Texas DOL/ETA Workforce Information Grant PY2012 Performance Report

Overview of Texas LMI Programs and Performance

PY2012 was another 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. LMCI implemented an internal reorganization during the PY, formally creating two Director positions; one with management responsibilities for BLS program operations and routine data dissemination and the other tagged as Applied Decision Support with responsibilities for LMI automation, education and workforce follow-up, and special project research. Operational management for the ETA Workforce Information Grant was placed in the Applied Decision Support group. Some staff reporting relationships were realigned and a special emphasis was placed on staff cross-training and functional integration; especially among the BLS program staff. This approach is to encourage those that produce various data series better understand how LMI consumers use their data.

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. 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, especially in the area of higher education.

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. In PY2012 TSTC has moved decidedly forward, creating their own internal software tools to align program learning objectives with detailed work activities. LMCI staff worked very closely with TSTC to help them emulate auto-coding functionalities and the ability to upload and parse course descriptions and create education program level DWA profiles. We are very proud of our ability to work with multiple stakeholders outside our immediate community of practitioners, and this project demonstrates the importance of skills-based labor market information to better align public education and labor market demand. The collaboration with TSTC will intensify in PY2013, including additional investments in updating the DWA skills library and improving upon the DWA natural language processing algorithms.

Of all the Internet applications developed and maintained by the Texas grantee, the Texas Reality Check application remained far and away the most popular. That site averages over a

million page views a month in its' first ten months of existence and students stayed on the site for almost 15 minutes per visit.
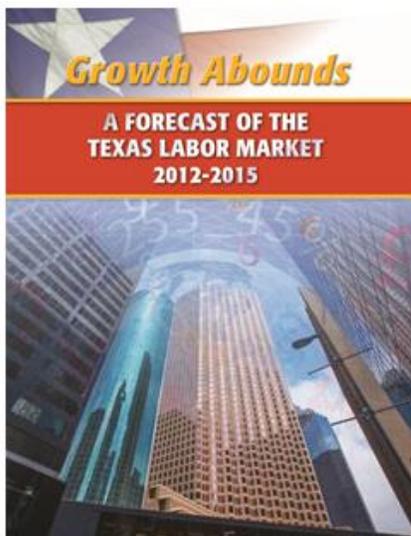
Annual Economic Analysis Report(s)

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. The Comptroller publishes a monthly economic outlook briefing at http://www.texasahead.org/economy/outlook.php and a series of charted economic indicators on a monthly/quarterly basis at http://www.texasahead.org/economy/tracking/

For a narrative economic overview of the Texas economy see the website of the Texas Governor's Office at: http://www.texaswideopenforbusiness.com/media/snapshots.php. This web page include overviews for the several industry clusters approved by the Texas legislature, as well as an overview of the Texas economy at http://www.governor.state.tx.us/files/ecodev/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

For PY 2012 we added a new publication to our repertoire that built on the foundation provided by short term industry employment forecasts. We contracted with IHS Global Insights to create annual employment forecasts for the four year period of 2012 through 2015 for Texas and all 28 Local Workforce Boards. In addition, we interviewed ten (10) Texas economists to get their take on the short term prospects for the state and regional economy. The result is an engaging and balanced discussion of the economic and demographic phenomena most likely to influence Texas job growth through 2015.The publication can be found on the Internet at www.lmci.state.tx.us/shared/GrowthAbounds.asp

LMCI Web Metrics for PY2012

LMCI offers ten (10) 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, page views 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 most LMCI applications for PY2012 are provided below.

The new Texas Reality Check program was introduced on October 1, 2012. From October 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013, there have been 369,089 user sessions and 10,581,093 page views for an average of over a million page views per month -- and trending upward. The average time spent on the site was just under 15 minutes; demonstrating significant engagement on the part of the primarily student oriented audience.

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 surpasses those intended for other audiences. Including Texas Reality Check and the other LMCI software applications, Texas had over a 1.1 million user sessions and over 25 million page views.

