

# One-Stop Innovations

## One-Stop Innovations

LEADING CHANGE UNDER THE WIA ONE-STOP SYSTEM

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## FINAL REPORT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Background*

In August of 1998, Congress and the President enacted the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the first major piece of federal employment and job training legislation in more than 15 years. The law recognizes the dramatic workforce and workplace changes that have taken place in the U.S. economy and responds to these with a vision of a workforce development system that is comprehensive and customer-focused. This new system is intended to help all members of the workforce access the assistance with training they need to manage their careers, and connect U.S. companies to workers they will need. The drafters of WIA made customer service a key ingredient of the system, requiring that agencies become more flexible and adaptable, because change can come at any time.

The centerpiece of WIA is the creation of One-Stop Career Centers in every area of the country, which are to be certified and overseen by local Workforce Investment Boards. As implied in their name, these centers are intended to offer job seekers and employers ready access to the many workforce development resources available in a local area. Workforce Investment Boards are responsible for making arrangements for both “mandated” partners (e.g. public employment service, vocational rehabilitation services, public assistance programs, etc.) and other desirable partners (e.g. community colleges, public school systems) to offer services through the One-Stop Career Center system.

In seeking to streamline and improve the nation’s workforce development system, WIA has set an ambitious agenda that is potentially very broad and far-reaching. It challenges states and local areas to develop workforce development services that appeal to a broad cross-section of Americans by using, manipulating, and assembling the many different pieces into a coherent whole that will provide high quality, customer-focused services.

The U.S. Congress set July 1, 2000 as the date by which the Workforce Investment Act would be implemented in all areas. During the Act's first year of full program implementation, the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration asked the John J. Heldrich Center at Rutgers University to identify, document, and disseminate information on innovative and promising practices supporting One-Stop Career Center systems operating under the Workforce Investment Act.

The Heldrich Center staff and consultants visited 25 sites across the country to gather information on positive and inventive developments within the emerging One-Stop Career Center system for the purpose of sharing this information with the entire workforce development community. The Workforce Investment Act is still a young program and many states and local areas are just beginning to put the pieces of this complex puzzle together to form a new system. The grand vision of WIA challenges even local areas that have been making steady progress for years towards comprehensive quality systems.

### ***Identifying and Visiting Sites***

The Heldrich Center solicited nominations from across every level of the workforce development system. This included professional organizations, states, local areas, partner agencies, U.S. Department of Labor Regional Offices and others. The nomination format, selection process, and criteria were widely disseminated. The purpose of the nomination process was to find the innovators, whether small or large, to recognize their success and to inspire others in the One-Stop system.

The USDOL and the Heldrich Center researchers sought promising practices in the following categories: Services to Job Seekers – innovative practices that deliver results for job seekers and other individual customers; Services to Employers – innovative practices that deliver results for business/employer customers; and One-Stop Design and Management – organizational innovations that promote quality services and high performance.

The nomination form itself was simple and required basic information. As these were received, Heldrich Center representatives spoke to contact people from each of the nominated sites by telephone and, in many cases, requested and received additional information. Over the course of several months, 25 sites were selected for visits. These sites reflect the many diverse dimensions of the workforce development system. They are urban, suburban and rural areas, and different geographic areas of the country. Their jurisdictions include those that had developed One-Stop systems before WIA and those that have just begun the process under WIA; and nominees represent the three categories in which nominations were sought. Appendix A (page 267) displays the names of the sites visited, along with contact information, and the name and category of the promising practice that was the focus of the visit.

The teams that conducted each site visit consisted of two experienced field researchers from the Heldrich Center. The team visited every site between April and September of 2001, with each visit lasting from one to two days. The Heldrich Center then prepared profiles of each site visit, which were shared with the main contact people from each site. The resulting complete profiles follow this summary report.

### ***General Observations***

The Promising Practices sites visited demonstrated that there are many exciting developments taking place in the One-Stop system and many powerful ideas worthy of review by other stakeholders in the Workforce Investment Act system. Innovative practices have emerged in response to an array of writers and contexts. In some cases, these are environmental, such as a significant economic shift, demographic change or major legislative change, (e.g. welfare reform). In other instances, people in leadership positions have been the catalysts for change. In many areas, promising practices have emerged through incremental, step-by-step continuous improvement. A number of the innovations profiled were built on efforts made through earlier One-Stop implementation grants.

Many of the practices identified can be replicated in other One-Stop Career Centers, and many involve areas that are central to One-Stop operation. The dissemination of

this information increases access by practitioners and policy-makers in the workforce development system to practical solutions to common issues faced by workforce development boards and staff leadership. In the course of identifying and visiting sites, we used the networks that have been formed to share information, and there is a good amount of peer-to-peer communication and replication that occurs on an ongoing basis. One area we visited – Montgomery County (Dayton, Ohio) -- had modeled its job center after another site we visited – Kenosha County (Wisconsin). Replication does not mean that one site will precisely copy the approach used in another community. Rather, replication means getting ideas and using these as a catalyst to create a service center or program that fits the particular needs of a community. For example, Montgomery County learned from Kenosha’s experience, but created a center that was truly its own – bigger, and with new and innovative features that suited its community.

Although One-Stop Centers were mandated by WIA, many One-Stop Centers profiled in this research receive financial support from varied funding streams. Indeed for some of the communities studied, the WIA, one-stop funds represent a minority of total resources. Other major funding streams include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Wagner-Peyser (which funds the public employment service), other supportive services (childcare, food stamps, etc.), vocational rehabilitation, discretionary grants, foundation funding and fee-based services.

### ***Promising Practices Themes***

Although the sites were selected in three categories – services to job seekers, services to employers and One-Stop design and management – the report is structured into theme areas that cut across these categories and demonstrate some of the key emerging developments in One-Stop Career Center Systems.

Many of the practices outlined did not exclusively fit into one of the three defined selection category areas. The themes represent a more detailed level of categorization that appear in one, or all, of the three defined selection category areas.

These themes are:

- Integrating programs and services
- Universal access
- Empowering individuals
- Sectoral strategies for employers and job seekers
- Using information technology to improve service quality
- One-Stop effectiveness measures

Each of these topics is illustrated with examples drawn from the visited sites.

Appendix B (page 270) cross-references the promising practices with the thematic areas. Complete site visit reports, with background information and detailed descriptions of each promising practice, follow the summary report.

We hope that the information on promising practices profiled through this project will enhance communication among staff, board members and others interested in the workforce development system and inspire more and greater innovation to serve job seekers and employers.

