PY. However, maintenance and restructuring work is an ongoing process.

State and Local Industry and Occupational Projections

In a repeat performance, Utah produced both statewide and substate industry and occupational projections in the same year. Historically, Utah produced statewide long-term industry and occupational projections in odd-numbered years, then in the next year produced its substate projections. In other words, the projections were made from the top down (geographically-speaking).

Utah now takes a bottom up approach. With a staff of five economists available to produce the industry projections, Utah generates all of its statewide **and** substate industry projections at the same time.

The statewide projections are derived as the sum of the substate industry projections. As both the statewide and substate industry projections are now available, the occupational projection process could also produce both statewide and substate output in the same year. The statewide occupational projections were generated and submitted by the June 30, 2016 deadline.

Utah feels it a better approach to generate all of its occupational projections at the same time. This way, where occupational projections are being referenced throughout the various modules of Utah's Economic Data Viewer, all geography levels (meaning statewide and substate) are referencing projections covering the same time period.

The 2014-2024 occupational projections are incorporated into the WIDb database after WRA regional economists assign "Star Ratings" to selected occupations. This Star-Ratings concept is a customized Utah approach to present occupational projections in a more meaningful way for users. Ratings are applied to occupations based upon a weighting of occupational openings and median wages in those occupations. High openings and high wages are assigned a five-star rating down to low openings and low wages with a zero-star rating. The Star Ratings are designed to give an occupation an economic evaluation through the combination of openings and earnings. Star ratings are only applied to occupations that meet a minimum threshold of base-year employment. Utah has used the Star Ratings approach for several years and it is a requested product.

Utah also produces a summary pamphlet of these occupational projections and titles it Utah Job Outlook with a subtitle of Jobs with the Best Career Options. This pamphlet speaks to openings and fastest growing, and speaks to occupations with various training levels, and incorporates Utah's star rating in relation to the best outlook for jobs based on openings and earnings.

As the projections are submitted by the last day of PY2015, the work to produce the star ratings and the Utah Job Outlook will occur in the first months of PY2016.

Utah's UWORKS system (DWS' Employment Counselors' client career planning tool) links directly to the appropriate occupational information in the WIDb database. This makes it easier for the department's Employment Counselors (who advise the department's customers) to use WRA projections to help customers make informed career or training decisions. WRA also worked with the department's internal training staff to develop a web-based Employment Counselor training module. WRA information is a key tool in Employment Counselor advice to job-seeking customers, so their familiarity and knowledge of occupational, wage, and job opening information is imperative. Therefore, the WRA information and staff are key components in DWS building and maintaining a comprehensive Employment Counselor training program.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/outlooks/state/index.html>

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/employmentcounselors/>

Short-term industry projections were developed and posted on the WRA webpage for the 2015-2017 timeframe by February, 2016.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/publicat.html>

Annual Economic Analysis and Other Reports

WRA participates yearly in writing an annual Utah employment, wage, labor force, industry, and county-level summary within Utah's collaborative Economic Report to the Governor (ERG). The ERG has been produced yearly for decades and is directed by the Utah Department of Economic Analysis (DEA) within the Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB). DEA spearheads the solicitation and compilation of information and analysis pertinent to Utah's annual economic profile. Agencies such as the Utah State Tax Commission, the Bureau of Economic and Business Research at the University of Utah, and the Utah Office of Education are contributors, among others. The WRA piece is of primary importance as WRA provides the data (graphs and tables), analysis, and written commentary on the state's employment performance, employment distribution, industry profiles, wage performance, unemployment statistics and labor force profile, and analysis upon significant labor force issues pertinent to the times. As employment is most state's key variable in measuring the performance of the economy, the WRA piece is of high priority and value.

http://gomb.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2016/01/2016_ERG_Compendum_Final.pdf

In PY2015, WRA posted numerous workforce information reports and profiles on the Internet through several different modes, including publications in downloadable formats, Tableau visualizations, data and statistics in the Utah Economic Data Viewer with downloadable formats, blog postings on economic topics, press releases of the latest Utah labor market information, and other economic interests directly within the web pages themselves. Users are alerted to the postings when they sign-up for our e-mail subscription service.

