



State of Arkansas Annual Report

Workforce Investment Act
Program Year 2012

July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013



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Report Prepared by

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VISION

A highly trained and diversified workforce that meets the needs of high growth industry, which drives a statewide regionalized economy that is competitive in the global market.

MISSION

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board will strive to ensure an innovative and demand-driven workforce investment system, in collaboration with education, business, industry, labor and state agencies, that effectively leverages employment and training resources and collectively responds to the needs of local and regional economies.

INTRODUCTION

The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was signed into law in August 1998 and became effective in Arkansas on July 1, 2000. This summary report focuses on thirteenth year accomplishments in Arkansas relative to the provision of WIA Title I-B services. For Program Year 2012 (July 2012 through June 2013), the United States Department of Labor (DOL) allotted approximately \$19.5 million in WIA Title I-B funds to Arkansas. While these funds enabled a continuation of employment and training services designed to benefit our youth, adults and dislocated workers, as well as our employers, funding for PY 2012 was \$185,954 less than the previous year's funding due primarily to funding reductions at the federal level.

This report describes how WIA Title I-B is organized in Arkansas, highlights state and local accomplishments, and concludes with WIA Titles I-B and III performance results.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM VISION AND GOALS

Arkansas' strategic plan for workforce development was submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor in September 2012 and approved in December 2012 for the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs through June 30, 2017. The plan communicates the state's vision, goals, objectives and strategies for the workforce development system. WIA Title I-B programs are a critical part of realizing this vision and accomplishing our state's workforce development goals. In addition, the state received approval of the following waivers as well.

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board identified nine objectives to improve Arkansas' workforce and included those in the state's strategic plan. These goals were developed in agreement with the Governor's plan for economic development in the state. This report highlights the workforce activities conducted during program

year 2012 to meet these five-year objectives. The nine objectives included:

Serve the range of job seekers

- Identify, provide and leverage services for adults, youth, dislocated workers, incumbent workers, people with disabilities, ex-offenders, mature workers, returning military, and other veterans

Serve the range of employers

- Develop and deliver services in support of small businesses, regional priority sectors, existing companies
- Understand industry skill needs locally, statewide and regionally
- Track business impact

Serve the range of job economies

- Address local businesses' skills needs
- Support skill development infrastructure
- Create industry skills task forces in each workforce investment area
- Certify Arkansas communities as "career ready"

Ensure that the population is ready for work

Increase the effectiveness of local Workforce Investment Boards

Maintain collective accountability

Gain efficiencies across the system

- Create statewide workforce asset inventories
- Create joint diversified communication strategy
- Create joint tracking function across programs

Re-imagine learning

- Create mechanisms to integrate learning and work
- Improve remediation
- Provide new learning opportunities

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Diversify funding

- Leverage new funding sources
- Explore cost sharing with job seekers, employers

Waivers

[Waiver of the prohibition at 20 CFR 664.510 on the use of Individual Training Accounts for older and out-of-school youth.](#)

The ability to use Individual Training Accounts for this hard-to-serve population enhances the ability of local areas to expedite entry into the workforce through occupational skills training and eliminates the duplicative efforts inherent to dual-enrollment.

[Waiver to replace the performance measures at WIA Section 136 \(b\) with the common measures.](#)

The common measures provide a simplified and streamlined performance measurement system and have become the basis of the workforce system's performance accountability. This waiver positively impacts all customers of Arkansas' workforce investment system by simplifying program management and performance measurement.

[Waiver of the provision at 20 CFR 663.530 that prescribes a time limit on the period of initial eligibility for training providers.](#)

By alleviating provider concerns with the types and amount of information to be collected and reported, the state is able to retain approved providers and continues to increase their numbers. This facilitates quality customer choice for Arkansans in need of occupational skills training.

[Waiver of WIA Section 133 \(b\) \(4\) to increase the allowable transfer amount between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams allocated to a local area to fifty \(50\) percent.](#)

This waiver provides greater flexibility in the design of local area adult and dislocated worker service delivery plans and enhances the ability of local boards to respond to changing workforce and economic dynamics. Local boards are able

to provide targeted assistance in response to customer needs. The vast majority of requests are to transfer dislocated worker funds to the adult funding stream because a large number of dislocated workers qualify for training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The ability to transfer funds enables local areas to serve more adults that were not trade impacted.

DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICES

Arkansas continues to create economic growth through attracting new employers and by working to retain the businesses we already have. Unfortunately, some businesses must downsize or even close their doors, and their workers become displaced through no fault of their own. When this happens to our citizens, it is a terrible blow to the community and the families affected. The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force provides rapid response services to workers affected by layoffs through worker assistance workshops that provide information and services dealing with many issues including:

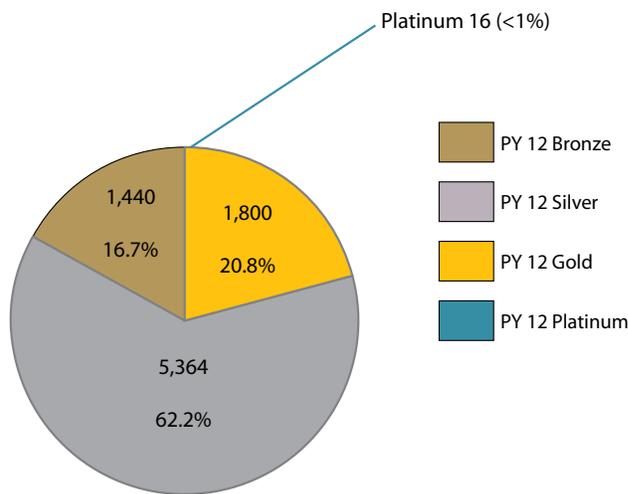
- Claiming Unemployment Insurance
- Retraining and Educational Opportunities
- Social Service Programs
- Stress Management
- Credit Counseling
- Insurance Needs
- Job Search Tips

Immediately upon receiving notice of a permanent closure or a substantial layoff, the Task Force contacts company officials. Whenever possible, a community meeting is scheduled with elected officials and business leaders to assist in creating action plans to aid both the community and the affected dislocated workers. During Program Year 2012, the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force was informed of 139 actual or anticipated company closures or layoffs impacting 6,618 workers. Other PY 2012 dislocated worker facts, include:

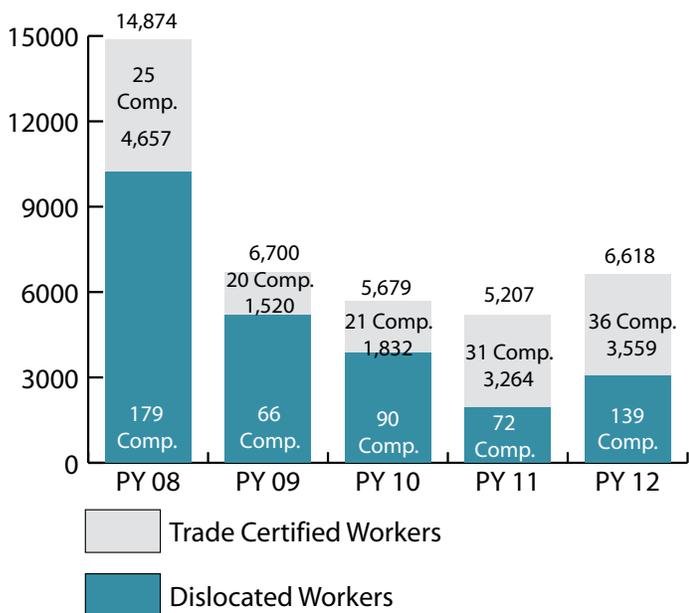
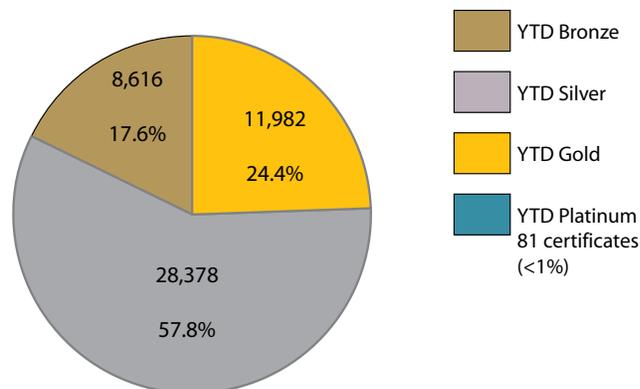
- 36 companies were certified as trade-affected representing 3,559 workers--an increase of almost 10 percent from PY 2011.
- 2,822 eligible workers enrolled in the Trade Program.
- 1,341 clients exited the Trade Program.
- 77 worker assistance workshops were held and attended by 4,060 workers.
- The Task Force participated in or sponsored 29 job and opportunity fairs to connect dislocated workers with jobs and supportive services.

WorkKeys assessments (Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics and Locating Information).

Program Year 2012 CRC Awards



All CRC Awards



CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATION

In program year 2012, 8,620 career readiness certificates were awarded to Arkansas job seekers making the total number of CRC awards 49,057 since the inception of the program in 2008.

Seventy-seven employers have signed commitment forms to use the Arkansas CRC program as part of their pre-employment process. More than 7,600 employers have reported wages for CRC holders throughout Arkansas.

Arkansas implemented the Platinum level certificate on January 1, 2012. To be eligible for a Platinum CRC a job seeker must score a 6 or higher on all three

NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANTS

In response to the severe winter storms that took place December 25-26, 2012 Arkansas applied for and received National Emergency Grant (NEG) funds to cover the cost of providing temporary employment linked to cleanup and recovery efforts caused by the disaster. Arkansas was awarded \$391,539.00 for the period of January 29, 2013 through December 31, 2013 to serve 61 participants. NEG funds received by the state were provided to two (2) Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs), geographically located throughout the state, through grant awards. The two areas were Central and the City of Little Rock. The Western Arkansas Planning and Development District

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(Central) was sub-granted \$245,752.00 and the Little Rock Workforce Investment Board was sub-granted \$140,001.00.



The President declared a disaster for Arkansas on June 25, 2013 due to severe storms, tornadoes and flooding, which took place during the period of May 30 to June 3, 2013. Arkansas applied for and received National Emergency Grant (NEG) funds to cover the cost of providing temporary employment linked to cleanup and recovery efforts caused by the disaster. The NEG was approved for \$1,054,112.00, with an initial incremental funding obligation of \$351,371.00 for the period of July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014 to serve 61 participants. There were 11 counties affected by the storms. NEG funds were provided to three (3) LWIAs, geographically located throughout the state, through grant awards. The three areas were North Central, Northwest and Western. The White River Planning and Development District, Inc. (North Central) requested \$496,821 and awarded \$165,607 of incremental funding to employ 30 participants in Cleburne, Independence, Stone, Van Buren and Woodruff Counties. The Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc. (Northwest) requested \$150,000 and awarded \$50,000 of incremental funding to employ 10 participants in Searcy County. The Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc. (Western) requested \$391,713 and awarded \$130,571 to employ 22 participants in Scott and Polk Counties.

ARKANSAS ENERGY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

In January 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded Arkansas an Energy Sector Partnership grant of \$4,866,479 from ARRA funds. The Arkansas Energy Sector Partnership (AESP) provided funds to enable Arkansas workers statewide to be trained in the skills required to succeed in energy efficient and green jobs. The AESP program resulted in over 2600 Arkansans entering employment or

enhancing their careers and salaries. The Department of Labor recognized the success of the AESP project inviting the AESP project team to attend a workshop for the highest performers nationwide to share best practices.

AESP partnered with the state's two-year colleges as well as the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition to develop and deploy curriculum and programs that prepare participants for careers in the targeted industries. AESP also partnered with Winrock International to manage and distribute supportive services funding under the grant. Training activities include high school concurrent credit programs, college certificate and degree programs, incumbent worker training, apprenticeship programs, workshops for employed workers to gain green skills, and training for disadvantaged populations. AESP produced a video to showcase the successful training programs and encourage DWS clients to participate in those trainings. The link to the video is: <http://dws.arkansas.gov/Programs/AESP/index.htm>

AESP has resulted in life-changing success stories for many of its participants. Each of the 20 Two Year Colleges and the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition (AAC) had many participant and industry success stories of employment, increased salary, enhanced quality of life for employees and their family and the creation or expansion of businesses.

