

Texas DOL/ETA Workforce Information Grant PY2011 Performance Report

Overview of Texas LMI Programs and Performance

PY2011 was an excellent and productive year for the Texas LMI grantee. New products were brought to the marketplace, both electronically and in print, innovative processes continued to permeate our operations, our outreach and training effort has never been more robust, our collaboration with other stakeholders, at both the state partner and local level has never been more solid, and we managed to maintain and keep current an already dizzying array of labor market products and services.

Staff addressed innumerable questions on Texas and regional labor market dynamics while continuing to expand the number of online reports such as our one-page LWDA and Industry Profile reports in TRACER2. We balanced maintenance of existing products with an eye toward continued innovation. While the most recent past program years were highly invested in the creation of the Detailed Work Activity (DWA) Common Language project, this year focused on the application possibilities for that initiative, the development of enhanced tools for analysis and the outreach and communication of the potential of this common skills language. Perhaps the greatest achievement of our PY2011 DWA initiative was the adoption by Texas State Technical College (TSTC) Waco of the DWA process for alignment of their educational curricula to DWAs, representing employer skill requirements. We are very proud of our ability to work with multiple stakeholders outside our immediate community of practitioners, demonstrate the importance of labor market and career information, and move forward with this important initiative.

Annual Economic Analysis Report(s)

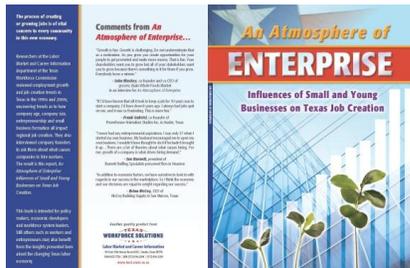
LMCI contributes to, but is not exclusively responsible for, several external analyses of the Texas economy. The state Comptroller of Public Accounts and the Texas Governor's Office, serving as the state Economic Development Office, offer such analyses against which the TWC opts not to compete or duplicate analyses. For PY2011, the Comptroller continued their publication of a series of regional reports called "Texas in Focus" with seven regional highlights. The statewide analysis can be found at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/tif/96-1286.pdf> and the regional reports can be found at the same location. The report for the San Antonio region, for example, is found at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/tif/alamo/pdf/AlamoFullReport.pdf>

For a narrative economic overview of the Texas economy see the website of the Texas Governor's Office at:

<http://www.texaswideopenforbusiness.com/assets/documents/Texas-Economic-Overview.pdf>

LMCI does play a significant role in providing useful regional information that forms the basis of workforce, economic development and labor market planning for regional intermediaries. Most of these data are made available electronically to facilitate more

interactive, regionally customized labor market analysis that often must transcend traditional politically-designed regions. Such interactivity becomes important in a state the size of Texas. With 254 counties and 28 local workforce development areas, it is impossible to produce hardcopy reports for each area. Chief among the automated tools available to get local economic profiles is the County Narrative Profiles (CNP) application, which can be found both in Texas Industry Profiles and SOCRATES. CNP allows the user to create county and multi-county economic profiles on-the-fly that include almost 400 economic demographic, income, employment and social variables in a pre-written narrative report. CNP can be found at <http://socrates.cdr.state.tx.us/CNP/index.asp>



This PY we added to our library of publications describing the dynamics of the Texas labor market and job creation through the eyes of small business. Growing the economy and creating jobs is important to every Texan; from job seekers, to business, to those engaged in public policy-making. But what causes business to create jobs? How do companies decide when to add workers? And what can be done to help

employers create even more job opportunities? These are all issues critical to the Texas economic landscape. *An Atmosphere of Enterprise* was written to address these and other questions relating to the process of job creation. Specifically, this new research publication addresses the role of small and new companies in job creation. And while entrepreneurship is an important aspect of a growing company, there are many diverse schools of thought as to what triggers job growth. This book discusses not only these varied approaches, but offers keen insight from several Texas CEOs about their experience in growing a business. The publication can be viewed online at <http://www.lmci.state.tx.us/shared/AOE.asp>

LMCI Web Metrics for PY2011

LMCI offers nine different end user applications to address the information needs of our constituency. All LMCI web based applications are monitored for user activity, assessing metrics such as sessions, bytes transferred, pageviews and the number of visitors. Counts of information disseminated, numbers of inquiries addressed and type of inquiry help determine user interest and guide product development efforts. Web use data for LMCI applications for PY2011 are provided below.

Because the new Reality Check program was introduced just this past summer, the use metrics on an annual basis are not yet available. However, the monthly use to date has been outstanding. From August 1 through October 31, 2012, there have been 117,098 sessions and 3,291,263 page views for an average of over a million page views per month -- and trending upward.