## INTEGRATING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

One of the primary goals of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is to streamline services through One-Stop Career Centers. Different agencies, programs or groups should ideally deliver services in a seamless way, their differences invisible to the customer. To further this goal, WIA encourages physical co-location in One-Stop Career Centers. While co-location places different agencies or programs in the same physical space, it does not necessarily synthesize their services.

Several of the One-Stop Career Centers visited have not only co-located physically but have achieved an exceptional degree of service integration. This integration has resulted in:

- A reduction in duplication of services,
- Better quality services,
- Enhanced customer satisfaction as customers receive the services they need without having to be concerned about who or what agency is providing the service,
- Greater availability of services,
- A higher level of staff morale, as staff feel that they are accomplishing more in a customer-focused way.

In order to achieve this integration, staff, administrators and One-Stop system designers in these local areas believe it is important to:

- Be guided by customer needs, customer satisfaction and customer success,
- Build a culture of collaboration that will outlast staff and management changes,
- Bridge the knowledge gap -- increase inter-agency knowledge.
- Invest – spend the staff time needed to work out the details. In each case, this appeared to require a seemingly infinite number of meetings of staff at all levels.

- Articulate a common mission. The time and energy needed to develop a mission statement that is inclusive and mutually supported is well worth the effort.
- Confront organizational cultural differences. When different agency perspectives indicate different approaches to program delivery, identify the underlying assumptions to build a consensus and find a common ground based on understanding other points of view.
- Secure a good location, with an attractive physical facility, and design a customer-friendly layout for the Center. Good location should also be accessible by public transportation

Many of the sites visited used techniques they found effective in fostering program and service integration. Using some of these sites as examples, several of these methods are illustrated below.

### **Forging a Common Identity**

Although there are numerous partners on-site at *WorkSource Lynnwood (WA)*, the primary identity of all staff is WorkSource, not their individual employing organizations or programs. It is important to the partners that this single identity is projected to all customers, both job seeker and employer. The telephone is answered with the name WorkSource, and all promotional materials, Center resources and staff business cards have this identification. The process of creating a common identity is not an easy one. In order to reassure staff members from various agencies who are afraid of losing their identity, the new Center must offer staff members another identity with which they will feel comfortable.

Other examples of One-Stop Career Centers with a single, common identity include CareerLink (Pittsburgh, PA), the Kenosha County Job Center (Kenosha, WI), Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center (Oklahoma City, OK) and the Golden Crescent Workforce Center (Victoria, TX).

## Organizing Services by Function

At the **Kenosha County Job Center (WI)**, staff from the different agencies sit together based on related functions and common caseloads, not agency affiliation or program funding. The following functional service components are staffed on a multi-agency and multi-program basis:

- **Information Point** provides a common general reception area, information services and a waiting area. It handles the Center's unified telephone system central answering system and messaging services.
- **Employment Central** offers a full range of self-service and staff-assisted resource room services as well as assessment services and job-search related workshops. This is considered the "hub" for providing services to the general public and businesses.
- The **Employer Relations Team** provides area employers with a single point of access to a wide range of offerings.

At the **Montgomery County (Dayton, OH) Job Center**, integrated work teams consisting of staff from different agencies, have common caseloads, goals and outcomes. They have developed a **mutually accepted case management protocol** that is used by all of the agencies/programs in the center. This protocol includes the commitment to share information, with the prior approval of the customer.

## Staff Development

In order to provide quality integrated services to a universal job seeker population, **WorkSource Lynnwood (WA)** has **trained and cross-trained staff** of all agencies to perform reception functions, provide assistance in the resource room, and conduct job search workshops. These trained staff are then rotated through these functions.

An outside consultant working with **Pittsburgh's CareerLink** has trained staff in **team building** and **managing change**. As teams formed and began to work together, training moved to an emphasis by all team members on **customer service**. This

involves, among other things, the development of **customer service standards** to which all staff members subscribe.

**Pittsburgh's CareerLink** has recently focused on **helping supervisors and managers to become better "coaches."** With staff members from different agencies working closely together, it is critical that agreed-upon values and standards of performance are promoted and maintained, but not through assertions of authority. A coach leads by example and helps team members understand and embrace organizational values and standards.

It is often daunting for staff of a One-Stop Career Center to be aware of all of the services and funding streams available. The **Oswego County (NY) Department of Employment and Training** has developed a **service grid** that allows staff to easily identify programs and funding sources for which individuals qualify and are suited. After an initial assessment of eligibility for services, staff are able to identify which programs will provide the needed services as well as which programs have adequate funding available. The service grid has proven useful as a training tool for newly hired staff.

### **Negotiating Cost Sharing Arrangements**

All partners at **WorkSource Lynnwood** share resources and pay a share of the costs. One cardinal rule agreed to is that all partners must pay their fair share of rent, supplies, copy machine rental, repair costs and telecommunications. Each partner signs a **Resource Sharing Agreement** detailing its monthly costs. These costs may be adjusted quarterly by written agreement of the partners.

## UNIVERSAL ACCESS

A key principle of WIA is to provide “universal” service. Any member of the workforce, whether employed or unemployed, should have access to information about job vacancies, career options, student financial aid, relevant employment trends and instruction on how to conduct a job search, write a resume, or interview with an employer. The law emphasizes the importance of serving employers and promotes the employer as at least an equal customer with the job seeker in the One-Stop System.

### Universal Services to Employers

A focus on serving the universal employer population presents a challenge that takes many workforce development organizations outside their “comfort zone.” Several of the One-Stop systems profiled have made substantial efforts to reorient their entire operations and provide responsive services to employers.

They have found the following to be some of the key ingredients in working effectively with the universal employer population:

- Devoting sufficient resources to the employer services effort
- Approaching employer services strategically, often in concert with the local Workforce Investment Board
- Soliciting and using customer feedback from employers
- Employing Internet resources that offer employers a user-friendly system for listing job openings on a local, state or national job bank system, and a user-friendly system for accessing resumes of candidates

*Career Resources, Inc. (CRI) of Louisville (KY)* has shifted its entire One-Stop strategy to an “employer-first” focus. The organization believes that it can best serve all of its customers – businesses, individual job seekers and the community – by knowing the job and skills needs of employers in the workplace, and by being able to respond to these. In the fall of 1999, CRI established a **Business Services Division** and a plan to

retool all service delivery processes to support the strategic shift. This included the education and training of staff. Performance is measured against benchmark goals that include such items as new and repeat business clients, job openings listed and average wage of postings.