For example, graduates of Black River Technical College Structural Welding Program are able to find employment immediately upon graduation with salaries ranging from \$20 an hour to \$3,710 a week plus per diem. Black River Technical College through AESP funding added to agricultural diversity in the state by offering Peanut Production Training. Peanut farming is a more sustainable crop. In 2009, peanuts were planted on only 500 acres of farm land in Randolph County. In 2012, almost 9 times that amount—4,350 acres—were in peanut production. "The AESP grant and the support from BRTC made possible things that otherwise might never have happened," said

Randolph County Extension Agent Mike Andrews.

Arkansas State University at Mountain Home partnered with Fishing Holdings, LLC, the maker of Ranger Boats, to offer Welding Certification Training. An 18 year old graduate of the program was one of the first of 10 new welders hired as part of a \$2.5 million expansion at Fishing Holdings which is projected to lead to another 50 jobs. The student said, "I wouldn't have this job if it weren't for the training I got. With the on-job-experience I'm getting now, I could go pretty much anywhere and get a job welding if I wanted to. But I have no intention of leaving."

Special efforts have been made to recruit participants from the priority populations of high school dropouts, offenders, unemployed workers, and other disadvantaged, at risk individuals. Many participants benefited from supportive services funds to assist them with basic expenses while in training. This much needed assistance meant the difference between staying in training or dropping out for many participants. An AESP participant at UA Community College at Morrilton credited the supportive services with allowing her to stay in the program. "Some days I couldn't go to training because I just didn't have the money for gas. If it had not been for the reimbursement, I wouldn't have made it. If it had not been for the training, I would not have my current job."

Many apprentices, particularly in the construction trades, felt the blow of the recession in their pocketbook. "With everyone's hours being cut due to the slump, these funds were a blessing," said Karen Breashears, the Vice-President of the AAC. "Many of the apprentices were financially strapped just for basic survival. "One apprentice who went through AESP training said, "At the time of my enrollment, I was not working. The supportive services I received from Winrock to pay my rent really helped me to get on my feet. I don't know what I would have done if it had not been for that help." He now works at the JW Turk Power Plant in Fulton.

Many, many more Arkansans benefitted from the AESP grant. The AESP grant ended on June 30, 2013. AESP grant accomplishments include:

- The AESP achieved 171.5% of the entered training goal with 3,842 participants enrolled in AESP programs.
- 2,686 AESP participants completed their training and entered employment or 176.4% of the program goal
- AESP successfully recruited 1,855 members of priority populations to participate in trainings which is 618.3% of the original anticipated number of 300.
- Many incumbent workers who participated in a training program experienced a wage increase of between 7% to 8% based on a study of a statistically significant random sampling of over 500 incumbent workers.
- 603 AESP participants received supportive services which enabled many participants to remain in training despite financial hardship.
- Over 92 courses and 7 apprenticeship programs have incorporated energy efficiency curriculum that will be sustainable beyond the life of the grant.
- Through community outreach and education programs, over 14,835 people have participated in energy efficiency programs.
- Over the life of the grant, a cumulative total of \$2,301,540.71 in leveraged resources was utilized to support AESP grant activities.



OUTREACH TO COMMUNITIES

In PY 2012, the state coordinated or supported many events designed to assist dislocated workers, job seekers and the workforce development system. Several job and opportunity fairs were held for specific communities experiencing significant layoffs. An example of these opportunity fairs or other community outreach initiatives include:

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- Serco Hiring Event, Rogers, Arkansas
- Reduction in Pilgrim's Pride Employees, Batesville, Arkansas
- Easter Seals Career and Resource Fair, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Nordex Transition Center, Jonesboro, Arkansas
- Veteran's and Community-Wide Opportunity Fair, Jonesboro, Arkansas
- Putting AR Back to Work (Cumulus Media Job Fair), Little Rock, AR and Fayetteville, Arkansas
- Hewlett-Packard Job Fair, Conway, Arkansas
- Pine Bluff Arsenal Transition Center, Pine Bluff, Arkansas
- Red River Army Depot Transition Center, Hooks, TX.
- Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce Regional Job Fair, Fort Smith, Arkansas
- White County Business Expo at Harding University, Searcy, Arkansas
- Convoy of Hope in Mountain Home, West Memphis, Arkansas
- Warren Oil Company Job Fair, West Memphis, Arkansas
- Jonesboro Human Development Center Job Fair, Paragould, Arkansas
- American Railcar hiring initiative in Paragould, Arkansas
- Nestle Job Fair, Jonesboro, Arkansas
- ADBECA Construction Career Day, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Career and Opportunity Fair sponsored by the STAND Foundation, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Hiring Arkansas' Heroes veteran's outreach event, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Northwest Arkansas Job Fair, Rogers, Arkansas
- Philander Smith College Career Services Career Day, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Hola Arkansas' Career and Business Expo, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Emmanuel Baptist Church Community Clothing Drive & Health Fair, Little Rock, Arkansas
- ACE Expo, Fort Smith, Arkansas
- Cenovus Oil Industries Jobs Town Hall / Job Fairs in Conway, Fort Smith and Jonesboro, Arkansas
- HELP Fair hosted by the Living Affected Corporation, North Little Rock, Arkansas
- Arkansas Transition Summit, Hot Springs, Arkansas
- Heber Springs Business Expo, Heber Springs, Arkansas
- ASU Newport / Marked Tree Community Health & Resource Fair, Newport, Arkansas
- Disability Employment Initiative Leadership Training Summit, Russellville, Arkansas
- Hot Springs Boys and Girls Club Job Fair, Hot Springs, Arkansas
- Helena-West Helena/Phillips County Regional Job Expo held at the Phillips Community College Fine Arts Center.
- Odom's Tennessee Pride Job Fair and Workshop, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Dr. Martin Luther King Assoc., Malvern, Arkansas
- Arkansas Department of Correction, Malvern, Arkansas
- Department of Community Correction, Malvern, Arkansas
- Arkansas Parole Board, Malvern, Arkansas
- Clinton School District Special Education Job Fair, Clinton, Arkansas
- Mountain Home Career Expo 2013, Mountain Home, Arkansas
- Forrest City Job Fair, Forrest City, AR
- Paragould Job Fair, Paragould, Arkansas
- Walgreen's Corporate Offices, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Exploring Innovation: Community Development in Times of Austerity Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Allen Canning, Van Buren, Arkansas

DISABILITY PROGRAMS

In PY 2012, the state continued implementation of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) that works to prepare and connect youth with disabilities, ages 14-24, to career information and planning.

The initiative employs three strategies to assist job seekers with disabilities to navigate and use the workforce center system. They are:

1. Guideposts for Success – to help youth with disabilities successfully transition into adulthood through milestone directives;
 2. Integrated Resource Teams – representatives from different agencies and service organizations coordinate services and leverage funding to meet educational and employment needs;
 3. Customized Employment – a relationship between an employer and an employee that is negotiated and personalized in a way that meets the needs of both.
- The DEI grant received federal approval to utilize funds to increase the participation of youth with disabilities in pilot site summer employment programs. DEI staff began working to recruit participants, and as the program year ended, preliminary reports indicated that hundreds of youth were applying for open positions.
 - DEI partners with agencies and organizations who have a shared interest and investment in the development of youth with disabilities; in PY 2012, various staff members:

Disability staff worked throughout PY 2013 to advance the principles of youth development. Some notable activities and achievements include:

- DEI partnered with four-year colleges and community colleges to host four DEI Leadership Training Summits for youth with disabilities. The Leadership Summit is modeled after the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), and is a focused experience where students explore personal leadership skills and begin the process of creating an action plan to enhance and broaden their lives and future careers. Nearly 400 students and teachers were involved. One teacher opined during the closing moments of the first Summit, “(You) have made our day! Three of our students now know what they want to do.” To continue with the training, job search clubs (Leadership Academies) were organized in several schools.
- The February 2013 edition of *Savvy Kids*, a magazine with a statewide circulation, included several paragraphs on the DEI project in the article, “Vocational Training for Teens with Disabilities.”
- DEI funds were utilized to enhance accessibility for customers with disabilities by upgrading Arkansas Job Centers with automatic openers on doors.
- Planned and served as presenters for the Department of Education’s annual Arkansas Transitions conference.
- Planned and served as presenters for the Arkansas Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE) 3rd Annual Employment Conference. The DEI State Lead delivered an opening address.
- Served on the National Disability Institute’s (NDI), “Ticket to Work Operations Work Group” that is charged with investigating and finding solutions to operational barriers that are impacting service providers’ abilities to efficiently move beneficiaries toward self-sufficiency.
- Served on the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Assistive Technology Advisory Committee.
- Joined the Office of Disability Employment Policy, Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program Monthly Community of Practice. That involvement led to DEI being invited to take part in a business roundtable that included Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
- Planned and provided underwriting for a business roundtable to discuss best practices that put an

emphasis on reversing the high unemployment for people with disabilities.

- Continued involvement with the Office of the Governor “Employment First” Taskforce.

REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMANTS

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, mandated four additional requirements for current Unemployment Insurance claimants to continue to qualify for Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) and assist them in returning to the workforce more quickly.

1. Orientation to the Workforce Center: a summary of the services provided by partners in the one-stop.
2. Dissemination of Labor Market information: An overview of the labor market in Arkansas and how data collected and created can be used to explore career options.
3. Assessment of Skills: An assessment of an individual’s current skill level. Since implementation of the reemployment eligibility assessment program in March 2012, 11,288 skill assessments have been done in the TORQ system. TORQ is a web-based assessment system that assists in identifying a client’s key knowledge, skills and abilities, based on their previous work experience, then utilizes that information to rank alternate occupations based on the ability to easily move into that occupation. The system combines labor market information (median wage in the area for the suggested occupations); O-Net knowledge, skills and abilities; current job posting information (from Job Central, Simply Hired, Indeed and Arkansas Job Link) to provide the client relevant information to assist identifying a possible career change.

4. Review of Eligibility: Job search contacts for the initial claim must be reviewed for any potential issues with eligibility.

The above listed services are provided by a combination of Unemployment Insurance, Employment Services, Veterans’ Employment Representatives and Reemployment Services staff members.

The Arkansas Reemployment Services (RES) program uses claimant demographic data to mathematically identify Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants that are most at risk of exhausting benefits before finding employment. The Department of Workforce Services, through the Arkansas Workforce Centers, provides additional assistance to these participants and requires completion of a job search workshop to maintain their UI benefits. The goal of the program is to keep these claimants from exhausting their benefits before they move on to gainful employment. A job search workshop that lasts four to six hours is held once a month in each of the workforce centers that handle unemployment insurance claims. The workshop provides:

- An orientation to the Arkansas Workforce Center system
- Partner Program Information - Adult Education, Workforce Investment Act, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, etc.
- An overview of program requirements
- Labor market information
- Career Readiness Certification information
- Job search assistance
- Proper resume and application preparation
- Interviewing skills information

There were four RES program staff members that conducted over 250 Job Search Workshops throughout the state with over 3,500 individuals attending during PY 2012. The Arkansas Reemployment Services Pilot program enhanced the current RES process by adding the Career Readiness Certificate program, the Transferable

Occupation Relationship Quotient (TORQ) assessment and additional services for selected claimants to maintain benefits. The goal of the pilot program is not only to keep claimants from exhausting their benefits before moving on to employment, but also to reduce the total benefits paid to result in a savings for the Unemployment Insurance trust fund. Additional requirements for the pilot program include:

- Initial assessment appointment with RES pilot staff
 - Resume creation or modification
 - TORQ assessment
 - Work search plan and/or enhanced employment plan
- Attempt the KeyTrain online curriculum as a first step to obtain a Career Readiness Certificate
- Attend five counseling appointments with RES pilot staff every other week
 - Evaluation of KeyTrain and WorkKeys progress
 - Review of job contacts

There were eleven RES pilot locations providing these intensive services throughout the state. The RES pilot program staff in these locations conducted over 125 Job Search Workshops with over 2,900 individuals that received these intensive services in PY 2012.