LMCI offers several applications geared toward regional workforce planning and analysis and economic development. Within these packages the most frequently visited pages

involved employer contact information, occupational profiles and occupational projections data in that order. These results are not surprising as the more complex LMCI web applications, such as SOCRATES, SWAP and Texas Industry Profiles, offer enormous analytical power but are targeted for a much smaller audience of workforce planning and economic development professionals. Use of LMCI's career information tools far surpass those intended for other audiences.

| Customer Use Metrics July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2012 | | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Application | Sessions | Sessions per day | Page Views | Page Views per day |
| Texas CARES Online | 605,726 | 1,655 | 11,106,827 | 30,346 |
| LMCI Home Page | 158,289 | 432 | 2,972,439 | 8,121 |
| Industry Profiles | 69,519 | 190 | 292,833 | 800 |
| TRACER2 | 125,038 | 342 | 779,162 | 2,129 |
| Texas Wages | 11,515 | 32 | 13,661 | 37 |
| SOCRATES | 14,813 | 41 | 115,217 | 315 |
| Texas Work Prep | 25,611 | 70 | 81,534 | 223 |
| All LMCI Sites (incl. RC) | 1,130,832 | | 18,663,375 | |

Section A: Detailed Project Accomplishments based on PY2011 Statement of Work

I. Populate & Maintain the Workforce Information Database

Maintenance of Workforce Information Database (WIDb) v. 2.4 -- The Texas WIDb is fully converted to version 2.5. All WID core data tables are appropriately populated per guidelines issued by the Analyst Resource Center. Texas has incorporated InfoGroup's 2012 Employer Contacts files into all LMCI online tools and distributed the free CDs to all Texas LWDBs. LMCI employed a full-time staff person dedicated to keeping the Texas WIDb core data tables current and interconnected with our TRACER2 workforce information delivery software and our data warehouse. That same staff member continued to serve as a permanent member of the ARC (Analyst Resource Center), attending all group and telephone meetings.

II. Produce and Disseminate Industry and Occupational Employment Projections (long and short term)

Publish state and regional 2010-2020 long-term industry & occupational projections

Texas completed our 2010-2020 statewide and LWDA projections in early October 2012 and sent the required electronic files to North Carolina for inclusion in ETA online tools. Unlike some states, Texas prefers not to produce and publish statewide projections first and then generate LWDA projections on a subsequent schedule. We believe it is important to maintain "region-up" additivity between our Workforce Board regions to the state and vice-versa. Thus, we work to reconcile the state and regional industry numbers simultaneously. While this may delay slightly the release of state level projections, we

are thus gifted by projections that are internally consistent within and across the state and regional boundaries. The projections have been subsequently parsed into 29 different spreadsheets (28 Board regions plus a statewide file) that will be uploaded on “The Future” page of our TRACER2 delivery tool the last week of October. These projections files will be available to local WIB staff who will be developing their WIA strategic plan Target Occupations lists. Integrating the detailed industry and occupational projections into SOCRATES, Texas Industry Profiles and other LMCI online analysis tool will take place the first two weeks in November. Texas participated on the PMP workgroup that produced the new projections tool, providing input in the development of the training and Help modules and in field testing.

For our short term industry projections, Texas issued an RFP and awarded a contract to IHS Global Insights to produce forecasts for the State and all Board regions for the period 2011 through 2014. These forecasts, along with a written report, were completed in October 2012. The numbers are still under internal review, but we expect to release them to the Boards for WIA planning purposes in early November 2012. Release will be in the form of posting on “The Future” page of our TRACER2 delivery tool, along with the written narrative report.

Unlike the linear forecasting methods in the PMP short term projections package, the Global Insights projections were customized for Texas within the scope of their global macroeconomic forecast. The result is a forecast that considers larger macroeconomic phenomena and headwinds to economic growth, including the influence of global energy prices. Because Texas is the largest exporting and energy producing state in the nation, we believe the impact of global economic conditions will influence growth prospects in Texas industries – especially in the near term. As such we were very pleased to get this unique perspective for our short term numbers.

III. Economic Analyses, Special Workforce Information, and Economic and Workforce Studies

Conduct research and draft reports on various labor market topics, including a journalistic approach to assessing market conditions and business interaction – LMCI staff are routinely asked to conduct scores of minor analyses on behalf of a variety of internal and external customers. Such analyses include studies on the state of the Texas manufacturing sector, the age of Texas workers by occupation, analysis of higher education program graduates and earnings, assessing recessionary impacts on job growth in Texas compared with other states, patterns in employment and payroll wages by size class distribution, veterans labor force status, quarterly employment patterns in the various Governor’s clusters, post exit geographic employment location of Texas college graduates, supply/demand analysis of occupations requiring a postsecondary credential, creation of a statewide list of targeted occupations in support of the Governors clusters, job creation and small business, etc. Most of these research efforts were for internal consumption, legislative testimony or in response to a customer request. Staff completed and published a new publication titled, *An Atmosphere of Enterprise* that explores the role of small and young business in Texas job creation. This monograph was an

interesting mix of internal research of job creation using ten years of UI wage records, examination of competing theories that address job creation and entrepreneurship, and interviews with a wide range of Texas company executives. This report was published in June 2012 and can be found online at www.lmci.state.tx.us/shared/AOE.asp.

Participate in the Local Employment Dynamics and Business Employment

Dynamics programs – The LMCI Director served as an LED steering committee member. Texas provided Census LED staff with the necessary files on-time and appropriately formatted for each of four quarters during the program year. LED data sets continue to be integrated into our development version of County Narrative Profiles application, but these sections have not yet been activated to the public. PowerPoint slides highlighting LED outputs have been integrated into almost every external presentation. The Director conducted an LED webinar on integrating LED data sets into a regional labor market analysis alongside other, more traditional data.

