

ARKANSAS: WORKFORCE INFORMATION PY' 05 ANNUAL REPORT

CONTINUE TO POPULATE THE ALMIS DATABASE WITH STATE DATA

All mandatory core tables of the ALMIS database, version 2.3, were updated by June 30, 2006. This is a continual project, as we update the information in the ALMIS database as it is made available. Arkansas also populates many of the ALMIS Database's non-required demographic and economic tables and is building tables that will power local WIB Area profile reports in the "Discover Arkansas" system. We maintain the Uniform Resource Locators (URL) of <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> and <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>, that are the official website addresses for our Internet delivery of ALMIS Database information

The 2005 version of the *Directory of Licensed, Certified, and Registered Occupations in Arkansas* database files were updated and submitted to the National Crosswalk Service Center by June 15, 2005, with the first printed version being released on August 1, 2005. The process of updating the 2007 version of this publication will commence in January of 2007.

PRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Long-Term

The statewide Industry and Occupational Employment Projections for 2004-2014 were successfully completed and printed and the file sent to the Projections Management Partnership Consortium. We are currently working on the 2004-2014 sub-state process, which should be released by May 31, 2007. Statewide long-term projections are also made available through our ALMIS Database website at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>.

Short-Term

The statewide Industry and Occupational Projections for the 2005-2007 period, utilizing a base period of 1st quarter 2005 and projected out to 1st quarter 2007, have been completed, and the necessary files sent to the Projections Management Partnership Consortium.

Arkansas completed the 2005-2007 sub-state Industry and Occupational Projections on June 30, 2006 and submitted for inclusion in the ALMIS database in July 2006. Printed versions of the 2005-2007 sub-state short-term projection should be released by November 1, 2006.

State and sub-state level Short-Term Projections can be found through our ALMIS Database website at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>

PROVIDE OCCUPATIONAL AND CAREER INFORMATION PRODUCTS FOR PUBLIC USE

Discover Arkansas (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov):

“Discover Arkansas” is the State’s web-based LMI delivery system supporting the WIBs, business, education, other agencies, and the public, utilizing information in Arkansas’ ALMIS database. This fully ADA compliant system was officially released on January 31, 2005.

ArkOSCAR (www.arkoscar.org)*: Through collaboration with the Texas LMI Department, we’ve developed an Arkansas-specific web version of the popular **Occupation and Skill Computer-Automated Researcher**. ArkOSCAR is a powerful O*NET-based application that allows Arkansas Workforce Centers and schools to assist dislocated workers, youth, and other job/career seekers in their career exploration by leveraging O*NET data with current State LMI (Wages, Occupational Growth Projections, Job Openings, Demographic data, and more). The system contains seven different ways to help users explore job and career possibilities, including automation of the first two O*NET Assessment tools. ArkOSCAR displays an engaging window into the powerful O*NET database and is an excellent way for users unfamiliar with O*NET to learn about occupational possibilities. The system was updated with the latest labor market information in August 2006.

*To visit ArkOSCAR, from the sign-in page (www.arkoscar.org), select “Out-of-State” from the “LWIA or EDS” drop down menu, and then type in “54321” in the “Password (Zip Code)” window.

Career Videos on CD-ROM: Arkansas continues to expand its distribution list for Career Videos on CD-ROM, as we duplicate the newest releases of the videos for our existing customers and growing base of new customers, which includes our WIA partners and schools throughout the State, at no cost to the customers. Arkansas has developed, with the input of The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, the Career Videos into a 24 CD set and organized the videos by the 16 Career Clusters and their Career Pathways. The “Discover Arkansas” Occupational portal (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov) also provides access to the career videos.

2005-2006 Career Watch (www.careerwatch.org): Arkansas distributed 103,650 copies of this very popular tabloid-type career magazine in PY'05. *Career Watch* provides students (and their parents) over 20 areas of interests in exploring the world of work.

Topics covered included career planning, resumes, apprenticeships, work ethic, military opportunities, top occupations, occupational profiles with wage information, scholarship information, financial aid programs, higher education in Arkansas, and more. The Career Watch magazine is also available for downloading at www.careerwatch.org.

