

STATE of VERMONT



**ANNUAL REPORT
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT
TITLE 1-B
PROGRAM YEAR 2011
July 1, 2011-----June 30, 2012**



Submitted By:

Anne M. Noonan
Commissioner
Vermont Department of Labor
PO Box 488, Montpelier, VT 05601-0488
802-828-4000

Workforce Development Narrative

Although not specifically part of the VDOL Workforce Development report, we would be remiss not to acknowledge one of the worst natural disasters ever to hit the State of Vermont. Tropical Storm Irene not only caused untenable personal loss and natural environmental havoc around the state, it also had a dramatic and long lasting impact on Vermont's economy during the past year and beyond. Although more needs to be done before the recovery from the storm is complete, the recovery work that has been done by so many in a short amount of time is a testament to the Vermont character, spirit, work ethic and labor force! Here is a quick overview of the damage caused by Tropical Storm Irene:

The Facts and Damage Report

- **Tropical Storm Irene hit Vermont on Sunday, August 28th**
- *American Red Cross responded with 13 temporary shelters and food banks to supplement community efforts*
- **Over 16,000 meals are estimated to have been provided to Vermonters and volunteers**
- *Six storm-related deaths were reported as individuals from the Vermont communities of Rutland, Woodstock, Ludlow, Brattleboro and Wilmington lost their lives*
- **More than 3,500 homes suffered some damage. Of these residences, approximately 681 had damages exceeding \$10,000**
- *An estimated 1,405 households were temporarily or permanently displaced*
- **16 mobile parks and more than 500 mobile homes (located in parks and on private land) were damaged or destroyed**
- *Over 7,000 people registered for FEMA's Individual Assistance Program*
- **Average FEMA Individual Assistance provided: \$5,500 (cap \$30,200)**
- *Agricultural losses estimated at over \$10 million*
- **Flooding damaged over 400 acres of land producing fruit and vegetables**
- *VEDA approved 305 loans totaling \$14.9 million. Of the 305 loans, 249 were commercial loans and the remaining 56 were associated with agriculture*
- **A total of 225 Vermont municipalities were impacted by Tropical Storm Irene; 45 of which incurred severe damage**
- *More than 600 historic buildings were impacted spread over 30 downtowns or villages*
- **146 state road segments were closed (approximately 531 miles)**
- *34 state bridges were closed*
- **2,260 local road segments were damaged and 175 closed**
- *289 local bridges damaged and 90 closed*

NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANTS (NEG)

2011 was marked by a number of extreme and highly unusual weather events for Vermont. The state experienced three different disasters as a result of spring storms and flooding, May storms and worst of all the intense rains and flooding in the mountains from Tropical Storm Irene in August. Due to the damages that occurred, the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) applied to the United States Department of Labor (US DOL) and was awarded a total of \$2,940,000 to hire workers and support programs that would assist in the repair and clean-up for areas of the state that suffered damages.

□ Disaster #1

In the spring of 2011, Vermont was inundated with a number of severe storms that caused heavy damage from localized flooding and saw Lake Champlain, the 6th largest fresh water lake in the country, continue to rise and pass the 1869 high level record and on May 6, 2011, set a new record high water mark at 103.27 feet above sea level. This high water level, more than 3 feet over flood level, combined with weeks of lake winds caused considerable and unusual damage...especially in the counties of Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle and Washington Counties. US DOL awarded VDOL \$1,200,000 for the damages that occurred between April 23, 2011 and May 8, 2011.

□ Disaster #2

In May of 2011, storms also caused numerous rivers in Vermont to overflow their banks in Caledonia, Essex, Orange and Washington counties causing more unusual flood damage far exceeding the "normal" spring run offs. To assist these counties, VDOL received an additional \$60,000 from US DOL.

□ Disaster #3

Tropical Storm Irene blew into Vermont on August 27, 2011 creating the third major weather disaster of the fateful spring/summer. "In a disaster that caught many communities off guard, Irene dumped up to 11 inches of rain on Vermont over the weekend and turned placid mountain streams into roaring brown torrents that smashed buildings and ripped homes from their foundations. At least three people died in Vermont...While all eyes were on the coast as Irene swirled northward, some of the worst destruction took place well inland, away from the storm's most punishing winds. In landlocked Vermont, Gov. Peter Shumlin called it the worst flooding in a century." (AP, August 30, 2011) Rebounding from the shock, destruction, despair and clean up caused by this particular disaster revealed the true underlying spirit of Vermont and it's small state/small town character. The extensive damage occurred throughout the state and US DOL awarded a grant of \$1,680,000 to VDOL covering thirteen of the state's fourteen counties (Grand Isle in Lake Champlain was the exception).

These three grants have provided temporary work to over 136 individuals that were directly impacted by the flooding. The individuals either met the eligibility of a dislocated worker or had been unemployed for a minimum of 15 weeks.

VDOL continues to provide extensive outreach to communities to determine what type of assistance is needed. The workers have completed numerous projects involving clean-up, demolition, repair, renovation, and reconstruction of destroyed or damaged non-profit structures and facilities.

Governor Shumlin opened the Irene Recovery office staffed with workers that were eligible for work under the terms of the grants. The workers communicated with local “on the ground” Vermonters to help identify projects. The projects included municipal and community owned land in need of repair such as town recreation fields, school sports fields, bike paths, town green spaces, and in some cases, private property that was ravaged by the storms. Staff was instrumental in working with the Vermont Long-Term Recovery Group and helped to develop and write grants for communities to apply to VDOL for assistance.

In addition to coordinating projects, staff was instrumental in organizing Vermont’s “Spring into Action.” This was a statewide call for action to bring the focus back to the most devastated communities during the spring of 2012.

The participants are very proud of the work they have completed and are excited about the progress they have made in restoring and in turn revitalizing Vermont!

VDOL participants have completed projects in state and national parks, community recreational fields, school recreational fields, and the Rozalia Project which has cleaned miles and miles of lakes and streams and removed tons of debris. What follows is a July 25, 2012 article from *The Mountain Times*, a weekly paper published in Killington, VT.

Public-private partnership for Irene Cleanup



By Julia Purdy posted Jul 25, 2012

The Mountain Times

At a pullout on Route 73 just east of Brandon, Josh V. stands at the edge of a rocky ravine, pulling hand-over-hand on a rope. The other end is tied to a 5-gallon bucket that Tyler and Josh G., down in the ravine, have loaded with debris gathered along the upper reach of the Neshobe River. Behind him, April stands at the tailgate of Dwight's pickup truck, meticulously sorting and tabulating the gathered trash. The pickup has a bubble light on its roof, as does a blue car. Both vehicles display small red placards that read:

"State of Vermont Clean-Up Crew Working in the Area - Rozalia Project."