Continuation and extension of DWA validation project –The completed DWA library has been integrated into every LMCI online product, including the SWAP software system. Considerable work continued on processes to match applicant capabilities and job posting vectors through the DWA library, using the Performance Levels as one of the ordering variables. Thread analysis tools were constructed and formal output reports have been created. These offline analytical processes are being migrated to the web in two forms:

1) **integration of the thread analysis process for Work In Texas job postings and applicants.** This exercise for Texas was postponed for PY2011 as Texas had just released a new Work In Texas version to the public. However, LMCI staff continued to work with other states which demonstrated interest in the DWA project. We conducted a study on the quality of Utah job placements by matching their applicants and job postings using the DWA matching process and comparing actual referrals made by Utah to referrals that would have been made using the DWA approach. Other states that have expressed significant interest in the DWA approach to labor exchange include the District of Columbia, South Carolina, Michigan and Massachusetts.

2) **development of online tools developed through the DWA Research Institute in the form of a program called SkillsPASS.** The SkillsPASS application remains in elementary form, however a user can upload their resume and the program will create a DWA Profile. Based on that Profile, the user can compare against any job posting text they wish to insert in free-form mode or match against the Conference Board Help Wanted Online job postings. SkillsNet, in conjunction with the DWA Institute and LMCI, has created a storyboard for a new and upgraded program and begun the software development. Also a part of the new SkillsPASS program will be the integration of a natural language algorithm to help identify DWAs from random text from job orders or applicant resumes. During the program year this new algorithm was “tuned” to recognize DWAs and we expect the new SkillsPASS to include a two stage profiling process that incorporates both the AutoCoder approach and the new natural language algorithm.

Quarterly QCEW reports (4) – LMCI staff produced four quarterly QCEW reports during the PY, as scheduled. These reports are posted in TRACER2 and are available for viewing on the Internet and downloading individually by quarter on the Data Search Page. The most recent version can be found at :

http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedPublications/2064_QCEW_1Q2012.pdf

In addition to the quarterly QCEW reports, LMCI staff make a significant investment each month in the creation of a newsletter called the Texas Monthly Labor Review (TLMR). In PY2011 the TLMR was significantly expanded to a full 16 pages and includes new detailed tables and analyses of not only the monthly release of labor force and payroll jobs statistics but articles and observations designed to help readers better interpret those statistics. The TLMR is published electronically through TRACER2 and electronic copies are sent to thousands of customers each month via a direct e-mail contact list.

LMCI staff annually **produce automated follow-up reports** that document the labor market and continuing education outcomes of customers of the Texas workforce system. These reports by program silo for DOL PY2011 (e.g. ES, WIA, Skills Development Fund) are posted on the LMCI website. For PY2011 staff also returned to a previous idea to create a regional, cross-program workforce follow-up report. This report combined completers from all the workforce programs operated in a given region, rather than from program silos. The report documents labor market outcomes and compares results against regional labor market activity chronicled through the Local Employment Dynamics program. A draft was created for the Central Texas LWDA to serve as a prototype for additional efforts in PY2011. This report format has yet to be adopted.

In addition to the cross-silo approach to displaying follow-up data, LMCI staff created a new animated data inquiry and display tool, combining several different Internet tools and data visualization. The new format has yet to be vetted with Workforce program staff.

IV. Posting Products, Information, Reports on the Internet

LMCI makes a concerted effort to put as many data sets, and analytical tools, on the web as possible – and has been doing so for many years. This PY we spent considerable time revisiting all our applications to address issues of potential hacking vulnerability, TWC agency branding standards and accessibility. Addressing the issue of potential vulnerabilities absorbed considerable staff resources as each of our nine major applications was included in the review. All LMCI staff programmers attended at least one accessibility training program during the PY to insure that new code was sensitive to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 accessibility standards, in addition to meeting TWC security and branding standards.

Strategic Workforce Assessment Program (SWAP) upgrades, including occupations-based menu option -- For PY2011, significant additions and upgrades continue to be made to the SWAP program. A Supply/Demand report for any

occupational grouping was developed in 2009 and an individualized Supply/Demand feature was added last year, allowing a user to view the S/D balance by clicking on any single occupation within a group. For this program year these SWAP functions were reprogrammed to improve response time, the data were completely updated, and a new CIP to SOC crosswalk was installed to accommodate the new 2010 SOC codes. This later activity was significant not only for SWAP but for all LMCI online tools. The reason is that PY2011 witnessed adoption of the new 2010 SOC codes in the OES wage program but there was still hold over of the older SOC codes in a number of other data bases, including the industry/occupation matrix used in projections. This required the creation of an interim set of SOC codes, referred to as “hybrid” codes, to blend the old and new SOC coding systems.

All the data sets in SWAP were updated, including 2011 wages, the number of Conference Board HWOL job postings for the most recent quarter, and the most recent QCEW industry employment data. Finally, a newly designed splash page was fashioned that provides more information to help the user understand what analytical prowess SWAP offers. The new splash page, which includes a third major section designed around likely scenario applications of SWAP and FAQs, has been created and ten scenarios relating to SWAP uses in education, workforce and economic development planning have been drafted. This new design remains in development and will not be rolled out to the public until late 2012.