The Business Services Division provides a full range of services to employers. Its first priority was to define and market core (no-cost) services. CRI recognized that the service employers value most is being able to post job openings and have interested, quality applicants referred to them. Key to increasing job listings from employers was expanding the applicant base beyond low-skilled, entry-level job seekers. The Business Services Division has played a key part in attracting additional job seekers to the One-Stop system's *Solutions Centers*.

In addition to the no-cost core services, CRI offers fee-based services at competitive rates. Some of the more popular fee-based services include: customized pre-screening of applicants; human resource and employee relations consulting; and customized training. CRI has also identified an external partner network to provide high-quality training, consulting and other value-added services to businesses.

Supporting these employer services is a skilled staff that solicits and uses customer feedback to continuously improve and redesign services to employers.

At the ***Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center in Oklahoma City (OK)***, a unified approach to employer services is provided through the integrated ***Workforce Development Business Services*** team. Action teams from the Center sit down with employers, analyze their workforce needs and concerns and design an individual strategy for that employer. A broad range of services is offered through this integrated team.

A notable feature of this team is its use of the Occupational Information Network (O\*Net) as a uniform framework for customizing services to meet specific needs of

area employers. O\*Net allows the Center to help employers clearly define their employment needs by job title and skill set.

Another key practice of the team has been to promote the expansion of employer on-site recruitment. For example, employers using the office frequently for recruitment services have installed their own company tests in the Career Connection Center computer system. This facilitates the interviewing and screening process and improved service to both the employer and applicant. Applicants no longer have to go to the employer premises on another day to take required tests and employers spend less time in the recruiting process.

The ***Golden Crescent Workforce Center in Victoria (TX)*** has a ***consolidated Employer Services unit*** that provides a high level of quality free services to employers. The Workforce Development Board realized that more than the resources of public Employment Service would be needed in order to provide an optimal level of universal service to employers. Therefore, WIA and other funding sources are used to provide comprehensive quality services to the employer customer. The resulting multi-agency unit is under the supervision of an experienced staff person from the Texas Workforce Commission.

Of particular note is the pro-active recruitment done for employers as well as the extent of pre-screening performed at no cost to employers. In general, staff verify that candidates have met minimum qualifications. Depending upon what the employer requests, they may collect documentation required in the application process, such as transcripts, licenses and certifications, as part of the application process, or they may view the documentation to verify the information for the employer. With this extent of basic service it is not surprising that virtually all local employers in this relatively rural area use the Golden Crescent Workforce Centers for their entry-level and mid-level workforce needs.

The ***Kenosha County Job Center (WI) Employer Services Team*** is a consolidated, multi-agency employer services unit that functions as single-point-of-contact for a wide range of employer services, such as:

- Recruitment Services, including on-site recruitment, job fairs, marketing employers' job postings and helping employers develop recruitment strategies
- Customized Training, in which employer services staff facilitates the skill development of an employer's workforce
- Labor Market Information, such as local wage and salary information, a worker availability analysis or other labor market and demographic data
- Publications and Employer Forums, usually tailored to the issues employers face in a state or local area
- Access to incentives, such as tax credits and on-the-job training

### **Universal Services for Individuals**

Perhaps the single greatest difference between WIA and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), which it replaced, is the new emphasis on serving the universal job seeking population. Previous programs had always treated "eligibility," generally based on either income or unemployed status, as a threshold issue in providing services. Under WIA, all individuals have a right to "core" services, which includes information about job vacancies, career options, student financial aid, relevant employment trends, and instruction on how to conduct a job search, write a resume, or interview with an employer. At the same time, local One-Stop systems must also provide "intensive" and "training" services to those in need of them.

Many One-Stop Career Centers visited have taken seriously the charge to offer services to a universal population. Some of the important practices in this effort include:

- Creating a Resource Room with a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, useful technological resources and extensive personal assistance from staff
- Cross-training staff in Resource Room tools and resources, so that all staff are able to provide services to a universal customer base

- Offering high quality workshops in job search and related issues

At the **Denton (TX) Workforce Center**, the **Resource Room** is the focus of Center services. When planning the use of space, the North Texas Human Resource Group (the One-Stop operator) took great care in designing this central feature of its One-Stop Career Center. The Resource Room is large, and is visible from the front door – a customer cannot possibly receive a service without seeing the Resource Room. The Resource Room is also very light and open, with plenty of window space. It is clean, well maintained and tastefully decorated. It is intended to reach large numbers of people and help the Center develop its reputation as a provider of value-added services. Access to state information systems and databases was also crucial for Resource Room services, so when the new facility was designed, two state-funded staff (Wagner-Peyser) were chosen to run it, thus allowing customers full access to all information systems. The Center's relationships with its partners impact the Resource Room's effectiveness and performance in two primary ways: (1) Staff from other programs are cross-trained in self-access tools and resources, and therefore actively market them to their customers across programs; and (2) Program staff, because they are cross-trained, can both provide back-up assistance in the Resource Room during busy periods, and can effectively advocate for new services or improved designs on behalf of their particular customer groups.

Of particular note is the staff assistance provided to the universal customer base. As individuals enter the Resource Room, staff immediately introduce themselves, inquire about the customer's needs and assist them in getting started. Staff members make timely and effective service a top priority. Customers commented on the value of having Resource Room staff personally aware of their job search goals and alerting them to opportunities. Job seekers also noted the valuable help they received in putting together an effective resume. The prevailing attitude of the staff is that no customer should leave the Center without receiving the assistance they need.

The **Peoria (IL) Workforce Network Center** assists individuals, businesses, schools and community organizations seeking information about available jobs and job seekers through its Resource Center, as well as through job search and job readiness

workshops that are offered by Workforce Network partners. At the North Santa Clara Valley Workforce Investment Area (**NOVA**) in **Sunnyvale (CA)**, job seekers are encouraged to participate in the Professional Effectiveness Program (PEP), a series of workshops which focuses on “soft skills” such as effective oral communication, team-building and problem solving that many employers like to see in their employees.

At **WorkSource Lynnwood (WA)**, one of the ground rules is the professionalism of all staff, defined to include professional appearance (e.g. dress, cubicle decorations, cleanliness of work area) as well as conduct (language, acting with compassion and understanding, responding in a timely way, dignified and polite demeanor, rules of confidentiality). The underlying premise is that customers will have more confidence in the Center and staff will be able to serve customers (and each other) better if they adhere to a professional code of conduct.

## EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

An important concept within WIA is to give job seekers enough information so that they can make informed choices with regard to the services they want and need, and especially with regard to training. Several One-Stop Systems profiled have developed unique ways of accomplishing this goal.

In the rural ***Thumb Area (Marlette, MI) Michigan Works!*** One Stop Center, the One-Stop system uses a ***“Tool Chest” voucher system*** that allows customers to choose the services they want within defined categories. There are three “Tool Chest” levels available to customers, each generally corresponding to the core, intensive and training definitions within WIA. The funds that support the “Tool Chest,” however, are comprised of WIA, TANF, and other funding sources.

- The Level I Tool Chest has a variety of free self-starter services, including access to Michigan’s Job Bank and other Internet Resources as well as workshops and preliminary employment development services. Customers that utilize Level I services receive an “All in One Folder” that includes a 37-page job search handbook and three occupational test instruments for self-analysis of skills and interests. The job search handbook guides customers through the use of various job search and informational services.
- The Level II Tool Chest is awarded for a 6-month period. After completion of an application, customers are awarded \$500 - \$1,000 scholarship-style grants that can be used to purchase any of a number of short-term and low-cost development opportunities, such as career counseling, computer awareness sessions, employer specific training, licensing and certifications or high-school completion training.

- The Level III Tool Chest is designed to help those who face a larger number of barriers to employment. Dollar awards are determined through an application and eligibility process. Training packages have been designed for health occupations, manufacturing occupations, retail food/service occupations and technology/office occupations. In addition to training opportunities, the Level III Tool Chest may include transportation assistance, day care, car repair, occupational clothing, and job-specific tools/equipment.

The ***Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board in Victoria (TX)*** adopted a new ***policy and process for WIA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)*** that is based on the premise that ITAs place training resources in the hands of the customer rather than being directed to the training provider by the Board.

The new policy was developed in order to make the process of training approval both more rigorous and more supportive. In this customer-driven system, the training service phase is an information-rich environment for the customer. With help from a Career Consultant on staff, customers are expected to research training provider requirements, visit the campuses they are interested in, and, if the new occupation is unfamiliar, research and tour an employer's operation. Based on this information as well as assessment results and individual counseling sessions, the customer is able to make an informed choice. Extensive support and encouragement are provided to the customer while he/she explores a career path and selects a training institution.

One unusual feature of this ITA process is the requirement that each customer appear in person before an ITA Review Committee as a final step before approval. This Committee is comprised of a Board member, a Board staff person, a Career Center staff person and a prior customer. The individual appears along with his/her Career Consultant. Committee members believe that it encourages those who are sincere and really want the training, while filtering out others. The process has had the effect of boosting the self-confidence of the customer. The Board allows a maximum training period of two years and strongly encourages degree and certificate

programs. It will allow someone to complete a Bachelor's degree if he/she has less than two years remaining.

In addition, Golden Crescent developed the concept of the ITA as "similar to a checking account at a bank." The customer is informed in the Training Agreement that "x" amount of money will be spent towards his/her education at a Certified Training Provider. On a periodic basis, the Board then provides the customer with an itemized statement that shows the remaining balance of the ITA.

Because of the historic low unemployment rates in the southeastern Connecticut area, consequent lower allocations for WIA, flat population growth and the need for an increasingly skilled work force, the **Workforce Center in Bridgeport, CT** has created "**WorkPlace Scholarships**" to supplement WIA and other funding streams. These are privately funded training grants provided by corporations and foundations. This initiative has increased the availability of ITA-type training in the area. These WorkPlace Scholarships are generally used for individuals who do not qualify for other funding sources.

## SECTORAL STRATEGIES FOR EMPLOYERS AND JOB SEEKERS

At the same time that One-Stop systems are working to provide quality universal services, they are experimenting with addressing the needs of segments of the local workforce or workplace community. The use of these “sectoral” strategies has been widespread and successful with groups of employers as well as job seekers. The range of promising practices is impressive, and illustrates both the diversity and creativity of programs across the country.

### Sectoral Strategies for Employers

In general, sectoral strategies have the potential to strengthen relationships between the One-Stop entity and the business community. It is through helping employers solve their particular workforce problems that One-Stop systems appear to gain credibility and become sought-after in their local communities.

As the examples cited below demonstrate, there are a number of advantages to using sectoral strategies with employers:

- *Initiatives can be a manageable size.* Attempting to serve the needs of all employers can be daunting. By targeting a high-profile single employer, an industry, a geographic area or a particular need, One-Stop systems can focus resources on a particular employer or group of employers and pay attention to all of the details of the relationship and the specific project. It is often easier to build relationships with businesses around a specific initiative.
- *Measurable success can be achieved.* In using sectoral strategies, One-Stop systems are able to score tangible triumphs, demonstrating their importance to Board members and the community. One-Stops are thus able to establish their credibility in a concrete way.

- *One-Stops can establish themselves as intermediaries between business and community/public programs.* It is often difficult for the business community and the public sector community to understand each other. Their cultures are often different, as are their vocabularies and ways of conducting business. The role of “intermediary” has often been cited as a very valuable one, where the intermediary organization bridges the differences and helps each to understand and work with the other. In several of the sectoral strategies cited, the One-Stop system fulfills this function.
  
- *In cases where offering fee-based services is a strategic priority for the Workforce Investment Board, One-Stop partners are able to offer fee-based services to employers.* In a number of areas, One-Stop partners are providing services that go beyond “core” services to employers. Based on their expertise gained through sectoral strategies, some local organizations are offering fee-based services to employers. These services are clearly beyond the “core” services that are offered free.
  
- *There is the potential for a strong connection to economic development authorities and/or developers of industrial parks.* In a number of cases, sectoral strategies provide an entrée to working with economic development entities in a local area.

The ***Napa County (CA) Job Connection*** has achieved a good deal of success in working with local employers through what are called “industry clusters.” The underlying economic goal is to diversify the local economy and promote economic development, particularly in industries other than the wine industry. The Napa County Job Connection works with the local economic development agency to identify particular industry clusters, and a workforce strategy is developed and implemented for each cluster.

As a result of the industry cluster strategy in the hospitality industry, for example, the Regional Occupation Program (the local vocational school run by the county

school system) is currently operating an 80-hour training program in hospitality. The local community college will begin offering more advanced hospitality courses in the near future. Other industry clusters that Napa County is pursuing include technology and construction.