The Future Awaits : Arkansas continued its distribution of this publication, which focuses on teaching young adults pre-employment basics, including resume preparation, how to apply for jobs, appropriate dress, interview tips, and even basic guidance on how to complete federal tax forms. Due to many requests, we have reproduced the “Pocket Resume” out of *The Future Awaits* into a stand-a-lone workforce tool for citizens to use in their everyday work search. As of this date we have distributed more than 20,000 copies of this product.

Estimates Delivery System: During PY'05 Arkansas LMI provided over thirty (30) specialized reports concerning wages, staffing patterns, and occupations to the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, State Data Center, Chambers of Commerce, and other entities including cities, counties, and Local Workforce Investment Areas.

National Governors Association (NGA) Skills Matching System: To provide information on the skill needs of jobs/occupations in Arkansas, we created a skills matching prototype system, through the support of the NGA “Pathways to Advancement Policy Academy”. This tool, updated with the newest information in August 2006, is incorporated into the Discover Arkansas LMI portal, and links Arkansas’ growth industries to the nationally recognized Educational Career Clusters. It also identifies if a growth industry is a targeted industry by the Arkansas Department of Economic Development or an industry that has been identified by the Department of Labor’s High Growth Job Training Initiative. The tool identifies occupations related to each growth industry and career pathway and provides information on skills, projections, wages, training programs, licensing requirements, and notes if it is a high demand occupation in Arkansas.

Career Interests, Training, and Job Outlook System

Working with the Department of Workforce Education and the Arkansas Association of Two Year Colleges, Arkansas developed this system to simplify the alignment of the Career Cluster/Cluster Pathway organizational system with occupational specialties, standard occupational codes (SOC), and classified instructional program (CIP) data. Also included are long-term projected job openings and average annual wages for the state of Arkansas. This information will be extremely valuable to schools that are planning curriculum additions or changes, as well as to individuals seeking career changes. This new system can be viewed in “Discover Arkansas” at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=161>

Affirmative Action (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.Arkansas.gov): In support of the SWIB and LWIBs, business, education, economic development, other agencies, and the general public, the “Discover Arkansas” website contains an entire

Affirmative Action section with statewide, MSA, and county tables that can be downloaded onto the user's PC.

Other Printed Publications: During this past year, the Department of Workforce Services' Labor Market Information section has produced various other LMI-based publications, such as the popular "Directory of Licensed, Certified, and Registered Occupations in Arkansas", annual Arkansas Wage Survey, "Arkansas Labor Market", the "Projected Employment Opportunities List" (formerly known as the Demand Occupations List), and others. Most of these publications are accessible on-line from the LMI Publications page of our "Discover Arkansas" website at www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov.

**ENSURE THAT WORKFORCE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT REQUIRED
BY STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS ARE
PROVIDED**

Projected Employment Opportunities List (formerly the "Demand Occupations List"): Arkansas continues to produce this publication that identifies future job opportunities and links them to training programs with the State. The publication presents information in two columns, with the first providing the occupation's code, title, and a Statewide estimated average annual wage. The second column lists the corresponding training code and title for the occupation. A list is included for the State and each of the 10 Local Workforce Investment Areas. This product is distributed to help the workforce system and its users make better training decisions.

Local Employment Dynamic (LED): Arkansas is part of the Census-led, and ETA/BLS-supported, LED program. Developed through a multi-agency, Federal/State collaboration, LED provides the public a powerful window to key State and local workforce indicators supporting businesses, program planners, and job seekers. Employment, Job Flow, Job Creation, New Hires, Job Separations, Job Turnover, and Average Monthly Wage information is very useful by itself, but with the ability to segment by Gender, Age Groups, Geography, Industry, and Business Size, it becomes exceptionally powerful. The leveraging of Census, BLS (QCEW/ES-202), and ETA (UI Wage Record) data - under strict data sharing and confidentiality agreements - will answer many questions for businesses, program planners, and job seekers such as:

- + Where are the workers in my industry and county?
- + How much are workers like mine paid?
- + How does the job turnover for other firms in my industry compare to the turnover at my workplace?
- + Where are the jobs in my WIB area?
- + How much do the occupations in my WIB area pay?
- + How long can I expect this type of job to last in this WIB area?

