

heldrich

Solutions at Work

John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Progress Report

2002–2003

"The Heldrich Center has been a key collaborator in the design, implementation and oversight of the September 11th Fund's effort to assist workers displaced by the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001. From day one, the staff of the Center have been responsive, knowledgeable, insightful, flexible, and extremely hard-working. I don't think the Fund or the Center recognized the magnitude of the undertaking when the partnership began and it has been quite a complicated project. ***There is no question that thousands of people in the metropolitan area are getting the help they need thanks in large part to the Center's involvement.***"

— Carol Kellermann
President
September 11th Fund

"During my service to the U.S. Department of Labor, the Heldrich Center provided impeccable research on a range of topics, and solved one tough problem after another facing the nation's workforce development system. ***The Center is an invaluable asset to those who make and regulate the laws that help people get training and go to work in this country.*** These are smart people who get things done."

— Ray Bramucci, President, Instructional Systems, Inc.
Assistant Secretary of Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, 1998-2001
New Jersey Commissioner of Labor, 1989-1993

"The Heldrich Center is an indispensable resource for the state of New Jersey. Public and private sector leaders working to improve performance from our workforce and from educational and governmental institutions depend upon the Heldrich Center for direction and best practices. ***New Jersey is blessed that this national asset is located within our state.***"

— James E. McGreevey, Governor, State of New Jersey

"I wanted to write to thank you and your colleagues from the Heldrich Center for all you have done to help Lucent learn from our charitable 'investments' in programs that support the work of nonprofit organizations. You have provided valuable insights into the impact of the Foundation's support for the four programs we have funded specifically focused on youth development. ...Your evaluations helped us, and our nonprofit partners, enhance the programs as they progressed and helped Foundation staff to identify best practises among the programs. This enabled us to make decisions about which programs to continue, which to cease supporting when funding became tight and which we might want to replicate at some point in the future. ***We found your services to be first rate and we thank you for the good work you did for us.***"

— Chris Park
President
Lucent Technologies Foundation

The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development is a research and policy organization dedicated to applying the best research to address the core challenges of New Jersey's and the nation's workforce. We share this report to provide an update on our progress and plans for the Center in the years ahead.

“So let me say it directly: At Rutgers we create knowledge for its own sake. ...But our university also creates knowledge that is useful, especially to the people of New Jersey. Examples abound. The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development does research to improve job training practices and public policies so that Americans will be more productive and prosperous. The Heldrich Center has projects and partners across the country, but through its work with the pharmaceutical and medical technology industries of our state and through its special relationship with the New Jersey Department of Labor, it benefits New Jersey first.

...These endeavors, selected from among dozens I could have named, show that Rutgers is part of the fabric of New Jersey and contributes deeply to the betterment of our state.”

— *Inaugural Address, April 13, 2003*
Richard L. McCormick, President
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey



Richard L. McCormick, President
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

PHOTO BY NICK ROMANENKO

Finding the Right Solutions

The Heldrich Center has raised over \$14 million in grants and contracts since 1998, and more than \$20 million for the development of Heldrich Plaza in New Brunswick, a statewide resource for improving New Jersey's education and training system.

The Heldrich Center's priorities are clear:

- *closing the skills and education gap,*
- *re-employing laid-off workers,*
- *creating economic opportunity for all,*
- *ensuring high quality education and training for all students and jobseekers, and*
- *strengthening the management and effectiveness of workforce programs.*

This report marks the five-year anniversary of the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. It marks our progress and maps our emerging vision for our state and nation's workforce. It will demonstrate the successes made possible by the Center's commitment to delivering impeccably researched and effective solutions—even for the most intractable problems.

Since 1998, the John J. Heldrich Center has grown rapidly, working with federal and state government partners, Fortune 100 companies, and major foundations. The Center has completed more than 90 projects and 70 major reports, staged over 20 statewide public events, designed five online information systems, and won more than 50 grants of over \$100,000. Building a team of approximately 25 full-time faculty, staff and practitioners, the Center has become one of the nation's leading academically centered applied research institutes. The support and guidance of founder and National Advisory Board chair John Heldrich keeps the Center focused squarely on its mission.

The Heldrich Center was founded at the peak of the new economy boom. Unemployment was at post-World War II lows, and employers were eager to recruit workers at every skill level. Tight labor markets and soaring information age job growth generated widespread private sector interest in workforce development.

During this period, the Center embodied its slogan 'solutions at work' by teaming with partners and clients to translate cutting-edge research and analysis into practices and programs that companies, unions, schools, CBOs, and government officials used to strengthen their workforces, create jobs, and remain competitive. While the Heldrich Center addressed the tight labor market concerns of many business leaders and policymakers, it also began to take note and document the new realities driving the labor market.

As has been shown in many books and reports (including our own *A Nation at Work: The Heldrich Guide to the American Workforce*, published by Rutgers University Press in 2003), the future of American workers and employers is being shaped by a dizzying array of forces—communications technology, immigration, education reform, the roles and markets for lifelong learning, social diversity, and persistent gaps in technology skills and education among higher and lower-income workers, to name a few.

These trends will continue to reshape the choices facing employers, policymakers, and educators, no matter what terms we use to define the economy. In fact, the most successful firms and partnerships are finding that sustainable growth now requires a convergence of enduring 'old economy' values (service, trust, value), 'new economy' technologies (online transparency and access, transportation and communication efficiencies), and sensitivity to the roles of global economy markets for goods and labor (offshore software development and online travel services, for example). Some have called this convergence the 'real economy.' However we choose to describe these changing times, those who can harness the complex forces driving our economy will lead their industries and communities in the years ahead.

This is a useful metaphor for the evolution of the Heldrich Center's work. Our priorities remain the same: closing the gap between the skills workers have and the job skills employers require, re-employing laid-off workers, creating economic opportunity for all, ensuring high quality education and training for all students and jobseekers, and strengthening the management and effectiveness of workforce programs. We are merging the most effective and intuitive technologies and services with cutting-edge research, in order to achieve policy goals rooted in enduring American values of fairness, opportunity, and justice.

for Today's Economy

In this report we will illustrate how the Heldrich Center breaks down tough problems to find the solutions that work. We will demonstrate how the Heldrich Center's research and staff professionals listen and collaborate with strategic partners and communities to help organizations better understand and succeed in the world of work around them. We will show how the Heldrich Center is committed to meeting the core challenges of the workforce, from closing the education and skills gap to ensuring no worker is left behind. This approach mirrors the new wave of academic partnerships focused on problem-solving through collaboration, partnership, and market analysis.

Read on to find descriptions of Heldrich solutions that:

- Assisted laid-off workers after September 11, 2001;
- Developed online consumer guides to training for New Jersey and Los Angeles employers and jobseekers;
- Created guides to the emerging skill needs of employers and industries in New Jersey;
- Forged workforce development strategies for the next generation;
- Analyzed the career and life challenges facing students who graduate from high school but don't go directly to college;
- Charted the views of workers who lost jobs in the recent recession.

As this report goes to press, the Center is breaking ground for Heldrich Plaza, the site of our new offices. The new Heldrich Center facility will provide New Jersey with a first-of-its-kind university-based training and education facility for corporate executives, county and state officials, non-profit organizations and workers, unions, and all those involved in job training, retraining, education and worker retention and recruitment.