All web products are placed on the web within days of their production, and for printed material, even before their hard-copy printing. WRA continually encourages customers to go to the web to access our products and the latest labor market information. Our publications often promote web links, either in relation to an article or as a stand-alone advertisement.

County-level data is produced and made available on the web. Each county has its own web page. It is visualized through the Tableau software with the most current set of economic variables. The most recent available data is presented in a format we call "Snapshots." These are updated every month when new unemployment rate data is released, and four times a year the Snapshots get major revisions; always when new QCEW data becomes available. These Snapshots include current county-level employment, unemployment, initial unemployment claims, new construction permitting and gross taxable sales. These various categories are represented in their own tabs. The Snapshots are spearheaded by the Tableau visualizations of charts and graphs, but there is also a short narrative attached to each page that gives an economist's summary of what is seen.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/regions/county/index.html>

WRAs flagship publication is *Local Insights*. It was produced four times during PY2015, and each of the state's eight multi-county regions is assigned its own publication. Local Insights includes more than just a summary of the current QCEW data. It also includes a highlighted feature article made pertinent to the local area. It is scheduled for production when new QCEW county-level data becomes available, which is timed to coincide with the WRA BLS unit submitting its quarterly QCEW deliverable.

<http://www.jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/localinsights/past.html>

WRA made a change to its publication of *Local Insights* halfway through PY2015. Whereas this was a hard-copy publication, WRA changed it to an all-electronic format. This was largely undertaken to offset the cumbersome and costly process of preparing and printing a magazine-style product. Now, a *Local Insights* homepage was created from which the viewer can navigate in three possible directions. First, to the county Snapshots. The new county QCEW data was the feature of *Local Insights*, and it remains that way in the form of the Snapshots.

Local Insights also aggregated the county information and presented it in a regional summary (multi-county) also. To maintain this, WRA added a link to a regional Snapshot page. Lastly, the unique feature article that appeared in *Local Insights* is now linked to within the WRA blog where that feature article is part of the blog yet tagged as *Local Insights*. <http://www.jobs.utah.gov/localinsights/>

County annual profiles are also made available in the Tableau format. Some economic variables that are descriptors of a county's economy are not updated as often as are the data within the Snapshots, such as population figures or major employers, so a

calendar-year summary of each county is made available with more economic variables covered than those appearing in the Snapshots. The annual profiles take on much the same look as the Snapshots, but include more economic variable tabs than the Snapshots. Additions include major employers, population, demographics and income. Upon clicking on a data chart, the data can be downloaded to a text file that can be imported into Excel or other program.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/eprofile/index.html>

WRA continues to expand its LMI web presence through the division's blog, which focuses on statewide and local economic events, economic and demographic data release announcements, marketing of our publications and web tools, and other information surrounding and affecting the Utah economy. WRA is using the blog as a primary forum to analyze and write about pertinent, current, or time-sensitive economic issues. Each Regional Economist is assigned to contribute. Blog posts are produced with statewide economic subjects and posted as a statewide summary, but blog posts are also generated and posted for local, regional subjects and interests as well. <http://economyutah.blogspot.com/>

WRA produces several demographic-specific profiles. One of those relates to women in the Utah workforce. It was updated in PY2015 and was converted to a Tableau visualization. This profile has garnered particular interest, and the initiative to update it this year was a request from a female Utah legislator.

<http://www.jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/hardatwork/>

Throughout PY2014, WRA undertook a major employer survey to ask about the employer community's difficult-to-fill jobs. The survey's necessity stemmed from the larger debate that is going on throughout the nation in terms of "skills gaps." WRA partnered with the University of Utah's Center for Public Policy and Administration (CPPA) in both building this survey and carrying out its administration. This survey was a major endeavor throughout PY2014 and involved much staff time in insuring the building of the survey, its proper sampling and methodology, preparing the employer list, and then coding and analyzing the employer responses.