- + Where are the jobs where I live?
- + How much can I expect to be paid in different industries?

Arkansas maintains the State-specific LED website on “Discover Arkansas” at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net/?pageID=154>.

Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) (www.arkansascrs.org): Arkansas unveiled the first nationally recognized WIA certification system in operation back in December 2001. ACRS streamlined a paper system, which averaged 90 days for WIA provider certification, into a 24-hour automated approval process. ACRS provides an interactive, customer driven, search engine to review all educational entities within State boundaries.

Workforce Area Profiles: Arkansas has created localized labor market profiles for each of its local workforce investment areas. The profiles contain the local demand occupations with local wages and key important information for each local area. These can be found on “Discover Arkansas” (www.discover.arkansas.gov or www.discoverarkansas.net) as a left column heading of “Local Workforce Investment Area Statistics”.

Other WIB Support Activities: During PY'05, the LMI Section has:

- a) Presented on five different topics at four different State WIB meetings.
- b) Attended and/or presented at 12 local WIB meetings.

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE ELECTRONIC STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS

While Arkansas' LMI section provides many Workforce Information Delivery systems, below are the main activities provided in this Workforce Information area for PY'05:

Discover Arkansas (www.discoverarkansas.net): “Discover Arkansas”, released on January 31, 2005, is one of the Workforce i-NFORMER family of second-generation LMI delivery systems. Arkansas was a member of a 22 State Consortium in developing this new type of LMI delivery system, which draws information from Arkansas' ALMIS database and the O*NET occupational databases. Besides the system providing a huge amount of occupational information, “Discover Arkansas” provides access to wages, employment and unemployment information, industry information, LMI publications, employer contact information, training provider information, and local area reports for WIBs. Due to Arkansas law concerning state government websites, “Discover Arkansas” is fully (508) “Bobby Compliant” and meets the higher accessibility standards set by the State.

ArkOSCAR (www.arkoscar.org): Arkansas, with collaboration with the Texas LMI Department, updated this powerful occupational exploration and career information delivery system with new, current O*NET and Arkansas labor market information in August 2006.

Career Watch (www.careerwatch.org): Provides access to a web version of the State's popular *Career Watch* magazine. It allows direct viewing or downloading of any part or to the whole publication. It was updated to the 2005-2006 magazine in March 2006.

Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) (www.arkansascrs.org): Arkansas developed and still maintains the first nationally recognized automated WIA certification and Eligible Training Provider system.

Real-Life in Arkansas (www.real-life.arkansas.gov): As of August 2006, Arkansas is in the final stages of developing and testing an Internet-based Lifestyle/Budget Calculator designed as a learning tool to assist students with their understanding of the relationship between taking higher order high school coursework and the importance of pursuing postsecondary education. The exercise is intended to inform students of the educational requirements associated with most higher-paying occupations and the costs associated with a standard of living to which many students aspire. The objective is to inspire students through this "real world" exercise to take seriously their education and to pursue postsecondary education. The exercise is also intended to help jobseekers and students become aware of the impact their career selection will have on their spending habits and will reinforce the importance of career selection, exploration, and education. The current target date of release is now set for October 1, 2006.

SUPPORT STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Arkansas remains committed to the Educational community and continues to participate in educational training programs, conferences and career fairs across the state. Some of the activities DWS/LMI staff have participated in this past year were:

University of Arkansas Rehabilitation Counselor's Graduate Student Class Conference – July 19, 2005, held in Fayetteville, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products through a half-day speaking engagement.

Arkansas Career Orientation Teachers Conference held July 28-29, 2005 in Hot Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated all LMI products and also conducted breakout sessions for counselors and administrators on ArkOSCAR, Career Watch magazine and the Future Awaits publication.

TAA Projected Employment Opportunities Training – September 22 & 29, 2005, held in Little Rock, AR, where LMI staff worked with TAA coordinators to

increase their understanding of demand occupation issues and give technical assistance of the ACRS system on Eligible Training Providers.