The \$100 million complex is a joint effort of the State of New Jersey, Rutgers University, the City of New Brunswick, and several private-sector partners. The New Brunswick Development Corporation is the developer of the project. The new development and the Center reflect and honor the lifelong accomplishments and civic vision of John J. Heldrich, the Center's founder and national advisory board chair.

Changes of Note at the Heldrich Center

- William Palatucci; John Lynch join Heldrich Center board
- Kathy Krepcio named as executive director; Bill Tracy retires
- Governor McGreevey, Rutgers President McCormick featured at statewide Heldrich workforce summit
- New projects launched with AT&T Foundation, NGA, SETC
- Schaffner, Van Horn, Heldrich Center publish major new book with Rutgers University Press
- Web site redesigned
- \$3.4 million in grants and contracts 2002-2003



Kathy Krepcio was named the Heldrich Center's new executive director in April 2003.

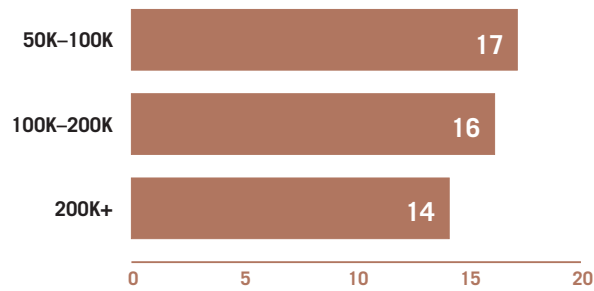
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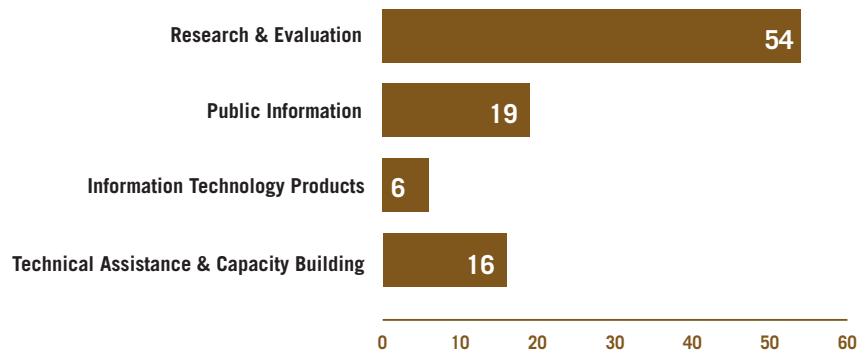
PHOTO BY NICK ROMANENKO

1998-2003 Snapshots of Progress

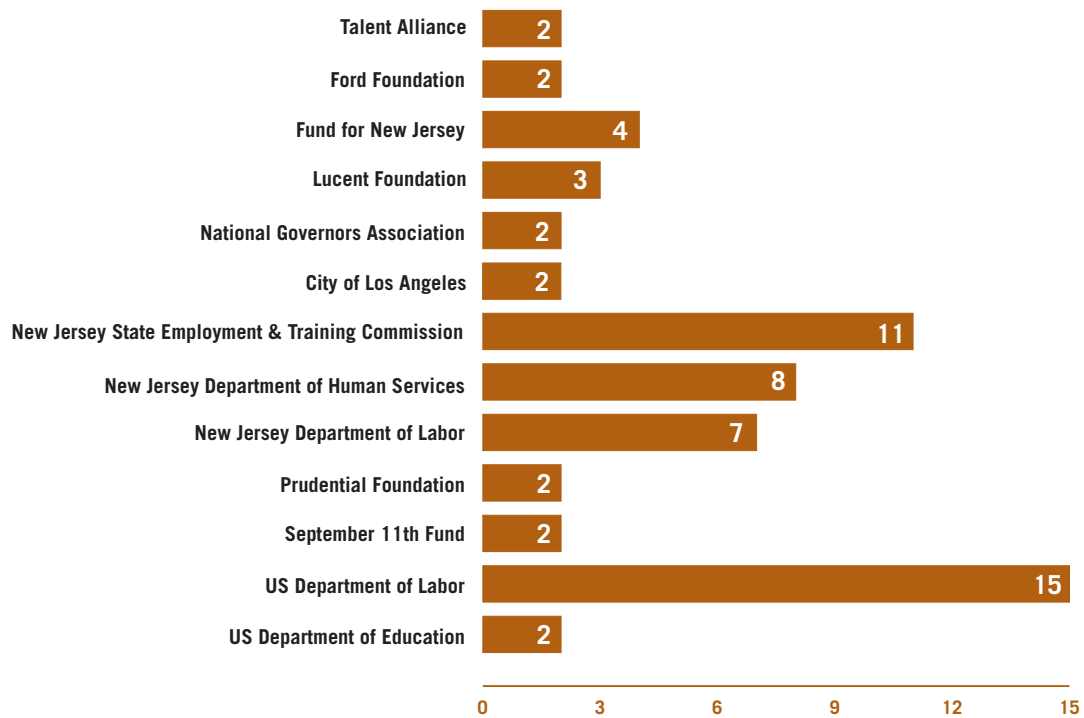
Large Projects by Funding Amount (#)



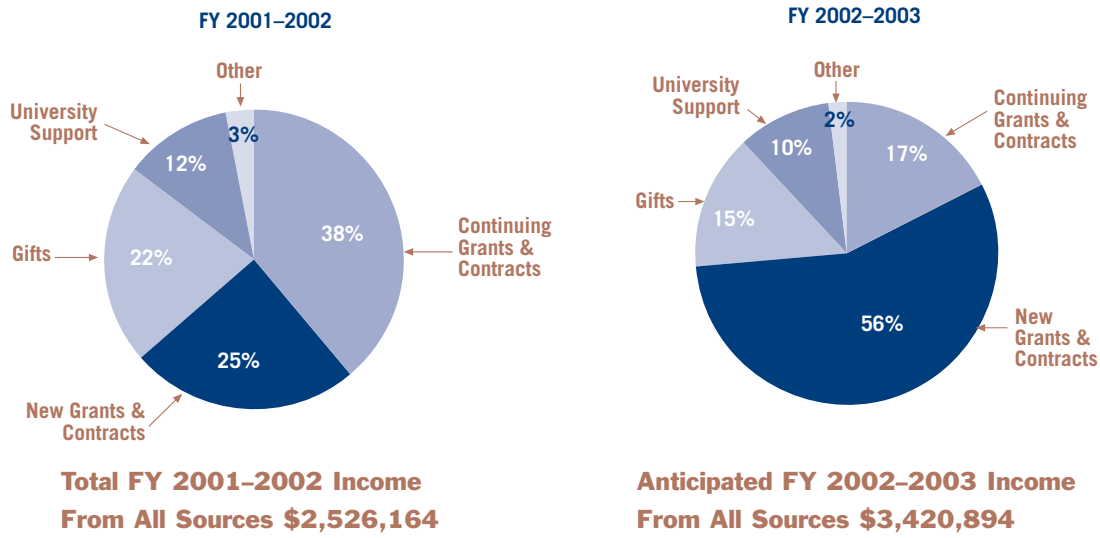
Projects by Type (#)



