

# **Annual Performance Report**

## **Workforce Information Grant PY 2012**

**September 2013**

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 2012 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 the Workforce Information Database (WIDb) with core data as required in the PY 2012 grant. We also updated and added other data at state-option to better serve our customers including tables listing educational offerings from schools around the state. 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 2.5 of the WIDb was in use during the year, following an upgrade at the start of the program year. At the time of the upgrade, the LASER database was moved to Geographic Solutions servers.

We coordinated with 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 continued adjustments to transition SOC 2010 codes that carried over from the previous program year and will remain an issue until both projections files and OES wages are full converted. To the extent that we were able with available staff resources, we conducted training in both the VOSS and LASER systems to familiarize users with the data in the WIDb. ER&A staff again submitted licensing data through the National Crosswalk Services Center (NCSC) as an optional annual update. Staff had previously attended the annual GeoSolutions-sponsored conference and participated on a workgroup to design new LMI reports. In 2012 we were represented by agency IT staff.

#### **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 2012-2014 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 and later in the year 2011-2021. We developed new publications highlighting both the short-term and long-term projections and disseminated them through a variety of means, including paper handouts and 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 March. 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 had a revised layout that was easier to read. The report emphasized data generated by ER&A and was enhanced with other sources such as 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 served in a technical capacity 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 covering topics such as tax incentives for small business expansion and changes to the state minimum wage. We participated in a number of studies highlighting regional economies within the state and highlighting industry and occupational trends as well as analysis of regional wage information.

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.

This year, ER&A continued using the publications planning process which was introduced the previous year and had proved successful in prioritizing and focusing efforts. Using this process, we assessed the continued need for existing publications and prioritized the development of new publications. To further enhance our capacity, we dedicated additional staff resources to developing publications, while encouraging all

ER&A economists to write articles for inclusion in the monthly Labor Market Review on topics of their choice. New publications that were introduced included a Career Guide, “Star” Occupations, a monthly Industry Spotlight, and a monthly Occupational Bulletin. The Career Guide was developed for New Mexico students and job seekers between the ages of 16 and 24 and 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.

The “Star” Occupational sheets, which were in the early stages of development at the end of the 2011 program year, employed a new methodology for identifying key occupations in New Mexico and its regions based on projected employment and wages. This information has been received with enthusiasm by the local workforce boards, and publications that present this information will continue to be produced annually by ER&A. Information is targeted to New Mexico’s local workforce boards and job seekers. Future plans include distribution of this information to high schools and colleges.

The Industry Spotlight and Occupational Bulletin were developed late in the 2012 program year. Both publications are produced monthly and include critical information on individual industries and occupational groups. They are targeted to policy makers, businesses, economic development groups, and job seekers.

During the 2012 program year, the Veterans’ Employment Resource Guide, which had been primarily produced in the 2011 program year, was published. The guide was distributed to local workforce offices around the state and veterans institutions, such as the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services.

ER&A also continued producing several publications that have been successful in providing information to NMDWS customers. Publications included the monthly Labor Market Review; the quarterly Regional Review; the annual Social and Economic Indicators Report; annual Projections In-Briefs; and annual Wage Sheets.

During the program year, ER&A also prepared reports and analysis for economic developers and local workforce boards. Examples included information we provided on employment growth for New Mexico’s counties at the request of the New Mexico Economic Development Department. For another project, we updated employment projections information to meet a request by Central Workforce Development Board members. The report we produced included employment changes by industry, with an emphasis on industry composition to identify economic drivers, and how the Central Region is recovering from the recession. We also provided employment change data related to construction as requested by the City of Santa Fe Economic Development Department.

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

During the year we posted publications, studies and other information to our website. We updated existing publications and added new publications when they were available.

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 <https://www.jobs.state.nm.us/analyzer/default.asp>. Data produced under the 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, Veterans Resource Guide, the wage Estimates Delivery System, New Mexico Annual Social and Economic Indicators, Regional Reviews, 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 at the end of the previous grant year. As a result of the redesign, the LMI pages encountered difficulties which we addressed during the grant year and we now have a standalone clickable LMI section that is visually appealing and easy to navigate, while still integrating LMI into services provided by NMDWS.

#### **5) 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 made formal presentations on LMI topics at board meetings as well as providing 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 were 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.

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.

Another way in which ER&A continues to be responsive to local WIB members is by providing individualized employment projection analysis. In the 2012 program year, ER&A developed a new methodology for ranking jobs and compiling a listing of top jobs for each region. These top jobs represent the best occupational opportunities in each community based on job growth and wages. Based on the feedback received throughout the year on this information, ER&A has determined it will continue to prepare this information and expand publications and outreach related to the identified top jobs.

ER&A also worked one-on-one with the local workforce development boards. The largest project included providing the Central Workforce Development Board with updated employment projections; information and analysis on employment changes by industry, with an emphasis on industry composition to identify economic drivers; and analysis on how the Central Region is recovering from the recession.

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**

We actively participated in several key partnerships, several of which led to cooperative grant applications and other initiatives to leverage limited funding to serve common goals that we share with the education community, economic developers and local governments.

One project that involved considerable resources was a multi-agency initiative that required our senior economist to work two days a week on special assignment for several months in Santa Fe at the Higher Education Department (HED). The group was tasked with developing a new funding formula for state funded colleges of higher education that would increase accountability and take account of student outcomes. Our role was to

incorporate factors into the funding formula factors to reward training for occupations that were in demand. Our analyst adapted ER&A's occupational projections for use in the public college funding formula. We developed documents with tables to take account of geographic WIA areas and occupational supply and demand.

ER&A has responded several times in the past year to special requests from economic developers and local WIB members. ER&A presented findings to the Santa Fe City Council from an economic snapshot prepared for the Santa Fe Economic Development Division. The presentation highlighted current and historical information on Santa Fe's labor market and included employment changes, unemployment rates, labor force participation, industry and occupational employment and employment projections, and wages. The presentation also focused on specific industries in Santa Fe that are considered economic drivers.

We identified obstacles to obtaining grant funding which, among other initiatives, led us to start the process to become a WRIS 2 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.