Customer Use Metrics July 1, 2012 thru June 30, 2013				
Application	**Sessions**	**Sessions per day**	**Page Views**	**Page Views per day**
Texas CARES Online	482,673	1,323	13,382,723	36,665
LMCI Home Page	47,457	130	103,258	283
Industry Profiles	69,487	190	312,950	857
TRACER2	102,788	282	674,958	1,849
Texas Wages	8,760	24	10,424	28
SOCRATES	36,442	100	233,750	640
Texas Work Prep	31,122	86	94,827	260
All LMCI Sites (excluding Reality Check)	**778,729**		**14,812,893**	

Major shifts in use between PY2011 and PY2012 occurred when Work In Texas, the Texas electronic labor exchange system, changed internal web links from the LMCI home page to links to Texas CARES Online and SOCRATES. Not surprising given the user volume from WIT, page views for the LMCI home page declined while all the use metrics for SOCRATES and page views for Texas CARES Online increased sharply.

Starting in PY2013 LMCI will be transitioning from the Urchin web analytics software to Google Analytics. Urchin was acquired by Google in 2005 to form the basis for Google Analytics but they are no longer supporting the older Urchin software. We will endeavor to make sure no data are lost in the transition process, however it is possible that next years' statistical use reports may lack continuity with those submitted in prior years.

Section A: Detailed Project Accomplishments based on PY2012 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 2013 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. In addition, the state of Texas invested in a commercial site location application called Sites On Texas. Although it is a limited subscription only service, site licenses were provided to each LWDB. LMCI provides extracts from the WIDb to the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) so our data can be made available from that package.

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 were uploaded on "The Future" page of our TRACER2 delivery tool the last week of October. These projections files are available to local WIB staff who use the data to develop their WIA strategic plan Target Occupations lists. The integration of the detailed industry and occupational projections into SOCRATES, Texas Industry Profiles and other LMCI online analysis tools took place during the first two weeks in November.

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 month after completing the Texas short term forecast IHS released a new report on the economic impact of tight oil, namely oil & gas extraction, using fracking techniques. Because Texas plays a significant role in this sector, and oil & gas extraction has significant multiplier effects across many industries, we asked IHS to revise the Texas short term forecasts through 2015 and include the additional insight from their newest report. The revised data were published in Excel database format on "The Future" page of our TRACER2 delivery tool in December 2012. The subsequent narrative report, *Growth Abounds: A Forecast of the Texas Labor Market 2012-2015*, was released in August 2013.

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.

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 have now been fully integrated into our production version of County Narrative Profiles application. The new version was rolled into publication in March 2013. PowerPoint slides highlighting LED outputs have been integrated into almost every external

presentation. LMCI staff were invited to make a presentation at the 2013 LED national conference on their work integrating LED data into County Narrative Profiles application.

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. Two major areas of emphasis for PY2012 were:

   1) Development of online tools to match resumes against various output vectors, including job postings. The DWA Institute was dismantled during the PY with the death of Michael Brown, CEO and Founder of SkillsNet Inc. The fledgling SkillsPass application was taken down. However, LMCI developed parallel capabilities and replicated all functionalities of SkillsPass. These functionalities have been used internally to address myriad skill matching challenges. In PY2013 staff will formally create a public facing application to demonstrate the capabilities of DWA matching in the labor exchange process. Most likely that application will relate to job matching for veterans as discussions are underway to create a system designed around the job search needs of transitioning soldiers.

   2) Enhancement of the DWA database by the addition of Workplace Basics.

Sample: Workplace Basic Skills Profile for Economist
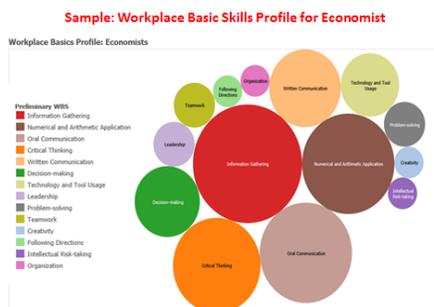
Employers who are interviewed as to their primary skill needs most frequently refer to workplace basic or soft skills as those most in demand. However, there are limited empirical data to quantify soft skills, nor is there a common definition. In 2009 Texas developed a compendium of 30 workplace basic skills that we use to help define this concept. In PY2011 we did a research project with SkillsNet and funds from the Texas Education Agency to determine the feasibility of assigning workplace basic skills to each DWA. That research demonstrated not only the possibility but the value of a wider scale data development project (see sample visualization of WBS profile for Economist). A contract with TSTC Waco will be executed in PY2013 for the assignment and employer validation of a primary, secondary and tertiary workplace basic skill to each DWA.