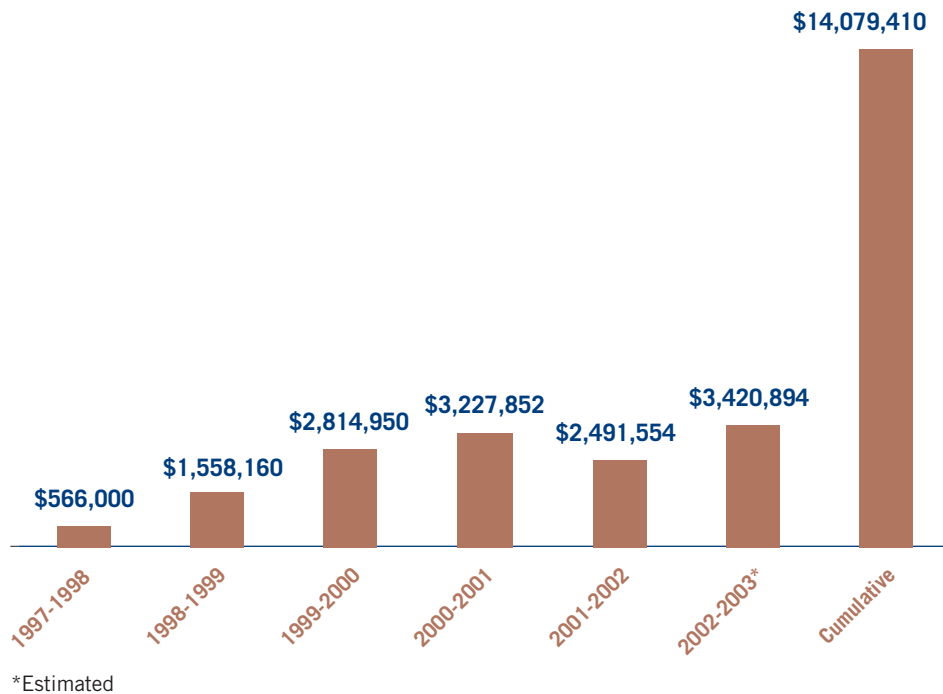
Selected Projects by Funding Source (#)



\$3.4 Million in Grants and Contracts Raised for 2002–2003



Current Funding Doubles Since 1998–1999



HELDRICH CHALLENGE ONE:

Closing the Skills and

Accomplishments

- Held two major industry/higher education symposia
- Created new degree and certificate programs
- Workforce report received widespread media coverage and employer attention
- New web site and information service being developed based on the skills particular industries need
- Formed knowledge networks connecting higher education and various industry human resource leaders

PROJECT IN DEPTH:

Sectors in Demand: Fostering New Information Partnerships Among Industries, Educators, and Students 2001-2003

Partners

Health Care Institute of New Jersey
New Jersey Department of Labor
New Jersey State Employment and Training
Commission
New Jersey Commission on Higher Education

Overview

Employers want committed, highly trained workers. Educational institutions want to offer their students desirable, relevant degree and certificate programs. People seeking work want the tools to compete for the best jobs. There is substantial common ground among these groups. In New Jersey and other states, the Heldrich Center is implementing a unique sectoral strategy to discover, map, and show these groups exactly where that common ground is, and how to use it to everyone's advantage.

By researching where New Jersey's jobs are going to be, and developing reports and public meetings to widely share that public information, the Heldrich Center facilitates new business-education partnerships and knowledge networks. The Heldrich Center also helps educational institutions create curricula and degree offerings flowing from these partnerships. New Jersey's current efforts to restructure its higher education system to reflect long-term high-tech growth make such sectoral strategies all the more urgent.

"The process is key," notes Center director Carl Van Horn. "Employers discover they don't know as much as they need to know. Educators see the need for new partnerships. Jobseekers make better decisions."

The Center's sectoral initiatives over the past two years are reaping major benefits for the State's economy. The initiatives include a partnership with the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey and the state's pharmaceutical and medical technology industries, a comprehensive new guide to high demand industries and skills for New Jersey, and designing curricula that prepares high school and college students for positions in the utility industry.

Pharmaceutical and Medical Technology Sector

In their first two years of collaboration, the Heldrich Center and the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey have organized two statewide symposia on workforce issues, and contributed to an expanding series of new education programs sponsored by the industry and degree-granting institutions across the state. These include:



Information Gap

- A full-time MBA in pharmaceutical management at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey;
- A certificate program in clinical research and drug development at Mercer County Community College;
- An undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree program with an emphasis on pharmaceutical sales and marketing, developed for The College of New Jersey;
- A new comprehensive Schering-Plough internship program for undergraduates at Montclair State University.

In order to examine the broader questions of supply and demand, and to deliver concrete, practical recommendations to its industry partners, the Center performed a multi-year study of how New Jersey's labor market conditions affect the pharmaceutical industry. This report was published in fall 2002, *Looking Ahead: A Workforce Supply and Demand Analysis for New Jersey's Pharmaceutical and Medical Technology Industries*. In a press conference led by New Jersey Governor James E. McGreevey, the Heldrich Center and the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey released the report. The report showed that while New Jersey's pharmaceutical and medical technology companies are growing and expect to add nearly 15,000 jobs by the end of the decade, there won't be enough qualified workers in the state to fill those jobs. As a result, schools, universities, the state, and industry need to expand existing and create new partnerships focused on teacher training, externships, awareness, and curriculum and course development.

Emerging Demand in Key New Jersey Sectors

The New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission and the New Jersey Department of Labor asked the Heldrich Center to partner in a landmark initiative to conduct a demand-side skill assessment of New Jersey's labor market and to make the results of this assessment available to job seekers, employers, policy makers, and workforce system service providers. By working directly with employers from leading industries in the New Jersey economy, the State and the Center intend to identify and describe the current and future skill demands in the workplace, from entry-level positions to those that require highly skilled workers. By casting light on the dimensions of New Jersey's future workforce demand and tying that demand to the skill standards that have been defined at the national level, the project will help employers and agencies concerned with workforce and economic development issues. The Center will identify skill needs in New Jersey's eight major industry sectors, and organize and distribute findings through reports, brochures, and a state web site open to the public.

As part of the project, the Center has already identified growth areas in New Jersey's economy projected to require workers with new high-level skills. These emerging areas are biotechnology (including medical devices), security (both data and physical), e-learning, e-commerce, and food/agribusiness. The Center's team of economic forecasters and industry experts focused on several areas of emerging skills and training that will be in demand in the state, including strong math, science, and technology base skills, as well as specialized science skills; teamwork and communication skills; entrepreneurship/business skills; and interdisciplinary knowledge.

"The Heldrich Center is emerging as a key research center, which has the capability of conducting effective research and providing thoughtful analysis. Their FINDINGS report on the future workforce of the pharmaceutical and medical technology industry has enabled us to effectively advocate for the resources necessary to grow the state's premiere industry."

—Hon. Bob Franks
 President
 HealthCare Institute of
 New Jersey



“The state’s drug makers and medical-device companies are expected to ramp up hiring in New Jersey during the next few years—if they can find enough people qualified for the jobs.

“A study released yesterday was not optimistic. Nearly half of the jobs to be created by 2007 will be in research and development, which requires advanced science or math degrees, according to the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers, which conducted the study. But not enough students are graduating from the state’s colleges and universities with such degrees.

“We need to understand the importance of New Jersey becoming the innovation state,” Gov. James E. McGreevey said at a news conference at the Statehouse. “Critical to our success or failure will be our ability to provide excellence in higher education and a skilled workforce.”

