



INITIATIVES



US DOL-EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
REGION 2-PHILADELPHIA

Volume 1, Issue 4

December 2002

WEST VIRGINIA GOES LIVE WITH THE MACC!

On December 2, 2002, the State of West Virginia went live with full implementation of the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium One-Stop operating system (the MACC). The MACC is an internet-based system designed to support Workforce Investment Act (WIA) activities by providing both self-service and staff access to WIA services. Implementation of the MACC is a substantial step in the development of West Virginia's Workforce Development Initiatives.



Phil Hayden, the MACC Project Manager for the State of West Virginia, stated that the operating system was well received by the seven Local Workforce Investment Areas in the State. **Gary Pommerenck**, Executive Director, Region 2 WIB in Huntington, WV, stated that he sees the system as a focal point for encompassing and delivering all workforce investment activities and services in the local area.

Over one hundred and fifty State and local staff were trained on the system. Implementation has gone smoothly thus far.

BUSINESS RELATIONS GROUP by Karrie Gericke, BRG Liaison



The Business Relations Group (BRG) was recently created by ETA Assistant Secretary Emily Stover DeRocco and is a top priority within the Department of Labor. The BRG applies innovative approaches to help businesses better access the services of the State and local workforce investment system and also ensures the workforce investment system understands the skills needed for business productivity. Most importantly, it promotes the workforce system, an invaluable resource in building and retraining a strong workforce.

The BRG achieves its goals by creating partnerships between the workforce system and businesses. The partnership groups make efforts to coordinate appropriate federal, State, local, and public and private sector partners to implement effective workforce development strategies. Such strategies promote identifying business growth, ensuring an effective response time to business needs for a skilled workforce, and encouraging business utilization of the workforce system already in place. The BRG is also developing a working relationship with the Department of Education to explore the skills needed in today's workforce.

In Region 2-Philadelphia, Karrie Gericke serves as the BRG Liaison. It is her job to make certain that all States in the Region are on board and reflect Assistant Secretary DeRocco's message that ETA serve "America's workers by effectively meeting the needs of business."

The BRG is currently partnering several businesses with the workforce system, including: Home Depot, Citibank, Toys R Us, Swift, Bank of America, Verizon, SAKS Incorporated, Allstate, and HCA. Seven other nationally recognized companies are in the process of partnering.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

CHANGES TO THE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT

by Rosemary Williams-Raysor,
Regional Office Trade Specialist

For many years, the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act has been an important safety net for workers who have been dislocated as a result of foreign trade and the free trade agreements. The **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Reform Act of 2002** was enacted on August 6, 2002. This legislation reauthorized TAA through Fiscal Year 2007, expanded the eligibility criteria to more worker groups, and increased the benefits currently available. The Act became operational November 4, 2002. Most of the changes to the new Act were designed to enhance re-employment efforts and to increase customer satisfaction of Trade Act customers.

Under the TAA Reform Act, NAFTA-TAA was repealed and consolidated into TAA. Other major provisions and changes include the following:

- Petitions must be decided upon in 40 days, rather than 60, in order to assist the eligible worker in getting re-employment services and benefits more quickly
- Eligible workers will also include secondarily affected workers of an upstream supplier or downstream producer to a certified primary firm
- The training cap has been increased from \$80 million to \$220 million per year.
- Eligible participants must be enrolled in training 16 weeks after separation or 8 weeks after certification with exceptions under extenuating circumstances
- Additional Trade Reform Assistance (TRA) has been increased by 26 weeks for those participants who are currently in training. TRA along with UI can result in 104 weeks of income support
- An additional 26 weeks of income support was added for those participants whose training includes remedial education, for a net total of 130 weeks of income support

- Job search and relocation allowances caps have been increased from \$800 to \$1250.
- The break-in training requirement has been increased from 14 days to 30 days
- The waiver process has been streamlined.

There are other major provision of the new TAA Reform Act which will take longer to implement, but are in the planning stage. One such initiative provides for an alternative TAA program for workers 50 years of age and older. There will also be a TAA program for farmers, which will be managed by the Department of Agriculture.

Another major new initiative will refund or provide a tax credit for affected workers who pay for health insurance. The Department of Health and Human Services and the Internal Revenue Service are partnering with the US Department of Labor and policy is currently being developed.