Overall, the outcome of the industry cluster process for the community has been to increase the capacity of the county's educational institutions to respond to the needs of area businesses. In addition, One-Stop staff have gained added credibility with private sector employers. The primary lessons of the success of this industry cluster strategy is the value of partnerships, in this case, the partnership between the Napa County Job Connection, the Napa Valley Economic Development Corporation, the Regional Occupation Program, the Napa City Adult School and employers. The One-Stop is convinced that the cluster approach has been an effective strategy for helping employers improve the skills of their workforce that will establish the Job Connection as an important source of the employers' new hires in the future.

In a similar type of effort in the ***Golden Crescent area of Texas***, the local community college (Victoria College), working with the local petrochemical industry, and with guidance and encouragement from the Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board, developed an A.A.S. degree program in Process Technology. This was in response to an industry that had been experiencing job growth, but had no local source for employees with the technological skills needed.

The ***Grays Harbor Career Transition Center in Aberdeen (WA)***, working with the Chamber of Commerce in the lead role, has developed methods for assisting employers who are experiencing high turnover and/or retention problems. A key premise of this effort is the belief that successful job retention begins with appropriate placement. Retention is strongly influenced by the accuracy of the referrals and employers quickly lose faith in a system that provides inappropriate referrals. Because an effective matching system is critical to the success of such an

effort, Grays Harbor developed a *WebMatch* program that the staff and employers believe is exceptionally accurate when matching skills with job requirements.

Although the objective of the program was to provide capable employees to employers with high turnover and to provide steady employment to jobseekers, a natural outcome of its success has been the strengthened relationship between the Career Transition Center and the business community. Credibility has been established, relationships have been developed, and doors have been opened for additional collaboration. It also strengthened the relationship between the Chamber of Commerce and the Career Transition Center.

The ***Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Airport Coalition*** works with employers in a particular industry (aviation) and geographic location (DFW airport). Airport employers were experiencing acute shortages of workers as well as retention problems. At the same time, low-income individuals were in need of quality career opportunities. This public/private coalition, spearheaded by the One-Stop operator for Dallas County (Lockheed Martin IMS), was formed and has acted as an intermediary to meet the needs of both employers and job seekers. Coalition activities have included:

- A major networking breakfast that introduced community leaders and employers to each other,
- Special events and networking opportunities that familiarize community organizations and job seekers with the airport,
- Ongoing job fairs in both employer and community locations,
- Monthly information sharing sessions for employers and community organizations,
- Support for increased public transportation to and within DFW Airport.

One of the main lessons learned through this effort is the power of joining together to solve common problems. Airport employers chose to collaborate rather than compete to address the workforce issues they were all facing. They decided to jointly market the airport as a good place to work. Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) put \$2 million into the project for additional public transportation with the commitment from

companies to buy bus passes for their employees. Every Coalition partner emerged a winner.

In ***Louisville (KY)*** and at ***Alliance Airport (Fort Worth, TX)***, One-Stop operators have chosen to locate career centers on-site in industrial parks. Career Resources, Inc. (CRI), the One-Stop Operator in the Louisville area, operates a small career center on-site at the Riverport industrial park in southwestern Jefferson County, adjacent to a large residential area housing many job seekers. Riverport has more than 100 employers, collectively employing more than 6,500 people. This effort is strongly supported by the Louisville and Jefferson County Riverport Authority.

In addition to posting job openings from employers and referring interested applicants, CRI conducted a survey of all employers on-site at the Riverport Industrial Park. Topics included general employment, pay and benefit practices. This information was then collected and the data (without identifying any individual employer) was organized into a report that was sold to employers in the Park. With the results of this survey, employers were able to compare their own rates of pay, benefits and other employment issues (such as turnover, pre-employment screening practices, incentive plans) with other employers in the Park.

In a similar development, the Alliance Opportunity Center functions as a satellite One-Stop Center operated by several partners (including the One-Stop operators for two workforce boards, the developer of the industrial park, the state, the Chamber of Commerce and the community college) on-site at Alliance Airport in Fort Worth, Texas.

The ***Trident Career Center (North Charleston, SC)*** provided customized recruitment, screening and selection services to a large employer (NUCOR) moving in to the area. The Trident One-Stop, together with Trident Technical College, worked with the company to develop specific criteria for screening and hiring entry-level workers, provided services to attract and select the most qualified workforce, and provided

technical training assistance to enable a smooth and successful start-up of operations.

From the beginning, there was a strong commitment to attracting the broadest and most diverse applicant pool. Recruitment methods attracted 700 applicants at a time when the unemployment rate was 3%. The One-Stop received all applications, created a database of candidates and maintained files with all required paperwork and documentation. Trident administered and scored the assessment battery, which used the Work Keys process. Based on the assessment, individuals were selected for the interview process, and beyond that, for the pre-employment/orientation program.

This initiative was important to the area because it was the first significant public-private partnering opportunity involving the One-Stop system and was viewed by many as a high-profile opportunity to demonstrate the capability of the One-Stop system to support strategic business initiatives by local employers.

***Workforce Essentials, Inc., of northern Tennessee*** offers fee-based services through its ***Commercial Services Division***. These services were developed in response to customer demand, opportunities in the market place and Board encouragement. One example of the fee-based services offered is Substance Abuse Program Management. Workforce Essentials (a non-profit corporation) assists employers by helping them to become “drug-free workplaces,” in compliance with Tennessee’s Drug-Free Workplace law.

### **Sectoral Strategies for Job Seekers**

Sectoral strategies for job seekers allow One-Stop Centers to recognize that different types of services might be needed for different segments of the job seeking population. These approaches recognize that One-Stop does not mean one-size fits all.

As the examples cited below demonstrate, there are a number of advantages to using sectoral strategies with job seekers. Doing so allows the One-Stop system to experiment with new approaches to serving existing customers, and lets the One-Stop focus on serving customer groups with specific needs, such as those with limited English-language skills, youth, or professionals. It also recognizes that some customer groups, such as persons with significant disabilities, may experience more problems than other one-stop customers and that it may take more patience, time and dedication to achieve successes. A sectoral strategy also fosters the formation of strategic and mutually beneficial alliances.

Job seeker sectoral strategies often make use of special funding, frequently through special grants or other funding streams, especially in order to get started. They may also need a separate space and/or may require staff dedicated to that customer group and specially trained to work with them.

In ***Burlington (VT) and North Santa Clara Valley (NOVA) (CA)***, One-Stop Operators have set up separate One-Stop centers for youth. Both felt that there was a need for a high-visibility youth initiative to respond to particular issues experienced by young people.