TORQ is a web-based assessment system that assists in identifying a client's key knowledge, skills and abilities, based on their previous work experience, then utilizes that information to rank alternate occupations based on the ability to easily move into that occupation. The system combines labor market information (median wage in the area for the suggested occupations); O-Net knowledge, skills and abilities; current job posting information (from Job Central, Simply Hired, Indeed and Arkansas Job Link) to provide the client relevant information to assist identifying a possible career change. During PY 2012, there were 34,377 individual skill assessments created for individuals in our Workforce Centers using the TORQ system. The "Anatomy of a Quality TORQ Project" curriculum

was developed from October – December 2012 for intensive training of our Arkansas Workforce Center staff as well as our Local Workforce Investment Area partners. The required training was designed for all staff with active TORQ user accounts. The purpose was to provide consistent, quality projects for all customers, gain "buy in" from customers to utilize the program, and to increase customer usage rates across the state. Between December 2012 and June 2013, twenty training sessions were held in eight cities across the state. Over 375 staff members representing Unemployment Insurance, Employment Services, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Transitional Employment Assistance, Veterans' Employment Representatives and Workforce Investment Area partners attended these sessions.

VETERANS SERVICES

The state's commitment to serving our veteran population is strong. The primary means of fulfilling the needs of veteran jobseekers remains the force of the Local Veterans Employment Representatives and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists fielded through funds provided by the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Through this grant, the state employs 21 full-time equivalents across the state to educate employers and jobseekers of the services available to veterans and ensuring that workforce centers adhere to priority of service for veterans.

The effectiveness of these efforts are measured the same as they are for other clients, by determining the entered employment rate and employment retention rate of those served. While the outcomes for veterans as a whole are not significantly different from all employment service clients, it should be noted that for veterans who have separated within the last three years, 75% have obtained employment and 85% retained employment. These outcomes are significantly better than for the overall jobseekers we serve, and are a testament to the priority of

service we provide to this cohort.

The state educates the local office staff on the myriad of tools specifically directed at providing customized assistance to veterans (i.e. TORQ My Next Move, Military Skills Translator, and VetCentral). Our success with the implementation of priority of service is evidenced by the fact that during PY 12 of the 14,686 "Covered Entrants" served, 9,302 (63%) received a direct service.

Through the implementation of the Gold Card initiative, the state has provided targeted training to office managers, veteran representatives, and employment service staff on the steps required to document and provide follow up contact with veterans that come through our offices for service. The effect of this effort is identified by the fact that 63% of all veteran clients served by our system received staff-assisted services, compared to 51% of all clients.

The success of this effort is indicated by the high entered employment and employment retention rates among our recently separated veterans. With the announcement of the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) as part of the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act, the state has provided information on all of these efforts to our staff and suggestions on ways in which they can be leveraged with other programs and funding sources to overcome barriers for veteran clients.

In addition to the above activities, the state funded the ARVETS Initiative, operated by ARVETS, Inc., in PY 12 that provides additional support to veterans and their families to connect with needed employment and training services.

The activities for this project include:

- Meet with military branches to develop a complete list of transferable skills veterans may have gained through military service for the purpose of assessing viable civilian job opportunities
- Compile information relative to the current Arkansas

job market to assist in veteran job placement

- Develop tools to educate employers on the benefits of employing veterans
- Create a case management level system to help veterans navigate through components of employability services and track success
- Serve as a referral source for existing state and federal programs that share the common goal of improving the quality of life for veterans through career development
- Support statewide events and organizations to identify those in the veteran population in need of assistance
- Structure outreach efforts to include units and drill weekends for statewide reservist branches
- Focus on the veteran support system, which includes spouses and/or children and partner with existing organizations within the state to service this particular population.

Arkansas Veterans Education and Training Partnership

On September 12, 2012, the state received an Arkansas Veterans Education and Training Partnership (AVETP) grant to provide funds for training and supportive services to veterans. The grant is a three-year grant, which will end on June 30, 2015. The grant utilizes the expertise of ADWS veterans staff (LVER's and DVOP's), two-year colleges and the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition. ARVets, a non-profit veterans services provider, provides case management to participants. AVETP met all of its goals in the first year of the grant. Thus far, the AVETP grant has assisted 173 veterans or 38.4% of the total three-year goal of 450 with training and/or supportive services. AVETP has placed 100 participants who have completed training into employment which is 28.1% of the total grant goal.

ARKANSAS PARTNERSHIP FOR NURSING'S FUTURE

Arkansas received a \$4.8 million grant to train health care professionals in the state over the next four years. Arkansas was one of 43 grantees who received this funding

under the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grants. The goal of the federal grant program is to reduce the number of H-1B visas for foreign workers by training and educating Americans to fill those jobs most in demand. The Arkansas Partnership for Nursing's Future (APNF) will provide funding to enable Arkansas workers statewide to be trained for careers in the nursing profession which include Certified Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical Nurses, Associate Degree Nurses and Bachelor of Science Degree Nurses. The APNF partners in providing training under this grant are the two-year colleges and UAMS.

A total of 1500 participants will receive grant funded services. Of these participants, APNF has a goal of 960 participants completing their education and a goal of placing at least 691 participants into employment in related health care fields. APNF will train 168 CNA's, 200 LPN's, 300 ADN's and 100 BSN's during the life of the grant.

DWS Labor Market Information indicates that the number of RNs will increase more than 27 percent in Arkansas by 2018. According to the health care industry, more than 1,500 qualified nursing applicants are turned away each year in Arkansas because of limited capacity. The grant intends to address that lack of capacity through the use of distance learning and increased clinical training opportunities.

The APNF grant has already reached close to 40% of the participants to be served under the grant. Most participants were still enrolled in multi-year nursing programs as of June 30th, 2013. 10.3% of the participants have completed training.

PARTNERSHIP WITH REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

In June of 2012, Governor Beebe approved an investment of up to \$1.2 million dollars from the Department of Workforce Services Training Trust Fund in an apprenticeship training initiative that is being implemented

by the Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition. It is providing a long-term employment and training opportunity for many previously unemployed and underemployed individuals, in that these new apprentices may be funded for the full four to five years, depending on the discipline, that it takes to reach the Master or Journeyman level. Of the 96 individuals who began the program as new-hire apprentices, 77 (80%) successfully completed the first year of training, have advanced to the third semester, and are earning an average second year annual wage of \$28,353.00. The individual training providers and the number of apprentices that are currently in training, by trade, are as follows.

- Arkansas Painters Apprenticeship Local 424 – 11 Painters apprenticeships
- Little Rock Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)) – 11 Electrician apprenticeships
- National Apprenticeship Training Foundation, Inc. (NATF) – 15 Plumbing and 16 Electrician apprenticeships
- Northwest Arkansas Plumbing – 9 Plumbing apprenticeships
- Plumber and Pipefitter Local Union 155 – 11 Plumbing and 8 Pipefitting/Welding apprenticeships
- Sheet Metal Workers Local 36 – 3 Sheet Metal Worker apprenticeships

Additionally, in May of 2013, the Arkansas Pipe Trades Association was approved for \$1.2 million dollars to fund the implementation of an Accelerated Welder Training Program. This program will result in 192 individuals receiving training that leads to certification and employability as an apprentice in the pipe fitting and pipe welding trades.

MICROSOFT IT ACADEMY

In July 2012, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet announced the launch of the Microsoft IT Academy program. The

PY 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

Microsoft IT Academy includes web-based instruction and opportunities to earn industry-recognized certifications, including Microsoft Office Specialist, Microsoft Technology Associate or Microsoft Certified Professional. Topics range from computer basics to high-level programming, along with information and communications technology management.

In the first year, the Microsoft IT Academy was piloted in approximately 20 Arkansas high schools, 24 adult education centers and 26 Arkansas Workforce Centers, with the expectation that more high-school sites will be added during the first year. It is planned that all public high schools and adult education centers will eventually offer the program. Arkansas is the first state in the nation to offer the Microsoft IT Academy to adult learners, who can access services at adult education centers and Arkansas Workforce Centers.

Arkansas' Microsoft IT Academy is funded jointly by the Department of Career Education, the Department of Education and the Department of Workforce Services. The state's investment of \$469,635 provides a variety of curricula, lab resources, teacher training and certification materials for an anticipated 343 sites.

With the implementation of the Microsoft IT Academy, adult Arkansans who are not students will also be able to participate and acquire skills to enhance their employability. Arkansas' Microsoft IT Academy is customized to align with the state's STEM Works program, also an initiative of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. STEM Works is aimed at educating more K-12 students in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics and equipping Arkansas colleges with the tools needed to better educate future K-12 teachers in these core subjects.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

In program year 2012, Arkansas had a total of 46 Arkansas

Workforce Centers, including 22 comprehensive, 11 satellite and 13 affiliate centers. In program year 2011, two Arkansas Workforce Centers moved to new locations.

Arkansas Workforce Center at Pine Bluff

The Workforce Center staff in Pine Bluff has settled into their new location at 1001 Tennessee Street. The Pine Bluff Workforce Center at Regency Square closed June 30, 2012 and moved to co-locate with Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (ADWS) at the 1001 Tennessee Street location. Being co-located with the Department of Workforce Services has made the Center more of a one-stop shop. Partners in the Tennessee Street location include Experience Works, Adult Education and Youth Development. The center continues to experience client growth as the public, partners, and employers learn of their new location.

Arkansas Workforce Center at Burdette

The Workforce Center at Blytheville was temporarily housed in Burdette, Arkansas until January 2013 when it was relocated to the renovated Mo-Ark building on the Arkansas Northeastern College campus in Blytheville. Partners in the Blytheville center include: Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Trade Readjustment Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and the Local Veterans Employment Representative Program.

MOBILE WORKFORCE CENTERS

The Department of Workforce Services operates five mobile Arkansas Workforce Center units. The units are used to assist with employment services

at job fairs and other events and as needed to areas of worker dislocation. The units, which are in high demand around the state, are available to training providers,



educational institutions, and other state and federal agencies.

For Arkansans who lack access to reliable transportation this is often the critical factor in obtaining and maintaining employment. With the use of the mobile workforce centers, many more Arkansans will have access to services. Each mobile workforce center contains 10 to 13 computer stations. Three units also include an interview room, interactive smartboard, sound system, and are handicapp accessible. These three units also are equipped with outside monitors that can display videos and presentations which can be directed to larger audiences. In program year 2012, the mobile units were used at 63 events statewide to assist jobseekers and employers.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Outreach to the employer community is critical for the Arkansas Workforce Centers in meeting the employment needs of the community. Each local workforce investment area conducts business engagement activities in a customized way in order to meet the needs of their employers. Below is a summary of some of the outreach activities and programs and strategies for serving the employer community in Arkansas.

- Statewide implementation of the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program at no cost to employers or job seekers.
- Coordinated outreach to employers among all partner programs through the use of Business Liaison Teams to prevent duplicate contact.
- Speaking with a common message for the center rather than program specific messages.
- Use of Business Service Coordinators to focus on services to the employer community.
- Communication, both verbal and written, with local community leaders. Community leaders and local businesses are provided with pamphlets, brochures, business cards, and other reading material that gives a

brief description of services.

- Conduct job fairs, opportunity fairs, and career expos at no cost to employers and jobseekers.
- Conduct open houses for community members to learn more about the workforce centers.
- Make mobile workforce center units available to employers that are having mass hiring or training.
- Allow employers to recruit and conduct interviews onsite at workforce centers.
- Work closely with chambers of commerce, economic and community development organizations to establish strong working partnerships, attend and participate in after-hours business networking events.
- Educate employers about incentives for hiring targeted populations through the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program and Federal Bonding program.
- Follow up with employers about the quality, timeliness, and efficiency of services provided.
- Partners share information about job openings and use a common database to record job orders throughout the state.
- Join regional and state human resource associations.
- Provide occupational skills training such as the Microsoft IT Certification(s) to employers needing specific skills.
- Provide information on external partners (i.e Vocational Rehabilitation Services).
- Identification of employers current and future hiring needs.
- Listening to the customer's needs, concerns, and expectations.
- Work with high school and post-secondary schools to help develop a career and technical education (CTE) honors program that will encourage and better prepare individuals for technical jobs for which employers are recruiting.
- Use the Career Readiness Certificate to inform employers of the abilities of prospective employees.