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/2094_QCEW_2Q2013.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 PY2012 the TLMR continued to evolve. The expanded 16 page format

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 copies are sent electronically to over eight thousand 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 are required by Texas SB 281 but also provide snapshots of one year, three year and five year program outcomes. These reports by program silo for DOL PY2012 (e.g. ES, WIA, Skills Development Fund) are posted on the LMCI website. For PY2012 staff were finally able to consummate the long-considered online interactive dashboard for automated follow-up (see embedded dashboard reports). This new dashboard format allows us to create reports for all of the various education and training programs and for any of the local workforce board regions. The new reports have been fully vetted with Texas Workforce staff and have become the primary means for communicating post-program labor market outcomes.
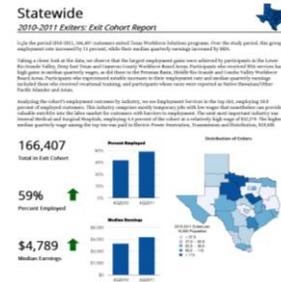
IV. Posting Products, Information, Reports on the Internet

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 continued to upgrade and refine existing products with an emphasis on making the necessary upgrades to migrate LMCI applications from their current quarantined server environment into the newer, more robust TWC server environment. While no LMCI products have been migrated to the new server environment, considerable progress was made in this direction. TWC continues to have a strong emphasis on accessibility and LMCI continues to make all new products fully accessible while moving older legacy applications in a similar direction of common agency branding standards and accessibility.

Strategic Workforce Assessment Program (SWAP) upgrades -- For PY2012 staff continued to update data sets in SWAP and make minor code changes. No significant rewrites or new features were added during the PY. Among the many data updates were 2012 occupational wages, the number of Conference Board HWOL job postings for the most recent quarter, and the most recent QCEW industry employment data

Update and upgrade SOCRATES regional planning software – LMCI staff routinely updates and improves SOCRATES data currency and program functionality. For PY2012 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 PY2012, staff continued revisiting functionalities of the TRACER2 product and implemented many public facing changes. Wholesale TRACER redesign efforts continued during PY2012, however major modifications to the public facing application were delayed in order to address higher priority applications.

Texas CARES **On-line –**Texas CARES online continues to be our flagship career

information product. During PY2012 staff updated the data sets to include 2013 Peterson's College data, 2012 occupational wage data, 2012 labor supply data from Texas colleges and many other data items. Texas CARES Online, while it is a very robust data application, has an outdated look and feel which has become noticeable relative to new application designs. Starting in PY2012 we began an entire rewrite of Texas CARES Online with a special emphasis on a cleaner look and feel to the application, continuity with TWC branding standards and full accessibility. Given the breadth of the application and the limited resources being applied to it, we expect the rewrite to last well into PY2013.

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 PY2012 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. 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. This year we also began work on an HWOL centric online application. This application development has not been a high priority project but we expect to make more progress in PY2013.

Update and upgrade State Training Inventory software – LMCI updated the State Training Inventory program to include three years of enrollments (2010, 2011, and 2012) 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 much of the Texas grantee's outreach activity is being pushed online, staff make significant efforts to be in the field making presentations on the state and regional economies and providing training on our various products and services. For PY2012, LMCI staff made 103 presentations at conferences, meetings and in-service workshops. Estimated total attendance at these events was roughly 8,037 conferees (see Appendix A workshop list attached for details). The addition of Mick Normington as a full-time presenter was largely responsible for the increase in presentation attendees by over 30 percent from PY2011. His focus on providing training to regional Society of Human Resources (SHRM) chapters throughout Texas, local Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Boards, and Economic Development entities significantly expanded our outreach activities. Due to funding priority reallocations in PY2012 from the Texas Education Agency we will no longer be providing the same level of training among Texas school districts. This will lead to a decrease in the total number of presentation in PY2013; however we still expect to conduct as many as 80 sessions next year.

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 PY2012 our Dissemination staff addressed 1,258 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 continued to purchase 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 2013 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 also continue to dissect the American Community Survey PUMS micro file to help answer detailed demographic questions. Starting in 2009 the ACS PUMS records contain information on the earnings and occupational employment of Texans who hold a Bachelor's degree or higher. Among other things, these data give us a sense of earnings and occupational attachment for persons whose major has limited direct association with the labor market, such as Liberal Arts, Political Science, etc.

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.