The main focus of the crew's efforts this year is cleaning up after Tropical Storm Irene. This summer alone, cleanup crews have removed 114,951 pieces of debris from Vermont waterways, a large percentage of which was generated by Irene a year ago. According to Brigid Brese, Community Outreach and Site Coordinator for the Rozalia Project, 14,000 pieces weighing five tons were removed from Riford Brook in Randolph alone.

The most memorable finds have been an entire sugarhouse, a pre-1940 horse rake, and a full-size mobile home trailer frame wrapped around a tree.

April enters tick marks on a tally sheet for everything from tires and mattresses to cigarettes and golf balls. Stacked alongside the guardrail nearby are a household fan, bent scraps of sheet metal and a record-player. All items are weighed. The data will go directly onto spreadsheets as the Rozalia Project adds to its database of non-biodegradable flotsam and trash found in waters around the world.

"Team Becky," as the crew members have dubbed their six-person cohort, is one of four such crews currently working under a joint partnership between the Rozalia Project and the Vermont Dept. of Labor's Workforce Development Division. They are paid under a VTDOL cleanup grant, funded in turn by a National Emergency Grant from the U.S. Dept. of Labor for disaster relief and displaced worker employment under the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. Last year Vermont qualified for three National Emergency Grants to cope with Lake Champlain flooding in April 2011, the Memorial Day floods that hit the northern counties, and Tropical Storm Irene. Within two weeks of Irene's visit, Vermont had received \$1.68 million to fund disaster relief field work.

WIA funds are also available to towns and nonprofits for activities to employ the unemployed and underemployed in disaster relief work. Bethel, Hartland, and Royalton are among those who have benefited. Under this provision, the Rozalia Project submitted an application to VTDOL to carry out Irene recovery work in Waterbury, Northfield, and the White River corridor.

In effect, the program is a close cousin of the Job Corps and the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's. Crew members must qualify under WIA guidelines: they must meet income eligibility guidelines and have been drawing unemployment for 15 weeks or more. Becky Trudeau, WIA case manager and career development specialist for VTDOL, explains that the program helps

the unemployed and underemployed get training and strengthen credentials by providing good references and a record of steady work, commitment, and teamwork.

Team Becky members speak proudly of their work, adding that they even turn out on rainy days-although working in thunderstorms is prohibited. They pool their collective past experience in construction, general labor, equipment operation, grounds maintenance, security, and firefighting to solve problems and make the work run more smoothly. For example, Josh V. fashioned a rope harness for crew members descending into the river gorge and skid plates of scrap metal for the 5-gallon buckets to prevent them from snagging and dumping their contents.

Equipment is low-tech. It includes a weed-whacker, long-handled pickers, saws, machete, hatchet, shovels, rakes, and a come-along. The program also provides rain gear and boots, first-aid kits, hand sanitizer, gloves, and water bottles. Mark and Josh V. contribute their own two-way radios to help members communicate over distance and listen for thunderstorm forecasts. Crew members carpool to work sites. Gas for the pickup, trash bags, and transfer station fees are reimbursed by the program, and Leicester and Brandon accept the crew's loads at no charge. They are also authorized to sell the scrap metal to help defray costs.

As of midsummer, the field locations include the northern reach of the White River in Rochester, Otter Creek and tributaries in northern Rutland County and Addison County, along the Third Branch and the Dog River in Randolph-Braintree-Northfield, and locations in Windsor County. The cleanup project is scheduled to end in September.

For more information on the Rozalia Project's mission and activities worldwide, go to rozaliaproject.org. Contact Brigid Brese at 802-595-3862 with your information or request for other areas still in need of stream cleanup.

<http://www.mountaintimes.info/news/important-community-bulletins/2012/07/public-private-partnership-for-irene-cleanup/>



Adult WIA

The Vermont Department of Labor administers the Workforce Investment Act adult funding stream to provide services to income eligible Vermonters so they can obtain employment in an occupation that is in demand or expected to grow in the near future.

Applicants must meet eligibility guidelines for these services. Eligibility is determined by a number of factors including but not limited to income little or no work history, barriers to employment, including those with disabilities. An assigned VDOL case manager will complete an assessment of the individual to ensure that the individual is appropriate for the training and will be able to successfully complete it. Case managers will work with the participant throughout their training and will assist when problems arise. VDOL works with those individuals that are unemployed or underemployed, and priority is given to those receiving public assistance or determined low-income.

Occupational Skills

This school based training is designed to help individuals gain occupational skills that are needed to perform a specific job.

From Sally in our St. Albans office:

I worked with Mark, a WIA participant, who was discharged from his position of 7 years. He felt it was unjustified, but could not do anything about it. He was found eligible for UI. He was making \$17.75/hr and was a single father of two. He wanted help with getting his CDL Class A license and had a job offer from an employer to start right after his CDL training. The employer was going to utilize both his driving skills and his logistics Coordinator/shipping/receiving skills. During the training the participant ran into some financial problems with medical bills and a car that kept breaking down. We were able to provide support services to allow him to continue with training. We paid for mileage reimbursement to ease the money situation. When the training ended he was ready to go to work but the company found out that their insurance company would not insure him because he had 2 accidents in the last 6 months. Even though the accidents were found not to be his fault, the insurance company felt because he was not experienced at CDL driving he would be a risk. He lost the job. He was very discouraged, but kept applying to various jobs. He had a few interviews and was very excited about one with the State AOT department that he saw listed in our office. He really wanted this job because it was only 3 miles from his home and had benefits which he really needed for his family. He got the job and was very excited and happy to be working for the State of Vermont. He was also very appreciative of all the help that WIA gave him and his family.

From Becky in our Middlebury & Burlington offices:

YP came to WIA with a criminal background after being in jail 2 for years. Assessment showed that there was a good chance that he could succeed with additional skills training. WIA paid for an advanced welding course which he completed with excellent grades. Only one week after his graduation, he secured

employment as a full time welder for C.C.S. Contractors at \$15.00 per hr. He called to let me know he was working as a welder on the new Vermont Hotel in Burlington. Prior to this training he worked as a low wage non-skilled laborer with minimal hope of job longevity or advancement.