—**Drug Makers Facing Critical Worker Shortage**, Ed Silverman
November 13, 2002, *Newark Star-Ledger*

These specialized skill clusters will be found in genomics, bioinformatics, and DNA chip technology jobs, as one example. Others will emerge in agribusiness jobs including molecular biology, applied chemistry, and the design of innovative packaging materials. Content developers, software developers, and marketers will be needed to work together to develop and deliver e-learning products to adults.

Entrepreneurship and business skills will be required in rapidly emerging homeland security jobs needing both technical experience and management/entrepreneurial skills to nurture start-up divisions and enterprises.

To ensure more workers are equipped to seize these opportunities, the Center identified several strategies to improve student and worker education and training in New Jersey and make it more responsive to the changing job market. The recommendations spanned secondary and post-secondary institutions, as well as the workforce development system. These strategies include:

- Accelerating and integrating math and science education;
- Expanding career awareness;
- Increasing cross-discipline training;
- Developing applied learning, field internships, and field projects;
- Initiating sectoral workforce approaches;
- Improving the quality and navigability of education and employment information.

These recommendations are already being examined in detail among policymakers in labor, education, the Legislature, and the private sector. The Center will release these findings in the full New Jersey report later in 2003.



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INSIDE THE HELDRICH APPROACH

Improving the 'Customer-Supplier' Relationship

The Heldrich Center uses smart planning and state-of-the-art labor market research to lead employers and educators to mutually beneficial strategies in a rapidly changing information economy. Among the keys to fostering these partnerships:

- **Setting the agenda** — Sectoral economic and workforce development represent a best practice policy approach with demonstrated results endorsed by the National Governors Association.
- **Collecting and analyzing workforce data** — The Center has wide experience securing and analyzing workforce data including supply-demand analyses facilitated by a Web-based demand data collection tool. The center also possesses the ability to analyze graduation data from New Jersey and other state departments of higher education.
- **Creating knowledge networks** — The Center forges bonds between industry and education leaders in several ways — from newsletters and earned media outreach to symposia and smaller meetings of top people from key institutions.
- **Creating information technology solutions** — Online tools such as the consumer report card (see pp. 20) provide job seekers, educators, and employers with open access to information about training and education organizations; and will eventually integrate New Jersey sector job demand data.
- **Accelerating change** — The Heldrich Center worked with policymakers and government managers to build support for sectoral development efforts, thereby stimulating and shaping rapid investments by participants.
- **Educational expertise** — Its role as a graduate educational organization provides the Center with the expertise and networks to suggest and develop specific degree and certificate curricula.



K.A. Dixon (not pictured), Jennifer Cleary, Aaron Fichtner, Sarah Gyarfus and Leela Hebbar are among the Heldrich Center staff researching labor demand in New Jersey's leading industries. Photos by Nick Romanenko.

HELDRICH CHALLENGE TWO:

Improving Job Security:

Accomplishments

- Served over 4,500 jobless
- Designed state-of-the-art management information system
- Created model for job training and assistance in wake of localized economic disaster

"The Heldrich Center has been a key collaborator in the design, implementation and oversight of the September 11th Fund's effort to assist workers displaced by the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001. From day one, the staff of the Center have been responsive, knowledgeable, insightful, flexible, and extremely hard-working. I don't think the Fund or the Center recognized the magnitude of the under-taking when the partnership began and it has been quite a complicated project. There is no question that thousands of people in the metropolitan area are getting the help they need thanks in large part to the Center's involvement."

—Carol Kellermann
President
September 11th Fund

PROJECT IN DEPTH:

Assisting the September 11th Fund and Dislocated Workers 2001-2003

Partners

September 11th Fund

Overview

The September 11th attacks were devastating to New York City's economy. Thousands of businesses failed, others lost key workers, and as many as 100,000 people lost their jobs in downtown New York alone. The business failures and closures were concentrated in food service, small business, and light manufacturing—sectors that traditionally

employ low-income and Chinese-speaking workers. Existing government safety nets could not help all of these workers. The September 11th Fund, founded by the United Way and the New York Community Trust in the wake of the attacks, stepped forward as one of the few philanthropies dedicated to responding to this need, in addition to providing intensive assistance to families of those who were killed or injured. In 2002, the Fund asked the Heldrich Center to work closely with the charity's leadership to sort out the complex employment problems facing these groups, and design effective programs to help them find new work.

The 9-11 economic crisis created a number of unforeseen challenges. As many of the newly unemployed were low-income workers with limited language skills and resources, they required carefully targeted help in order to re-enter the workforce. In addition, coordinating philanthropic assistance with appropriate government program assistance was a key priority of the Fund. Finally, the partners needed to get their work done against extremely tight timelines, as the public, elected officials, and many media organizations expressed concern that donated money must be distributed as quickly as possible.

The Fund and the Heldrich Center consulted and coordinated with state, federal, and local officials, other charitable organizations, and victims and their families to create the September 11th Fund Employment Assistance Program, which provides customized services to a targeted group of dislocated workers. Effective September 16, 2002, eligible dislocated workers throughout New York City, Long Island, and New Jersey can call an "800" phone number that connects them with a range of employment services, job counselors, placement opportunities, and other resources. Today, the Center continues to work with the Fund to manage the Employment Assistance Program as well as provide them with research and technical assistance related to the program.



Connecting the Jobless to Work

INSIDE THE HELDRICH APPROACH

A trusted broker among government agencies, nonprofit groups, and individual workers

The September 11th Fund project called upon the Heldrich Center to apply in-depth knowledge of public job assistance programs and develop models for program financing where public and private monies must blend as economically as possible. The Fund and the Center needed to assess and evaluate dozens of community and private agencies and knit them into a service delivery network capable of providing counseling and training to large numbers of workers. The Fund also needed the Center to become a broker of the workforce development world, moving seamlessly between foundation, human service, workforce, and city arenas. The keys to the Heldrich approach included:

- **Setting agendas** — The challenges posed by the September 11th Fund intersected with several core elements of the Center’s mission, such as translating research into workforce program change; stimulating economic opportunity; fostering support and education about workforce and economic issues among business and opinion leaders; and building workforce system capacity. To meet this crisis, the Center quickly set about doing what it does best: research and evaluation, training and assistance, building capacity, and promoting public understanding and education.
- **Forging smart partnerships** — The Heldrich Center helped design, support, and facilitate partnerships among disparate and powerful New York City institutions and organizations, including the City University of New York, the Consortium for Worker Education, Chinese Manpower Project, FEGS, Wildcat, Seedco, and other training providers and community groups.
- **Creating custom IT approaches** — Because the September 11th Fund made program accountability and evaluation a leading priority, sophisticated tracking and data analysis was critical. With the help of IBM, the Center and CUNY made this database system a reality. “The development of the September 11th Fund database and financial system in such a short time was pretty extraordinary,” notes Kathy Krepcio, Heldrich Center executive director. “In a matter of months, the partners created a sophisticated online system that provided daily outcomes, performance, and financial data.”
- **Accelerating change** — In the wake of the city’s disaster and the economic aftershocks, speed was key. “They needed a program that would serve several thousand people in a short period of time,” notes Aaron Fichtner, director of research and evaluation at the Center. As programs were implemented, the Center provided rolling technical assistance and training to the agencies, ran constant quality checks, and counseled the Fund’s senior management on strategic policy issues.
- **Assembling learning networks** — The September 11th crisis inspired an extraordinary level of cooperation among community-based, government, and private organizations around the New York tri-state area. The Heldrich Center and the September 11th Fund capitalized on this spirit of cooperation to build knowledge and support for the workforce development system among groups and interest who had previously worked at cross-purposes.