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. 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 by 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 looking for the best data sets and analytical tools they can find to achieve that goal. LMCI has ten 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 is 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 103 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. In PY2012 we continued a new direction by conducting personal interviews with Texas business to get a sense of their skill needs. These anecdotal data give us additional context for our statistical data and also provide us opportunities to collaborate and to form hypotheses that can be empirically tested. An excellent example this year was our work with the Tien Jen pipe company in Corpus Christi. We made contact with a representative from this Chinese company at a presentation and ended up in a conversation about their skill needs and recruitment challenges. We were able to translate their job posting language into a DWA profile and then share that profile with the local workforce board to help the company with recruitment. Also in PY2012 we continued execution of the Texas WDQI grant to build an integrated database capacity for purposes of identifying post-exit customer outcomes. LMCI staff are co-managers of the grant and provide technical leadership on issues of educational data integration. A final report on this grant will be submitted next year under separate cover.

LMCI program managers also participate in national policy councils, as time allows. The LMCI Director sits on the national LED steering committee and NASWA LMI committee. Our BLS program manager sits on the OES and CES policy councils. We find this external engagement to be extremely useful for generating new ideas and creating relevant products and services.

5. **Stay involved with other state constituencies** – The Texas Department of Rehabilitative Service Blind Services (DARS/VBS) 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.

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. Excellent examples of that collaboration in PY2012 are the commitment by TEA to fund the Workplace Basics research project, LMCI staff participation in the Education Research Center (ERC) joint advisory board, and continued sharing of UI wage records with the Texas Higher

Education Coordinating Board to maintain college report cards and related post-graduate outcomes analysis.

Starting in PY2012, the TWC began a Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) initiative to look at streamlining Agency operations. LMCI will participate in this process and more specific information on that initiative will be reported in PY2013.

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 or end-user data tools. Our strongest outside collaboration in PY2012 was with the Texas Education Agency. Among the deliverables we produced under a Perkins grant from that agency were:

1. Provided 29 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). Altogether, staff trained 1,480 teacher participants.
2. The execution of a data collection approach and context for collecting "Workplace Basics" or social competence data by detailed work activity for every SOC coded occupation. Data collection for workplace basics linked to DWAs will begin as a joint project in PY2013. This project is an excellent example of a three-way collaboration between Career and Technology Education, Higher Education in the form of TSTC Waco, and LMCI.
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 27th consecutive year, filling 561 requests for counselor packets and answering 3,239 student calls from September 1, 2012 through August 31, 2013. Of those, 38% came from 8th graders and another 8% came from 7th graders; reinforcing the point that Career Development courses are increasingly being taught in middle school. Interestingly, for the first time in some years there were five occupations requested by students that were not in the top 20 in the previous year. It is hard to draw conclusions from these data, but the new occupations all have experienced strong labor market demand in the past several years. Topping the list in order of inquiries are Athletes, Video Game Designers, Physicians, Registered Nurse, High School Teacher and Forensic Science Technician. New to the top 20 are Truck Driver, Welder and Middle School Teacher. As part of the Hotline contract LMCI continued their commitment to update and maintain Texas CARES at no cost to the Perkins contract or the Texas Education Agency. 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.

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. Texas has been able to undertake larger, more meaningful projects by executing some operational budget austerity and the use of budget carryover provisions 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 is moving 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 and 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 continues to support the partnership between state LMI shops and the Census Bureau regarding the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. 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 prior 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 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). Otherwise referred to as "real-time LMI" the availability of online job postings data has been an exceptional addition to the LMI toolkit. We recognize that there are many companies engaged in web spidering for electronic job postings; however 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.

Lastly, we encourage ETA to fully support the Projections Managing Partnership. The micro-matrix product is critical to long term projections and the various related tools and expertise that allows that system to be useful are highly valued by states. In addition, the EDS OES wage data processing tool is critical to providing occupational wage data to our local workforce boards. The BLS supports wage data for MSAs but in states like Texas that have 28 local workforce boards that are not coterminous with MSAs, the ability to support WIA and those Boards with wage data and customized regional staffing patterns is dependent on the EDS processing engine. We hope ETA recognizes the importance of the EDS processing engine and the valuable support role previously provided by the state of North Carolina and finds a way to retain this capability.