The completion and publication of this survey spilled into the first few months of PY2015. The publication of this survey was presented in two forms to the public; a 24-page "brief" summarizing the study and its key points, and an 86-slide full report designed in a PowerPoint format.

The survey and its findings were presented this PY at the LMI Forum in Minneapolis. We were asked to participate as this is a study in line with vacancy surveys that many states undertake. This was a different approach upon that subject as it was more focused on higher-end occupations, and it was only focusing upon the areas that employers identified as hard-to-fill instead of just speaking about and quantifying all of their job openings.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/specialreports/difficulttofill.pdf>
<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/specialreports/difficultfilljobstudy.pdf>

Customer Consultations

WRA must operate within the parameters of the greater DWS structure. Much of our customer feedback comes to WRA through the various DWS representatives (Workforce Development Specialist's, a.k.a. WDSs) who interact with the state and local business, education, association, and employment services communities, as well as the WIBs. DWS representatives are a part of collaborative boards between business, economic development, higher education, and the labor supply (which is being represented by DWS). They convey feedback and data requests to WRA, and WRA partners with them on product design, enhancement, and delivery.

DWS maintains a feedback link on the department's webpage. Any feedback that comes through that avenue specific to the WRA webpage and its products is relayed to WRA for inspection and action.

<https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/feedback/welcome.do;jsessionid=60EB4C201CEC43D5F4B64734F56C2B17>

WRAs Regional Economists are required to regularly dialogue and/or meet with the department's regional directors and Workforce Development representatives in the areas the Regional Economist's represent. The regional front-line workers are in direct contact on a regular basis with their local education, employer, economic development, and chamber of commerce communities. These local DWS representatives advocate DWS services to these communities, including the promotion of LMI. These DWS representatives are an invaluable source of feedback to WRA on the acceptance, usage, and development of WRA's labor market information, its presentation, and its effectiveness.

DWS also maintains a communication's department. This department is active in community outreach and information promotion. This department helps WRA in the clear production and dissemination of information to the public. The communication's department offers us regular feedback on what they are hearing and seeing from the customers to whom we supply data and information.

One aspect of the communication department's outreach was to undertake a DWS "familiarization tour." The department dubs these as FAM Tours, with the FAM standing for familiarization. Several DWS regions of the state were targeted, with a session planned for each major city within said region. The idea is to invite all types of interested parties who may be familiar, or particularly unfamiliar, with who DWS is and what services and products we can offer. The idea is to have each major division within DWS showcased, of which the WRA division represents the labor market information

piece. The session involves a division-by-division introduction to what product and service is offered within each DWS division, and then a table set up for personal interaction and demonstration of each division. WRA was a key part of this showcasing. From this, not only can WRA teach the public about its services, but the public can also give WRA direct feedback as to its products usefulness, assistance, and ways to improve product and delivery. Five tours were conducted in PY2015 and participated in by one of WRAs regional economists.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyu3HW1gXXo>

Utah's greater economic community requests the WRA unit to be a leading part of Utah's economic message and interaction by being an active member of the Utah Economic Council. Response and participation in this request will be covered in more detail under the Partnerships and Collaborations section.

Activities Undertaken to Meet Customer Needs

Regional Economists and the LMI Analyst provide a range of services from data requests to economic reports to informational presentations. We consider immediate access to an economist by the public a key part of the economist's job. Ad hoc requests are a major part of the work activity. On a monthly basis, all economic staff are required to log their work activities, data requests, presentations, and such activities through a Survey Monkey format. This is done not only for summary statistics for ETA purposes, but also DWS upper management reviews monthly summaries of all DWS activities, and this accounting helps in that summarization. In PY2015, WRA staff addressed 700 data requests and gave a total of 16 presentations with a total audience of 350 to national, state and local audiences on multiple economic topics.

