

# Annual Performance Report

## Workforce Information Grant PY 2011

September 2012

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Economic Research and Analysis Bureau (ER&A) met or exceeded the workforce information objectives and grant deliverables in Program Year 2011 for the Workforce Information Grant (29 CFR 97.40(b)(1)). This report summarizes achievements for each activity identified in the Statement of Work Deliverables. All data and publications referenced in this report can be found online at:

[www.dws.state.nm.us/LMI/dws-lmi.html](http://www.dws.state.nm.us/LMI/dws-lmi.html)

### **A. Accomplishments**

#### **1) Populate the Workforce Information Database (WIDb) with state and local data.**

This year, New Mexico continued to support and update the Workforce Information Database (WIDb) with core data as required in the PY 2011 grant as well as with other data. Our primary WIDb analyst stayed abreast of current best practices during the program year and ensured compliance with guidelines issued by the Analyst Resource Center. Version 2.4 of the WIDb was in use during the year. We took steps to plan for the move to version 2.5 in the upcoming program year.

We coordinated with a private vendor, GeoSolutions, for continued upgrades and maintenance of the state's LMI delivery system, which we call "LASER" (Labor Analysis, Statistics and Economic Research). The WIDb is an integrated part of the Virtual One-Stop System (VOSS), referred to as the "New Mexico Workforce Connection," and is used by research staff, school counselors, and state and local WIBs. Further enhancements were again added this year, including adjustments to using the transition SOC 2010 codes. State staff conducted training in both the VOSS and LASER systems to familiarize users with the data in the WIDb. ER&A staff submitted licensing data through the National Crosswalk Services Center (NCSC) and intends to provide annual updates. Staff attended the annual GeoSolutions-sponsored conference and participated on a workgroup to design new LMI reports in the upcoming version.

#### **2) Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.**

This year, both long- and short-term industry and occupational projections were produced using the methodology, software tools, and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership. Statewide short-term occupational employment projections for 2011-2013 were completed and submitted ahead of the deadline. Long-term projections for the state's four workforce regions and four MSAs

were also developed, covering the period 2010-2020. We developed new publications highlighting both the short-term and long-term projections and disseminated them through a variety of means, including PDF pages on the website.

### **3) Conduct and publish relevant economic analysis, special workforce information, and/or economic studies determined to be of benefit to the Governor and state and local WIBs.**

The 2012 State of New Mexico Workforce Report was published in January. The report was designed for use by policy makers including the Governor, legislators, the state and local WIBs, and the economic development community. This year's report included improved graphics and more regional data. The report emphasized data generated by ER&A and was enhanced by a variety of additional inputs, including census data and education statistics.

ER&A staff supported the New Mexico Job Training Incentive Program, which provides subsidies for job training to companies expanding or relocating to New Mexico, with information on wage levels and occupational forecasts. We serve in a technical capacity and also as an advisory board member to evaluate economic development proposals submitted for funding.

New Mexico's ER&A staff provided analysis of proposed legislation during the state legislative session to determine potential impact on the state's economy. Various studies of the projected regional industry and occupational growth, as well as analysis of regional wage information, were supported by tools such as IMPLAN 3.0.

We made use of an ongoing subscription to a news clipping service to monitor employment developments in communities around the state. Events are categorized in terms of proposed expansions, contractions, openings, and closings. The data are used to compile briefing papers and community profiles that are frequently requested, and the information is also published in our monthly Labor Market Review. We work with the local university to incorporate these developments for use as add factors in the econometric model used to forecast state revenues.

ER&A economists are encouraged to write special articles for inclusion in the monthly Labor Market Review on topics of their choice. These articles typically discuss subjects such as new and innovative ways of presenting data and accessing labor market information that is often requested but not always easily found.

This year, ER&A created a publications planning process which reviewed the continued need for existing publications and introduced new publications. New publications that were introduced included quarterly Regional Reviews, quarterly Business Employment Dynamic (BED) publications, a 2012 Veterans Guide, and a 2012 Career Guide. The Regional Review is a quarterly publication that is created for local communities, businesses, economic developers, and policy makers. A special article specific to one or more of New Mexico's regions or counties is included, along with general labor market

information for each county and business news. The career guides are two new publications that are geared towards the job seeker. The 2012 Veterans Guide reaches out to veterans with extensive information on career exploration, the job search, educational opportunities under the GI Bill, and several other topics specific to veterans and the unique challenges they face in the civilian workforce. The 2012 Career Guide is developed for New Mexico students and job seekers between the ages of 16 and 24. The 2012 Career Guide includes articles on career exploration, job search, and educational opportunities, as well as targeted tips for successfully entering the job market, financial advice, networking, and top entry-level jobs in New Mexico.

#### **4) Post products, information, and reports on the Internet.**

During the year, a number of new or updated items were added to our website. These can be reviewed at [www.dws.state.nm.us/LMI/dws-lmi.html](http://www.dws.state.nm.us/LMI/dws-lmi.html) and in LASER at <http://laser.state.nm.us/gsipub/index.asp?docid=364>. Data produced under this workforce information grant include both long-term and short-term industry and occupational projections for the state and for each of the New Mexico MSAs and WIAs. Other products posted on the Internet include special reports (such as the annual State of the Workforce Report), the monthly Labor Market Review, County Profiles, the wage Estimates Delivery System, New Mexico Annual Social and Economic Indicators, job hunter guides, and data produced as part of the BLS cooperative agreement.