Appendix A: LMCI Presentation Schedule PY 2012

LOCATION	PURPOSE	FOLKS	TYPE
Pasadena	Working Texas Style to Palacios Chamber of Commerce	40	Employer
Corpus Christi	Provide Career Development and CARES training at TVIA summer conference (2 sessions)	90	Teachers
Corpus Christi	Provide Career Development and CARES training at TVIA summer conference (2 sessions)	90	Teachers
Austin	Changing Face for UT@Austin Professional Development	18	Administrators
San Antonio	Changing Face for TAB/SHRM business conference	325	Employer
Dallas	Provide Career Development and CARES training at CTAT Education conference	50	Teachers
Dallas	Provide Career Development and CARES training at CTAT Education conference	50	Teachers
Austin	Texas economic overview for TWC internal staff PAR briefing	21	Administrators
Dallas	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Family Consumer Sciences conference	60	Teachers
Dallas	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Family Consumer Sciences conference	60	Teachers
Dallas	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 10 ESC	45	Teachers
Dallas	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 10 ESC	45	Teachers
Huntsville	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 6 ESC	10	Teachers
Huntsville	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 6 ESC	10	Teachers
El Campo	Working Texas Style: Job Creation & Employment Trends in Wharton County	50	Employers
El Paso	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 19 ESC	45	Teachers
El Paso	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 19 ESC	45	Teachers
San Antonio	Presentation on Tx Economy and LMCI Resources Northeast ISD CTE teachers	50	Teachers
San Antonio	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 20 ESC	40	Teachers
San Antonio	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 20 ESC	40	Teachers
Texarkana	Working Texas Style presentation on the TX & Texarkana economies for LWDA Summit	60	Workforce
Victoria	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 3 ESC	20	Teachers
Victoria	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 3 ESC	20	Teachers
Kilgore	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 7 ESC	30	Teachers
Kilgore	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 7 ESC	30	Teachers
Austin	Working Texas Style: Do you have the skills to pay the bills for Austin Community College	90	Administrators
Ft. Worth	Changing Face for Ft. Worth SHRM conference	75	Employer
Silsbee	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 5 ESC	35	Teachers
Silsbee	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 5 ESC	35	Teachers
Austin	Working Texas Style: Do you have the skills to pay the bills for TX CTE Leadership	240	Teachers
Richmond	Working Texas Style: Do you have the skills to pay the bills for Wharton Co Junior College	6	Administrators
Houston	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 4 ESC	45	Teachers
Houston	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 4 ESC	45	Teachers
Bay City	Working Texas Style to Bay City Chamber of Commerce	5	Employers
Harlingen	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 1 ESC	45	Teachers
Harlingen	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 1 ESC	45	Teachers
Austin	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 13 ESC	40	Teachers
Austin	Provide Career Development and CARES training at Region 13 ESC	40	Teachers
South Padre	Changing Face for DARS Statewide conference	200	Counselors
Austin	Changing Face for Capital Area LWDA Job Club at UT	25	Employers
Austin	Economic briefing to TWC Commissioners PAR briefing	45	Workforce
The Woodlands	Changing Face for The Woodlands Labor Law Symposium	110	Employers
San Antonio	Labor market and career opportunities for visually impaired	20	Counselors
Beaumont	Working Texas Style for Golden Triangle Business Roundtable	110	Employers
Port Arthur	Will & Skill for Southeast Texas	8	Counselors
Beaumont	Working Texas Style for Beaumont workforce office staff	19	Counselors
Ft Worth	Changing Face for Ft. Worth Education and Business Alignment Conference at ESC XI	120	Administrators
Baytown	Working Texas Style of regional college administrators and counselors	55	Administrators
Austin	Changing Face for AHRMA conference - lunch keynote	60	Employers
Grapevine	Will & Skill for the Texas economy TWC statewide conference	150	Workforce
Grapevine	Use of DWAs in TSTC Curriculum Alignment process TWC statewide conference	75	Workforce
Austin	DWA Common Language Project webinar for NASWA	215	Workforce
Austin	Changing Face for TASSCC State of the State conference	350	Employer