SH, a recently separated Veteran, was able to secure an entry level position with J.P. Morgan at \$12.00 per hour shortly after he graduated from the Community College of Vermont Business program using WIA adult funding.

From Dave in our Rutland office:

Jessica was a waitress receiving Food Assistance when I met her in August 2009. She knew that she was destined to remain at or near the poverty level unless she got training to work in a good paying occupation. She applied to the RN program at Castleton State College and was accepted. We used WIA funds to pay for Jessica's tuition and books for the two years she was at Castleton. She graduated in May, 2011, passed her licensing exam in July, and is now working as a surgical nurse at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N H.

On-The-Job-Training

This training allows eligible individuals that are unable to obtain a job in their chosen field to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed and perform the job. The participant is hired by the employer and VDOL develops a training outline, with input from the employer and participant, based on current skills. The employer is reimbursed for a percentage of the extraordinary cost of training based on a negotiated rate.

Work Experience

This training allows individuals to "work" on a temporary basis to explore different types of jobs. They are expected to learn good work habits that allow them to become successful in their field. This training assists the job seeker to learn the "soft skills" that are required in the workforce of today; there may also be an educational component to this training. The length of the work experience is determined by the needs of the individual. VDOL is the employer of record for all work experience, pays a training wage equal to the state's minimum wage and covers the worker's compensation for each individual participant.

Dislocated Worker

The Vermont Department of Labor, (VDOL) administers the Workforce Investment Act, Dislocated Worker Program. The Dislocated Worker Program provides reemployment services to adversely affected dislocated workers statewide, which may include:

- Job search strategies
- Resume, cover letters, applications
- Referrals to jobs
- Labor Market Information
- Interview preparation

The Resource Centers statewide provide direct services to the dislocated workers, and assist in identifying appropriate services. This may include core and intensive services and retraining services in order for the adversely affected dislocated worker to become employed.

E-mails from John in our Burlington office:

Hi John,

Just wanted to share with you some good news--I got a job offer yesterday, thanks in large part to you and my revamped resume and cover letter. (In fact, I got a call this morning for another interview for later this week!) But the job I'm taking is for a Training & Events Coordinator, at VT Family Network, in Williston. The pay is very decent, exactly what I had hoped for but was fearing I'd never get. So, we're very pleased. Anyway, just wanted to share that with you and thank you for your help. It's very much appreciated.

**Take care,
Linda**

John,

I wanted to let you know I finished my first week working at MBA Health Group as an Implementation Consultant working on implementing Practice Management software in physicians' offices. I love my job and the company and people I work with are great. This is the type of job I set out one year ago to obtain. I would not have this job if you had not brought the MBA training to my attention at the time you did. So I just wanted to let you know how fruitful your conscientiousness has been and how grateful one currently employed Vermonter is.

**With Gratitude,
Brian**

From Dave in our Rutland office:

Donna had been working in the shipping department at OMYA when she was laid off in March, 2009. OMYA was downsizing and moving much of their main office functions to Cincinnati, Ohio. Donna was a single parent with three daughters, one of whom was in college at the time of Donna's layoff. She knew that she needed to get training in order to support her family. Donna entered the Castleton College nursing program in August, 2009. Throughout the two years she was there, WIA funds were used to cover the cost of tuition and books. Donna borrowed money to maintain her household and to keep her daughter in college. Donna graduated in May, 2011. She passed her RN licensing exam in July, 2011 and then immediately went to work as an Emergency Room Nurse at Porter Medical Center in Middlebury, VT.

From Becky in our Middlebury office:

CS was a dislocated worker. She completed the Retail Internet Business Certification Program at Champlain College on 4-27-12. A few days later, she started a new job at website developer, Dealer.com, in Burlington as a SEO Analyst at \$19.41 per hour.

Rapid Response Activities

The Vermont Department of Labor provides Rapid Response Activities in Vermont. Each Regional Resource Center has a trained Rapid Response Team. The Team will go onsite, or to a designated location, and hold informational meeting(s) for the adversely affected dislocated workers.

In the event of a layoff or closure, or upon receipt of a WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification) Letter, the Rapid Response Team will schedule meetings with the adversely affected dislocated workers and provide information regarding services available to assist them. This early intervention strategy helps to ensure that the adversely affected dislocated workers who need intensive and/or training services are identified as early as possible.

VDOL staff person, John, received the following e-mail shortly after a Rapid Response session:

Hi John,

We spoke a few times while I was at Qimonda. I started a new job last Thursday at ASIC North in South Burlington. Thanks for your help and advice. The quick response from the DOL with information and workshops was a big help, as was your feedback on my resume and on interviewing techniques. Please feel free to pass this on to the other DOL employees who came to Qimonda.

Regards,

Paul

Reach Up (TANF)

VDOL works closely with Vermont's TANF, Corrections and Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, to ensure that services are provided to those determined low income, public assistance recipients and people with disabilities. Whenever possible we work collaboratively to share resources on behalf of our shared clients.

As a part of this collaboration, each VDOL Resource Center has identified Career Development Facilitators working directly with the TANF (referred to as *Reach Up* in Vermont) population of job seekers. These staff members are funded by a contract with Creative Workforce Solutions (CWS), an Agency of Human Services entity operated by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. CWS is designed to create a single entry point for AHS consumers with barriers to employment.

The function of the VDOL Reach Up staff is to provide one-on-one services in our Resource Centers to those Reach Up jobseekers referred by the CWS local teams; the goal for this specialized staff is employment for the jobseeker receiving public assistance. The Reach Up staff is an integral member of each local VDOL Resource Center and is well versed in the multiple resources available to all jobseekers. As a member of the VDOL Team, they are very

familiar with WIA programs, Veterans' programs, Vermont JobLink, Wagner Peyser services and the connection with the Unemployment Division. Reach Up staff work closely with other Career Resource Center staff and partner agencies to provide needed services to their clients. It is not uncommon for the blending and braiding of services and funding streams to work within our workforce development system.

From Ann in our Burlington office:

Crystal, A former Reach Up client, informed me today that she had been promoted to head/lead chef and is now making the daily soups. She told me that people love her soups!! I told her congratulations and that I was very proud of her and would be back to try out her dishes. She not only was able to climb up the ranks but after hearing some of her recent set backs, how resourceful she has become and has developed the ability to solve her problems without any assistance. She's pretty happy with herself.