Update and upgrade SOCRATES regional planning software – LMCI staff routinely updates and improves SOCRATES data currency and program functionality. For PY2011 staff updated all data items in that package to assist regional WIA planners develop their lists of Targeted Occupations. Specifically, we updated all the QCEW industry employment data sets, the occupational wage data sets and the InfoGroup employer contacts database.

Update and upgrade TRACER2 LMI inquiry software – During PY2011, staff continued revisiting functionalities of the TRACER2 product and implemented many public facing changes. Wholesale TRACER redesign efforts continued during PY2011 and will continue into PY2012 in anticipation of a spring 2013 release.

Texas CARES On-line –Texas CARES online continues to be our flagship career information product. During PY2011 staff updated the data sets to include O*NET version 16.0 release, 2012 Peterson’s College data, 2011 occupational wage data, 2011 labor supply data from Texas colleges and many other data items. While improvements in accessibility have been made to CARES, significant work remains to be done to bring that application in full compliance.

Enhancements of DWA based transferability of skills functionalities – Beginning in PY 2009, LMCI staff created automated utilities through the use of a modified version of AutoCoder that can build a DWA Profile for any job posting or individual resume. Staff also created an algorithm that matches DWA Profiles for individuals and job postings to determine a “thread score” or strength of match between one or more job postings or any

one or more work history profile. During this PY, refinements to that matching and stack ranking process continued, fully integrating the Performance Level data into the ranking process. These report generation and match capabilities have been increasingly migrated to a web-enabled platform; however they are not yet ready for public viewing. LMCI staff made considerable progress on an editing routine that allows the user to manually select and deselect DWAs listed as part of the automated DWA profiling engine. This editing routine is being paired with the DWA profiling engine during the current PY.

In addition to the analytical design and programming work accomplished during the program year, staff also wrote and published a white paper that documented the theoretical underpinnings of the DWA Common Language project, progress made over the past several years, including the establishment of the DWA Research Institute, and a listing of several companion projects that could further the value of the DWA Common Language project. In addition to a hardcopy monograph, an online version of the white paper can be viewed at: <http://www.lmci.state.tx.us/shared/DWA.asp>.

Development of a new Reality Check Budget Calculator software – This project is an excellent example of both online web tool development and delivery and collaboration with our partners in Career and Technology Education (CTE). In June 2012 we released a new Reality Check budget calculator program with many new features including the alignment of the core career data sets with the WID 2.5 data file structure, additional geographic regions, a page to deal with student loan debt, access to occupational videos, and portal access to Work In Texas to allow students to view existing job openings. The new program has averaged roughly 1.3 million page views per month since its introduction. The platform neutral software operates on almost all current browser and operating system combinations.

But in addition to the web based Reality Check program, we also created a Reality Check iPhone application. The iPhone version has all the same functionalities of the parent program but has a unique design that optimizes the user interface for the smaller iPhone screen. The Reality Check iPhone app is the first smart phone app developed at the Texas Workforce Commission. The app can be downloaded from the Apple App Store.

Real time job posting access and analyses using The Conference Board help wanted job posting data (HWOL) -- Texas continued our investment in the HWOL data set, giving access to the Wanted Analytics data tool to all Texas LWDBs, while retaining five seats for LMCI staff. In PY2011 we also continued a live feed of online job postings through The Conference Board as part of the testing process of DWA-centric job matching and to populate the SkillsPASS job postings data vector. We also included HWOL job posting counts in our SWAP occupational profile and they are a staple in staff presentations that show the occupations most in demand and comparisons of HWOL job posting activity with estimates of unemployed workers. The costs for procuring HWOL data was spread across multiple funding streams within the TWC. No progress was made on creating a HWOL-centric monthly press release but that activity will be explored for PY2012.

Update and upgrade State Training Inventory software – LMCI updated the State Training Inventory program to include three years of enrollments (2009, 2010, and 2011) and graduates by CIP program and by institution. Program functionalities were also improved.

V. Partner & Consulting on a Continuing Basis with WIBS & other Key Workforce/Economic Development Partners and Stakeholders

Staff training workshops and presentations – While increasing levels of our outreach activity are being pushed online, LMCI staff make significant efforts to be in the field making presentations on the state and regional economies and providing training in our various products and services. For PY2011, LMCI staff made 81 presentations and in-service workshops. Estimated total attendance at these events was roughly 5,957 conferees (see Appendix A workshop list attached for details). Note that among stakeholders receiving training were Society of Human Resources (SHRM) chapters throughout Texas, local Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Boards, Community and Technical College associations, and Independent School Districts through their Career and Technology Education teachers.

LMCI staff customer service and technical assistance -- Whether our customers touch one of our web sites or make contact through one of our staff, LMCI dissemination staff analysts answer questions from the public. Inquiries and responses provided are entered into an MS Access database from which frequently requested data items can be identified and, ultimately, given sufficient multiplicity of requests, web-enabled. For PY2011 our Dissemination staff addressed 1,497 calls and inquiries answering questions almost too diverse to classify. However, they range from creating customized data for the TWC Bond Package Offering, to certifying investment areas under the EB 5 program, to earnings distribution analyses for the Texas workforce.