PERFORMANCE DATA

Wagner-Peyser Performance

Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange Performance focuses on providing a variety of employment related services including, but not limited to, job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, and recruitment services for employers with job openings. The services are delivered in two modes: self-service and staff assisted service. Arkansas’ customers may visit a workforce center, electronically or in person, for a variety of services. During the 2012 program year, over 249,000 individuals received employment related information services and registered with Arkansas JobLink, the state’s internet-based job matching system. Of the 249,000, 140,000 (56%) received staff assisted services. During the program year, there were 242,000 new and active job orders that produced 343,000 new and active job openings posted in Arkansas JobLink:

Through our partnership with the National Labor Exchange and a proactive effort to include jobs from employers with established applicant tracking systems; 65 percent of the jobs in the AJL system are received and automatically included through a “no touch” electronic information transfer. This leveraging of information frees up staff to provide services directly to jobseekers and saves thousands of man hours each year in reduced maintenance and updating of individual job orders posted in our system.

The PY12 federal performance measurement indicators from Arkansas JobLink show that 64 percent of Arkansas’

jobseekers gained employment and 82 percent were retained in employment for at least six months with six-month average earnings of \$12,300 dollars.

Workforce Investment Act Title I-B Performance

The data tables included in this report represent Arkansas’ Title I-B performance measure results for Program Year 2012. Arkansas has the highest performance measure goals amongst all states in seven categories (Adult Entered Employment, Adult Employment Retention, Dislocated Worker Employment Retention, Dislocated Worker Entered Employment Rate, Youth Attainment of a Degree or Certificate, Youth Placement in Employment and Education, and Youth Literacy Numeracy Gains).

The results of Arkansas rigorous performance measures were calculated in varying timeframes, meaning every measure was not calculated within the same twelve-month time period. For example, Average Earnings and Retention Rates were measured by customers who exited between April 2011 through March 2012. Entered Employment Rates were measured by customers who exited between October 2011 through September 2012. The 12-month Retention Rates and 12-month Average Earnings Rates were calculated based on customers who exited between January 2011 and December 2011. The Participant Counts were calculated from July 2012 through June 2013.

A performance table is presented for each of the state’s ten local workforce investment areas. Each table contains a section that illustrates the performance successes and/or challenges of each local area. The results serve as an evaluation tool to indicate the overall success rate of the statewide Title I-B system.

Wagner-Peyser Program Results

Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual
Entered Employment Rate	63.0	64.0
Employment Retention Rate	81.0	82.0
Average Earnings*	\$11,300	\$12,300

*Average Earnings measure represents two quarters of earnings.

Adult Program Results At-A-Glance

ETA-B

Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual	Numerator Denominator
Entered Employment Rate	91.0	83.9	364 434
Employment Retention Rate	92.0	95.1	682 717
Average Earnings*	\$12,530	\$13,741	\$81,070.30 590

Outcomes for Adult Special Populations

ETA-C

Performance Items	Public Assistance	Numerator	Veterans	Numerator	Individuals	Numerator	Older	Numerator
	Services	Denominator		Denom	Disabilities	Denom	Individuals	Denom
Entered Employment Rate	82.4	239 290	88.9	16 18	62.5	5 8	100.0	4 4
Employment Retention Rate	94.1	380 404	92.9	26 28	100	9 9	100.0	6 6
Average Earnings*	\$12,911	\$41,959.53 325	\$17,483	\$4,021.01 23	\$12,449	\$87,145 7	\$12,250	\$73,500 6

Other Outcome Information for the Adult Program

ETA-D

Performance Items	Individuals Received Training	Numerator Denominator	Individuals Core/Intensive Services	Numerator Denominator
Entered Employment Rate	83.6	336 402	87.5	28 32
Employment Retention Rate	95.3	633 664	92.5	49 53
Average Earnings*	\$13,959	\$77,193.46 553	\$10,478	\$3,876.84 37

*Average Earnings measure represents two quarters of earnings.

Dislocated Worker Program Results At-A-Glance

				ETA-E
Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual	Numerator Denominator	
Entered Employment Rate	94.0	89.6	311	347
			458	477
Employment Retention Rate	96.0	96.0	\$5,595,643	400
Average Earnings*	\$13,500	\$13,989		

Outcomes for Dislocated Worker Special Populations

								ETA-F
Performance Items	Veterans	Num Individuals Denom Disabilities		Num Denom	Older Individuals	Num Displaced Denom Homemakers		Num Denom
Entered Employment Rate	85.7	24	100.0	1	87.5	21	33.3	1
		28		1		24		3
Employment Retention Rate	94.7	36	87.5	7	100.00	37	100.0	3
		38		8		37		3
Average Earnings*	\$15,584	\$451,950	\$15,069	\$105,486	\$11,548	\$323,357	\$14,821	\$29,642
		29		7		28		2

Other Outcome Information for the Dislocated Worker Program

					ETA-G
Performance Items	Individuals Received Training		Numerator Denominator	Individuals Core/Intensive Services Numerator Denominator	
Entered Employment Rate	89.4		286	92.6	
			320	25	
Employment Retention Rate	95.9		416	97.7	
			434	42	
Average Earnings*	\$14,129		\$5,143,098	\$12,571	
			364	\$452,545	
				36	

*Average Earnings measure represents two quarters of earnings.

Youth (14 - 21) Program Results

ETA-H1

Performance Items	Negotiated	Actual	Numerator Denominator
Placement in Employment or Education	81.0	82.7	535 647
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	81.0	84.1	562 668
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	75.5	79.2	57 72

Other Reported Information

Program	12 Mo.		12 Mo.				ETA-L			
	Employ Retention	Num Denom	Earn Change	Numerator Denominator	Place. Nontrad	Num Denom	Wages Unsub	Num Denom	Unsub Trng	Num Denom
Adults	89.1	680 763	\$8,566	\$5,610,553 655	4.1	15 364	\$4,957	\$1,606,066 324	61.0	205 336
Dislocated Workers	91.4	480 525	138.2	\$6,449,073 \$4,666,985	2.6	8 311	\$5,973	\$1,654,410 277	62.2	178 286
Older Youth										

Participation Levels

ETA-M

Program	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
Total Adults	195,184	176,132
Total Adults (self)	193,444	175,159
WIA Adults	194,635	175,841
WIA Dislocated Workers	553	293
Total Youth (14 - 21)	1,593	738
Younger Youth (14 - 18)	1,346	600
Older Youth (19 - 21)	247	138
Out-of-School Youth	296	157
In-School Youth	1,297	581

Cost of Program Activities

		ETA-N
Program Activity		Total Federal Spending
Local Adults		\$3,046,962
Local Dislocated Workers		1,683,005
Local Youth		2,218,647
ARRA Adult		0.00
ARRA Dislocated Worker		0.00
ARRA Youth		0.00
ARRA Rapid Response		0.00
Rapid ResponseARRA Dislocated Worker		800,759
Statewide Required Activities		137,042
	Description	
	Statewide Youth Activities	
	Capacity Building & Technical Assistance	
Statewide	GAE Administration	
Allowed	Outreach	
Activities	ARVets Veterans Program	493,537
Total of All Federal Spending Above		\$8,379,952

Arkansas has analyzed the cost of workforce activities for the program year using the “cost per participant” methodology used in previous years. The analysis indicates that the value of services has increased and that overall costs of providing services have declined, considering inflationary factors.

For Program Year 2012, Arkansas provided a cost efficient program that provided a wide variety of services meeting the needs of all stakeholders. Data for PY 2012 are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Cost Analysis

ETA-Figure 1

Target Populations	PY 2011 Expenditures*	PY 2011 Participants Receiving Services	Cost Per Service Provided
Adults			
Core	\$603,011.60	1,631	\$369.72
Intensive	\$906,881.22	3,362	\$269.74
Training	\$1,032,142.07	1,043	\$989.59
Dislocated Adults			
Core	\$409,562.85	705	\$580.94
Intensive	\$607,240.45	1,474	\$411.97
Training	\$388,425.72	460	\$844.40
Youth	\$3,228,389.62	9,911	\$325.74

*Expenditures were from all available funding periods and sources, i.e., PY 2011, and PY 2012 allotments. Expenditure period covers July1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Please note that the participants counts above may count one individual more than once, depending on the level and number of services received by the participant.

Customer Satisfaction

For PY 12, the approach that was used to assess customer satisfaction paralleled the methodology used previously, which followed the ACSI protocol. Telephone surveys were used to administer the three core customer satisfaction questions. The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (ADWS) contracted with the Institute for Economic Advancement (IEA) at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to conduct the surveys. ADWS collaborated with IEA on the design of the survey instrument, but the execution of the survey was done independently by IEA staff to attain the most accurate, unbiased assessment. ADWS randomly selected and provided IEA with customers. In order to assess customer satisfaction systemwide, all job seekers were included in the survey population, not just WIA participants. IEA staff administered the survey, collected the data, analyzed the data, and reported the results. The means for the three core questions were converted to numbers on a 100 point scale and then equally weighted when they were averaged together to compute a single customer satisfaction score. The outcomes for the two surveys appear below.

Employers

Overall Satisfaction 72.5%

Total Survey Population 640 (with 370 agreeing to participate)

Response Rate 57.8%

Participants

Overall Satisfaction 70.2%

Total Survey Population 745 (with 378 agreeing to participate)

Response Rate 50.7%

CENTRAL ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

The Benton Boys and Girls Club with the help of a grant, awarded from the Department of Education have planted a Garden of Hope. The garden is designed to help youth develop project skills, increase obesity awareness, and enhance academic development. The community garden is based on the applications of STEM lessons and the integration of the Arkansas 4-H program educational support. The STEM Works program focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, was made by Governor Beebe on August 16, 2011. The goal of STEM Works is educating K-12 students in fields that need the most qualified workers and have the most potential for expanding the state’s economy by combining STEM education and extensive project-based learning activities such as the garden. The STEM fields offer stable well-paying careers for the 21st century.

On March 12, 2013, the annual Spring Career Fair was held at the Owens Center Gymnasium located on the Arkansas State University Beebe Campus. The facility was open to employers in the surrounding areas. The Department of Workforce Services sponsored a table with information for job seekers. Geanice Hunter, Lonoke WIA One-Stop Manager partnered with Veterans’ Representative Russell Cook of Cabot and Garry Williams of Searcy, to provide services to job seekers. Services provided included, Job Seeking tools, Information on Resume Writing, Career Readiness Certificate, WIA services and Veteran Services.

The Arkansas Workforce Center at Lonoke partnered together with Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC) to better serve clients in Lonoke County. On November 13, 2012 a Money Management Workshop was held at the Lonoke Workforce Center. The training focused on helping individuals broaden their financial planning and management skills. Information was provided on Individual Development

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
	Adults	26,775		
	Dislocated Workers	45		
	Older Youth	18		
	Younger Youth	111		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	24,277		
	Dislocated Workers	11		
	Older Youth	12		
	Younger Youth	38		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	90.0	100.0	
	Dislocated Workers	94.5	94.7	
Retention Rate	Adults	92.5	100.0	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	96.4	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,900	\$22,003	
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,250	\$13,821	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	78.0	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	71.7	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	54.5	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	X			

Account or IDA. The IDA accounts are matched saving accounts that encourage low-income working people to save money and acquire assets. Most applicants will be enrolled in the program for six months to two years. Participants commit to save at least \$10 a month. When they reach their savings goal, CADC will match it \$3.00 up to \$2,000 per individual, or \$4,000 per household. The CADC and Lonoke Workforce Center staff believes that financial management is the first step towards individuals becoming self-sufficient.

ReEntry Fair - Conway

The Faulkner County Team had a great turnout on the First Annual Reentry Resource Fair on April 17, 2012. We closed out the day with 172 customers and 32 vendors. This event was a collaborative effort between the Department of Community Correction, Life After Prison Ministries and the Arkansas Workforce Center at Conway. The community of Conway stepped up and provided food, tables, volunteers, free t-shirts, banners, etc. for the event. It was a great event and one that has been duplicated across the state.