The agencies providing employment assistance through the September 11th Fund initiative provided many personal success stories such as these, recounted by case managers:

Mrs. Chun Yin Cheung

“Mrs. Cheung used to work in downtown NYC as a seamstress. Her salary was around \$5.15 per hour. After September 11th, Mrs. Cheung’s factory closed down. Thanks to the September 11th Fund, Mrs. Cheung was able to turn this tragedy into an opportunity to change her career. Mrs. Cheung has always been interested in medicine, and decided to enroll in training to become a home health aide (after completing a four-week ESL course).

The September 11th Fund Employment Assistance Program helped Mrs. Cheung to improve her ability to speak, listen, and write in English. She also learned about preparing for and dressing appropriately for job interviews, along with learning the skills required for home health assistance. And now, she has created her first ever resume.

I remember when Mrs. Cheung first came to me to ask for my help. She was nervous and indecisive. She could barely make a complete sentence in English. But now her vocabulary has improved and she is able to listen to most of the conversation in English. Most important of all, she has her certificate as a home health aide and she will use what she has learned in the classroom to use in her new job at a home care agency. The EAP program provided the perfect training and head start for Mrs. Cheung. She is more confident, has gained some knowledge of medicine, and become a better English speaker.”

Sandy Ma

“As a case manager, I understand that developing service plans and that providing supportive counseling and referrals for my clients are significant missions. Thus, in addition to the counseling workshop I focus on seeking jobs for my clients. When I learned that Green Point Mortgage Bank in Flushing had an opening in the position of Sales Assistant, I informed my client, Sandy Ma (accounting class student). I helped Ms. Ma to prepare a resume as well as to practice interview skills. She went for the first interview and then the second interview. She was very excited and satisfied when she was notified that she had been hired. Eventually, she accepted the job offer and went to work on March 3, 2003. The position pays an annual salary of \$26,000, 240% of her previous job that paid \$6 per hour. Coincidentally, when I am writing this story she calls me. She sounds very happy and excited. As a case manager I share the happiness with my client, too.”

The *Work Trends* Series:
Download and read the surveys
and reports at
www.heldrich.rutgers.edu

- *Job Loss in the Current Recession*, June 2003
- *Restricted Access: Work Trends Survey of Employers About People with Disabilities*, March 2003
- *Taking Stock of Retirement: How Workers and Employers Assess Pensions, Trust, and the Economy*, May 2002
- *Standing on Shaky Ground: Employers Sharply Concerned About Terrorism*, February 2002
- *A Workplace Divided: How Americans View Discrimination and Race on the Job*, January 2002
- *Special post-September 11th Work Trends Release*, October 2001
- *Holding On: Americans Assess a Changing Economic Landscape*, May 2001
- *Second Wind: Workers, Retirement, and Social Security*, September 2000
- *Making the Grade: What American Workers Think Should Be Done to Improve Education*, June 2000

list continued on next page

PROJECT IN DEPTH:

Work Trends: What We Think About the Economy and Jobs

Partners

Center for Survey Research and Analysis, University of Connecticut

Overview

For five years, the John J. Heldrich Center and the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut have collaborated on a national public opinion series focusing on the views of American workers, called *Work Trends*. The partners shared a goal: to give American workers a voice in the national policy and economic debates of the era. The partners have succeeded. During this time, the series compiled over 14,000 worker interviews, released 14 surveys on trend and topical questions, garnered hundreds of feature articles and interviews in national media, and distributed more than 50,000 copies of the *Work Trends* surveys in print and downloadable formats.

In May 2005, the *Work Trends* researchers began speaking to working and out of work Americans about their views of the current economy, their experiences with unemployment, and the services and policies workers believe are effective in addressing job loss, unemployment, and reemployment. The results of this data will provide a detailed public opinion picture of how American workers themselves view the economy, joblessness, and unemployment. The Center will release the report in June 2005.



INSIDE THE HELDRICH APPROACH

Accurate Information That Builds Consensus

Since its inception, the Heldrich Center has sought to inform employers, union leaders, policymakers, community members, as well as media and the academic communities, on critical workforce and education issues that relate to the emerging global, knowledge-driven economy. The *Work Trends* series provides the Center with a storehouse of survey data of use to researchers, clients, partners, and the public, regarding the beliefs, habits, preferences, and affiliations of American workers. The Center also uses its *Work Trends* findings to illuminate how policymakers and executives can make more effective policy choices. During the course of the project, the Center's surveys have spurred numerous opportunities for education, advocacy, and policy change. Among the impacts of the *Work Trends* series:

- Survey findings earned feature national media coverage in hundreds of articles and broadcast interviews, from *The New York Times* to *The Washington Post* to *The Wall Street Journal* to National Public Radio and Fox News.
- *Work Trends* data and director Carl Van Horn are cited in content features on www.monster.com.
- Each survey is downloaded from our web site by the thousands. The survey on discrimination and race in the workforce, *A Workplace Divided*, was downloaded more than 15,000 times, and *Restricted Access*, a 2003 survey on people with disabilities and access to work, was downloaded more than 4,000 times.
- A number of leading advocacy organizations representing people with disabilities featured the recent *Work Trends* survey on disabilities and work on their web sites.
- *Work Trends* findings led to an appearance by Center director Carl Van Horn to testify about labor standards before the U.S. House Education and Labor Committee, and to numerous speeches and appearances nationwide by Center researchers.
- The President's National Economic Council used *Work Trends* economic and job data in developing key reports during the late 1990s.
- Telecommuting analysts and national advocacy groups featured *Work Trends* data in their own analyses of the benefits and concerns surrounding telecommuting and balancing work and family.
- *Work Trends* findings are featured on a number of web sites serving human resources executives and management scholars.

- *Nothing But Net: American Workers and the Information Economy*, February 1999
- *Who Will Let the Good Times Roll? A National Survey on Jobs, the Economy, and the Race for President*, September 1999
- *Working Hard But Staying Poor: A National Survey of the Working Poor and Unemployed*, July 1999
- *Work & Family*, March 1999
- *Americans' Attitudes About Work, Employers, and the Government*, September 1998

HELDRICH CHALLENGE THREE:

Ensuring Economic

Accomplishments

- Wrote and distributed white papers to New Jersey leaders in business, government, policy, labor and education, and national groups;
- Forging working groups with policy makers to explore workforce and welfare service reforms;
- Building national dialogue to address education and workforce choices for 70% of young people moving into the workforce without a four-year degree;
- Quoted frequently in national and regional media coverage of workforce development/welfare to work issues.

PROJECTS IN DEPTH:

Improving Workforce and Welfare Programs

Designing the “70% Solution” for Young People Entering the Workforce Without College Degrees

Partners

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, Fund for New Jersey, AT&T Foundation

Overview

It is more than five years since Congress enacted major reforms in welfare and workforce programs. Yet our nation’s current strategy for helping low-income workers transition to full-time work and self-sufficiency continues to fall short. Despite the sweeping reform of state and federal guidelines, and despite the fact that there are dozens of federal and state workforce and “welfare to work” programs, policy makers have yet to find the right strategy for serving the needs of these most vulnerable workers.