To help States understand these changes, the Regional Office hosted a bi-regional training meeting with the Atlanta Regional Office, October 28 – 30, 2002. Over 100 people representing 15 States attended this meeting, which was for Trade Act, Dislocated Worker, and Rapid Response personnel. National Office TRA staff offered formal training on implementation of the Act, but more importantly, it was an opportunity to begin an earnest dialogue about the integration of services for the Trade-affected worker at the One-Stop. Further meetings will be planned and greater clarification will be shared as the regulations are developed.

Additional information on the new Act, and questions and answers, can be found on the TAA website which is located at www.doleta.gov/tradeact/2002

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A FEATURE ARTICLE?

If so please contact Jennifer Tolbert, Editor at jtoltbert@doleta.gov OR

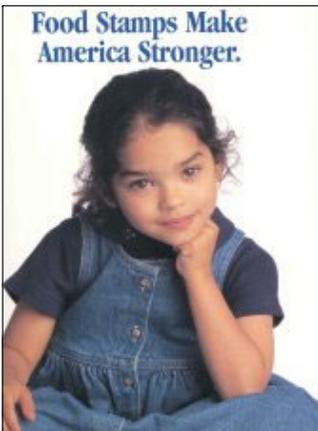


INNOVATIONS

USDA AWARDS OVER \$5 MILLION IN FOOD STAMP OUTREACH GRANTS

“Food Stamps Make America Stronger”

USDA PRESS RELEASE:



WASHINGTON, Sept. 24, 2002 — Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced grants totaling over \$5 million to improve access and awareness of USDA’s Food Stamp Program for low-income households. Grants were given to 19 local and state organizations across the nation to implement outreach efforts for assisting the working poor, elderly, legal immigrants and low-income families. USDA

also unveiled new educational materials designed to support outreach initiatives across the country.

“Providing nutrition assistance to eligible families is a top priority for the Bush administration,” said Veneman.

“Partnerships among local organizations and state and federal governments will help provide the nutrition assistance families need.”

The Food Stamp Program, administered by USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), is the cornerstone of federal nutrition assistance programs and provides crucial support to working poor and needy households. The program provided an average of \$1.3 billion a month in benefits to participants in fiscal year 2001.

“We want to ensure that everyone who is eligible for food stamps knows about the program and knows where to go to participate,” said Eric M. Bost, undersecretary for food, nutrition and consumer services during a visit to Miami, Fla., where he presented the grant to the Human Services Coalition of Dade County. “State and local organizations provide unique approaches to reach eligible people and that’s what these grants are all about.”

The outreach grants will be used for increasing food stamp awareness of legal immigrants, the working poor, elderly and low-income families and individuals.

For more information on the food stamp outreach grants, visit our Web site at <http://www.fns.usda.gov>.

Source: <http://www.usda.gov/news/releases/2002/09/0404.htm>

NEW TOOL FOR INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

by Randy Murphy,
PA Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

Expanding its services to local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), Pennsylvania’s Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) developed the “Regional Data Analysis Tool” (RDAT), an innovative database application. The RDAT provides the complete industry employment series at the county level including: number of business units, average annual employment, and total wages by two-, three-, and four-digit level Standard Industry Codes (SICs), beginning with 1995 data.