Requests were noticeable in PY2015 from the K-12 education community for WRA to do presentations concerning WRAs information and tools on career guidance. What is available, how to access, how to interpret and guide, etc. Several of these presentations were given around the Salt Lake City metropolitan area. Out of it came the initiative to build an Occupational Dashboard designed for the students themselves to visualize information concerning occupations, starting pay, educational and/or work related requirements, etc. This product is also mentioned in the New Tools and Resources section. <http://www.jobs.utah.gov/wi/occi.html>

During PY2015, states were required to prepare and submit their new WIOA plans to ETA. This included an economic analysis section that was WRAs part in this department-wide collaboration. In relation to the draft product produced for that plan, one of the DWS' Economic Service Delivery Director's requested WRA to produce a similar profile for their specific region—in this case the Provo-Orem MSA, or what the department has packaged as the Mountainland Region. This was performed by the regional economist

for that area, and the end product was posted in WRAs special publications page on the WRA section of DWS' web page.

<http://www.jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/specialreports/mountainlandprofile.pdf>

DWS is structured so that its Workforce Development Specialist's (WDSs) are the primary interaction with the business, education, and economic development communities. The WDSs are very active in calling upon the regional economists to come into their regions and support them in their interactions. Site visits, economic development consultations, presentations, and special analysis are all a part of the normal procedures of the regional economists supporting their local regions, and were the activities undertaken in PY2015 to support this relationship.

WRA continues to receive requests for economic analysis to support the Immigrant Investor Program (EB-5) as administered through the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services agency. This program encourages foreign investment into local areas with a goal of job creation. A key criterion for allowable foreign investment into a local metropolitan area is that area's unemployment rate in relation to the national unemployment rate (needs to be one and a half times higher). These areas of high unemployment are called Targeted Employment Area (TEAs). The program is supported by the Utah Governor's office, and building off WRA's close relationship with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) LAUS program (unemployment rate calculations), WRA has been designated by the Governor to oversee and identify the TEA unemployment rate designations and certify all TEA requests. Utah has chosen to evaluate these unemployment calculations down to the census tract level to help stimulate investment in high-unemployment areas and to foster the job creation required of these investments. Over the years, Utah has seen several projects take shape and create jobs through this program. WRA maintains a link within the DWS website that informs economic developers and investors which areas within Utah qualify with a TEA designation for the most recent year. The website is updated annually (or more often if needed) and includes contact information for those wanting to connect with WRA staff in developing their TEA proposals. WRA has also worked with educating legislators in the state who have shown interest in supporting the TEA program.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/statewide/tea/index.html>

Utah has an oil-producing region. Oil production so dominates the Uintah Basin (Duchesne and Uintah counties) economy that as oil goes, so goes the Basin's economy. With the sharp decline in oil prices in PY2015, this naturally stirred much interest in the Basin as to what might be expected for oil, and in turn, how will that translate into anticipated job losses and pressures upon the Basin's economy and need for social assistance. The regional economist for that area did model-based analysis of forecasted oil prices and produced an estimate of the depth of the region's anticipated employment loss. He was asked to make a local presentation on said forecast, and to be available for any and all other questions or economic needs that may therefore arise in the area.

WRA participates in the Utah Economic Council, a regular collaboration of Utah economic agencies, academia, and private sector representatives who work toward evaluating and collaborating on Utah economic issues and needs. WRAs work on these endeavors is not funded by the Economic Council. But a low cost is involved, and WRA feels this meets part of the WIG grant's fundamental goal of promoting LMI, its marketing, its use in practice, and the overall economic development of Utah. More is expounded on the Council and its economic value in the Partnerships and Collaborations section below.

There are many other things that could be listed under this category, as meeting customer needs is the heart and soul of the work within any LMI shop. Being available, marketable, accessible, unbiased, trustworthy, efficient, and personable are all major parts of operating a successful labor market information shop.

New Tools and Resources

The Occupational Comparisons Dashboard mentioned in the previous section which sprung out of training given to career counselors was a new product WRA posted on its Career Exploration portion of the DWS webpage. It is an interactive Tableau visualization designed with the intent that students themselves would be the primary users of this data. Utah's occupational information is condensed into this visualization, with employment growth and inexperienced wages as the X and Y axis. Bubble sizes are used for occupational employment size. Color is used in the bubbles to represent educational requirement categories to get into said occupations. Clicking on a bubble will then direct one to the Occupational Explorer tool where much detail can be found on each individual occupation. This tool has been well received.