From Diane in our Burlington office:

Allen L. comes from generational poverty and was referred through the Reach Up program. Having no HS diploma and a spotty work history, after a long case managed and monitored job search process, in 2012 was hired by the Burlington School district as a maintenance, cleaning person on the 2nd shift starting at \$18.35 per hour. The school district will not only help him get his GED, they will help him get a full set of dentures that he desperately needs. This wage will allow him and his family of 4 children to become self- sufficient for the first time.

Amanda D, has 3 years of college education and a fairly good work history until substance abuse challenges took over life and she lost custody of child. After counseling and other available resources helped her deal with the substance abuse issues, she was able to get clean and sober then got her child back in April, 2012 when she applied for Reach Up. We helped her develop a resume, cover letter and offered lots of support, enabling her to get a job at Gardener's Supply where she is making a good wage doing what she truly enjoys. This job will help Amanda and her child become self- sufficient..

From Marie in our St. Johnsbury office:

Here's the story:

A single mother is transitioned to my Reach Up caseload and proves to have good administrative skills. She also has a child with a significant health challenge which has caused her to miss work in order to take him to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, some 50 miles away, at any given time of the day or night. Although she is the only one who can "authorize" the trip to the hospital, she does have reliable child care most of the day. However, when called, she must leave work to decide whether the child is displaying sufficient distress to make the trip to the hospital for emergency care. Hence, she was not able to hold a job, was out of work and on Reach Up with a 30 hour per week work requirement. VDOL Reach Up worked with her in Job Club, and as a Case Manager, helped her to more fully recognize the extent of her skills and strengths, improve her resume,

prepare for interviews, and to recognize more completely her abilities and determination. All of these steps increased her self confidence over time. The VDOL Reach Up case manager placed her in a TANF work experience at a local youth services agency, which was willing to work around the absences due to the child's medical issues, where she proved to be a significant asset. VDOL Reach Up staff then successfully negotiated an Individual Training Contract [ITC (similar to a WIA OJT using TANF funds)] with the same agency at \$13.00 per hour for this Mom who loves the work, the people and the flexibility of a 20-24 hour work week which allowed the closure of her TANF grant and the ability to flex her schedule when necessary.

She is now working there without any subsidy as the ITC reimbursements have ended. On an exit interview questionnaire, both the employer and employee checked the "strongly agree" category in every exit interview question. "Strongly agree" is the most positive answer to the questions being asked to rate the program. At the bottom of the exit interview, the participant wrote: *"Thank you Marie! This program has greatly helped me, resulting in the perfect employment opportunity for me, with a great group of people."*

Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Program

The Vermont Department of Labor, through its State Apprenticeship Council, is the registration agency for Apprenticeship in Vermont. VDOL is responsible for registering apprentices, monitoring training, and issuing completion certificates; tracking all performance data such as grades, wages and on-the-job training hours; arranging classroom instruction; ensuring compliance with Affirmative Action requirements; and developing new apprenticeship programs.

The Apprenticeship Program is beginning a slow rebound after a significant downturn because of the lagging economy. During the past fiscal year, 995 individuals were served in Apprenticeship, an increase in over 100 participants from the previous year. VDOL registered 406 new apprentices, also a significant increase over the prior year. Completion certificates were issued to 130 graduates and over 300 employer sponsors participated in the program.

During the fiscal year, VDOL registered two new programs for composites technician. At present, all three companies that make up the "composites cluster" in Bennington County now have approved Apprenticeship programs. The related instruction is provided in partnership with the Southern Vermont Career Development Center.

VDOL worked throughout the year to develop new programs in advanced manufacturing. Through a collaboration with Vermont Technical College, Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation and several central Vermont manufacturers, a curriculum was developed to meet the needs of the industry. The program will be funded through a combination of employer contributions and grant funding. Apprentices will be registered after the 1st of January.

VDOL also worked to develop a program in meat cutting. Working closely with the VT Department of Agriculture, the Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center in Middlebury and several meat processing companies, a one-year related instruction curriculum was developed. The program will combine hands-on lab work in its related instruction component.

A significant percentage of Vermont's Apprenticeship programs are in the plumbing and electrical trades. Through a grant to Vermont Technical College, VDOL funds related instruction classes to meet the needs of students and employers. Ensuring that all Vermonters have access to quality related instruction has always been a challenge, primarily because of the rural nature of Vermont. In 2011, for the first time, classes were offered over Vermont Interactive Technologies, a provider of videoconferencing services. Students who previously had to travel very long distances were served much closer to where they live and work. Level I and II classes were offered as a "pilot" and were very successful. More than 50 students were served during the first year.

VDOL continued to expand its reach into information technology occupations. In February 2012, a new program for interface analysts was registered. To date, 29 apprentices have been registered, including 10 women.

VDOL partnered with a non-profit, Vermont Works for Women, to run two successful pre-apprenticeship programs. The first program, which ended early in the fiscal year, trained women in the plumbing and electrical trades. Five women were subsequently registered with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. The IBEW, for the first time ever, had more than 50% women in its first year electrical class. The second pre-apprenticeship program followed the same model, but included both men and women. After graduation from the pre-apprenticeship program, 4 individuals were hired through an on-the-job training program funded through the Workforce Investment Act.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is a federal program to assist adversely affected workers prepare for reemployment as quickly as possible.

During the WIA 2011 Program Year (7/1/11 to 6/30/12) Vermont experienced one certified trade petition in the Northwest Region of the state. The approximate size of the adversely affected workforce was 16. Though Vermont experienced a decrease in the number of petitions filed and approved from the previous year, the population of adversely affected workers under prior certifications were still actively participating in the Trade program and co-enrolled in the WIA Dislocated Worker program.

The Trade Act program is housed within VDOL. The TAA Program is managed by the Workforce Development Division and the TRA Program is managed by the Unemployment Insurance Division. When working with trade-impacted individuals, all divisions work together in providing accurate information to the trade-impacted workers.

VDOL provides rapid response services to WIA Dislocated Workers and provides information on how they can begin receiving Core and Intensive services. If the adversely affected workers become certified under the Trade program, a Trade Informational Session will be held for the adversely affected workers by the TAA Coordinator from the Workforce Development Division, the TRA Coordinator from the Unemployment Insurance Division, and case managers who work with the Trade program from the statewide Resource Centers.

From Lorraine in our Burlington office:

Brett lost his job in November 2009 at age 25 when the filament plant where he had worked for two and a half years closed its doors in Middlebury, VT. His previous job in woodcraft in 2006 had ended after a reduction in production forced the management to reduce the workforce. In the midst of a struggling economy, Brett lost two full time jobs in three years due to no fault on his part.