In ***Burlington***, the youth center, known as "***Jump Start***," is housed adjacent to the main One-Stop Career Center. Jump Start works to provide a facility that is welcoming and friendly for young job seekers, and can be the focal point for the many diverse community groups that serve youth. Jump Start has attracted many volunteer partners who share a common mission of youth development. In contrast to adult services, which are often self-directed, Jump Start employs two Youth Specialists to provide one-on-one intake and assessment services. Working together, the counselor and customer develop an employment plan based on the needs of the individual. In response to these needs, Jump Start and partner agencies have created a number of youth-focused career development services. In collaborating with other agencies, an unusual rapport

and relationship has developed among the front-line staff. The result of this bond is teamwork and creative solutions to the individual needs of youth.

At **NOVA**, the **Youth One-Stop Center**, which opened in 1993, offers young people in the area a full array of services for finding jobs and exploring career possibilities. Located in a local shopping mall, the entrance to the Center displays a group of computers that youth clients can use to get a sense of the jobs, work experience opportunities, internships or apprenticeships that might be available to them. This on-line system is called [Youth@Work](#), and can be found at [www.youthatwork.org](http://www.youthatwork.org). In addition to the computers, a case manager works with every youth customer by enrolling them in pre-employment workshops, conducting individual assessments, determining eligibility for subsidized work experience or training and developing a service strategy that often draws on the resources of multiple partners. A number of youth-serving organizations have assigned staff to work out of the Youth One-Stop Center. In addition, NOVA staff members make frequent outings to local schools to make youth as well as their teachers and counselors aware of [Youth@Work](#) services, and to invite them to visit the Center.

At **Detroit's Work Place** (A Michigan Works! Agency Affiliate), the One-Stop Operator, Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), has partnered with the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Metropolitan Detroit, Inc and the Michigan Department of Career Development Rehabilitation Services to offer **extended services to persons with significant disabilities**. These services are funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to the United Cerebral Palsy Associations. The One-Stop goals for the project have established the following goals: Assure that persons with significant disabilities have access to one-stop career services; Assist one-stop centers to meet the need of persons with significant disabilities by implementing a choice-based; personal budget approach; Create a provider network that is responsible to individual needs and personal budgets; Assist in the development of an advocacy network of persons with disabilities and their supporters that will assure the expansion of

employment services by applicants with significant disabilities; Discover additional costs associated with employment of persons with significant disabilities over the typical costs available in one-stop career centers; Coordinate and maximize the current funding available in the system.

In carrying out this agenda, the One-Stop has achieved several notable outcomes. These include the training of many state and local staff in sensitivity to working with persons with disabilities, including discussion on the suitability of self-service with the disabled person. This cross training has been very successful in fostering communication and understanding between partner agency staff. In addition, many agencies involved in helping disabled persons have been encouraged to work with Detroit's Work Place and will continue doing so after the conclusion of the special grant. Detroit's Work Place plans to include some of the specialized services into its regular One-Stop operation and will continue to fund a specialist to work with this customer group.

In **Portland (OR)**, the **Northeast One-Stop Career Center** operates the **Job Link Retention Project**, a program that provides customers who have found a job with the emergency services they may need to help them retain employment. In addition to providing information services and requiring attendance at two work retention workshops, the project offers the toll-free Job Link Hotline Service that helps them to address emergencies. Customers enroll 6 months at a time. The program can help address emergencies that include car breakdowns, lack of transportation, lack of childcare, illness, tardiness, or family and personal problems. The service will dispatch a towing company for cars that break down; a taxi can be dispatched for those in need of transportation or a bus pass can be issued to help a person get to his/her job. Arrangements are made immediately to provide temporary child care services to those in need, allowing them to report to work. If a customer is sick or late for work, or has a personal or family problem, the customer is referred to a Northeast One Stop counselor immediately (by pager) for help in contacting employers to make appropriate arrangements. Northeast One Stop Center staff follow-up on all hotline calls to ensure that customers are making arrangements to resolve their

transportation, child care or other personal problems since the Job Link Retention Project can provide services only on a temporary basis.

Funding for the program was obtained from Enterprise Zone resources and is designed for individuals who face barriers in retaining employment.

A number of One-Stop Career Centers offer services targeted to professionals, who are a non-traditional customer group for many centers. At **WorkSource Lynnwood (WA)**, there is a **Professional Networking Group** that meets weekly, with meetings facilitated by a staff person. The professionals themselves, who function as a volunteer network, carry out other activities of this group. In **Sunnyvale (CA)**, the Employment Development Department, in partnership with NOVA, has developed a special program for highly skilled unemployed professionals called **ProMatch**. Unemployed individuals, including engineers, managers, financial analysts and sales professional form groups to share information, offer advice to one another, and make themselves known to potential employers through their own web site. Most of the ProMatch activities are designed and implemented by the professionals themselves who meet as a group in weekly plenary sessions.

In response to needs demonstrated by many of its Spanish-speaking job seekers, the **FutureWorks Career Center** in **Springfield, MA** has introduced **Working English** for limited English-speaking job seekers. The Center offers a wide range of services under this banner, including a Spanish-language welcome meeting, the services of a bi-lingual counselor, an 18-hour "Working English" training program, a 3-hour Computer Basics program in Spanish and a 5-hour Job Search Seminar in Spanish. The Working English training program is an 18-hour course, which takes place over three weeks and includes the use of CD-ROM-based software called Real English. In addition, the Center's website, [www.futureworks-now.com](http://www.futureworks-now.com), offers information in Spanish.

Because of its separate funding stream and administration, Job Corps Centers close to One-Stop Centers have often been overlooked in serving local youth. In

**Morganfield (KY)**, the **Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center** essentially acts as a no-cost training vendor for local youth coming through the One Stop Career Center system. With both residential and non-residential options, the Center offers more than 25 training programs that are attractive to local youth. To facilitate this activity, the Center offers free transportation services from One-Stop Centers to the Job Corps Center to local youth participating in its programs. One-Stop Centers in the area initiated this transportation service in order to increase the use of Job Corps.

## CONTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO SERVICE QUALITY AND DESIGN

Technology allows workforce development programs to reach more people, provide different, better and more flexible services, and obtain customer feedback. It also represents a skill set needed by virtually everyone in the work force because it has become clear that job seekers who lack computer skills are increasingly marginal to the labor market.