<http://www.jobs.utah.gov/wi/uocd/dashboard.html>

Quantifying agriculture in a labor market atmosphere can be a shortcoming, as QCEW data in Utah, due to UI laws, does not capture any depth of information about this industry. As part of WRAs production of Local Insights, one issue's theme article was to highlight the Census Bureau's Census of Agriculture. To give the data more than just words, a Tableau visualization was created to showcase the agricultural profile.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/regions/county/agprofile.html>

<http://economyutah.blogspot.com/2015/11/utahs-agricultural-employment-census-of.html>

One economist on the WRA team has a particular interest in looking for new data and running with it. After years of anticipation, the Census Bureau, in its LED program, finally was able to make available job-to-job flow information across states. Said economist downloaded that information and made a Tableau visualization that presented the Utah job flows. The data covers at least a decade's worth of job-flow information. Census was impressed with the work and had said economist present it at Census' annual LED

conference. Said economist then made a template in Tableau for other states to plug in their own data and make a job-to-job flow visualization for their own state.

WRA maintains a cost-of-living section on its website. To keep with the Tableau theme, a visualization was created with income variables as its main theme.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/wni/index.html>

Spanning PYs 2014-2015, Utah participated in an evaluation of Real Time LMI as part of an ETA grant. From this process Utah made the decision to purchase the Conference Board's Help Want Online (HWOL) tool during PY2015. The power of this tool caught the attention of the DWS executive management team. The cost for this product is high and WRA notified the executive management that it did not have the ETA grant resources to purchase this product. Executive management stepped in and found other funding sources to finance the purchase of said product. DWS has entered into a five-year contract with HWOL for this product, with the option each year to cancel the agreement.

Efforts to Create and Support Partnerships and Collaborations

WRA partnered with the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) and the other workforce councils representing regions and industries across the state in PY2015. The current state workforce agency structure has led WRA to partner with local economic development groups and key workforce stakeholders through our relationship with the Economic Service Area (ESA) directors. The ESAs are DWS's segmentation of the state into various regions. Each ESA has a director administering DWS' functions and support in each of these regions. WRAs regional economists are designed to support ESA directors with site visits and support in council, chamber, or other local meetings requiring an economic-profiling presence. WRA also supports activities of ongoing regional councils and to be assessable economic resources to the local WIBs, Workforce Development Specialists, and the business community they aspire to enhance.

In Utah's northern region, the aerospace industry has a high profile. With Hill AFB there and also the company that made the rocket motors for NASA's Space Shuttle, Utah views aerospace and corresponding composite's industry as a key part of its economic clusters. Training and funneling workers into this industry has a high profile from both the political and education standpoints. Boeing had approached the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) to coordinate in Utah with the education community to set up an aerospace certification program that would begin in high school and carry its credits over into post-secondary trainings at the Davis Applied Technology Center and Salt Lake Community College. The education community asked WRA to evaluate the outlook for various occupations that Boeing highlighted and had WRA give occupational outlook information to determine the viability of bringing this aerospace training program to existence. This collaboration produced the Utah Education-Aerospace

Partnership, and fortunately, the training program/partnership has become reality.
<http://uapathways.com/>

The northern Utah economist attends quarterly meetings of the Northern Utah Workforce Alliance. This is a collaborative meeting between education, government representatives, and local industry leaders. The goal is to have dialogue about labor supply issues in the area and work together to meet needs. The economist attends as a consultant and to back up the DWS Workforce Development Specialists who are DWS' front line contacts in this alliance. Economists are available to do this in all areas of the state, but we find that some local regions are more active in their use and request of regional economists than are other regions.