CITY OF LITTLE ROCK HIGHLIGHTS

Environmental Workforce Development Job Training Grant

The Little Rock Workforce Investment Board (LRWIB) and Arbor E&T d/b/a ResCare Workforce Services (Arbor) entered into a partnership with the Arkansas Construction Education Foundation (ACEF) – the lead partner in a grant funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – with the objective to recruit, train and place homeless residents of Central Arkansas in environmental careers with skills needed to safely conduct remediation work at solid and hazardous waste-contaminated sites, as well as appropriate training in wastewater management and chemical safety. ACEF has formed partnerships with other organizations to accomplish this objective. The LRWIB has partnered with ACEF to recruit a total of 100 program participants from the local homeless programs, based on core eligibility requirements, to participant in a 4-week training program. In turn, through its current contractor for local WIA One-Stop Services, LRWIB is sub-contracting with Arbor to perform these services. This partnership begins on October 1, 2012 and ends on September 30, 2014. Arbor will designate one of its existing WIA one-stop center employees as the Recruitment Coordinator for this program. The Recruitment Coordinator will make contact with the local Homeless Shelter Managers and/or Case Workers to invite them to attend a brief introduction session hosted at the Arkansas Workforce Center. During this introduction session, the ACEF’s training program and eligibility requirements will be discussed. This informational session is designed to obtain the key players support, and to request personal referral of clients they feel would be a good fit for the training program. Recruitment activity will continue until a total of 20 candidates per five (5) training sessions have been identified; for a total of 100 trainees. Additional partners include: Our House Homeless Shelter, The Compassion Center, The Salvation Army, Better Community Development, and Snyder Environmental Services.

YouthBuild Little Rock

As the lead organization in this \$1.1M DOL Grant, The Little Rock Workforce Investment Board (LRWIB) finished its second year on June 30, 2013 and succeeded in serving more than 60 young people ages 18-24 in gaining a high school

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants		ETA-O	
	Adults	22,079		
	Dislocated Workers	54		
	Older Youth	19		
	Younger Youth	88		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	20,362		
	Dislocated Workers	23		
	Older Youth	12		
	Younger Youth	48		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	93.1	
	Dislocated Workers	92.5	93.1	
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	95.4	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	95.9	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,900	\$10,743	
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$12,952	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	90.0	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	78.7	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	100.0	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	X			

diploma or equivalency and acquiring industry recognized and accredited certifications in construction through the National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER). The principle partners were Arbor E&T d/b/a ResCare Workforce Services (Arbor), The Little Rock School District, New Futures for Youth, UALR, the City of Little Rock, Habitat for Humanity of Pulaski County, A’Test Consultants, the Metropolitan Housing Alliance and Arkansas Construction Education Foundation (ACEF).

The emphasis during this final quarter was to finish delivery of the program services to the participants in a strong and successful fashion, so that entry into employment, continuation of higher education or training and other placements would reflect positively for the youth. This resulted in 16 of 31 participants being able to complete the NCCER training by program end. 4 Students earned their GED or a High School Diploma during this quarter. Three participants completed a Certified Nursing Assistant’s (CNA) training course. The program met overall Attainment of Degrees and Certificates by more than 60% of both cohorts. (65.38% have attained degrees and certificates and increasing.) The program predicts that it will exceed a 50% placement rate over both cohorts. (48.28% have been placed in employment, military, higher education or continuing construction or other training programs.)

EASTERN ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

Disadvantaged Youth Program Activity

Ten Lee County WIA summer youth participants were treated to a field trip to Blanchard Springs Caverns in Mountain View, AR on July 10, 2013, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the caverns being open and to learn about the formation of caves. The event was sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service which has an office in Marianna and has been a valuable worksite for the work experience program in Eastern Arkansas. The youth were absolutely amazed at the size and the beauty of the caverns and something of that magnitude being located Arkansas.

The U.S. Forest Service, paid for the tour and a portion of the gas costs. In addition, Clifton Collier, Lee County Cooperative Clinic, furnished the transportation and drove the van. The Co-op also had youth participants working at the worksite during the summer. This was a great example of how working together as partners we can provide an excellent opportunity for our youth to learn and grow as individuals and to see how much they are appreciated for their hard work and participation in the summer work experience programs.

Lee County Career and Job Expo

Lee County has a population of 10,424 people and is the poorest county in Arkansas with a poverty rate of 37.5 percent. In order to serve this county a job fair was organized in the Spring with several hundred jobseekers participating and 18 vendors present who either had jobs or could help with employment related needs. The city donated the space for the job fair and the entire county showed great appreciation and support for the event. Many job seekers had never attended a job fair before and were thankful to have the opportunity to talk to employers and to know that someone cared enough for them to offer this event in their community. Also, the vendors were amazed at the quality of potential employees that participated. From the success of the event and enthusiasm of the community -- we are making this an annual event!

Forrest City Regional Career and Job Expo

A successful Third Annual Regional Career & Job Expo was held October 25, 2012 at the East Arkansas Community College (EACC) Fine Arts

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O			
Eastern	Adults	12,623			
	Dislocated Workers	19			
	Older Youth	10			
	Younger Youth	142			
	Total Exitters				
	Adults	11,155			
	Dislocated Workers	7			
	Older Youth	4			
	Younger Youth	51			
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level	
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	89.0	78.0		
	Dislocated Workers	91.5	100.0		
Retention Rate	Adults	84.5	97.5		
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	100.0		
Average Earnings	Adults	\$9,500	\$13,535		
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$16,324		
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	89.4		
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	92.5		
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	0		
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded		
	X				

Center in Forrest City with over 500 jobseekers participating and 57 vendors. Over half of the vendors had job openings or represented companies who were hiring. The Department of Workforce Services mobile workforce unit was also on hand for jobseekers to register for job assistance through the Arkansas Job Link. The event is also in partnership with the Department of Workforce Services and East Arkansas Community College. The County Judge, Forrest City Mayor and the employers were extremely happy with the caliber of job seekers represented and individuals that were hired by the various employers.

Phillips County Regional Job Fair

The Phillips County Chamber of Commerce and the Arkansas Workforce Center partnered to host a Job Fair at Phillips County Community College on November 8, 2012. Over 700 jobseekers attended at which time they had the opportunity to meet with 25 employers who were taking applications for 85 jobs. The employers were thankful for organizing the job fair and for the job seekers they hired. Also, the Arkansas Workforce Centers mobile workforce unit was also on hand for jobseekers to register for job assistance through the Arkansas Job Link.

NORTH CENTRAL ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

NADC, the North Central LWIA service provider, was notified in November 2012 that it was awarded a \$1,043,130 Youth Build (YB) grant through the U.S. Department of Labor. YB is a comprehensive youth and community development program that addresses core issues facing low-income communities such as education, housing, employment, crime prevention and leadership development. The program is for a total of 36 months including 3 months preparation, 24 months program and 9 months follow-up. The participant's time is broken down into 50% in education, 40% in construction training providing vocational education and on-site general construction skills and 10% in community services projects. To be eligible for the program, a young person must be age 16-24, have dropped out of high school (with the exemption of 25% of participants who may have other barriers), and be a current or former foster youth, a youth offender, a youth who is an individual with a disability, a migrant farm worker youth, a child of an incarcerated parent and/or a low-income youth. Participants are awarded stipends twice a month during academic learning, community service projects and construction training. They can earn up to \$156 per week for the four-day week, but they must be present daily and be willing to work to receive a stipend.

In the first eight-month cycle, 24 participants enrolled out of 40 that completed the initial mental toughness aspect of the program. The purpose of the mental toughness week is to determine if the participants are truly committed to the YouthBuild Program. They must prove they are willing to attend regularly, have a good attitude, a willingness to work on the program and a desire to learn. The youth have participated in a variety of areas to help them learn including classroom instruction, OSHA training, construction of Habitat for Humanity home, distribution of commodities for Help and Hope, YB fundraisers, and community service experiences. They also attended a YB Celebration Ceremony where they had a formal dinner and received awards and their work gear and tools. Batesville City Mayor Rick Elumbaugh was the guest speaker and he talked about the importance of community service and leadership.

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O	
North Central			
	Adults	13,703	
	Dislocated Workers	50	
	Older Youth	11	
	Younger Youth	198	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	12,935	
	Dislocated Workers	33	
	Older Youth	7	
	Younger Youth	121	
		Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.5	78.4
	Dislocated Workers	97.5	86.7
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	93.3
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	94.9
Average Earnings	Adults	\$11,000	\$13,051
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$10,919
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	69.1
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	93.4
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	100.0
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	X		



Before a participant can graduate from YB, they are required to meet the following requirements: satisfactory attendance, a high school diploma or GED, master vocational and academic competencies, master career/life skills, leadership and community service through achievement of monthly benchmarks and placement in college or advanced skill training or employed at completion of the program. Even though this first eight-month cycle has been a challenge and learning experience for all involved, it also has had many success stories. In the beginning of the program, the majority of participants failed the required drug test. However, after the last drug test was administered, everyone was clean. One of the many field trips taken by the participants has been to the county library. All the participants now have a library card.

One of the participants has a dream to be in the National Guard and have a career in the military. He is aware that he must have a high school diploma to make that dream come true. Through YB, he received his diploma and attended National Guard training this past summer in Georgia. Even without any family support, he completed his training and now has returned home to continue his education and construction training with YB.

NORTHEAST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are utilized to provide eligible individuals with occupational skills training in a demand occupation at local two- and four-year educational institutions. The Northeast WIB has enrolled over two hundred and seventy individuals in occupational skills training from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. Approximately 60% of the adult participants were low income individuals, and seventy-three dislocated workers benefited from post secondary education.

On April 16, 2013, the Arkansas Workforce Center (AWC) staff along with 24 other exhibitors participated in the Paragould Regional Job Expo. The AWC staff provided information regarding WIA and partner services to over 467 attendees.

On May 29, 2013, the new Blytheville Workforce Center had an open house. The workforce center relocated from its temporary location in Burdette, Arkansas to Arkansas Northeastern College Campus in Blytheville, Arkansas in January 2013. The Workforce Center at Burdette was housed in a temporary location until January 2013 when it was relocated to the renovated Mo-Ark building on the Arkansas Northeastern College (ANC) campus in Blytheville. Blytheville is the largest city in Mississippi County and the new workforce center will provide easier access to services for a larger population.

By relocating on the ANC campus, clients have access to the following partner services housed outside of the workforce center but on the campus: Adult Education, Career Pathways, and post-secondary education.

Arkansas Workforce Center staff have attended the following two- and four-year state college and high school functions:

- Student Orientation/Outreach – Arkansas State University - Newport (ASUN) (Jonesboro Campus)
- Student Orientation/Outreach - ASUN

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
	Adults	25,719		
	Dislocated Workers	95		
	Older Youth	46		
	Younger Youth	192		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	23,330		
	Dislocated Workers	44		
	Older Youth	23		
	Younger Youth	94		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.5	92.9	
	Dislocated Workers	92.5	100.0	
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	98.2	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	97.7	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,900	\$15,311	
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,500	\$14,633	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	88.3	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	86.1	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	96.7	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
			X	

(Marked Tree Campus)

- Career Fair - ASUN (Marked Tree Campus)
- Career Fair - Manila High School
- Job Fair - Arkansas Northeastern College
- Student Orientation/Outreach - Black River Technical College (Pocahontas Campus)
- Outreach to the high schools in the seven county area

The Northeast Arkansas Workforce Centers utilize business service teams comprised of WIA, ADWS, and partners. The teams utilize a packet representing the menu of services and contact information for all partners. The business service teams coordinate with economic development and social services networks in their community by meeting with various business organizations, career fairs, SHERM, and membership in Chambers of Commerce and other community activities such as Job Fairs, etc. Area resource directories have been provided to all staff members, and working relationships continue to develop through regular referrals to other agencies.

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

This summer Northwest WIA enrolled 83 youth with disabilities ages 14-24 in summer work experience. Of those 83 youth 22 are co-enrolled in the WIA younger youth program. Of the 192 youth in summer work experience 83 were enrolled in the DEI program and 109 were enrolled in the WIA program. Prior to starting work experience the youth attended work readiness training. Youth participated in various types of work including veterinary assistants, janitors and cleaners, landscaping and grounds keeping workers, childcare workers, recreation workers, library assistants, clerical, stock clerks and order fillers, office clerks, carpenter helpers, bicycle repairers, installation and maintenance helpers, and cleaners of vehicles and equipment.