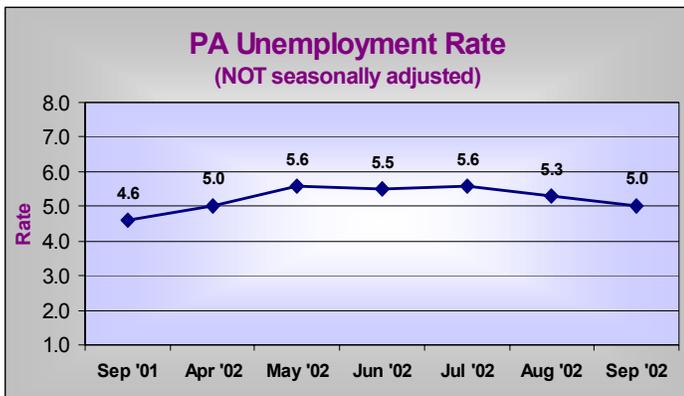
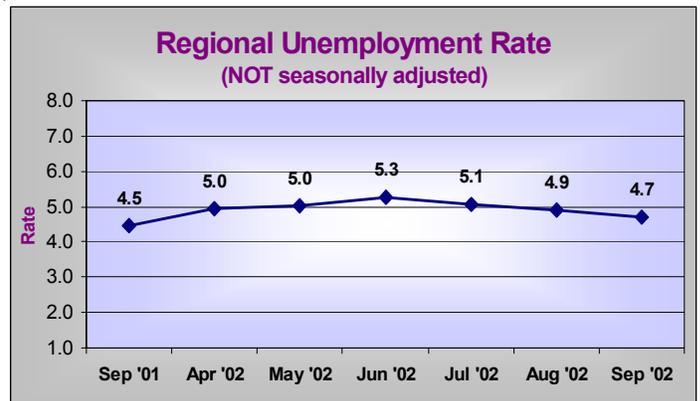
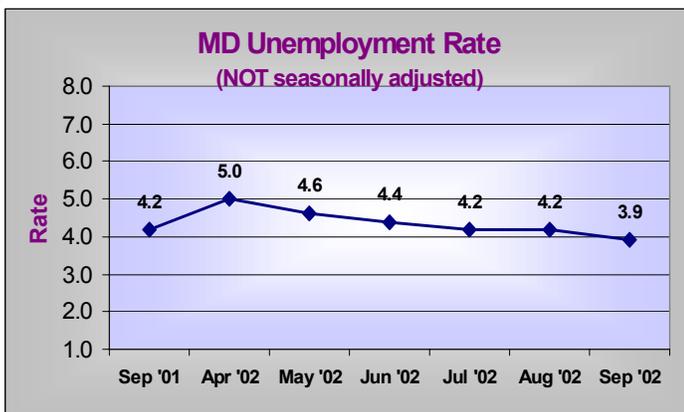
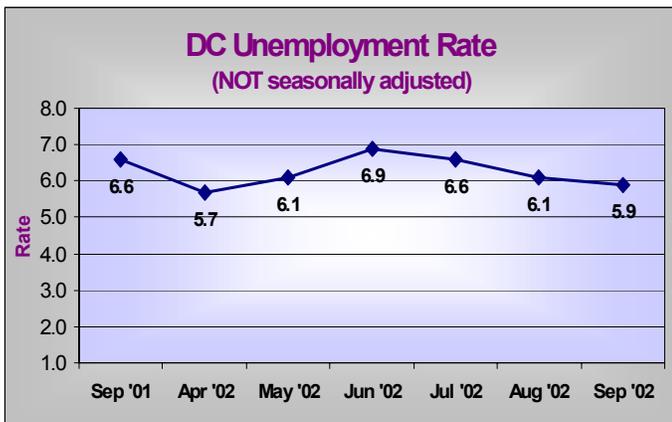
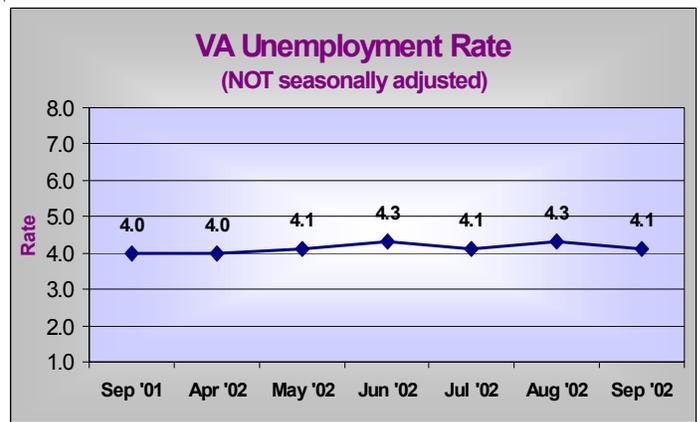
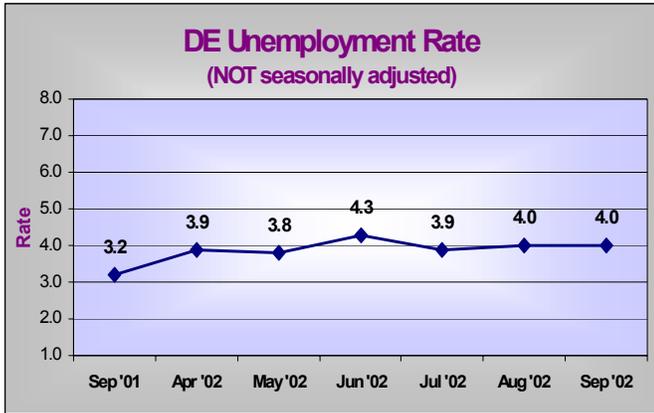
The application allows the local WIB to analyze industry employment for any geographic configuration and any grouping of industries. Access to historical employment data is not limited to defined areas such as Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) or other designated economic regions. The evaluation of industries is not restricted to predetermined industry groupings such as major industry divisions. Users have complete flexibility in generating areas and industry clusters per their planning and strategic initiatives.