Explore alternate data sources to expand labor market analytical capacity -- Texas has long been interested in non-BLS data sources that potentially open up new insights into labor market dynamics. One of these data sets is sales volume. LMCI purchased Global Insights industry value of output (\$) data, as a proxy for dollar-denominated sales value and as a means to assess industrial labor productivity and as an alternate measure of growth. The purchase of 2012 data extends the time series back to 2003 and covers every Texas county at the four digit NAICS level. These data have been integrated in the Industry Evaluation Model software in SOCRATES and SWAP as an additional explanatory variable. Staff have also fully dissected the American Community Survey 2008-2010 PUMS files to help answer detailed demographic questions. The ACS PUMS files also helped us answer labor force demographic questions such as the average age, gender, and race/ethnicity composition of Texas workers, and an assortment of EEO related inquiries. We requested and received a detailed Business Employment Dynamics (BED) data set that was analyzed and included in the *Atmosphere of Enterprise* monograph that explored the role of new firm births job creation.

Section B: Customer Consultations

Our strategy regarding customer interface and consultation has not changed from prior years. We strive to be an outward looking organization, operating under the premise that an inward-looking business operation will find themselves in the unsatisfactory situation of spending more time looking at themselves than they do at their customers. LMCI seeks to create a balanced LMI operation, one which serves as the standard bearer of data quality while also expanding the application of data to a wider audience. Critical to that process are regular customer consultations. A former LMI Director once said that products that don't address a customer need are mere vanity to the producer—and we concur. Many private consultants have the luxury to focus on new data applications without regard to necessarily maintaining the rigors of the BLS Fed-State Cooperative data system and strict adherence to federal statistical taxonomies. While somewhat straight-jacketed by these constraints, we also have a responsibility as labor market professionals to help our users understand the more relevant questions they might ask regarding regional economic dynamics and provide data-oriented solutions.

The Texas customer consultation strategy has five major components to achieve this balance, modeled after the underlying principles of the old NOICC/SOICC network. That network was responsible for creating and supporting uniform use of federal data taxonomies, while also customizing the use of LMI to address constituent-specific needs. These five major strategies are:

1. Stay engaged in external applied labor market research – If the recession has taught us nothing else, the labor market does not always behave in strict accordance to the Keynesian principles of macroeconomics so many of us were taught in school. In fact, as American economic hegemony is challenged by emerging nations and globalization and changing business practices shape the demand for occupational skills, those who do not constantly seek to understand evolving labor markets are destined to be jettisoned by customers. Tom Peters once remarked that if you don't like change, you'll like irrelevance even less. The best way for an LMI shop to stay relevant is to understand how regional labor markets are functioning and try to provide insights into those dynamics. We try to do this by relying not only on established core data sets such as those collected under the BLS Fed-State Cooperative programs but also but integrating new sources of information.

2. Have a strong Internet presence – Like it or not, most of our customers find us via the Internet. And increasingly those customers want to conduct their own research and analysis. They're just looking for the best data sets and analytical tools they can find to achieve that goal. LMCI has nine different web tools, each built to address a specific customer need. For example, economic development professionals tend to be more sophisticated data users and need data tools that allow them to conduct occupational supply/demand analysis, create regional and comparative wage profiles and generate small area e.g. county-level, community profiles. Students, on the other hand, are more likely to need career guidance information customized around a decision-making process to help them determine their interests and work values, find out which occupations might be of particular interest and how the world of learning is connected to getting those jobs,

i.e. what does one have to study, where can I go to get that instruction. Each of these diverse web tools are monitored so that we know where our customers are going and which data tools are generating the most interest. We maintain online feedback loops and customer support feeds to help us stay connected to customer concerns.

3. Maintain a presence in the field – If your customers don't know what you offer, they're likely to complain that you don't help them. Having a passive Internet presence is important, but it is equally critical for our customers to see and interact with LMCI staff. The most pivotal aspect of maintaining a field presence is the conduct of training and various presentations. This is one reason the Director makes so many presentations in local venues; to let customers know the data and data tools that are available, how those tools can be used to tell the labor market story, and to assess the most salient customer concerns. As detailed in Appendix A below, LMCI staff conducted 81 presentations and workshops during the program year. Each of these events not only allowed us to communicate value, but also to learn about customer data needs and challenges.

4. Attend conferences and share ideas – If you spend all of your time at your desk you never develop the personal relationships or participate in the brainstorming sessions that are so critical to innovation and addressing customer data needs. An excellent example of this in Texas is our active participation in the Texas Association of Institutional Research (TAIR), a group of largely community college institutional researchers. LMCI staff are asked to present at their annual conference, at which we have the opportunity to learn about new challenges for which labor market information might be useful. For PY2011 the TWC received a WDQI grant to build an integrated database capacity for purposes of identifying post-exit customer outcomes and to lay the groundwork for a process of continuous improvement for workforce program planning. LMCI staff are co-managers of the grant and provide technical leadership on issues of educational data integration.

LMCI program managers participate in policy councils, as possible, and the LMCI Director sits on the national LED steering committee and NASWA LMI committee. Sharing ideas with various constituents in conference settings is an extremely useful approach for generating new ideas and creating relevant products and services.