The Northwest summer program was titled: Learn Earn Achieve Develop. They employed 192 students this summer with 83 being DEI students. They estimated that \$310,182 was returned to the economy with the placement of these students in summer employment. Northwest has plans to expand their youth program by creating an Honor Program using the DEI Grant for students who may not go to college.

In a rural community such as Jasper in Northwest, Arkansas there are no summer activities for elementary age youth and even fewer employment opportunities for youth. A group of local agencies saw the need; the city council, public school, county extension agent, county resource council and the hometown health coalition partnered with the WIA Summer Youth Program to sponsor a five week summer camp. After receiving training in CPR and First Aid the nine youth counselors were assigned a group of campers for which to be responsible. The camp featured a weekly themed educational component consisting of Arts and Drama, Fitness and Nutrition, Community Service and Patriotism, Science and Technology and Agriculture. Serving as camp

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
	Adults	31,044		
	Dislocated Workers	100		
	Older Youth	36		
	Younger Youth	223		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	29,159		
	Dislocated Workers	82		
	Older Youth	30		
	Younger Youth	82		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	86.2	
	Dislocated Workers	92.5	89.7	
Retention Rate	Adults	94.0	89.2	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	94.4	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,700	\$14,672	
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$14,085	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	80.0	84.0	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	77.0	81.0	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	100.0	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	x			

counselors for 57 youth, the WIA participants learned valuable skills such as teamwork and leadership that will benefit them throughout their life.

Welding Program

The Arkansas State University at Mountain Home welding program funded by the Energy Sector Partnership focuses on helping participants prepare for certification with the American Welding Society. This elite program meets the needs of the workforce by training those who have never welded before to welder's looking to advance their skills. Graduates of the program stated that enrolling in the program was a life changing decision. Many participants had never welded before enrolling in the program, not even as part of a high school Agriculture Metals program. Some have now become a part of an elite team formed to produce a new product line a Ranger Boats in Flippin, Arkansas. The welding program continues to grow as students here of the great success with finding employment after graduation.

SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

The Southeast LWIA has been working hard to restructure their WIA Youth program and implement their Youth Advocates into the Workforce Center System. Staff has been working hard to redesign the youth program and bring new ideas to the system as a whole. The main objective is to ensure that the participants reach their career and educational goals. Among many of the developments is the formation of a year-round youth program curriculum designed to teach employability skills to all youth in a structured, topic-centered method, ranging in subjects like work ethics, communication skills, interviewing techniques, math, literacy skills, and much more.

The seven (7) Workforce Centers operating in Southeast Arkansas last year documented over 61,000 visitors that were seeking some type of service. The majority of the visitors were job seekers and over 1,500 of those individuals were able to obtain employment as a result of visiting the Centers. A large number of visitors were youth; at one point in the youth program, the Southeast Workforce Investment Area had 250 active youth which were receiving some type service to improve their basic skills, employability skills and work skills.

The 1st Annual Job Hunting Expo took place April 16, 2013 at the brand new Sadie T. Johnson Community Center located in Monticello, Arkansas. Several partners worked together to make this a successful event, which included: Southeast Arkansas Workforce Center/Central Arkansas Planning and Development District staff, Department of Workforce Service staff, Drew County Adult Education staff and the Monticello Economic Development Commission. Several local large business representatives participated

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
	Adults	9,657		
	Dislocated Workers	9		
	Older Youth	11		
	Younger Youth	170		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	8,386		
	Dislocated Workers	9		
	Older Youth	3		
	Younger Youth	87		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	88.0	74.5	
	Dislocated Workers	93.5	64.3	
Retention Rate	Adults	91.5	95.7	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	92.9	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,000	\$13,472	
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,650	\$12,604	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	81.1	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	84.0	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	0.0	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	X			

in this event, which included War Eagle Boats, Maxwell Flooring, and SEARK Boats. The purpose of the expo was to provide soft skills information and guidance to unemployed or underemployed individuals because so many job seekers lack the soft skills needed to obtain and retain employment. The expo covered the following topics: Employer's Perspective and Expectations, Job Hunting Strategies, Work Ethics and many others. Many local businesses donated door prizes and refreshments for the expo.

Lennox Industries in Stuttgart, is gearing up again, preparing for what we hope is signs of a recovering economy. Lennox manufactures commercial air conditioning units and is anticipating the need for more units due to projected new construction. They will hire approximately 150 new employees due to the increase in product demand. The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Center staff will work closely with the Manager at Randstad U.S., a staffing agency to make certain their hiring needs are full filled.

SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

New outreach marketing activities have been initiated based upon the “doing more with less” concept due to staffing cutbacks and changes. Outreach materials were developed which included participant pictures and success stories. These materials are being disbursed throughout our service area including city halls, courthouses, libraries, grocery stores, and other relevant public locations.

WIA staff is very proactive in serving Dislocated Workers in Southwest Arkansas. Staff attends workshops and/or contacts affected workers to offer Core, Intensive and Training services when appropriate and as funding allows.

One special project ended in PY 2012 which served Disadvantaged Youth. Funded by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to the One-Stop Operator, this grant was operated primarily by established partnerships with Southern Arkansas University Tech, Adult Education, The Department of Human Services, Ouachita County Public School Superintendents and Southern Arkansas Youth Services. Our partners provided vital services that were necessary for the success of the grant by providing tutoring, adult education, mentoring, counseling, and credit education.

This grant was used to serve youth from low socioeconomic backgrounds with learning disabilities, basic skills deficiencies, depression, poor work experience, domestic related issues, behavioral issues, and poor school attendance. Approximately, 215 students throughout the Southwest region were served through this project.

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
	Adults	16,808		
	Dislocated Workers	61		
	Older Youth	19		
	Younger Youth	93		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	14,119		
	Dislocated Workers	30		
	Older Youth	11		
	Younger Youth	25		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	81.1	
	Dislocated Workers	92.0	80.0	
Retention Rate	Adults	91.5	96.5	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	97.1	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$11,500	\$12,057	
	Dislocated Workers	\$14,600	\$18,710	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	75.0	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	72.7	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	63.6	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	X			

Youth grades 6th – 12th had the opportunity to receive tutoring classes on Saturdays in various subjects throughout the school year. Participants had the opportunity to bring their books and catch up on daily assignments, finish reports and get any additional assistance as needed.

Throughout the summer, youth participated in several activities such as voter registration drives and local clean up events. They also toured various college campuses where they received information on grant and scholarship opportunities.

The project was very successful and the final report to the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, which included statistical data, demographics and affected counties was recently submitted. SAU-Tech and the youth involved used social media to create a Facebook page and a YouTube video. These were presented to the Youth Council of Southwest Arkansas.

WEST CENTRAL ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

Job Fairs and Workshops

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Association partnered with the Arkansas Workforce Center, the Arkansas Department of Correction, the Department of Community Correction, and the Arkansas Parole Board to sponsor a Job Fair and Workshop hosted by the College of the Ouachitas. The workshop was designed to provide information to felons about the hiring process and the steps required to have their records expunged. It also educated businesses and employment agencies that hiring felons helps them to integrate back into society, reduce recidivism, and lessen the burden on the prison system. Workforce Center partners explained the WOTC (Work Opportunity Tax Credit) and how it could give potential employers a tax break.

The Job Fair was well attended, with standing room only, and was a success, as many of those in the community and surrounding areas found information about getting jobs and getting their record expunged. This Job Fair was the first of its kind and was embraced by community leaders and businesses alike. This event showed support from the community and concern to educate and help felons integrate back into society. Job/Career Fairs and Business Expo events continued to benefit our workforce area by connecting employers directly with job seekers. The Arkansas Workforce mobile unit was on site for customers to tour and have hands-on experience with the many services offered inside the mobile unit, including resume preparation and job listings. Military Recruiting Offices also set up informational tents in the workforce center parking lots to provide information to customers on the opportunities available from a career in the military.

Workforce Center customers/employers were and continue to be encouraged to participate in the Microsoft IT Academy. Clients completing the program were provided the technology skills necessary to

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O		
West Central	Adults	21,484		
	Dislocated Workers	10		
	Older Youth	36		
	Younger Youth	78		
	Total Exitters			
	Adults	19,487		
	Dislocated Workers	13		
	Older Youth	17		
	Younger Youth	29		
			Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	89.5	76.2	
	Dislocated Workers	94.5	95.0	
Retention Rate	Adults	93.5	94.1	
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	100.0	
Average Earnings	Adults	\$13,500	\$14,800	
	Dislocated Workers	\$12,200	\$14,945	
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	84.4	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	76.5	
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	70.0	
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
	x			

acquire certification and become more competitive in the workplace.

Workforce Center staff utilized the TORQ assessment data with adults, dislocated workers and disadvantaged youth in establishing their career goals and assessing their chances of career success. This assessment was available to be used to develop a training/career plan for clients.

Leadership Development Workshops were held on a regular basis for disadvantaged youth enrolled in the WIA Youth Program. These workshops have been successful in encouraging participating youth to become more responsible, focus on positive social behaviors and decision making. Youth were exposed to postsecondary educational opportunities that they might otherwise have been unaware are available to them.

Military Recruiting Offices also set up informational tents in the workforce center parking lots to provide information to customers on the opportunities available from a career in the military.

WESTERN ARKANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

Community and Service Learning Project for Youth

Several WIA Youth Clients participated in a community service/learning project on January 19th, 2013, at the National Cemetery in Fort Smith. The focus for the day was on community service and volunteerism. The main service/task was to remove the Christmas wreaths from the grave sites and to beautify the cemetery -which provided the opportunity for the youth to develop their teamwork and leadership skills while learning about the importance of community involvement.

Phillip Merry, Fort Smith City Board of Directors member and organizer of the event, began the day by thanking everyone for coming out to help with the removal of wreaths and explaining the day's activities. Mr. Merry also spoke on various topics including the importance and meaning behind the Pledge of Allegiance and honoring our Veterans, and what community service is truly about.

This project taught the youth that volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity, and is intended to promote good or improve human quality of life, which in return produces a feeling of self-worth and respect. They learned that volunteering is also great for skill development, socialization and fun. Mr. Merry also explained that, although the youth were there to provide a service of labor to the memory of veterans of war who served for our country and communities, that there are many other projects and causes where volunteers are needed and he encouraged the youth to make volunteerism a part of their lives as they grow and mature into adults.

Spring Career Fair

A Spring Career Fair was held on May 2nd at the Crawford County Adult Education Center in Van Buren. The main focus for the Career Fair was to reach out to students – both youth and adults, as well as to the community. Several businesses, schools, and other community resources were invited to participate so that attendees could gain access to, and knowledge about, what is available

Local Area Performance

Local Area	Total Participants	ETA-O	
Western	Adults	14,743	
	Dislocated Workers	110	
	Older Youth	41	
	Younger Youth	51	
	Total Exitters		
	Adults	12,631	
	Dislocated Workers	41	
	Older Youth	19	
	Younger Youth	25	
			Negotiated Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	92.0	88.6
	Dislocated Workers	93.5	88.9
Retention Rate	Adults	91.5	93.0
	Dislocated Workers	95.5	96.6
Average Earnings	Adults	\$11,400	\$14,866
	Dislocated Workers	\$13,000	\$12,697
Placement in Employment or Educ.	Youth (14 - 21)	79.7	85.2
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14 - 21)	76.9	83.9
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	Youth (14 - 21)	48.0	0.0
Overall Status of Performance	Not Met	Met	Exceeded
	X		

to them. This event gave WIA Programs and all the other presenters an opportunity to align with the mission of the local Adult Education Center of – “Providing opportunities and opening doors for the adult learner to achieve success in their life through education.” In addition to the WIA program provider (WAEDA), some of the vendors that were in attendance at the fair were: HMA Inc., UAFS, ATU Ozark, Experian Consumer Services, OK Foods, Pepper Source Ltd., Vincennes University, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Designer Barber and Stylist School, U.S. Army, Academy of Salon and Spa, BOST Human Development Corp., Head Start, Verizon Wireless, Carl Albert State College, Department of Workforce Services, Petra Allied Health, PRN Medical, AR/OK Tidbits, Tulsa Welding School, Parents as Teachers, Crawford Health and Rehab, Legal Aid of Arkansas, Educational Opportunity Center, VB Chamber of Commerce, and Sykes Enterprises.