A major redesign of the agency DWS website which encompasses LMI, along with broader agency constituent services, was introduced toward the end of the grant year. As a result of the redesign, the LMI pages encountered difficulties which we plan on addressing in the upcoming grant year.

#### **5) Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards and key workforce and economic development partners and stakeholders.**

ER&A staff members continue to partner and consult with staff and board members of the state and local WIBs to provide data and support for purposes that include strategic planning and resource allocation. ER&A provides training for board staff members in the use of workforce information needed for informed decision making and customer support. Additionally, data developed by ER&A are used to forecast local employment trends and to highlight occupations that offer workers jobs with higher than average wages and offer employers access to a skilled workforce. Prior to making technical assistance visits, ER&A provides senior state workforce agency leadership with briefing report summaries and analysis of local economic conditions.

ER&A supports the long-term commitment to the future workforce needs of the state and is involved in ongoing projects with the state's educational community. ER&A staff members serve on boards and provide guidance to educational planners to ensure that the projected needs of the state economy are considered. ER&A was involved with a project that would assist the New Mexico Higher Education Department in using our occupational projections to impact the allocation of public funding to two-and four-year

institutions. We continued to maintain Career Solutions, our high school career exploration tool.

During the year, we continued participating in meetings regarding developing a New Mexico longitudinal data system to provide answers on how students are progressing from education to the workforce. The group has made progress in designing the database and has developed the contractual framework for sharing data between various state agencies. We also continued participation in a task force related to family-friendly policies and women in the workforce.

### **B. Customer Consultations**

Our website provides customers and stakeholders the opportunity to ask questions or provide feedback, either by communicating with us electronically or calling one of our economists directly. The state agency webmaster receives feedback on and evaluation of products and services on a daily basis, forwarding relevant questions and information to ER&A. We make it a priority to respond to questions within one business day. Experience has shown these methods to be successful in meeting our customer needs and expectations; however, we are constantly seeking new ways to further add customer value.

Customers frequently consult with ER&A to determine the impact of various economic events, such as business openings and closings. The bureau maintains good lines of informal contact with members of workforce boards, economic development organizations, and other community and business groups to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information. ER&A staff makes presentations of workforce information to WIBs, educators, professional organizations, and other business and community organizations. At these presentations, customers are given the opportunity to comment on the information that we present and to suggest improvements. Workshop comments and evaluations are used to make future presentations more relevant.

### **C. Partnerships and Collaborations**

ER&A was fortunate to have the opportunity to administer the State Health Care Workforce Development Grant. Our parent agency, NMDWS, was awarded the Affordable Care Act – State Health Care Workforce Development Grant in September 2010. The purpose of the grant was to assess current and projected health care workforce shortages, with a focus on primary care occupations, and to develop a comprehensive statewide plan aimed at addressing those shortages. Over the period of the planning grant, ER&A led and directed the efforts of the entire grant, including the formation of the New Mexico Workforce Assessment and Recommendation Partnership (NM WARP). NM WARP included a set of health care and labor force experts. NM WARP, led by ER&A staff, implemented changes in the collection and analysis of workforce data (including workforce surveys at licensing and relicensing phases), recommended approaches to continued analysis of workforce shortages, and recommended approaches to continued analysis of educational resources and best practices. The creation of Web-

based surveys at the licensing and relicensing phases was a key element in ensuring more comprehensive and detailed data on the health care workforce would be collected in future years. These data are necessary in fully measuring and understanding health care workforce shortages. ER&A staff prepared and disseminated the NM WARP Final Report in January 2012. The report is available on our website.

ER&A has responded several times in the past year to special requests from economic developers and local WIB members. ER&A prepared economic snapshots for two of New Mexico's MSAs, Farmington and Santa Fe. The economic snapshots provided current and historical information on each community's labor market. Data provided included employment changes, unemployment rates, labor force participation, industry and occupational employment and employment projections, and wages. The snapshots also included information specifically requested by our partners, such as taxable gross receipts and real GDP and commuting patterns.

Another way in which ER&A continues to be responsive to local WIB members is by providing individualized employment projection analysis. ER&A also applied a new methodology for ranking jobs to compile a listing of top jobs for each region. These 5-star, 4-star, 3-star, and "sparking" jobs represent the best occupational opportunities in each community based on job growth and average wages.

ER&A also worked one-on-one with the New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD) in several data requests, including employment and employment projections, wages, and information on job seekers in specific occupations. Through several meetings, ER&A staff has worked to identify and provide data that support the mission and goals of NMEDD in bringing new businesses and industries to the state.

New Mexico ER&A is an affiliate to the New Mexico Data Center/Business and Industry Data Center (SBD/BIDC). As a partner to the state data center we assist in the dissemination of census data throughout the state and are often referred questions and data requests from researchers and business leaders where their data needs overlap with labor market information. We also participate in SBD/BIDC affiliates workshops and data users conferences each November, using the opportunity to host breakout sessions on topics such as occupational projections. The audience includes business leaders, grant writers, and others in the data using community.

#### **D. Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Deliverables**

We encourage increased tracking of specific outcomes that result from state expenditures using the workforce information grants. With continued pressures to reduce expenditures and cut government programs, it is necessary to demonstrate the effectiveness of Labor Market Information programs, share best practices, and be accountable for every dollar spent.