Physically fit and eager to move on, Brett turned his energies into researching his local labor market. While looking for work, he discovered there were job openings for auto mechanics in his county. This occupation grabbed Brett's attention; he recognized he had basic mechanical skills having worked as a machine operator at the filament plant. While he was discerning the next step to bridge the gap between unemployment and a new occupation, the Vermont Department of Labor announced that a TAA Petition had certified the workers of the plant where Brett had worked.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program was the answer for Brett. He applied for TAA and was approved to participate in TAA in April of 2010. Brett enrolled in an automotive technology program at Vermont Technical College. Upon acceptance into the college he applied for Vermont grants and to participate in training under the TAA Program. Brett received grants funds and was approved for TAA. He began his program in August of 2010. The program was not a piece of cake.

Brett worked very hard over two years attending two summer programs in Automotive Technology with VTC as part of his curriculum in addition to taking full time classes for four semesters. His perseverance paid off. Successfully completing the two- year program, Brett graduated in May of 2012 with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Automotive Technology.

The assistance Brett received through employment services and financial aid is credited to The Vermont Department of Labor, Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), VDOL's Unemployment Division, and the federal programs of Trade Readjustment Assistance and Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Brett was hired immediately upon graduation and is working full time for Denecker Chevrolet in Vergennes, Vermont as an Automotive Technician in training. He could not be happier. Today Brett will tell you, "I couldn't have accomplished this without the help I received from The Vermont Department of Labor and the TAA Program." What does Brett's employer say about him? "We are very happy to have Brett as part of our team." Congratulations Brett!



Brett

From Dave in our Rutland office:

I started working with John in November, 2009 when he was laid off from Specialty Filaments when the plant closed. John had worked as an extruding machine operator at Specialty Filaments. The long range plan was for John to get a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting. We knew Specialty Filaments had applied for certification under TAA, but until the certification was approved we decided to enroll John in WIA as a Dislocated Worker.

In the spring of 2010, Specialty Filaments was certified for TAA. I enrolled John in TAA and continued to assist him with funding for tuition and also with living expenses with TRA once his regular U.I. Benefits were exhausted.

John graduated from Castleton State College on May 20, 2012 with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting. He is now working as a tax compliance accountant for the State of Vermont.

Youth Services

VDOL continues to partner with multiple state agencies including the Departments of Education, Justice, Children and Families (ESD), Vocational Rehabilitation, Corrections and youth serving providers in the development of a youth vision strategy designed for youth in transition.

We continue to focus on youth facing serious barriers including out-of-school youth, homeless and runaway youth, high school dropouts, youth with disabilities, Native American youth, migrant youth, court involved youth or those at-risk of involvement, children of incarcerated parents and youth in foster care or those aging out of foster care.

From Carrie, VDOL WIA Youth Specialist:

EL has been training very part time hours in a Work Experience for some time and in June completed her Alternative Diploma Plan. She did not see herself as a high school graduate, but she finished the required 20 hours of leadership development, passed the Pre-GED tests, completed her resume/essay/cover letter and 4 months of work required for completion. EL is doing well and working on being consistent. If the employer grows her shop as anticipated, EL will be hired on as a shift manager. EL has gone from a high school drop out on Diversion to a graduate with a career path. (Morrisville)

RM has lived in foster care for over 10 years. She has had adult after adult fail her in life and she has grown sharp because of it. RM has a difficult time connecting with people and she was placed at a horse farm for her Work Experience. Her mentoring employer quickly because frustrated with her gruff nature but understood that the more time RM spent with horses the happier in her tasks she was and the easier it was for her to complete her education. RM has since graduated, left foster care and moved to another part of the state where she was quickly hired on as a ranch hand on a large horse farm. RM is happy in her current position and knows that it was her hard work in training that gave her the reference. (Morrisville)

NR came to us as a homeless, high school drop out with a deep desire to work with children. She was let go from her tech training but remained a focused and positive intern and has now been hired on by her Work Experience mentoring employer through an OJT. As of November, she will have completed her hours and observation for her Child Development Associate (CDA) and will be a full time employee of the Children's House of Montpelier. Since engaging in WIA services she has completed her alternative high school plan and graduated and completed the terms of her Court Ordered Diversion, to include counseling. NR needed the push and consistency that case management could provide as she was used to starting off well and not completing. She is very proud of herself and has reunified with her mother; their relationship is growing. (Barre)

Summer Employment Opportunities

The Vermont Department of Labor issued a competitive request (RFP) using formula funds for programs that would provide paid employment experiences for WIA-eligible youth during the summer of 2012. Both in and out of school youth were served with an emphasis on out-of-school youth. All youth are connected with year-round services. Once their summer employment opportunity ends, they are referred back to VDOL youth specialists for continued case management and WIA services as appropriate. Additional youth were served during this period by VDOL's youth specialists in all 12 of our career resource centers.

Summer Employment Opportunity (SEO) grants were awarded to thirteen youth serving organizations to begin providing SEO services to approximately 136 in- and out-of-school youth. Approximately 435 youth are currently enrolled in an activity or program element of WIA. Many completed in July, August, and all SEO ended September 30th, 2012, however, some will continue with the VDOL youth specialists, as appropriate for year round services.

Subject: Summer Tech Camp Follow Up provided by Carrie of our Barre office:

Rose and Carrie,

Attached is a photo (photo not available) of three young women who participated in RTCC's summer Tech Camp, funded with DOL monies.....They are the youngest of the students we served. All came with a variety of risk factors, and all were academically at risk. The attached photo was taken at RTCC's Technical Awards Ceremony on Thursday evening, May 17. AB (on the left) and AW (on the right) were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society, and BB (center) received a technical excellence award for her participation in Business Management.

AW is a junior in our Automotive Technology program and will return next year to do a second year in Auto Tech. She is a student who has a smile on her face every day and who is a delight to be around. I'm sure she will be a real school leader here next year.

BB is a senior in Business Management. This is her second year in Business Management, and she has a coop placement at Bethel Mills' main office, where they love her. She has been offered a permanent position there after graduation.

AB is a senior in Power & Sustainable Technology. She has plans to go to college, and now she is working to figure out how to combine work and continuing her education in a way that is financially feasible.

A counselor who has worked with one of the young women talked to us on Thursday evening about how the summer tech camp was a transformative experience for her. I think the same can be said of all three. Despite huge challenges and little or no family support, these three young women have done remarkably well, and we have been privileged to work with them.