The day was a huge success thanks to the generous of help from the community– Arvest Bank cooked hamburgers and also helped serve lunch to everyone in attendance. There were several donations that made the event possible and free to the community. Designer Barber and Stylist School even provided free haircuts all day to show off the talents of their staff and students.

SUCCESS STORIES

Terri White

Terri White was a Senior Customer Service Analyst IV for a company she had been employed with for 29 years and 11 months. On June 10, 2009, she received the devastating news that her position was being eliminated due to restructuring. Terri was unable to apply for other high paying positions within the company because she did not hold a degree. Her knowledge was a result of on the job training and years of experience. Other jobs available within the company were barely above entry level positions which she was overqualified for. After several months of active job search, Terri concluded that she would have to obtain a degree in order to secure gainful employment.

Since Terri's background was in a medical related field, she decided to pursue a degree in Health Information Technology. Due to her previous years' income, Terri was ineligible for Pell grant assistance. Terri came into the Workforce Center at Hot Springs with the hope of securing financial assistance to attend college. She applied for the Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker program and was enrolled into Occupational Skills Training for the Spring 2010 semester at the local community college. Terri's tuition, books and fees were paid for with an Individual Training Account issued by WIA. Also during this stressful time, Terri received supportive services in the form of transportation assistance and housing assistance through special grant funding.

Throughout her training, Terri maintained outstanding grades and was included on the President's List every semester. She graduated with an Associate of Applied Science in Health Information Technology on May 12, 2012 with an overall GPA of 3.93.

It was time once again to engage in intensive job search so she was enrolled in follow-up services. Terri scoured the want ads and applied for numerous positions through

internet job sites. The case manager regularly offered job leads that Terri followed up with and applied for. Terri's big break came in late February 2013. She had applied online for a job as a Medical Coder on Friday, was interviewed on Monday and was offered the job on Tuesday. Terri was ecstatic because the position was at the facility where she had most enjoyed completing clinicals while in the HIT program. The starting salary was also about 80% of her wages at layoff. The Workforce Investment Act, and Terri's determination, persistence and hard work, prove that success is attainable!

Gabriel Rice

Gabriel Rice, from Little Rock, strived to succeed in the healthcare industry. She was accepted into Baptist Health Schools in Little Rock for the Practical Nursing (PN) Program in July of 2012. She received WIA funds to help her complete school. Through hard work and self motivation, Gabriel was able to accomplish her goal on December 14, 2012 when she completed the Practical Nursing program with honors from Baptist Health Schools in Little Rock. In addition, Ms. Rice successfully passed the NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) examination and is listed as an LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) with the Arkansas State Board of Nursing. Ms. Rice currently works as an LPN with Fox Bridge Assisted Living.

Ashley Green

Ashley Green is a student at Sheridan High School and enrolled in the youth program in January 2012. During her time in the program, she received extensive training in career planning, college preparation, career-readiness, and leadership development skills; Ashley also participated in the Paid Work Experience service offered through Career Connections, which allowed her an opportunity to earn income while doing on-the-job training at a local employer. As a junior in high school, Ashley currently maintains a 4.2 Grade Point Average, and has already taken the ACT to begin to prepare for college and has scored a 31 overall composite score. In addition, she is active in several organizations within her school and volunteers her time

in the community. Recently Ashley was contacted by the Quest Bridge Scholarship organization, and selected as a college prep scholar amongst thousands of students in the nation. QuestBridge's College Prep Scholarship provides opportunities designed to help outstanding low-income high school juniors prepare to apply to top colleges. Students who are selected as College Prep Scholars will receive one or more awards that will make them stronger applicants to selective colleges. Students from low-income backgrounds with strong academic records actually have significant advantages over other students in the college admissions process. Leading colleges are seeking to increase socio-economic diversity on their campuses, which means they are looking for students who have achieved academic excellence despite financial challenges. Ashley's academic performance and perseverance is a perfect example of what this program is designed to do. Ashley's long term career goal is to be an Engineer. The staff of Arkansas Workforce Center salutes Ashley and supports her in her dream and journey to the top. Ashley is just one example of how the WIA program is proving to be effective in the lives of youth throughout SE Arkansas.

Jamie Caudell

Jamie Caudell came into the office in November 2011 seeking assistance from WIA with training expenses. She was 25 years old and married with two young children. Jamie's only employment had been three years prior when she worked for minimum wage as a child care provider. She did not have the skills, education or training for meaningful employment.

Jamie was attending Arkansas Tech University in the Health Information Management Program. She needed one year to complete her training. Jamie was receiving a Pell Grant but the amount was not sufficient to pay all of her education related expenses. Jamie was enrolled in the WIA program. She maintained excellent grades and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Information Management on December 15, 2012. Jamie accepted a position as HIM Director at Eureka Springs

Hospital on January 14, 2013, earning \$19.50 per hour. During follow up, Jamie advised she passed her RHIA exam and received an increase in salary to \$23 per hour.

Charles Lawson

Charles Lawson is one of the many intelligent students who fail to graduate from high school. The reasons for this happening can be too many absences from school, lack of support from family, failure to maintain a passing grade, lack of interest or a multitude of other reasons. Seventeen and eighteen-year-old students are not mature and often make the wrong decisions.

Charles has lived in various places throughout his life. When he first came to YouthBuild, he lived with a family of nonrelatives. Later on, he moved into an apartment with another YouthBuild member. There seemed to be a lack of closeness with his family members. When he left for National Guard training, he said, "I don't have any family to say goodbye to."

Charles wanted to receive his diploma, and he had to have it to stay in the Arkansas National Guard. He loves the military and wants a career in it. Through YouthBuild, he received his high school diploma and attended National Guard training this summer in Georgia. Charles has returned to Batesville and will continue his education and construction training with YouthBuild. Charles Lawson's future is bright, and his continued success is much more accessible.

Brittany Holleman

Brittany Holleman was placed at the Hope Water and Light Department in work experience while completing her degree at Southern Arkansas University. She did not know much about the WIA program but believed the program could help her get the skills she needed for a bright



future. While working at the Water and Light Department, she gained customer service skills and learned how to deal with difficult customers. Brittany believes this particular job helped mold and prepared her for the workforce and how to handle difficult and adverse situations.

Brittany graduated from Southern Arkansas University in the Fall of 2011 and shortly after, began a permanent position with the University of Arkansas Community College at Hope as a Career Coach/Career Development Facilitator. She credits the WIA program with helping her get the training she needed to start her career. Brittany believes that without the program she wouldn't have the necessary training to earn her job with the University of Arkansas at Hope. "It definitely made me the career woman I am today," she states.

Markita Green

Markita Green, of Forrest City, visited the Arkansas Workforce Center at Forrest City during the summer of 2012 to file for unemployment benefits and to register in the state's operating system, Arkansas JobLink (AJL), for job search. Markita was a substitute teacher for the Forrest City School District.

After several visits to the center and no luck finding a job, Markita met with a WIA career advisor to discuss the possibility of returning to school and to find out more about the labor market in Eastern Arkansas. Through assessments and further conversation, Markita showed interest in the truck driving industry and decided she wanted to go to truck driving school, even though this was traditionally a male dominated field. Much to her surprise, WIA assisted her with occupational skills training at Pine Bluff Truck Driving School. Since the summer of 2012, Markita has now obtained a Silver Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) through the Arkansas Workforce Center, a Certificate of Proficiency in Diesel Technology from East Arkansas Community College, and a commercial driver's license (CDL) from Pine Bluff Truck Driving School.

Markita is currently a full time truck driver with the

Arkansas State and Highway Transportation Department in Crittenden County and is grateful for all of the services she has received through the Arkansas Workforce Center in Forrest City.

Courtney Bruce

Courtney Bruce, of Cherry Valley, worked as a shop hand at Kenny Adam's Trucking, in Wynne, until he was laid off on April 12, 2012, due to lack of work in the shop. After receiving the news, Courtney visited the



Arkansas Workforce Center in Forrest City and applied for his unemployment insurance. Also, while at the Arkansas Workforce Center he spoke with a WIA career advisor about returning to school and obtaining his commercial driver's license (CDL) so he could return to the trucking company as a truck driver.

Courtney was approved for WIA assistance as a dislocated worker and began school on August 8, 2012, at Crowley's Ridge Technical Institute in Forrest City. He graduated on October 15, 2012, and began driving for Kenny Adams Trucking on October 29, 2012.

"I was raised around the trucking industry and have always enjoyed that environment," Courtney said. "Being laid off gave me the opportunity I needed to obtain my CDL and now I'm able to hit the open road."

Courtney said he thanks WIA for the assistance he received so that he could become employed in the career he always wanted and not just in a job that he had to accept to be employed in the trucking industry.

Destiny Green

Destiny Green, 18, of Forrest City, is a 2013 Forrest City High School graduate and has joined the Air Force. She

leaves for training in November 2013.

While in the WIA Youth Program, Destiny attended the 2010 Leadership Enhancement and Career Exploration Program at Arkansas State University. She also actively participated in leadership development opportunity events and paid summer work experience for the past four years.

During this year's summer experience Destiny worked at the Arkansas Workforce Center in Forrest City as a clerk. She assisted customers with unemployment insurance, job search, resume writing, job applications, answered multi-telephone lines and responded to various customer service needs.

"Destiny was very patient and understanding with the center customers," said Eduardo Lemm, WIA Career Advisor. "Destiny has been an asset to the WIA Youth Program and is a leader to her peers."

Christopher Manning

Christopher Manning began the WIA summer youth program in 2009. When he began the program, he was ready for any kind of work that was available and enjoyed learning new things. He interviewed



with the Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District (SWAPDD) and was hired after the interview as a runner/junior messenger with SWAPDD. This position gave him the opportunity to dress and work in a professional environment while learning valuable work skills and responsibilities. Christopher set a goal to save some of his summer work money to help buy clothes for school. After being part of the WIA youth program for a couple of years, Christopher's grade point average fell below 2.0 and subsequently he was no longer eligible to participate in

work experience activities. During this time, he continued to attend year round youth events; however was unable to find employment. After several months, he decided to visit with the youth coordinator and develop a plan of action by participating in a drop out prevention program. The youth coordinator asked Christopher, to write down his goals and his plans to achieve them and encouraged him to follow through until he received the desired results.

After two semesters, Christopher brought his report card in to the workforce center and his GPA was now up to the required 2.0. Christopher was proud of his accomplishment and the hard work that he had done to reach his goal. He immediately began the work readiness and employability training so that when a new training site was found, he could get back to work. After several weeks of searching, a new training site was found where he was able to work 20 hours per week.

Christopher continued to follow the dropout prevention plan he created as well as following up with his high school counselor and teachers. Christopher now has more confidence and believes that he can achieve the goals that he set for himself and realizes that he did this through hard work and dedication. In May 2012, Christopher completed his dropout prevention plan when he accomplished his ultimate goal of receiving his high school diploma from Magnolia High School. Since that time, Christopher has enrolled in classes at Southern Arkansas Community College seeking a technical certificate degree in welding. Christopher decided to pursue a career in welding because he believes that he will have numerous employment opportunities. Christopher is a WIA success story because he had almost given up but learned that if he worked hard and believed he could overcome any obstacle or barrier.

Shawana Washington

Shawana Washington, from Little Rock, earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 2005. Even though her college academics prepared her in the field of Biology, she was unable to obtain employment in her chosen career field. She eventually

settled on a job with Custom Direct as a Customer Service Representative. She was laid off in July of 2012 after one year of service. Shawana found herself having to rely on public assistance to make ends meet. She was still determined to succeed in the Science field. Shawana applied for and was accepted into the Cytotechnology program in the College of Health Related Professions at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) in the fall of 2012. She received WIA funds to help her complete school. In May of 2013, Shawana was awarded a second Bachelors of Science Degree in Cytotechnology. Shawana is successfully employed with UAMS as a Research Technician.