### Use of the Internet to Communicate with Customers and Transact Business

Almost all of the One-Stop Centers profiled have *worldwide web sites*. In most cases, the website uniquely refers to the particular One-Stop Center or System, such as the Golden Crescent's [www.gcworkkforce.org](http://www.gcworkkforce.org), Louisville's [www.careerresourcesinc.org](http://www.careerresourcesinc.org), Dallas' [www.worksource.org](http://www.worksource.org), Clarksville's [www.workforceessentials.com](http://www.workforceessentials.com), the Thumb Area's [www.thumbareaworks.org](http://www.thumbareaworks.org), or FutureWorks' [www.futureworks-now.com](http://www.futureworks-now.com). All of these websites give information to job seekers and employers about the services that are offered through the One-Stop system, and most have good "links" to other sites that job seekers or employers may have an interest in. Almost all have links to that State's job bank system or to America's Job Bank. All have information about how customers can reach the One-Stop system.

Web sites allow these One-Stop systems to provide information to job seekers and employers on any day, at any hour of the day and in any location where they is a computer connected to the Internet.

Some One-Stop systems have used the power of the Internet to go further. For example, the **San Diego (CA) Workforce Partnership** uses the power of Internet to: Broaden the pool of customers to which they can deliver important services; Allow people access to services and opportunities outside confines of business hours, transportation and child care limitations; and encourage broader

participation of employers and job seekers who might not have otherwise accessed public workforce development services.

Through the use of [www.sandiegocatwork.com](http://www.sandiegocatwork.com), the One-Stop can ***transact business with job seekers and employers on line***. Customers choosing to use this service have access to many functions that One-Stop Centers provide, but from the comfort of their own home, office or at a locale of their choosing, such as a library. While numerous other One-Stop web sites offer information about where to find jobs, or self-standing programs (e.g. resume builder), San Diego's site enables users to transact business in several ways. Job seekers can seek out jobs and apply for them without the assistance of a staff-person; or they can store resumes and manage their job search activities and information. Employers can post job openings, search for candidates, manage the result of their searches, and e-mail promising candidates.

A key innovation of this system is the ability of the system to match the skills of individuals to requirements of jobs, displaying the information as a percentage match. Employers can post jobs with as much or as little information as they like, enabling them to simply collect resumes, or allow individuals to apply on-line through their own web sites or by following the specific instructions the employer placed on the site. San Diego has found that many employers prefer recruiting employees through the Internet to other means, and like the fact that [www.sandiegocatwork.com](http://www.sandiegocatwork.com) is free.

### **Infusing Services with Technology**

Many One-Stop Centers are using technology to provide more and better service and to help customers develop basic computer skills. While technology does not replace the need for staff to work with job seekers and employers, technology extends what can be offered.

The **North Central Texas Workforce Center** in **Denton (TX)** uses its **Resource Room** as a means to promote digital inclusion. The Center's Resource Room is large and has 11 high-speed internet connected computers as well as telephones, fax machines, printers, and copiers. Three of the computers are equipped with self-paced tutorials on the Microsoft Windows operating systems and almost all of the Microsoft Office applications. The computers and workstations are clean and well maintained. The desktop interfaces are also clean – not loaded with an overabundance of shortcuts, links and extra software.

Two full-time staff assist customers in using the resources available. They generally encourage the use of *WinWay* as the primary tool for customers to use to create their own resumes. Staff tend to direct job seekers to specific job search resources first. These include national, statewide and local job banks such as America's Job Bank, Texas Workforce Commission's Governor's Job Bank, and the local version of the Governor's Job Bank (Express Jobs), local classifieds, and Monster.com. Staff are then available to assist users in navigating these systems. The staff maintains an extensive list of alternative job search engines in a paper customer guide (rather than in electronic bookmark form) and provides this to customers upon request.

All Center staff are required to become "certified" in Resource Room databases, information and electronic tools, so that additional staff resources are always available when they are needed. This policy also increases the skill base of staff whose primary responsibilities do not require knowledge of these resources.

It is through this kind of emphasis on using electronic resources and by devoting sufficient staff to help those who may initially be intimidated by it that the Center promotes the use of computers by everyone and establishes a climate in which everyone is comfortable with the technology.

Several of the One-Stop Centers visited have computer labs on-site and use these to offer job search and other computer-based instruction. In **Lynnwood (WA)** and **Kenosha (WI)**, the local community college is on-site offering computer basics as well

as computer applications courses. They also use computer labs to offer academic prevocational basic skills, preparing for and taking the GED test, and upgrading keyboarding skills. Many One-Stop Centers visited include the use of technology as part of their basic job search seminar offerings. These include such workshops as "Job Search on the Internet," and "Using E-mail in Job Search." The ***FutureWorks Career Center*** in ***Springfield (MA)*** uses software on CD ROMs to help customers develop English-language skills.

### **Using Technology for Customer Feedback**

The use of technology for obtaining customer feedback is relatively new within the workforce development system, but has promise. During the site visit to *Kenosha*, it was observed that the *State of Wisconsin* administers customer satisfaction surveys on-line to a sampling of Job Net customers immediately following their Job Net sessions.

Both ***Worksystems Inc (Portland, OR)*** ([www.worksystems.org](http://www.worksystems.org)) and ***NOVA (Sunnyvale, CA)*** ([www.novapic.org](http://www.novapic.org)) have on-line customer feedback mechanisms on their web sites that function much like on-line suggestion boxes.

## ONE-STOP EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES

A key principle of WIA is increased accountability, which raises the important issue of how to measure the effectiveness of One-Stop Centers. The Act identifies quantitative core indicators of performance that State and local entities must meet, but these apply only to the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. Additional, compatible measures have been developed by the U.S. Department of Labor for Wagner-Peyser-funded services that must be delivered within a One-Stop context. Several of the sites visited have grappled with how to measure the effectiveness of the One-Stop system as a whole, in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Those that have focused on this issue generally agree that a focus on excellence in customer service contributes to quality programs and outcomes and the choice of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) principles organizes the structure and tasks of the measurement process. They also agree that responsiveness to customers allows the One-Stop system to connect with the articulated needs of employers and individuals, and to shape operations in conformance with the views and preferences expressed by customers and that crosscutting measures are needed to address multiple funding streams.