I thought you would like to know of their success.

Ruth

NORTHLANDS JOB CORPS TASK FORCE:

Youth specialists in all career resource centers work closely with Northland Job Corps, placing youth at the center as appropriate.

From Carrie in our White River Junction office:

LF participated in our Health Careers training at Gifford Hospital last year and with his reference was able to get a job at Vermont Castings. The work was above his skill level but he got good feedback and decided he needed to spend more time on his skills. He has recently entered Job Corps and is working on his culinary skills. He had an opportunity to work with a New England Culinary Institute trained chef at Gifford last summer and it has sparked a renewed interest. LF had always been told he would be working manual labor jobs and it has taken some time for him to realize his true interest. He has taken the data from all of his experiences and decided that he is still working with his hands but he is making meals instead of stoves.

MD struggled with attitude and anger as well as his academics. In late November, he joined WIA and although he has not needed work place training, MD has gained the coping skills needed to transition to training at Job Corps. MD has logging skills and when he was in tech training at Hartford Area Technical Center in the mornings he did really well. His afternoons for the last two years were something different. He attended Hanover High School and did not fit in well or accept help with his academics. MD needed to be held to expectations. Monthly team meetings and case management services gave MD the foundation he needed to remain on a career track. He did not finish high school but earned enough credits to only be behind by two: 1 in math, ½ in English and ½ in an elective. MD was accepted to Job Corps. He will earn a Hanover High School Diploma by working on these last remaining credits. Since we started the team meetings MD was more focused and his attitudes and sabotaging behavior reduced greatly. MD still struggled but he was spending less and less time in detention and more time in the classroom. He upheld the expectations the team laid out and because VDOL drove the meetings, the focus was so clear to MD, "this is for your future." Hopefully he finds the same structure at Job Corps and for now he'll have access to case management to provide the background of what is most successful for MD. (White River-No WIA funds were spent other than Case Manager time)

Workforce Education and Training Fund

The Workforce Education and Training Fund (WETF) supports occupational training to enhance the quality of the Vermont workforce, and increase the number of highly skilled workers. The WETF is funded exclusively with an appropriation from the state general fund, and awards grants to employers and training providers in partnership with employers. VDOL establishes criteria for eligibility and awards grants on a continuous basis. During the program year ending June 30, 2012, twenty-five (25) projects were funded for a total of \$1,085,958.

Training was provided in several sectors including Manufacturing, Health Care, Information Technology, Construction, Services, Agriculture and Financial. More than 1,843 workers benefited directly from WETF training that was funded during this program year. As in past years, for several of the WETF projects, VDOL partnered with other training resources including the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Vermont Training Program (VTP), to maximize efficient use of state resources.

Workforce Education and Training Fund Money in Action

The Vermont Department of Labor administers the Workforce Education and Training Fund (WETF) with money appropriated each year by the Vermont legislature. Funded through Act 46/Next Generation legislation, the WETF has trained hundreds of new and incumbent workers over the last several years.

One fine example of WETF dollars in action is the grant awarded to the Village of Johnson. The Village had hired a temporary employee, Tim Percy, in its facilities and maintenance department. However, the Village needed to fill a higher level position that included skilled line maintenance work. The full cost of training a worker in line maintenance is very high and thus the Village sought additional funding to enable the training to occur. An application was submitted to the WETF and the Village was awarded a \$4000 grant. The grant paid approximately half the cost to send Tim to a line maintenance school in Rhode Island. Tim is now entering his second year of a registered apprenticeship and will receive progressive wage increases as his knowledge and skills progress.

The Village of Johnson's experience illustrates the power of the Workforce Education and Training Fund to raise the skills and wages of Vermont's

workforce. The Village was able to train an individual for a difficult-to-fill position and Tim is well on the way to a high-paying position in electrical line maintenance.



Tim Percy, Village of Johnson, participating in Northeast Public Power Association training in Rhode Island.

Governor's Career Readiness Program:

VDOL partnered with the Community College of Vermont (CCV) to deliver the Career Readiness Program. This training program is for work/career readiness and includes general "soft skills" as well as entry-level skills in applied mathematics, literacy, and basic computer proficiency. It is based on a skill assessment system with the following customized modules: Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, Locating Information, Teamwork & Interpersonal Skills, Work Ethics & Life Skills and Basic Computer Skills.

Students who successfully complete all six modules receive a nationally recognized National WorkKeys Certificate as well as the CCV Governor's Career Readiness Certificate. The program completion rate to date is 82%; of those who completed, 86% received one or both certifications.

Back in early 2011, our delivery model and approach had changed for this program and was offered in four (hub) locations throughout the state. The course model was also expanded in 2011 to include three course types which included a thirty-six hour Fast Track, a sixty-hour Traditional Track or a Customized Track. The Customized Track is for a specific employer, agency and/or special population in such a manner as to require customized tools, training topics or materials, or other elements, but incorporating substantial elements of the Fast Track or Traditional CRC content.

Utilizing this new model we were able to offer twelve additional sections of the CRC during PY 2011 – 2012. One of these sections included a 36 hour Fast-Track specifically geared towards veterans. Our Bennington Resource Center along with two area employers worked together to develop a customized employer section geared towards the composite industry. This region of

Vermont has seen an expansion in the composites industry and provided customized training to Plasan Carbon Composites and Plasan North America. This customized section included thirteen incumbent workers from both companies. In all, VDOL assisted with the recruitment and placement of 141 unemployed/under employed Vermonters, who participated in twelve sections of the Career Readiness Program.

Other employers who have also taken advantage of the program by having customized sections on site include Vermont Country Store, Cabot Cheese, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Rutland Regional Medical Center and Central Vermont Medical Center.

- As of June 2011, 44 CRC grads have enrolled in 132 courses: 20% are continuing education in Vermont State College System.
- Statewide over 703 individuals have participated in this program
- Over 562 have completed
- Over 546 earned WorkKeys75 Bronze, 288 Silver, 179 Gold, 4 Platinum
- 498 earned the CCV Governor's Certificate



Harry

Testimonial: *"I got the job! It's literally my dream schedule and a perfect fit for my skills. When we thought about our ideal job during class I have to say this is it! Thanks again for all your help during the Career Readiness Course. I feel they took me much more seriously because I had recently completed the course. They knew I was serious about reentering the workforce. Also I reviewed all the handouts to prepare for the two step interview process. It was all very helpful."*
CRC Graduate, Lisa

Other Next Generation Training Initiatives

In addition to the WETF training described above, the Legislature appropriated funding for FY 2012 for Internship programs of approximately \$347,093, with \$193,340 awarded to secondary programs and \$153,753 awarded to post-secondary programs. Through a partnership with the state's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation another \$50,000 was awarded to selected

secondary Internship programs. Approximately 222 high school and 285 college students were planned to be served through Internships with over 441 employers participating.