Nadja Smith

After enrollment into the Workforce Investment Act program at the Jonesboro center and participation in the work experience program Nadja was able to realize her desire for personal growth and her dream of being successful.



She was hired at the Workforce Center, where she received valuable training in the areas of telephone etiquette, receptionist skills, and how to assist customers who were using the resource room computers. Through her employment she was able to learn of job openings available in the community for which she was qualified. A local hospital accepted her application and hired her as a nutritional services assistant earning \$9.18 per hour. The position within the hospital allowed her to be informed of openings and is being considered for a position as a pharmacy technician at a starting wage of \$12.00 per hour.

Nadja is very thankful that the doors have been opened through her association with the Workforce Investment Act program which was available for her at a time when

she needed help to pursue her employment dreams.

Deshaun Green

Deshaun was enrolled in the WIA Youth Program when he was 14 years old and was attending Horace Mann Magnet School in Little Rock. He resided in a single parent household. At age 15, he started attending Central High School where he played on the rugby team and tried out for the football team. He did not remain on his football team because after each practice he was getting sick and too hot. His mother took him to a physician, and his mother decided that for health reasons he would not be able to play football. Since he could not play football anymore, he decided to join the ROTC program at school. He participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program while enrolled in the WIA Youth Program. He also did well in school despite not having a father figure in his life. He joined the National Guard, and attended basic training under the Split Option Program after his junior year. He returned for his senior year of high school and graduated from Central High School in May 2013. He was sent to job-specific training by the National Guard shortly after his high school graduation. He recently graduated from his training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, which is a United States Army installation located in the Missouri Ozarks. The WIA Youth Program helped this young man set out, conquer and achieve his goals.

Nadia McIntosh

Nadia McIntosh has been enrolled in the WIA Youth Program since she was a 15 year old 10th grader at McClellan High School. Due to her father's death and her mother's unknown whereabouts, she was raised by a legal guardian. Despite her circumstances, Nadia came to the youth meetings with a good attitude and focused on trying to do well in school. In May 2013, at age 17, Nadia graduated from McClellan High School. She is now attending Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock and works full-time at KidSmart Educational Services where she was hired after the Summer Youth Employment Program

ended. She is hoping to move into her own apartment in February. She is a very responsible, positive, mature, and outgoing young lady despite her past circumstances. The WIA Youth Program helped Nadia overcome huge obstacles in her life, to succeed, and beat the odds.

Shakala Perry

Shakala Perry's background can be described as harsh, to say the least for a teen. She was placed in foster care for a short time in her life due to her parents being involved with substance and physical abuse. Thankfully, her maternal grandmother took her in and she was removed from foster care. Still longing for a relationship with her mother, she was subjected to physical and mental abuse. Yearning to please her mother, she was willing to do anything for her; even breaking the law. When she was 17, she was arrested for shoplifting. She pled guilty so that her mother would not be charged. During this time, Shakala fell behind in school, which jeopardized her graduating on time. At the age of 18, she found herself pregnant, involved in an abusive relationship, carrying a criminal background, failing high school and had very limited family support. Determined to obtain her high school diploma and to complete four credits, she was accepted at ACCelerated Learning Academy at Metropolitan Career of Technology, through the Little Rock School District. Ms. Parker at ACC noticed that she was having difficulties getting back and forth to school and referred her to the WIA Program for transportation assistance, work experience, and mentoring. When the case manager first met Shakala, she had a tough exterior, but once she began to feel more confident that the WIA Program could actually help her, she opened up and discussed her goals with the case manager. This allowed the case manager to create a plan of action for her. Shakala attended monthly program meetings that provided her with information on wellness, decision making, career choices, work readiness and work experience at UAMS in Housekeeping. She went on to work at Wal-Mart full time. During Shakala's participation in the WIA Program, she completed high

school, strengthened her work experience and work ethics, removed her child and herself from an abusive relationship, and is in her 2nd year at Pulaski Technical College in pursuit of a nursing degree. She has gained permanent employment and was recently interviewed by St. Vincent's Hospital for a potential position. Shakala's drive and determination to provide a better life for her son is what has led her to success! The WIA program is thrilled to have been a part of her journey to success.

Tyson Oliver, Jr.

During the summer of 2012, Tyson Oliver, Jr. began his enrollment in the Workforce Investment Act summer youth program. He graduated from high school in May 2013 where he helped lead the Bay Yellow Jacket basketball team to two state championships in three years. Tyson's basketball coach regards him as a leader both on and off the court. His outstanding basketball skills paved the way for him to be offered a full scholarship to Philander Smith College in Little Rock where he will become a member of the Panther basketball team. Tyson returned to work during the 2013 summer youth program. He says the money that he earned will help buy clothes and supplies for college. It is the next step to a bright and prosperous future.



Curtis Harden

Curtis Harden, a Little Rock native, served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1975 to 1981. After faithfully serving his country, Curtis returned to Little Rock and went to work for Target Distribution Center in production for 19 years. When the Target Distribution Center closed permanently, Curtis desired to obtain a new occupational skill. In the fall of 2011, Curtis began the Radiology Program at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. He received WIA funds to help him complete school. With hard work, motivation, and determination he was awarded

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an Associates of Science in Medical Radiography from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) on May 18, 2013. Curtis is currently employed with UAMS as a Radiology Technician.

Thomas Watkins

Thomas was enrolled in the YES Program in February of 2012. He was 21 years of age and had graduated from Morrilton



High School in May of 2009. Thomas was enrolled in the YES Program to gain work experience. In addition to attending monthly workshops, Thomas was enrolled in work experience through the YES Program as a tutor for Conway County Literacy Council with Angela Hammond. In this position he worked on their website and other social medias. He also worked as a tutor, and organized library and inventory books. In addition to this Thomas answered the phones, assisted clients and kept office and testing areas clean and organized. This work experience went so well that a request for an extension through the end of April was approved so he could continue gaining the experience and self-confidence that this position gave him. When the summer program started in June of 2012, Thomas was placed in Summer Work Opportunities as an Office Clerk at the Arkansas Workforce Center for WCACDCS. Some of his job duties included greeting the public, answering phones and directing calls to partners. He was also responsible for organizing packets, making copies, and making sure the mail goes out and is picked up. He assisted customers in job searching and keeping the resource room organized and job order books up to date with current information.

Thomas was always so friendly and worked so well with the public, in fact, when an employer for Jackson Hewitt

Tax Service came in to place a job order, the supervisor was so impressed with Thomas that she offered him a position as a Tax Preparer for the 2012-2013 tax season. This position required that he take a training course. Once the training was complete, Thomas held the Supervisor position for the Jackson Hewitt Office in Morrilton. The YES Program has been a stepping stone helping Thomas to gain valuable work experience that he will use for the rest of his life. Doors have been opened to Thomas from the knowledge and work experience he has obtained over the past year. He was described by his Jackson Hewitt Manager, Bridget Richard, as a bright and dependable young man.

At this time, Thomas is enrolled in Summer Work Opportunities through the YES Program as an Office Assistant at the Arkansas Workforce Center in Morrilton. He has flourished in this working environment and his personable skills match his intelligence. Thomas has a bright future ahead of him and we are proud to have been a small part of early work experience.

Lawana Stockstill

Lawana Stockstill sought job search assistance from the Little Rock Workforce Center after being unemployed for two years. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from University of Arkansas at Little Rock in May 2011. Although she had a degree, she lacked the experience needed to secure employment. With help from her WIA case manager, she received assistance with her résumé, interviewing techniques and job searches in Arkansas JobLink. Her WIA case manager also referred her to a TAA Specialist position with the Department of Workforce Services. This referral, along with the other help provided by her case manager, led to Lawana being offered that position. She is currently working for the Department of Workforce Services.

Rannika Girley

Rannika Girley worked with the Workforce Investment

Act (WIA) work experience program and was assigned to work as an office clerk at the Arkansas Workforce Center in North Little Rock. Rannika has had many obstacles to overcome to get where she is today and we are very proud of her. When Rannika sets her mind to do something, she does it very well. When Rannika was asked to provide her story to The Resource (newsletter), she was very eager to comply. The following is what she had to say about North Little Rock Workforce staff and some events that helped move her along to where she is today:

The Workforce staff has helped me out a lot. When I first started working there as an office clerk, I was the shyest person ever. I grew out of that after a while and I was able to hold conversations with everybody. I had a lot of job opportunities through the Workforce Center as well. For example, I have worked at Tyson's, Joann's Fabric and Crafts, and Ross Dress for Less. Now, I am a full-time student at Shorter College pursuing my Associates Degree in Teaching and working part-time at Carelink as a caregiver. I currently hold a 3.7 GPA and I also made the Dean's list. I am representing Shorter College as one of their Ambassadors. The main job as an Ambassador is to go out and represent the school. Just recently, I and two other ambassadors had the pleasure of taking a trip to Washington, D.C to attend the 2013 Presidential Inauguration. We rode the bus with the Martin Luther King Commission and we met a lot of amazing people along the way. We actually had tickets to go inside the inauguration. We got to see Beyonce, President Obama and Kelly Clarkson. I am so blessed and thankful to Shorter College and everyone else who donated money for us to experience this once in a lifetime event. I can actually say I was a part of history. We also got to go to Bishop Samuel L. Green's banquet and church service at the State House Convention Center to represent Shorter College. I appreciate everyone from the North Little Rock Workforce Center so much. I appreciate all the calls I receive and know I can call Workforce Case Managers for advice and information.

Terri Smith

As a single parent raising two children, Terri Smith understood that it was extremely important to find a career that would



offer stability for her family. After serving in the U. S. Navy during Operation Desert Storm as a hospital corpsman, Terri re-entered the workforce only to find that her lack of education was inhibiting her ability to find a high wage job that would lead to self-sufficiency.

Choosing the right field of study was crucial to her success. For Terri, the medical field seemed to be the most logical choice since it was considered to be a high demand field and she had a strong background in the medical field from her active duty in the U. S. Navy. Terri enrolled at UAMS in Fayetteville and began a journey toward an associate degree in Radiologic Technology. Terri utilized support through a Pell Grant, student loans and a WIA scholarship to help cover the costs associated with her education.

On May 19, 2012, Terri was awarded her degree and soon realized that her hard work and perseverance would be rewarded. As a Radiology Technician, Terri has found a position with the Northwest Arkansas Medical Hospitals of Bentonville and Springdale. She now earns twice the hourly rate she was earning upon enrolling in the WIA program.

Britten Williams

Britten Williams worked in the manufacturing industry for 12 years before his job was outsourced to a foreign country. His skills in manufacturing were not going to help much with cut backs in the industrial field, especially in Northeast Arkansas where he lives. Mr. Williams has

always been interested in the healthcare field, so he came into the Workforce Center. Mrs. Faulkner, the case manager for Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, was able to help with his education and retraining fees. He was out of work from July of 2011 to June 2013 when he went to work as a Patient Care Technician (PCT). The training he received through the LPN curriculum also allowed him to begin working as a PCT. Soon after beginning work as a PCT Mr. Williams passed the state board exam and begin working as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) in August of 2013. Britten is currently enrolled at Arkansas State University and will graduate in May with his Bachelor of Science in Nursing and will begin working as a Registered Nurse. The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program was very essential in regards to his gaining the skills needed to re-enter the workforce in a high demand field.

James Waggoner

James Waggoner is a young parent who had a plan. His work experience was leading him to become an Apprentice Electrician. Unfortunately after two years of steady work the economy took a sharp downturn and James was laid off. At this point, James came into the Fayetteville Workforce Center to file for unemployment and look

for work. While in our office, James utilized the Resource Room by researching careers, completing interest/skills assessments and found that a non-traditional career in healthcare was



possibility for him. James contacted the Northwest Arkansas Technical Institute and was accepted into the Surgical Technology program. His next step was to secure his funding to help with the tuition and fees. James applied for the Pell Grant and also contacted the WIA Youth coordinator, Loree Alrawhani, for a scholarship to help with the his training expenses. James worked hard hours as a student, father and husband while continuing to maintain a positive attitude and dedication to completing his education. James' commitment to his career goal did indeed payoff because he is now working at the Northwest Arkansas Medical Center in Springdale. James works in the Operating Room Department making \$16.20 per hour as a Surgical Technologist.

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