Utah House Bill 337 mandated a comprehensive study of Utah's Career and Technical Education (CTE) system. A CTE oversight board was established, including education, DWS, the Governor's Office, industry representatives, legislators, and individuals who hold technical certifications. The goal is to evaluate CTE education systems across Utah and to look for inefficiencies, overlap, proper programs of certification, etc. To keep the analysis independent of the CTE system, the task for the board's comprehensive study and writeup was given to DWS, and in particular, WRA. WRA's research economist (a replacement analyst was hired in PY2015) was given the task to spearhead this study, to do the technical collaborations, to evaluate the data and to write up the findings. This work was begun in PY2015 and is continuing into PY2016. WRA has its part in the study with data pieces such as: Employment information for students who have completed programs; assessment of Utah business and industry needs for skills of students; number of current and anticipated jobs by geographic region and the skills required; starting and average salaries; and are the programs matching up with anticipated employer needs? About half of this work has been undertaken in PY2015.

The Utah State Legislature, through House Bill 198, created the "Strengthening Career and College Readiness" initiative. This bill creates a program to provide grants to local education agencies for professional development for school counselors. From this, a plan was formulated to develop a certification curriculum for career counselors to standardize their work and to help them be better prepared to work with students with the best career tools possible. A representative approached WRA about its online career and occupational tools and through teaching them its content and how to apply the information, this WRA career tool is now an integral part of this career counselor certification. WRA consulted on the content and the training exercises within.
<http://www.jobs.utah.gov/wi/occi.html>

Spearheaded by the David Eccles School of Business at the University of Utah, a Utah Economic Council was formed in PY2013. The WRA Chief Economist is a standing member of this council. It includes representatives from private industry, Utah's higher education community, Utah advocacy groups, and multiple state government agencies with a tie to the Utah economy. The Council's goal is to promote economic dialogue and

action in Utah, to address relevant Utah economic issues, and to promote a spirit of economic cooperation and understanding throughout Utah. WRA continued in PY2015 to participate in and support this conglomeration.

WRA continued partnering with The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) in updating custom LMI for that agency's favored economic clusters. These include custom-defined industry sectors such as Information Technology, Life Sciences, Advanced Composites, and Digital Media, among others. WRA provided profiles of establishments, employment, and wages for these non-traditional sectors based upon a custom assembling of NAICS codes. WRA also provides GOED with county-level average wage data for verification of companies meeting GOED-approved tax incentives. New or expanding companies are required to produce jobs meeting or exceeding 120 percent of the location county's average monthly wage (QCEW) to receive the tax incentives.

WRA economists continue to support the work of the Governor's Women in the Economy Commission by compiling workforce and demographic data to paint the picture of how women contribute to and are affected by the state of the Utah economy. WRAs Chief Economist serves as a member of the commission, and another economist serves on the research subcommittee which is currently working to develop research projects to collect information via focus groups across the state. WRA plays a crucial role in helping the commission achieve its goal of increasing awareness of the role of women in the Utah economy. <http://www.jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/hardatwork/>

WRA has also been closely involved with our state's preparations for the transition from WIA to WIOA. Members of our staff were on steering committee workgroups to represent labor market information as discussions unfolded regarding the implementation of WIOA and components of that system including administrative data analysis, sector strategies, and developing a Unified Plan driven by regional industry analysis. WRA was the lead in the subgroup on gathering, analyzing, and providing key data points and positions to guide other subgroups toward identifying action needs and action plans.

The Utah Legislature has mandated an ongoing evaluation of intergenerational poverty in Utah. The unique structure of DWS here in Utah being a combination of agencies that in the past were separate, such as the welfare activities, food stamps, and the unemployment insurance reporting activities, puts DWS in the unique position to track welfare recipients and their family across time in juxtaposition with their work activities and earnings. Therefore, DWS is the lead agency to report upon the Intergenerational poverty progression and analysis. As this is a research activity, portions of this report naturally fall within the WRA sphere of production.

Support of our state's emphasis on intergenerational poverty continues to be provided by the economists in WRA. The yearly report includes a section explaining the role of

local economic conditions relative to the change in the number of people in our state identified in the cohort of those experiencing generational welfare dependence.