The Heldrich Center is committed to answering the question at the heart of this issue: How should New Jersey and the nation connect low-income, low-skilled workers with the skills and learning opportunities that will prepare them for and help them retain living wage jobs with benefits?

To thrive in today’s economy—in New Jersey and the rest of the nation—workers must be increasingly literate, skilled, mobile, and able to manage work and family. Analysts have noted that at least two years of post-secondary education or its equivalent in vocational training is becoming the minimum qualification for jobs that pay a living wage, provide basic benefits, and offer a chance for advancement (John Comings, Stephen Reeder, Andrew Sum, *Building a Level Playing Field*). These trends are bad news for poor and working poor families struggling to achieve self-sufficiency.

It is true that fewer people are enrolled in welfare since welfare reform legislation was enacted. Yet, it is also true that there is a growing gulf between those with adequate education and training, and those without. Low-skilled, low-income workers are joined on the wrong side of this divide by the millions of young people who go to work after high school or brief stints in college without a bachelor’s degree.

The Heldrich Center is dedicated to improving the prospects of these individuals. Workforce-bound young people need stronger education and training options to bridge the gap between traditional K-12 education and the skills needed to thrive in the workforce of the future. Achieving a college degree is a gateway to the American dream, and one that should remain open for all with the drive and talent to reach it. But the nation must also offer more assistance, credentials, and guidance to young people and workers who seek alternate pathways to satisfying jobs and careers.

Opportunity for All

Why?

A staggering body of evidence shows that the U.S. is at risk of dividing into two distinct workforces—one comprised of people with college degrees and access to certificate and lifelong learning programs, who enjoy health benefits and diverse and changing job opportunities; and one comprised of people whose poor language, reading, skill and experience levels relegate them to minimum or near minimum-wage jobs in retail, back office operations, food service, small-scale construction, and landscaping. There is a significant social and economic cost to pay for this disparity—family and community violence, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, poor productivity, and psychological isolation. Among the troubling indicators:



- Over a fifth of New Jersey's adults read at the lowest literacy level, and nearly 40% function at a level of literacy beneath that required by the labor market.
 - Nearly eight in ten who receive food stamps or TANF are at the lowest levels of literacy, and about half of our high school dropouts have reading levels well below the ninth grade.
 - One out of eight 17-year-olds in the U.S. cannot read, write, or do basic math. One million high school students drop out of school every year. Progress in reading, math, and science scores among high school graduates has been painfully slow.
 - From 1979 to 1999, U.S. workers whose educational attainment was high school or less experienced a 27 percent drop in income.
- While access to computers and the Internet has increased across all demographic groups, enormous disparities remain. U.S. households with incomes over \$75,000 are twenty times more likely to have Internet access than people in lower income groups.
 - Full-time child care easily costs \$4,000 to \$10,000 per year—at least as much as college tuition at a public university. Yet, one out of four U.S. families with young children earns less than \$25,000 a year, and a family with both parents working full-time at the minimum wage earns only \$21,400 a year.

[References: Van Horn, Schaffner. 2003. *Winning the Workforce Challenge*; Jenkins, Kirsch. 1994. *Adult Literacy in New Jersey*. Educational Testing Service; New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission. 2001. *New Jersey in Transition: Crisis of the Workforce*; U.S. Census Bureau, 2002. *Current Population Survey: March 1996-2002*. New Jersey Department of Labor, Labor Market and Demographic Research; Childrens' Defense Fund, www.childrensdefense.org, Child Care Basics.]



The Heldrich Center is dedicated to providing the analysis and building the tools that will help make work pay, for everyone. The Center has undertaken a number of projects combining public information and process and policy design. These include:

- New Jersey and national studies of workforce-bound students and young workers and the options they face in the education and labor market;
- A major report on work and New Jersey's knowledge economy (*Winning the Workforce Challenge*);
- A statewide conference on the working poor, co-sponsored by the Heldrich Center and Center for Women and Work at Rutgers University, that led to a widely-read report, *Moving Up the Ladder*;
- And a broad-scale initiative designed to stimulate change in New Jersey's welfare and workforce programs.



Denise Balik and Laurie Santos are key Heldrich staff leading an AT&T Foundation project to explore the “70% solution.”



Designing the 70% Solution

To understand and evaluate approaches that would improve career preparation and education for young people, the potential of other reforms, the Heldrich Center was awarded a grant by the Fund for New Jersey to explore the views and perspectives of New Jersey’s students about college, skills, and careers. This report will be released in the fall of 2003.

The Heldrich Center was also awarded a major grant by the AT&T Foundation to address these concerns across the nation. In a report and analysis titled *The 70% Solution*, the Center will address the situation facing high school graduates who choose not to attend college, do not complete college, or who enroll in college after spending time in the labor force. Through research, focus groups, interviews, policy and best practice analysis, the Center will uncover prospective and current solutions to increasing opportunities for this group throughout their working lives. The project is investigating answers to questions that include:

- What are the various paths that high school graduates follow today? Who is going to college and when?
- What skills and education are needed for entry-level jobs that don’t require a college degree?
- How can parity of opportunity be assured for those who do not go to college after high school?
- What are innovative private corporations or public entities doing to assist workers without college degrees? How can public policy help or hinder these initiatives?
- The final report will be presented to public and private institutions to garner support and interest in policy advocacy and program creation to assist young people and increase their economic opportunities. The Center will use the findings to promote their recommendations among policy and thought leaders in the United States.

Moving Up the Ladder Conference and Report

In a conference co-sponsored with the Rutgers Center on Women and Work in March 2002, the Heldrich Center assembled a group of policy, business, and academic leaders to focus on the broad policy issues associated with assisting the working poor in New Jersey. The attendees agreed on the importance of the public sector educating the public about the plight of low-wage working families and that public services and programs need to be strengthened by:

- Improving the performance and responsiveness of public services;
- Simplifying support services and lowering bureaucratic barriers;
- Investing in literacy and forming partnerships with schools and universities;
- Seeking and promoting across government agencies an emphasis on ‘work supports’ and training;
- Promoting greater business participation in workforce development services.

Working with the Fund for New Jersey, the Heldrich Center has engaged government and business leaders in exploring reforms of the current state workforce services system, including new approaches for improving service coordination and delivery to the working poor and low-income families. The Heldrich Center is employing several strategies to stimulate government and private sector action, including:

- Examining best practices for serving low-wage workers and low-income individuals at the state, county, and local government level in the area of workforce services and work supports;
- Convening key New Jersey state cabinet officials and employers to design a system around labor market demand;
- Conducting community-based focus groups to help understand what low wage workers and low-income families need from the workforce system;
- Alerting the public, particularly low-wage workers, about services and supports available to them.

While this project is still in its early stages, the Center believes it has made a significant start towards identifying best practices, forging stronger and longer lasting state government partnerships, and expanding business involvement and partnerships between state agencies and the state university system.



PHOTO BY STEVE GOODMAN

Professor and Director Carl E. Van Horn advises New Jersey policy leaders on streamlining and improving welfare to work services.

INSIDE THE HELDRICH APPROACH

Providing a Statewide Think Tank for Public Policy

The Heldrich Center shares a core mission with Rutgers University—to serve the state of New Jersey by acting a statewide forum and resource for developing new and effective policies that will strengthen the state’s economy and people.