Funds for Adult Technical Education equaled \$351,087 . These funds supported evening and daytime classes for adults in Vermont's 17 Technical Education Centers and Comprehensive High Schools. Vermont's Small Business Development Center provided classes at five (5) Regional Technical Education Centers on "How to Maximize One's Use of the Internet."

Innovative Grants

During the period 7/1/11-6/30/12, Vermont continued to implement a \$4 million Labor Market Information Improvement grant on behalf of the New England states, New York, New Jersey and Georgetown University (Northeast Research Consortium). The grant officially ended 12/31/11. This grant focused on analyzing real-time labor market information (job postings) to see if and how it could be used to make short-term occupational projections. Although much more work in this area needs to be done the Northeast Research Consortium was able to analyze and develop coding tools, further define "green jobs" and "green economy," produce a Guide for Public Usage of Real-Time Data, produce a Guide to Using Real-Time Data for LMI Analysts and create a public portal for further use in analysis (<http://public.greencarecentral.org>). In addition , as part of this grant the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships was engaged to develop an on-line energy efficiency education directory for Vermont. Previously they had created a similar education directory for Massachusetts.

Health Care Workforce Development Partnership

The shortage of health care workers continues to be a critical challenge for a wide range of health care providers. The Workforce Development Council Committee has continued to quantify these shortages while identifying training needs/venues and resources and creating ways to feed the pipeline. Efforts related to attracting new workers into health care professional areas included presentations in schools on various health care opportunities and the provision of transition counseling to the mature health care worker. The Governor declared October as Health Care Career Awareness Month including monthly presentations in high schools and middle schools. The committee also served as a way of sharing promising practices for recruitment, retention and re-training strategies for health care workers.

Health Care Workforce Strategic Plan

In response to the FY 2011 Legislative session and Act 48, two reports were due to the Legislature and to the Green Mountain Care Board. One was due January, 2012 and a second one is due January, 2013. The first plan analyzed the potential displacement impact of a Single Payer System on billing, insurance and administrative positions. The group responsible was co-chaired by the Vermont Department of Labor.

The second report due January, 2013, will be a comprehensive and strategic plan for the state's health care workforce. The Health Care Workforce Development Partnership is serving as the advisory committee to staff developing the plan and supplying recommendations.

Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Nursing

Created by the Governor during the FY 2011 Legislative session, the charge to the Blue Ribbon Commission is to analyze the future of nursing in Vermont. The Commission will look at supply and demand needs and make recommendations. It is anticipated that recommendations will also be made affecting the collection and analysis of health care labor market information. The Vermont Department of Labor is a member of the Commission. In addition, VDOL's Economic and Labor Market Information division will be closely involved with the Commission's analyses.

Veterans Services:

The Veterans program experienced many changes during PY 2011 – 2012 which included transitions in staff, new initiatives, program management, as well as oversight of our Jobs for Veterans State Grant. One of our main focuses over the past year was filling all of our veterans LVER and DVOP positions. Time was spent recruiting, hiring and training employees to fill vacancies in several of our regions including Central, Northern and Southern Vermont.

In January we brought on board a new NW Region LVER. In February, we transitioned oversight of the grant from our Regional Offices to our Central Office in Montpelier and brought on a half time LVER as a Program Coordinator. In June we hired our final full time LVER position to cover our central and southern regions. With this transition in staffing we had new opportunities for staff to attend training at the National Veterans Training Institute in Denver, Colorado. During this past program year we sent staff to Labor and Employment Specialist Training (LES), Promoting Partnerships for Employment (PPE) and Case Management training. We also re-instated quarterly staff trainings which were conducted in March and May. Our quarterly staff meeting which was held in March included our DVET and Regional Administrator. In this meeting we conducted an overview of the Jobs for Veteran's Grant, New Structure, Reporting Guidelines and Managers Reports. We also reviewed the various Veterans initiatives including the Gold Card, Vow to Hire Veteran's Tax Credit and Vermont's Veterans Tax Credit (Act 44).

Our LVERs coordinated a variety outreach events over the year including coordination of three veterans specific Job Fairs held at various locations throughout the state. The Champlain Valley Expo was one of these venues where 98 individuals were in attendance. 59 identified themselves as Veterans and 28 identified themselves as National Guard members. Out of those 59, 11 identified themselves as a recently returning Veteran, 15 identified themselves as family members of a Veteran and 5 indicated themselves as having a disability or barrier to employment. Our Veteran staff used this information to reach out and conduct follow up appointments with any Veteran needing additional assistance. Each November, many regions conduct Annual Veteran's Job Fairs. For example, the Burlington regional Veteran Career Fair was filled to capacity with 43 table setups and 84 job seekers, 7 of which were spouses of Veteran's, 64 were Veteran's and 13 were recently returned National Guard members. Veteran's staff participated in a variety of job, and career fairs, including Elks Club and Spherion

Job Fairs, Norwich Career Fair, and Franklin County Career Fair. Staff also participated in the Career Skills Workshop for Veterans, sponsored by Employer Services Guard and Reserve (ESGR). At this event, LVER staff conducted resume reviews, and provided other counseling sessions for Veterans in attendance. In May, staff attended the Annual Business Expo that was held at the Sheraton Hotel in Burlington. LVER staff used this opportunity to network with employers in attendance and also secured follow up appointments to discuss incentives for hiring veterans.

Over the past year many regions continued to participate in Yellow Ribbon Events throughout the state working closely with the Army National Guard and assisting returning veterans with employment and other needs. An employer survey was designed by one of our DVOPs and was implemented for use at Yellow Ribbon and other events where Veterans are in attendance. The survey not only provides staff with a tool to identify veterans needing employment assistance, it also identifies those that may need training, USERRA needs and Employer Support Guard and Reserve assistance.

There has been continuing effort to identify potential updates and implement changes to the Vermont JobLink system to better offer "Priority of Service" to Veteran's as well as provide improved data monitoring by VDOL staff in an effort to increase our effectiveness.