Austin	Provide Career Development and CARES training for TVIA conference	125	Teachers
Austin	Provide Career Development and CARES training for TVIA conference	125	Teachers
Waco	Changing Face for Heart of TX Board Awards Banquet Waco Convention Center	175	Employer
Austin	Changing Face for Texas Rehabilitation Council	25	Administrators
Austin	Changing Face for TAB/SHRM business conference	190	Employers
Austin	Changing Face for Williamson County HR Association	40	Counselors
Austin	Provide Career Development and CARES training for CTAT conference	60	Administrators
Austin	Provide Career Development and CARES training for CTAT conference	60	Administrators
Beaumont	Working Texas Style: Trends Impacting Texas Employers & Workers to South East LWDB	45	Administrators
Galveston	Presentation on using interactive dashboards to display follow-up information	90	Administrators
Galveston	Presentation on using interactive dashboards to display follow-up information	90	Administrators
Austin	Aligning Will & Skill for CTAT Administrators conference	350	Administrators
Austin	Changing Face for UT graduate accounting students	75	Students
Hutto	Job Creation and Job Development for Hutto Chamber of Commerce	25	Employers
Corpus Christi	Changing Face and LMCI resources to workforce conference sponsored by Goodwill	35	Administrators
Austin	Working Texas Style for Texas Transitional Counselors statewide conference	150	Counselors
Austin	Aligning Will & Skill for Jobseekers for Capital Area Board LaunchPad jobseekers club	90	Job Seekers
McAllen	Aligning Will & Skill for Jobseekers for combined DARS and Middle Rio LWDB staff	35	Counselors
Houston	Working Texas Style: Skills To Pay The Bills for Houston ISD	220	Administrators
Corpus Christi	Will & Skill and LMCI resources to Texas Association of School Boards keynote	110	Administrators
Arlington	Will & Skill with Changing Face for NCT workforce board	60	Workforce
Austin	Will & Skill for TACTE statewide conference keynote presentation	150	Administrators
Austin	Quick Snapshot of the Texas Economy for TWC Commissioner work session	25	Workforce
Odessa	Will & Skill with Changing Face for Permian Basin workforce board (1st talk)	35	Workforce
Austin	Working Texas Style: Opportunities for All Kinds of Workers for DARS counselors	12	Counselors
Odessa	Will & Skill with Changing Face for Odessa College education administrators (2nd talk)	40	Administrators
Austin	Using LED data for regional labor market analysis for LMCI staff	8	Workforce
Austin	Texas Automated Student Follow-up System for FERPA conference	75	Administrators
Austin	Aligning Education and Economy for Achieve Texas in-service program	20	Administrators
Austin	Working Texas Style: Do You Have The Skills To Pay The Bills for TACE conference	50	Counselors
Austin	Changing Face of Austin for Metropolitan Breakfast Club	100	Employers
Tyler	Working Texas Style presentation for DARS Tyler regional conference	70	Counselors
Austin	The Texas Labor Market: Quarterly Performance Briefing	30	Workforce
Round Rock	Working Texas Style presentation for Round Rock Job Club	60	Jobseekers
Austin	Changing Face customized for new DARS counselors	25	Counselors
Cedar Park	Will & Skill customized for Cedar Park economic development	40	Administrators
Dallas	Working Texas Style: Do You Have The Skills To Pay The Bills for NCT LWDB	45	Counselors
Austin	Future of Texas IT workforce for GTC conference	300	Administrators
San Antonio	Changing Face for National Disability Counselors	30	Counselors
San Antonio	Working Texas Style: Skills to Pay the Bills to Texas Association of School Boards	100	Administrators
Washington	Using LED within the CNP data tool at national LED conference with R. Froeschle	150	Workforce
Washington	Using LED within the CNP data tool at national LED conference with R. Froeschle	150	Workforce
Ft. Worth	Working Texas Style: Skills to Pay the Bills to Texas Association of School Boards	100	Administrators
San Antonio	Changing Face for HR folks at San Antonio EEOC conference	200	Teachers
Austin	Working Texas Style to Texas Staff Recruiters Association	25	Employers
San Antonio	Aligning Will & Skill for San Antonio TX Economic Education conference	105	Employers
Pittsburg	Presentation on LMCI products to Region 8 ESC w/ M. Guzman	25	Workforce
San Antonio	*Will and Skill and LMCI Resources* for Alamo LWD Board	60	Workforce
Austin	*Do You Have the Skills to Pay the Bills* talk for TX Assoc. of Community College Marketers	80	Administrators
Austin	Aligning Education & the Economy for Austin Metro 8 chambers of commerce	20	Employers
Huntsville	*Do You Have the Skills to Pay the Bills* talk for TX Prison Education Conference	80	Administrators