5. Stay involved with other state constituencies – The Texas Department of Rehabilitative Service (DARS) is becoming an increasingly data driven operation. They routinely collect data on their job placements by occupation using Standard Occupational Classification codes. Their migration to SOC codes has allowed LMCI staff to provide detailed analysis on the labor market for those occupations where high placement volume occurs. Moreover, we can show them occupational areas in which there is high demand and yet DARS staff have limited penetration. This kind of analysis is only possible when you understand how other constituencies use labor market data. LMCI staff are routinely invited to statewide DARS conferences and new counselor training events to share our expertise in the context of serving the disabled.

In another example, LMCI staff are at the table for public K-12 and higher education activities. We try to maintain staff relationships with these other education and workforce

system partners, albeit through informal channels. As an annual recipient of Perkins grant funding through the Texas Education Agency, we are able to pursue data projects that are of joint and mutual interest to both the education and workforce communities. An excellent example of that collaboration is the inclusion of the 16 Achieve Texas clusters in all LMCI online data analysis tools. Another example is the sharing of UI wage records and subsequent collaboration in the creation of college report cards and related post-graduate outcomes analysis.

Section C: Partnership and Collaborations (new partnerships, activities & linkages and highlights of tools & resources created through or supported by these partnerships)

This section is asking for itemized collaborative efforts to highlight partnership activities and our contributions to those partnerships. Texas will argue that almost everything we do involves a partnership of some type, and that in each case we are bringing something of value to the table in the form of a customized analysis, as with the labor market outcomes report for the Texas Skills Development Fund, or end-user data tools, such as the Reality Check program to help students connect lifestyle aspirations and educational pursuits. Our strongest outside collaboration in PY2011 was with the Texas Education Agency. Among the deliverables we produced under a Perkins grant from that agency were:

1. Provided 22 in-service training sessions on the application and use of the LMCI Career Development curriculum, including the use of Texas CARES (Career Alternative Resource Evaluation System). LMCI staff conducted or scheduled twenty-four (24) sessions during the program year. Altogether, staff trained 646 teacher participants.
2. The development of a data collection approach and context for collecting “Workplace Basics” or social competence data by detailed work activity, including actual data collection for 20 occupations. Under this project, LMCI developed a conceptual framework, data collection infrastructure and electronic data repository of primary workplace basic skills to DWA assignments and developed a method and approach to assign the most significant workplace basic skills to each detailed work activity (DWA) within each occupation in the TWC/LMCI Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system universe comprised of roughly 806 occupations. The framework for workplace basic skills mirrored the 29 workplace basics statements outlined in the monograph *Workplace Basics: Employer Demands and Worker Preparation* by Froeschle and Theis (2009). Data collection for workplace basics linked to DWAs will begin as a joint project in 2013.
3. Provided Toll-free Career Information services, including materials, Spanish speaking Hotline operator, materials packing and dissemination. The Toll-free Hotline continued operations in PY2012 for the 26th consecutive year, filling 438 requests for counselor packets and answering 4,391 student calls from September 1, 2011 through August 31, 2012. Of those, 36% came from 8th graders and another 7% came from 7th graders; reinforcing the point that Career Development

- courses are increasingly being taught in middle school. It is with a somewhat heavy heart, but no surprise, that I report that the top 10 most requested careers for this year don't look much different from those of ten years ago. Topping the list in order of inquiries are Athletes, Physicians, Veterinarian, Lawyer, Actor, Registered Nurse, Forensic Science Technician, Truck Driver, Multi-media Artist, Primary/Secondary Teacher.
4. Developed marketing, print materials and promotional strategy for the new Reality Check program. Reality Check became a reality in PY2011. The program can be found at www.texasrealitycheck.com or connected to from the LMCI web page at www.lmci.state.tx.us.
 5. Provided video hosting services for Texas CARES. The TWC continued to update and maintain Texas CARES at no cost to the Perkins contract or TEA. TEA's lone contribution to Texas CARES is funding for a third-party video hosting service that serves up the over 400 occupational and college videos provided within Texas CARES.
 6. TWC/LMCI received dedicated funds to develop an iPhone version of the Reality Check budget calculator application. TEA approved this request and an iPhone app was developed. The application was completed in August 2012 and submitted to the Apple App Store for posting. The application is free and available to the iPhone carrying public for download.

There are several other efforts that TWC/LMCI contributes indirectly to the support of Perkins goals and CTE program support. Among these is the production of occupational supply and demand reports, analysis of post exit labor market outcomes and a variety of presentations at which the importance of CTE programs is emphasized.

Section D: Recommendations for Improvements

Texas encourages the continuation of the entire body of ETA core products. We believe the emphasis is pertinent to the role of an LMI grant recipient and yet flexible enough to allow each state to address their respective customer needs and engage in unique product development. We highly encourage the continuation of the three year funding cycle, which allows states to accomplish annual objectives but also to plan and budget more strategically to attempt bigger things. For example, Texas has engaged in an extensive effort to create a comprehensive skills map using the detailed work activity construct from O*NET. The rewrite and validation of the DWA library is a large project and could never have been accomplished in just one year with single year funding. However, with some austerity and the use of budget carryover provisions we were able to achieve project goals over the course of a three year period. We applaud ETA for reserving this kind of flexibility for the states to think and act on a larger scale and longer horizon than an annual grant cycle. From this perspective, it is disappointing to find that ETA has opted to move in the opposite direction by mandating larger percentages of annual grant funds be expended in the grant year. Most states will do this anyway. But those states that choose to be more assertive, develop a more diverse funding base or undertake larger

projects in a phased or piecemeal manner should be encouraged to do so within the Workforce Information Grant.