<http://jobs.utah.gov/edo/intergenerational/igp15.pdf>

<http://le.utah.gov/interim/2015/pdf/00002929.pdf>

In regular consultations with the local DWS Workforce Development Specialists (WDS), it was noted that they are regularly in consultation with their local economic development professionals and that there is a common theme of economic and demographic information that those agencies request through DWS when they are courting or supporting industry inquiries upon their local area. Economic development makes the requests to the WDSs, and the WDSs in turn would approach their local economist for this information. From this the idea sprang forth to create a Tableau tool on the WRA website where the WDSs and/or the local economic development professionals (or even the companies themselves) can go to and access the local economic and demographic data that they frequently request. This Tableau viz was put into its initial stages of development in PY2015 and is anticipated to be an added product to the WRA webpage in PY2016.

Activities to Leverage LMI-WI Funding

Each of Utah's WIBs has access to a Regional Economist assigned to their area that develops and produces information responsive to the needs of the particular region. Regional economists develop web products such as the county economic snapshots, county job growth tables by industry, major employer lists, county economic and demographic profiles, and industry briefs, all used extensively by Utah's WIBs for decision making and strategic planning. The local WIBs strongly support having regional economists who produce extensive local area LMI and serve the state's various WIB regions. WIGS grant money is not enough to support Utah staffing with four Regional Economists. Therefore, DWS has provided state funds that partner with the foundational WIGS funding to make possible Utah's four Regional Economist positions. Over half of the Regional Economist funding comes through other monies supplementing the WIGS LMI production. Utah's use of Regional Economists helps to focus more of WRAs work and analysis upon the state's local areas.

The Regional Economists and the LMI Analyst work closely with regional councils, employment centers, schools, and a wide variety of other local stakeholders and customers to develop and continually improve products and services. To partner and serve the needs of the councils, Regional Economists and the LMI Analyst provide a range of services from data requests to economic reports to informational presentations. In PY2015, WRA staff addressed 700 data requests and gave a total of 16 presentations with a total audience of 350 to national, state and local audiences on multiple economic topics.

The Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) is a uniquely built agency in relation to how many other states departmentalize welfare and work activities. DWS was created 19 years ago as a response to the Clinton-era welfare-to-work initiative. Various state agencies were brought together under one roof, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps, Medicaid, Child Care, and the labor-exchange activities known in many states as Job Service. This one-stop combination offers Utah the unique administrative opportunity to study the flow of customers through these disparate programs, such as the transition from the support programs like TANF and Food Stamps into the self-sustaining activities of job training, job search, employment, and even following post-TANF employment earnings over time to measure outcomes of TANF-program success. This social-services-and-job-search-activities combination provides DWS with unique information as to which programs and activities DWS should emphasize in terms of work-achievement success, which pieces within programs are successful, or which programs have minimal effect. These are the type of questions and issues that the unique multi-agency structuring of DWS offers for evaluation.

The data needed to answer these questions and to follow customers through time are stored in the agency's data warehouse. It becomes a matter of identifying, organizing and pulling pertinent data, then analyzing the product to come to research-based conclusions. The goal is to improve the labor market integration mechanisms for people who may be economically disadvantaged, or displaced and challenged by the labor market.

This was the DWS impetus in developing a research team five years ago that is housed and managed within the WRA unit, and minimally funded by WIGS grant money. These researchers also work on traditional LMI-related research as well. Utah's two-person research team (reduced to one during PY2014) is another example where other federal and/or state monies are used in partnership with WIGS grant money to enhance job-market evaluations and outcomes, in this case for economically-challenged segments of the community.

Spanning PYs 2014-2015, Utah participated in an evaluation of Real Time LMI as part of an ETA grant. From this process Utah made the decision to purchase the Conference Board's Help Want Online (HWOL) tool during PY2015. The power of this tool caught the attention of the DWS executive management team. The cost for this product is high and WRA notified the executive management that it did not have the ETA grant resources to purchase this product. Executive management stepped in and found other funding sources to finance the purchase of said product. DWS has entered into a five-year contract with HWOL for this product, with the option each year to cancel the agreement.

Recommendations to ETA for Changes and Improvements to WIGS Requirements

None at this time.