Sixteen States, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have been provided data-empty copies of the RDAT, for their evaluation and use after populating the database with their local data. Pennsylvania distribution and availability of the RDAT is currently reserved for use by the local WIBs. CWIA has received many requests from economic developers requesting a copy of the RDAT. CWIA’s response to these local agencies is one of partnership with the local WIBs. CWIA strongly recommends that the economic developers and workforce development professionals work together. Through these relationships, economic developers are granted access to the full series of industry employment data.

Further, the RDAT produces statistics on location quotients and shift/share analysis. Location quotients indicate the relative concentration of jobs compared to a larger area, e.g. the state or the nation. Shift/share statistics decompose the growth of an industry into 1) growth resulting from the overall economy, 2) growth resulting from the industry economy and 3) a residual that can indicate some particular local competitive advantage.

For more information regarding the RDAT, please contact Mary Ann Regan, CWIA Director at mregan@state.pa.us or Ed Legge, Reports, Analysis and Partner Services Division Chief at ellegge@state.pa.us.

EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS PAGE



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

For more LMI please visit: www.bls.gov



YOUTH PAGE



Office of Youth Services

YOUTH PROGRAMS ACHIEVING ACROSS THE REGION

Delaware:

Out-of-school youth are eligible for the “Challenge” program, which allows youth to complete academic instruction while learning construction skills. Through a partnership with the Wilmington Housing Authority (WHA), students gain on-the-job experience while rehabilitating WHA houses.

District of Columbia:

The “Mayor’s Youth Leadership Institute”(MYLI), funded by a combination of WIA and local dollars, is a unique in-school program serving both WIA eligible and non-WIA eligible youth. The four year program begins in 9th grade and includes six-weeks of leadership training each school year. Participants replicate city government, complete with a mayor and city council, and take on increasingly difficult challenges. For example, 11th graders must learn about college financial aid, participate in a mock interview with a real employer, and obtain work readiness skills, all while continuing to prioritize academic work. Mentoring relationships and active parent and alumni groups support student retention. One MYLI graduate, also a recent college grad, has returned to develop the current generation of DC youth as a member of the MYLI staff. There are currently 220 students participating in this year-round program.

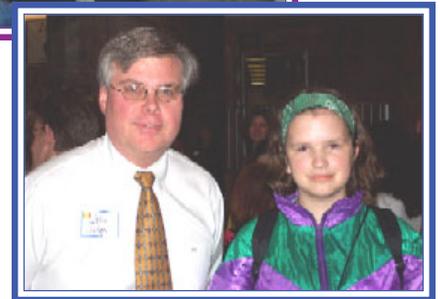
West Virginia:

From June 16-19, 2002 at the Snowshoe Resort, the Beckley, WV Region 1 LWIB sponsored “Escape to Snowshoe,” a youth retreat planned by and for the youth of the eleven county LWIA. Workshops at the retreat covered career exploration, the importance of a first impression, and how to complete an obstacle course. Fun activities for the youth included a trip on the steam powered Cass Railroad. For many of the youth in attendance, the retreat marked their first overnight travel outside of their home county.

Also in Region 1, Linda Lugar, Youth Director, and Bill Loope, Executive Director of the LWIB, are promoting the creation of youth centers within the one-stops in their Region.

Pennsylvania:

WIA Formula Youth Program manager, Earl Geiger, reported that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s October 11, “Disabilities Mentoring Day,” was a rousing success. The program was a statewide event enabling youth with disabilities an opportunity to connect with working adults in their communities. A total of 120 youth with disabilities participated in the event and were able to meet with mentors from several State agencies. **CHECK OUT THE PICTURES!**



Local teams are applying now for the **WIA Learning Exchange for Youth Systems** to be held in Butler, Pennsylvania on February 5-7, 2003. Space is limited. For further information, visit <http://www.dtiassociates.com/wiaexchange/>



CONFERENCE REPORTS

NATIONAL LMI FORUM

The Regional LMI Specialist attended the National Labor Market Information (LMI) Forum in Hershey, Pennsylvania, October 7-9, 2002. The Forum was co-hosted by the LMI Institute and Pennsylvania's Center for Workforce Information. In attendance were State Labor Market Analysts, Regional BLS and ETA representatives, and guest speakers from the ETA National Office, the LMI Institute, and New Zealand's LMI Department. This year, local WIB members were also in attendance, and their presence benefited all. WIB members increased their knowledge of LMI and Labor Market Analysts took note of the WIBs' LMI needs.