Texas also appreciates the flexibility allowed by ETA to provide the kinds of specific deliverables deemed necessary at the state level within broad categories identified by ETA. Texas appreciates the efforts of ETA regional office staff to keep us informed of federal initiatives that may have a bearing on state policies and approaches. We encourage ETA to retain this policy direction.

Texas would be willing to participate in additional discussions between state and federal staff regarding the deliverable requiring the development of an economic analysis for the state. There are so many complexities and such a wide array of stakeholders within each state surrounding this kind of product that perhaps an alternate or optional deliverable category could be identified for states that have partner agencies or entities with this same responsibility. To date, ETA has been flexible in recognizing these state level partnerships and we would encourage that continued perspective.

Texas is encouraged by the progress being made through the partnership between state LMI shops and the Census Bureau regarding the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. Once almost unimaginable, LED now has all 50 states participating and this treasure trove of labor market dynamics information is just starting to become mainstream. We applaud ETA's participation as a funding agent and we highly encourage ETA to continue their active participation as part of the partnership; both financially and through challenges to the LED partnership, to create products and reports that specifically can contribute to federal and state workforce program operations. There is no richer data base with more potential for the workforce system than LED. Given ETA's early support of the fledgling system, we encourage continued engagement -- if for no other reason than to optimize early development investments. We would also encourage ETA to investigate several related projects being undertaken by Census, especially the job to job flows research, as they have exceptional potential to assist planning and placement for dislocated and transitioning workers.

Texas also would like to encourage ETA to participate in the Conference Board's initiative relating to on-line help wanted job postings (HWOL). While there are many companies engaged in web spidering for electronic job postings, The Conference Board has made a concerted effort to understand help wanted advertising as a leading economic indicator within the larger macroeconomic environment. This allows HWOL job postings to be seamlessly integrated into various LMI tools and the underlying micro data and analytical tools should prove extraordinarily helpful in direct job placement under TANF/CHOICES and WIA.

Appendix A: LMCI Travel and Presentation Schedule PY2011

| LOCATION | PURPOSE | FOLKS | TYPE |
|----------------|--|-------|----------------|
| Dallas | Provide Career Development training at CTE conference | 75 | Teachers |
| Corpus Christi | Provide Career Development training at Trade & Industry CTE conference (2 each) | 100 | Teachers |
| Dallas | Provide Career Development training at Family Consumer Science CTE conference | 175 | Teachers |
| Victoria | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 3 ESC | 25 | Teachers |
| San Antonio | Changing Face for TRA Rehabilitation conference | 80 | Administrators |
| Dallas | DWAs and SWAP for CTE conference | 60 | Teachers |
| Dallas | Changing Face for CTE conference | 850 | Teachers |
| Ft. Worth | Changing Face for Ft. Worth Arlington HRMA | 110 | Workforce |
| Bellmead | Working Texas Style presentation for TSTC Job Fair | 80 | Students |
| Tyler | Changing Face for East Texas HRMA | 40 | Employer |
| Denver | Changing Face of the Region IV/VIII Economy for TANF conference | 60 | Workforce |
| El Paso | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 19 ESC conference | 75 | Teachers |
| Austin | Provide seminar on LMI concepts and overview of the TX economy to TWC GR staff | 8 | Workforce |
| Hutto | Working Texas Style presentation to Hutto Economic Development Corporation | 32 | Employer |
| Austin | Working Texas Style and LMI concepts to TX Vets conference (3 sessions) | 90 | Workforce |
| Corpus Christi | Changing Face for Corpus Christi CCHRM | 90 | Employer |
| El Paso | Presentation on LMCI Resources to Upper Rio LWDB staff | 75 | Workforce |
| Bryan | Working Texas Style presentation to Bryan SHRM chapter event | 32 | Employer |
| Amarillo | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 16 ESC | 31 | Teachers |
| Amarillo | Provide 3 session to Amarillo 2020 initiative: Changing Face, LMI Concepts, SWAP | 100 | Administrators |
| McKinney | Changing Face for McKinney Chamber of Commerce luncheon | 80 | Employer |
| Austin | Changing Face for P-16 Council at the THECB | 40 | Administrators |
| Austin | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 13 ESC | 35 | Teachers |
| Dallas | Changing Face for Dallas Regional Chamber of Commerce | 19 | Employer |
| Round Rock | Working Texas Style for Round Rock Chamber of Commerce | 75 | Employer |
| Woodlands | Changing Face for Woodlands Bar Assoc & SHRM chapter | 85 | Employer |
| Austin | Update on the Texas Economy for TWC PAR Briefing | 30 | Workforce |
| San Antonio | Presentation on features and use of SWAP in workforce planning for Alamo LWDA | 25 | Workforce |
| San Antonio | LMCI Products & Services at Northwest Vista College Counselor Showcase | 50 | Counselors |
| Midland | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 18 ESC | 15 | Teachers |
| Bryan | Working Texas Style for Bryan Regional CTAT conference | 40 | Counselors |
| Texarkana | Changing Face for Texarkana Chamber of Commerce | 90 | Workforce |
| San Antonio | Provide LMCI products & services at Eagle Ford Shale conference | 100 | Employer |
| Lubbock | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 17 ESC | 45 | Counselors |
| Port Arthur | Using LMI for student career planning to HS students Exploring Careers Classes | 90 | Students |
| Austin | Changing Face for DARS orientation | 15 | Counselors |
| Houston | Changing Face for TAWB at TWC Conference | 70 | Workforce |
| Houston | Changing Face for TWC Conference | 60 | Workforce |
| Houston | DWA and the Talent Development Pipeline with Michael Brown | 75 | Workforce |
| San Antonio | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 20 ESC | 23 | Teachers |
| Austin | Supply and Demand and SWAP presentation to SITAC | 25 | Administrators |
| Houston | LMCI Resources for TX Economic and Demographic Association (2 sessions) | 80 | Administrators |
| Austin | Changing Face for Central Texas Comp and Benefits | 45 | Employer |
| Corpus Christi | Changing Face for Best Places to Work Conference luncheon keynote | 450 | Employer |
| McAllen | Working Texas Style for South Texas Manufacturers Assoc. luncheon keynote | 90 | Employer |
| Austin | Texas economic overview for TWC internal staff PAR briefing | 25 | Administrators |
| San Antonio | Provide TAT to Alamo Work Source on LMCI data products after LAUS conference | 20 | Workforce |