This was a core function in the Center’s role in promoting welfare-to-work reform. Among the keys to this role:

- **Fostering new ideas** — Senior Heldrich Center staff, including director Van Horn and executive director Kathy Krepcio, bring decades of policy and public service leadership and a strong grasp of best practices to the center’s analysis of legislation and government operations.
- **Forging learning networks** — As part of Rutgers, the Center can use its independent authority and commitment to the state to bring cabinet heads, business leaders, and outside experts together for open, confidential discussions about program reform.
- **Tapping Rutgers’ intellectual resources** — The Center calls upon a variety of Rutgers faculty with expertise in welfare policy and workforce development to join ongoing knowledge networks.
- **Enhancing information about the labor market and government** — By making concrete recommendations and partnering with the State of New Jersey in developing online information systems, the Heldrich Center seeks to promote accessibility and clarity of job market and program information for jobseekers and program participants. The Center routinely examines and promotes ideas for simplifying and unifying information about government performance and programs for the general public.

HELDRICH CHALLENGE FOUR:

Strengthening the Management &

Accomplishments

- White paper, *A Governor's Guide to Creating a 21st Century Workforce*, distributed to all governors, governors' workforce advisors, state secretaries of labor, education, and commerce.
- National dialogue on best practices in workforce issues.
- Historic framework for consolidation of 'to-work' government programs in New Jersey.

PROJECT IN DEPTH:

Fostering Breakthrough Leadership for the Workforce: The Next Generation Project 2000-2003

Partners

National Governors Association, University of Texas, Northern Illinois University

Overview

In this two-stage project, the Heldrich Center joined the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas, Northern Illinois University, and the National Governors Association to envision and set into action a new set of governing principles for the next generation of publicly funded training and jobs programs and policies. The project was funded by the Ford Foundation and the U.S. Department of Labor. First, the partners articulated a vision of how the workforce system must be dramatically reformed by the states in a national policy paper, *A Governor's Guide to Creating a 21st Century Workforce*. This paper called for a 'next generation' system built on strategic changes that included the following:

- Capitalizing on new information technologies and private/public partnerships;
- Integrating performance measurement and accountability mechanisms into the evaluation of public programs;
- Providing legislators and program leaders with the latest findings and research about benchmarks and best practices in workforce issues;
- Supporting and promoting lifelong learning.

The Heldrich Center and its partners used these findings to develop a set of basic principles, which informed the curricula for a special academy for workforce development and policy leadership. Hosted by the NGA, the academy convened experts from the three organizations and top policy makers from selected states for a series of two-day intensive sessions. The Heldrich Center worked with all member states, but their primary responsibilities were New Jersey and Ohio. During the sessions, academy experts outlined the reasons for restructuring workforce programs and provided a forum for addressing the obstacles faced by states in forging new programs and practices. The academy faculty helped state leaders develop a vision for reform, narrow it down to specific strategies and tactics, and form a plan to achieve their objectives. By working with the academy, these individuals endeavor to accelerate change in workforce and education policy within their states, promote best practices, and enhance the visibility of workforce development.

In a complimentary effort, Van Horn and the Center provide technical advice to New Jersey on consolidating its job training programs and supports in one department, a redesigned Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Through this redesign, New Jersey aims to improve coordination and collaboration between agencies and among programs,



Effectiveness of Workforce Programs

employers, and providers. By consolidating training and work programs, the Center and the state seek to make public agencies more responsive to customers and policymakers, and align workforce strategies with the needs of the economy.

The Center and Governor James E. McGreevey highlighted the urgency of this initiative during a Friday summit on the workforce hosted at Rutgers on January 16, 2005. The event was well-received by the audience, who strongly supported Governor McGreevey's call that "the single greatest challenge to government is to provide for a comprehensive unified and integrated workforce investment system that focuses on being responsive to the market economy."



PHOTO BY STEVE GOODMAN

Learning from the customer: "The NGA academy brought state policy leaders together for intensive sessions where they played in-depth roles. These meetings were driven by their real needs and interests, and their commitment to a more effective workforce system."

—Carl E. Van Horn, director and professor

INSIDE THE HELDRICH APPROACH

Incubating Reform in Real Time

The Next Generation project provides senior policymakers with an accelerated learning process facilitated by the nation's leading analysts of workforce and economic policy. The academy compressed what might normally require months of meetings and preparation into a few sessions of intensive day-long collaboration. The keys to the Heldrich approach include:

- **Setting agendas** — The Heldrich Center has long identified and promoted the next generation principles for improving performance of the nation's public workforce system. The white paper and academy placed these principles before a national audience.
- **Forging smart partnerships** — The Center's multi-year partnership with the NGA, the Marshall Center and Northern Illinois University, allows the group to continually collaborate, share knowledge, and refine understanding of 'best practices' in the field.
- **Creating knowledge networks** — The academy fostered peer-to-peer networking that gave leading policy makers a shared set of principles and established a personal network for exchanging tactics and solutions.
- **Learning from the customer and evaluating feedback** — Researchers used focus groups and survey data from workforce agency staff, managers, and policymakers to refine their understanding of the next generation principles. This feedback loop continues to inform the project.
- **Accelerating change** — Distilling so much professional expertise and experience over a two-day period allowed participants to leapfrog over problems and knowledge gaps to develop full-blown action plans.
- **Creating new institutional skills and competencies** — By establishing and training this peer-to-peer network of senior state officials, the NGA-Heldrich-Marshall-NIU team sharpened the knowledge and presence of workforce issues in ongoing top-level policy conversations and decision-making.

Accomplishments

- 15,000 regular monthly users of njtrainingsources.org.
- New Jersey site chosen by National Governors' Association as national best practice model.

"Working with the Heldrich Center to develop New Jersey's Consumer Report Card has been a rewarding experience. We not only contracted with highly skilled professionals, but also gained a partner willing to work with us to solve seemingly intractable problems."

—Henry Plotkin
Executive Director
State Employment and Training Commission

PROJECT IN DEPTH:

Information that Counts in the Quest for Skills: Consumer Report Card Systems in New Jersey and California 1999-2003

Partners

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission
City of Los Angeles
Electric Vine Interactive (EVI)
California State University at Northridge

Overview

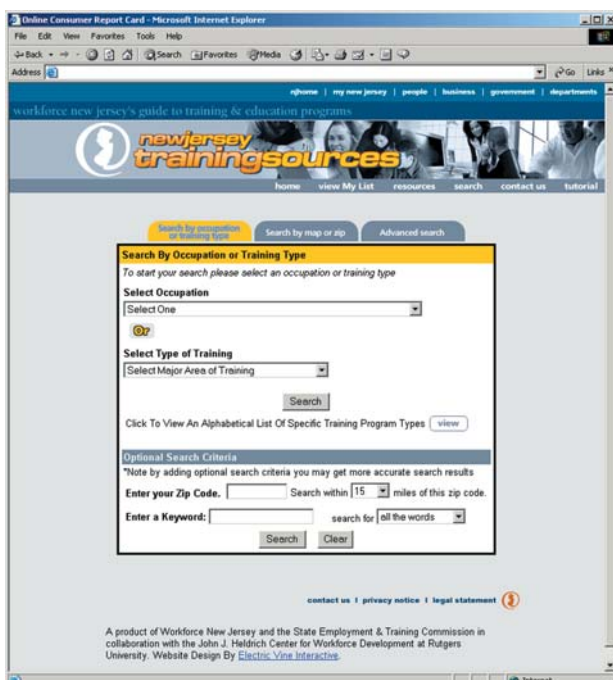
People seeking job training and placement services need accessible, accurate information to make good choices. Those measuring performance and encouraging accountability in public job training and placement programs also need good, timely information. Using cutting-edge technology, the Heldrich Center has

launched two online consumer report card services in New Jersey and the City of

Los Angeles that provide directories of interactive information about job training and workforce services. The consumer report card technology also makes a wealth of analysis available that will help keep training providers, 'One-Stop' career centers (public agencies offering a range of job training, information, and placement services), and government itself more accountable.