Middle School and High School Counselors' Conference – September 30, 2005, held in Hot Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted a breakout session on the use of LMI products, “Discover Arkansas”, Career Videos and ArkOSCAR

Workplace Readiness Teachers Conference – October 27-28, 2005, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted a general session meeting on the use of “Discover Arkansas”.

Arkansas Counseling Association Conference – November 9-11, 2005, held in Hot Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted breakout sessions on the use of LMI products and ArkOSCAR.

Ouachita Job Corps Industrial Advisory Council – February 23, 2006, held in Royal, AR; spoke to the Advisory Council on local area occupational demands to help guide them in the selection of new training programs.

Arkansas Education and Guidance Conference – March 30-31, 2006, held in Eureka Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted breakout sessions on the use of LMI products, Career Videos and ArkOSCAR.

Arkansas Transitions Education Conference – April 4-5, 2006, held in North Little Rock, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted a general session meeting on the use of “Discover Arkansas”.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Counselors' Association Conference – May 23-26, 2006, held in Hot Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted a general session meeting on the use of “Discover Arkansas” and a PowerPoint show on the upcoming Real-Life in Arkansas website.

Arkansas VETS Conference – June 29, 2006, held in Hot Springs, AR, where LMI staff spoke and disseminated information on all LMI products.

We remain highly supportive of staff development and utilized training developed through the LMI Institute and the Projections Management Partnership. Below are some of the training events that our staff attended in PY'05:

One staff member attended Micro-Matrix training.

One staff member attended Long Term Projections training.

One staff members attended the Applied ALMIS Database training.

Six staff members attended the LMI Forum.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

Below are the results of our efforts during this Program Year, the grading scale, and reports of the customer satisfaction surveys that were sent with each of our LMI publications.

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Usefulness</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Very Satisfied	Very Useful	A = 4 pts. / 3.8-4.0
Satisfied	Useful	B = 3 pts. / 3.0-3.7
Indifferent	Fair	C = 2 pts. / 2.9-2.0
Dissatisfied	Not Very Useful	D = 1 pt. / 1.5-2.8
Very Dissatisfied	Not Useful At All	F = 0 pts. /Below 1.5

Breakdown of Satisfaction and Usefulness by Publication

Directory of Licensed Occupations			
Satisfaction		Number	Percent
Very Satisfied		16	80%
Satisfied		4	20%
Overall Score	3.80=A		
Usefulness		Number	Percent
Very Useful		14	70%
Useful		6	30%
Fair			
Overall Score	3.70=B		

Long-Term Projections			
Satisfaction		Number	Percent
Very Satisfied		14	50%
Satisfied		13	46%
Indifferent		1	4%
Overall Score	3.46=B		
Usefulness		Number	Percent
Very Useful		11	41%
Useful		16	59%
No Answer		1	
Overall Score	3.41=B		

Short-Term Projections			
Satisfaction		Number	Percent
Very Satisfied		16	26%
Satisfied		45	73%
Overall Score	3.26=B		
Usefulness		Number	Percent
Very Useful		9	15%
Useful		46	75%
No Answer		6	10%
Overall Score	3.16=B		

Wage Publication			
Satisfaction		Number	Percent
Very Satisfied		56	72%
Satisfied		22	28%
Overall Score	3.72=B		
	Wage Publication continued:		
Usefulness		Number	Percent
Very Useful		58	74%
Useful		20	26%
Overall Score	3.74=B		

Career Watch Magazine			
Satisfaction		Number	Percent
Very Satisfied		117	90.70%
Satisfied		12	9.30%
Overall Score	3.91=A		
Usefulness		Number	Percent
Very Useful		117	90.70%
Useful		12	9.30%
Overall Score	3.91=A		

In summary, Arkansas has been relentless in its pursuit to furnish the citizens of Arkansas with good, reliable, and accurate labor market information. We continue to strive for excellence in our products' customer satisfaction assessment and will continue to adapt our information using suggestions from these surveys, through future Workforce Information grants. One idea that has been shared through these surveys was that our projections and wage publications are too number detailed. In the future, we plan on incorporating more graphs and charts in these publications to help the average citizen better understand the statistical data that we are releasing.