| | | | |
|---------------|--|--------------|----------------|
| Austin | Demand for STEM disciplines in the Texas labor market | 25 | Students |
| Texarkana | Provide TAT to Northeast Texas on use LMCI data products | 12 | Workforce |
| San Antonio | Changing Face for SHRM Comp & Benefits conference | 16 | Employer |
| Austin | Working Texas Style and LMCI products for Texas Transitions conference | 75 | Counselors |
| Austin | Changing Face & LMCI products for Westlake HS CTE Directors | 35 | Teachers |
| McKinney | Changing Face & LMCI products for TARPPS keynote Collin County | 125 | Counselors |
| Houston | Changing Face for Houston Economics Club | 90 | Employer |
| Houston | Aligning the Houston Economy with Education for HGAC Workforce Solutions | 45 | Administrators |
| Washington | Presentation Telling the Labor Market Story with LED data at LED national conference | 110 | Workforce |
| Houston | Working Texas Style to TX Economic and Demographic Association at Houston FED | 45 | Administrators |
| Round Rock | LMCI Tools for Williamson County Career Job Club with Phil and Rob | 35 | Job Seekers |
| Austin | Energy Industry Job Demand and Working Texas Style at ACC | 20 | Students |
| Austin | Working Texas Style to Austin Energy Students Club keynote | 35 | Students |
| Austin | Aligning Energy Jobs and Vets to Energy Students Club | 11 | Students |
| Austin | Using LMCI Data Products and Online Tools for TWC Quarterly Forum | 70 | Workforce |
| Austin | Presentation Telling the Labor Market Story with various data programs TWC Forum | 65 | Workforce |
| Dallas | Aligning Education and the Economy for the Dallas Chamber of Commerce | 50 | Employer |
| Austin | Regional Labor Market Change and Working Texas Style | 20 | Employer |
| Austin | Energy Industry Job Demand and Working Texas Style at Women in Green Energy | 20 | Students |
| San Antonio | Working Texas Style for Texas Federation for the Blind | 30 | Students |
| Rockwall | Regional Labor Market Change and Working Texas Style TX Eco Devo Council | 50 | Workforce |
| Brownsville | Aligning Education and the Economy for Brownsville Regional Directors (2 sessions) | 55 | Administrators |
| Austin | Youth Unemployment and Texas Employer Hiring Needs for Austin Community College | 10 | Students |
| Austin | Developments in the Texas Economy for TWC Performance briefing | 40 | Workforce |
| Austin | Changing Face for DARS/VBS for new counselor orientation | 15 | Counselors |
| Austin | Changing Face for TX County & District Retirement System | 350 | Employer |
| San Antonio | Texas Economy to Labor Relations/Human Resources conference w/ Temple | 250 | Employer |
| Pasadena | Working Texas Style to San Jacinto College administrators and faculty | 45 | Administrators |
| Waco | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 12 ESC | 30 | Teachers |
| Austin | Changing Face for TX Council on Economic Education | 50 | Teachers |
| Wichita Falls | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 9 ESC | 28 | Teachers |
| Round Rock | Presentation of LMCI products and services to Rural Capital Board | 30 | Workforce |
| Dallas | Presentation on Texas AutoCoder at BLS regional gathering | 20 | Administrators |
| San Angelo | Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 15 ESC | 20 | Teachers |
| Dallas | Working Texas Style for National Federation of the Blind | 45 | Administrators |
| | Total, All presentations | 5,957 | |