PERFORMANCE TASKFORCE MEETING

ETA's Assistant Secretary has made improved performance a key priority for ETA programs. In order to ensure Region 2 States are adequately prepared for this challenge, Regional Administrator, Lenita Jacobs-Simmons, called on experts throughout the region to serve on a Performance Taskforce. On November 4, 2002, the Region 2-Philadelphia Performance Taskforce held its first meeting. The Taskforce, a cross-section of State, Local, and workforce development vendors, was formed to:

1. Identify the issues having a negative impact on performance,
2. Develop solutions to those issues, and
3. Ensure that performance data is submitted timely and that it is valid, reliable, and accurate.

The meeting focused on the first goal, and the participants identified a variety of issues including:

1. Data sharing between States and locals
2. Training of front-line staff on performance measures and systems
3. Flaws in the data validation software
4. Need for more information on the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) system

The Regional Office then used this information to create a "performance issues assessment tool," for participants to fill out after gathering further issues from their peers. Responses are due back to the Regional Office in mid December, and will be used to generate a workplan that addresses the second and third goals of the Taskforce.

PERFORMANCE TASKFORCE MEMBERS

Patty Cannon
Executive Director
DE WIB

Patrick Cassidy
Deputy Director
MD GWIB

Robert Clarkin
IS Manager
DE Dept of Labor

Ray Cousins
Youth Program
Coord.
VA Employment
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David Lieving
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Bill Loope
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WV Region 1 WIB

Ed McCann
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Workforce
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PA Berk's County
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Carol McGlotten
Director of
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Labor, License,
Regulation

Jim Rabenold
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Mary Ann Regan
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PA Center for
Workforce
Information &
Analysis

Don Sandridge
Director of New
Business
VA Richmond WIB

Karen Sitnick
Director
MD Baltimore
Office of
Employment
Development

Lydotta Taylor
Chair
WV State WIB

John Vogel
Director
PA Dept. of Labor
& Industry

**BREAKING
NEWS**

REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF CHANGES

Michael Jones, former Director of the Office of Financial and Administrative Services (OFAS) has returned to his previous position as Executive Assistant to the Regional Administrator. **Edward Bowman**, former Performance Specialist, has been selected to fill the OFAS Director position, on a temporary basis.

Resources

Contributors to this Issue

State and Local Workforce Development Contributors:

Randy Murphy, PA Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

Regional Office Staff Team Contributors:

Business Relations Group; Career Transition Assistance; Labor Market Information; Performance Taskforce; Unemployment Insurance; Youth Services

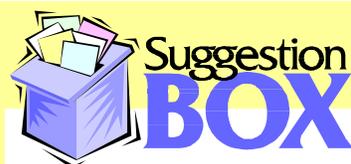
Calendar of Events

2/26/2003	2003 Youth Academy Innovative Strategies for the Youth Serving Community
2/26/2003	NASWA Winter Policy Forum
3/12/2003	The Future is Now: Positioning for Tomorrow's Mature Workforce
3/26/2003	Second Chance JobFest

For more info on any of the above events please visit:
www.doleta.gov/calendar/

Acronyms in this Issue

BRG	Business Relations Group
ETA	Employment and Training Administration
FNS	Food and Nutrition Services
LMI	Labor Market Information
LWIB	Local Workforce Investment Board
MACC	Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MYLI	Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute
OYS	Office of Youth Services
RDAT	Regional Data Analysis Tool
SYC	State Youth Council
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TRA	Trade Reform Assistance
UI	Unemployment Insurance
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
WIB	Workforce Investment Board



Are you a State or Local who has:

- An upcoming event you would like published?
- An idea for an article?
- Comments or suggestions on Initiatives?

If so please contact:
Jennifer Tolbert, Editor
jtoltbert@doleta.gov
215-861-5228

Initiatives is a quarterly publication for State and local workforce development professionals. Submissions from State and locals are encouraged.

Internet Resources

DOL	www.dol.gov
ETA	www.doleta.gov
ATELS	www.doleta.gov/atels_bat/
Career One-Stop	www.careeronestop.org
Dislocated Workers	www.doleta.gov/layoff
Employers Services	www.doleta.gov/employ.asp
LMI Forum	www.lmi-net.org
NASWA	www.naswa.org
Tools of the Trade	www.workforcetools.org
UI	workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/ui.asp
Welfare to Work	wtw.doleta.gov
Youth Services	www.doleta.gov/youth_services
Workforce Community	www.doleta.gov/usworkforce