Staff members also coordinated with the National Life Insurance group to provide informational Open Houses to Veterans. National Life is recognized as one of the best employers to work for in the state and they have a strong interest in hiring Veterans First for any of their Insurance Sales positions.

LVER staff also coordinated a Federal Workshop at US Customs and Immigration Services in conjunction with the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. 17 disabled and non-disabled veterans were in attendance and staff continued to work with these veterans in hopes of securing federal employment.

There is a continuing effort to identify potential updates and implement changes to the Vermont JobLink system to better offer "Priority of Service" to Veteran's as well as provide improved data monitoring by VDOL staff in an effort to increase our effectiveness. We are scheduled to upgrade our VJL system; this new version will contain a variety of updates that impact veteran's services and "Priority of Service."

From April in our Rutland office:

RS, a disabled veteran who has been previously incarcerated had some significant barriers to employment and had spent time using our core services. Jen, our local Vet's rep, and I have helped with various tasks including updating his resume and getting the resume to a company from a posting we found on Indeed.com. The company, Stellar Laser in Worcester, Vermont was looking for technicians and paying \$18 an hour. They even paid his transport to go to the interview as well as relocation costs after they offered him job. Yay!!!!!! He shared with me, that if we hadn't put that posting information available to him and others,

he never would have known about the position. He is very grateful for the help we provided on his job search.

In the month of April, our state rolled out a new federal program titled, RES/REA EUC which we call "JAS" in Vermont. As a result, our vet's staff have received additional referrals to meet with long term unemployed veterans who continue to receive benefits.

From Lucia in our Rutland office:

CB reported for her extended benefit orientation on 5/1/2012 and was scheduled for JAS appointment 5/30/2012. I posted a job for a Bookkeeper at Triller Print into Vermont Job Link and referred CB to the position. She interviewed on 6/14 and accepted the position on 6/21/2012.

RP reported for EUC on 6/5/2012 and later for JAS. She had been having trouble finding work due to a felony charge. I gave her a federal bonding intent letter and suggested she follow her passion working with animals. I asked her to go to 4Paws Academy to see if they needed help. They hired her on as a member of their staff.

All Veterans staff participated in a VRAP webinar/conference call. As a result of this new initiative, we have made a special effort to reach out to post 9/11 veterans who may be eligible for VRAP and/or the Gold Card. We did so by sending special mailings to veterans that we serve in each region. We are continuing to look for ways to reach out to veterans who file initial claims with our Unemployment Division hoping to catch them soon after filing for benefits.

The Burlington LVER has been working with The University of Vermont in the development of a program to assist veterans in pursuing careers in the transportation industry. This program is still in its developmental stages and the LVER is providing input related to how recently separated, and other veterans, can smoothly transition to a career field in this industry.

Employer Outreach:

Our Regional Employer Outreach staff offer recruitment services through the twelve Career Resource Centers around the state. Employer Outreach staff can provide specialized recruitment, assistance with conducting and coordinating job fairs, providing interview space and helping employers with planning additional recruitment strategies. Some of our offices have dedicated Employer Outreach Staff while other offices have a selected team of front line field staff providing these services to the business community. The business relationships VDOL establishes produce significant mutual benefits....especially in our "small town" environment. Armed with a working knowledge of VDOL's internal resources, and other public and private resources that impact workforce development, this team connects with individual businesses and business associations. Services can take the form of practical guidance around recruitment,

retention and training of workers, as well as direct assistance in accessing financial and other resources that turn plans into reality.

Bringing It Home to Vermont!

VDOL has been the leading force on an initiative on behalf of the Governor's office, conducting a survey of Vermont employer's immediate and future hiring needs titled, "Bring It Home To Vermont." As the Governor traveled around the state members of the business community reported that they are having trouble recruiting for their vacant positions. In response to this, the Governor proposed an initiative to keep young Vermonters working in Vermont and to recruit talented Vermonters and others who are working out of state to come back to Vermont. The Department of Labor is helping by conducting an extensive outreach and survey to businesses to ask about their vacancies and recruitment needs. As needs are discovered, the information is then shared with the regional Career Resource Center staff who then reach out to the local employers surveyed and offer assistance with their recruitment or other concerns while seeking to fill vacancies with qualified candidates.

Just as important, VDOL's business services staff listen to the concerns of the business community and bring this knowledge back to the department, where such information can become the catalyst to develop effective solutions. Our business outreach staff is expected to work with businesses and education/training providers to identify key occupational skills that are transferable across multiple sectors, help to develop appropriate training and lead the effort to recruit and select candidates. VDOL is not alone in this initiative but is actively engaged in partnerships with the Agency of Human Services (AHS) and the Agency of and Community Development (ACCD), entities that bring significant financial and human resources to workforce issues. Currently, AHS, through a wide range of programs, has direct access to a large pool of available workers while ACCD controls significant financial resources that promote business expansion, job creation and workforce training. In addition to leveraging resources more effectively, this close partnership is intended to eliminate duplication of business contacts and other services related to employment.

Our Employer Outreach staff actively engages in working with regional partners. These partnerships include, but are not limited to the following:

- Workforce education and training is delivered through local partnerships including Regional Workforce Partnerships, employers, Regional Development Corporations, trade associations, and many partner local non-profit organizations.
- The Agency of Human Services (Department of Corrections, Economic Services Division of the Department for Children and Families, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living) in the development of the statewide initiative for AHS jobseekers with barriers to employment called "Creative Workforce Solutions."

Waivers:

Vermont currently has two waivers in effect and will be requesting that these two be renewed. In our Five Year Plan, VDOL will request additional waivers to better serve employers and job seekers.

A waiver of the requirement for competitive procurement of service providers for three youth program elements, work experience, support services and follow-up services.

The youth case managers are responsible for the design framework component including such services as intakes, objective assessments and development of individual service strategies. Allowing them to deliver the work experience, supportive services and follow-up elements is more cost effective and seamless than the alternative of undergoing a competitive process, negotiating and monitoring grants and referring youth participants to various other service providers for these three program elements. The youth participants are the ultimate beneficiaries of this waiver. It allows them to relate to a single case manager for most of their programmatic needs during their enrollment and for the twelve month period following exit.

A waiver of the time limit on the initial period of eligibility for training providers.

This waiver allows for maximization of customer choice when selecting occupational skills training. Requiring training providers to submit annual outcome reports on all students would decimate our eligible training provider list due to the administrative burden involved.