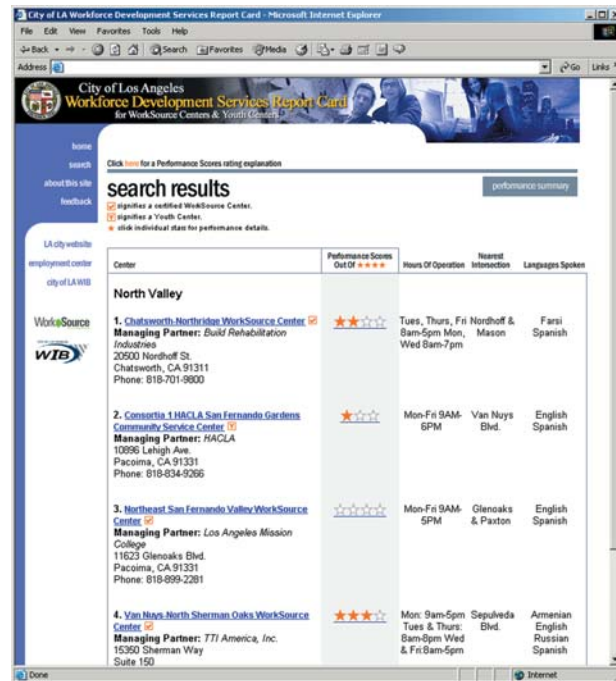
New Jersey

Working closely with the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, the Heldrich Center and EVI developed, tested, and refined a consumer report card in New Jersey, now available at www.njtrainingsources.org. The site combines a web-based tool that makes it easy for jobseekers and workers to comparison shop for the training that best fits their needs, with vendor application and data management services. In 2005 the site will offer comprehensive data on the results of training and education providers in job placement and earnings. The comprehensive point-and-click database provides information on more than 9,000 training and education programs offered by some 800 providers in New Jersey.



City of Los Angeles

The Heldrich Center and its partners from Cal State Northridge and EVI created an original online system that delivers comprehensive information about the city's One-Stop WorkSource centers to jobseekers and employers. The system also includes a performance accountability system that enables public managers and policymakers to quickly analyze how well agencies are serving the public. Agencies are evaluated by compliance with regulations, customers served, customer satisfaction, and performance outcomes. The system profiles each of the city's WorkSource centers, allowing the public or potential customers to obtain information on any of these centers, including performance grades on how well they serve the public.



INSIDE THE HELDRICH APPROACH

Employing Constant Customer Feedback

- **Setting agendas** — The Center continually seeks opportunities to design information technology tools that encourage wide public access, empower job seekers, and assist workforce program operators, reflecting a core principle of how the next generation workforce system should be reshaped.
- **Forging smart partnerships** — The Heldrich Center joined the City of Los Angeles and a team at Cal State Northridge to forge a cohesive management team.
- **Learning from users of the system** — In the Los Angeles project, the Center and Northridge staged a series of focus groups designed to gain a clearer understanding of the views of those closest to the system. In New Jersey, the Center compiles and assesses feedback from One-Stop job center operators and staff through regular conversations as well as comments and survey data gleaned from related research and design projects.
- **Engineering custom approaches for customers** — A hallmark of the Center's approach is designing information solutions that reflect and anticipate the unique needs and concerns of its key users. The Center worked closely with both its California and New Jersey partners and clients to develop, test, refine, and redevelop site design to meet the needs of workforce agency staff, jobseekers, and policy leaders. For example, the Los Angeles project team tested a variety of approaches for 'grading' One-Stop centers on their performance, in order to make the system easy-to-use and comprehend for both job seekers and policymakers gathering and studying performance data. The partners decided upon a system that awards stars for those meeting or exceeding negotiated center performance levels in categories that include customer satisfaction and outcomes. The LA system is the first in the country to rate One-Stops.
- **Accelerating change** — The Center's commitment to problem solving coupled with its diversity of knowledge contributed to the timeliness of both the Los Angeles and New Jersey consumer report card systems. Because of its relatively short 'time to market' after initial development, New Jersey was able to launch one of the first statewide consumer report card systems in the country.

Preparing New Jersey for Work: The New Heldrich Center and Heldrich Plaza Center

The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers will be the anchor of Heldrich Plaza, a multi-use building complex in the heart of New Brunswick's renaissance cultural district cleared for construction in summer 2003. The Heldrich Center/Rutgers facility will provide the state with a first-of-its-kind university-based training and education facility for corporate executives, county and state officials, non profit organizations and workers and all those involved in job training, retraining, education and worker retention and recruitment. The facility will serve as the nerve center of economic and workforce development strategy in the State of New Jersey, and provide a new focal point for public meetings and conferences around these issues.

Corporate and philanthropic giving opportunities are available: contact Carl Van Horn at 732.952.4100 ext. 714.

The Heldrich Plaza is a joint effort of the State of New Jersey, Rutgers University, and the City of New Brunswick. The New Brunswick Development Corporation is the developer of the project. The new development and the Center reflect and honor the lifelong accomplishments and civic vision of John J. Heldrich, who retired from Johnson & Johnson in 1991 after forty-one years of service to the global corporation as a senior executive and member of the executive committee and board of directors. Heldrich is the founding chairman of the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, and currently serves as chairman of the Heldrich Center's National Advisory Board.

Heldrich Plaza is located within the triangle parcel between Livingston, George, and New Streets in New Brunswick across from the Civic Square building housing Rutgers' Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy and the Mason Gross School of the Arts. The new building will expand earlier, enormously successful investments on the George Street corridor including the Civic Square building, the State Theater, Crossroads Theater, and the new University of Medicine and Dentistry headquarters.

The Heldrich Plaza project was made possible by an extraordinary financing partnership among leading New Jersey institutions including the State of New Jersey, which leverages four dollars of private investment for each public dollar invested in the project. Annual funding is provided by the New Jersey State Legislature and Appropriations committees. New Jersey Governors Christie Whitman, Donald DiFrancesco, and James E. McGreevey all provided leadership and support throughout the planning and development of the project. Significant private sector financing supports the development's related projects: a conference facility and hotel and apartment building.

Heldrich Plaza will generate \$100 million in total investment in the City of New Brunswick, and create 2,200 construction jobs and 500 permanent jobs. The project provides employment opportunities for the construction and building trades, and in the retail and service sectors. Employees will be recruited through partnerships with Middlesex County College, One-Stop, and local poverty and job training agencies.

By focusing statewide resources on the importance of a world-class knowledge economy workforce and education system, Heldrich Plaza will make New Jersey more attractive to the high-tech, health care, information, finance, and bio-tech firms that are creating good jobs today and in the future.

"One of the state's most significant urban development projects."

—Christopher Paladino, President, New Brunswick Development Corporation

**To learn more about Center staff, projects, and partners, visit
www.heldrich.rutgers.edu**

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