The ***Boston (MA) Private Industry County (PIC)***, Inc. has worked hard to measure the effectiveness of its One-Stop Career Centers. In 1995, a newly created Career Center Committee at the PIC began the development of its competitive-bid process with its own research question: Why did employers and job seekers not use the current employment services system? The results of the research conducted were clear, simple, and based on improved service to customers. Employers wanted Career Center staff to be professional, have knowledge of their industry, designate a single point of contact, and remove a job posting once the job was filled. Job seekers who used a Career Center wanted to be given respect by staff and be given some direction in their job search.

These findings pushed the PIC to adopt a continuous quality improvement (CQI) framework. They chose to “charter” Career Center operators through a competitive process, issue three-year charters, and conduct annual reviews of the Career Centers. Each Career Center has to demonstrate the outcomes and components of a plan to satisfy the needs of its job seeker and employer customers through service excellence. The PIC characterizes its commitment to service excellence by listing these goals for its Career Center initiative: Treat employers as a priority customer in the design and operation of both the labor exchange and workforce development systems; Become competitive by adopting standards of excellence (e.g., striving to reach performance standards of 100 percent) and develop the best possible technology and facility resources; Remove bureaucratic constraints to provide the best possible service to employer and job seeker customers; and Develop One Stop Career Centers that include labor exchange services, serve as hubs within the workforce development system, are customer-driven, develop and integrate funding sources, and are quality-focused.

In measuring the effectiveness of its Centers, the PIC uses both quantitative and qualitative goals. In keeping with its focus on customer satisfaction through CQI processes, the PIC uses only four quantitative indicators to measure Career Center performance.<sup>1</sup> The four measures include two for job seekers and two for employers:

- Ninety percent (90%) of all job seeker customers will be enrolled in an education and training program or service;
- Ninety percent (90%) of all job seekers placed in a job will stay at least six months;
- Ninety percent (90%) of all employer customers that accept a job seeker for hire will keep the employee for at least six months; and

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<sup>1</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts law does not allow public or private entities to use Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage data, to track individual or employer employment records. The Boston PIC will begin using a newly created, statewide management information system (called MOSES) to begin tracking progress of job seeker outcomes.

- Ninety percent (90%) of all employer customers who use the Career Center will return within two years for additional services.

The PIC uses qualitative measures as the primary vehicle to measure Career Center performance. The quality measures examined through qualitative data collection include:

- Strategic planning processes,
- Customer flows,
- Employee education and training,
- Methods of staff empowerment,
- Balancing-funding stream fragmentation with service integration,
- Matching customers and services,
- Partnering processes,
- Methods of gathering data for product improvement,
- Processes by which data is analyzed,
- Mechanisms that empower staff to implement findings from data collection, and
- Budgeting and staffing.

In addition to annual reviews, the PIC conducts a more comprehensive re-chartering process every three years. The activities included in the re-chartering process include a Career Center Self-Assessment, a review of service levels, customer feedback through point of service interviews, surveys and focus groups of job seeker and employer customers (performed by PIC staff), a site visit by PIC staff, and a Business Plan Update.

The ***North Santa Clara Valley Workforce Investment Area (NOVA)***, located in Sunnyvale, in the Silicon Valley of California, has a history of innovation and has been recognized for performance excellence by a number of national workforce development organizations. NOVA has been building its One-Stop system, known as NOVA Connect! Since the late 1980's, a "total quality management" culture pervades Silicon Valley, and has pushed the NOVA organization toward constant reinvention,

better customer relations and stronger performance. Since the mid-1990's, NOVA immersed itself in quality management through its participation in the Enterprise Initiative that emphasized the business principles endorsed by the Baldrige Awards. The core element in NOVA's strategic planning and performance management approach is customer satisfaction, known within NOVA as the "Voice of the Customer."

NOVA employs outcome measures at all levels: to measure the system's success in meeting its strategic goals and initiatives, to measure its success in performing activities that contribute to its chosen initiatives, and to measure the performance of individuals in accomplishing specific tasks that contribute to the realization of larger objectives. Many of the outcome measures NOVA uses include input from customers. Often this input produces surprises. A recent set of responses to surveys of One-Stop customers revealed that the job seekers going through the system were very satisfied with their interactions with NOVA staff members, but far less complimentary of NOVA facilities. This led to a decision by NOVA to make a significant investment in equipment and furniture for the One-Stop Resource Center and Learning Lab. In addition, the new and attractive furniture provided clients with more privacy. NOVA's attention to measures of effectiveness has contributed to its being central to strengthening workforce and economic development in northern Santa Clara County.

In addition to measuring the effectiveness of the One-Stop Center in terms of whether it has accomplished the vision of the partnership that created it, **WorkSource Lynnwood (WA)** is conscious of the need to demonstrate the value of a fully-integrated One-Stop Career Center to the hierarchies of each partner agency. For example, in a recent presentation to representatives of the WorkFirst (welfare) funding source, they illustrated how the blending of programs and resources has improved services and outcomes for TANF clients. For example:

- Increased access to career center services for WorkFirst clients, with extended hours and a much greater staff availability;

- Increased access to employers, with employer recruiting on-site, a large variety of employers at job fairs, and the combined resources of all agencies, especially those that receive Wagner-Peyser and WIA funds;
- Increased access to educational opportunities, with on-site classes in job search, job retention, computer skills and GED, and easier access to other training funds;
- Increased access to a variety of services, addressing various issues such as limited English, functional limitations resulting from a disability, homelessness, overwhelming personal problems or mental health issue.

For TANF clients, this has resulted in more clients engaged in job search and successfully entering employment, a reduction in returns to TANF, and greater wage progression and client self-sufficiency.

## CONCLUSION

WIA is an ambitious piece of legislation, requiring many changes to existing practice and encouraging a broad customer-focused approach to providing services. During the first full year of implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the John J. Heldrich Center at Rutgers University visited each of the 25 promising practice sites between April and September 2001. In the course of the site visits, it became clear that WIA One-Stop Career Centers can succeed in a variety of different ways – there is no single model for success. While State law and policy direction have an impact, we found that WIA is predominantly a locally-driven system -- each promising initiative was responding to and driven by the environment surrounding it -- political, business, historic and bureaucratic. The crosscutting themes that emerged from these visits include:

1. ***Integrating Programs and Services.*** A number of One-Stop Career Centers have gone beyond the required co-location of agencies and programs, and have achieved an exceptional degree of service integration. Some features of this integration include:
  - *Forging a single, common identity that is projected to all customers.* This common identity often grows out of a carefully developed common mission and fosters a culture of collaboration. Examples from the site visits include: WorkSource Lynnwood (WA), CareerLink (Pittsburgh, PA), and Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center (Oklahoma City, OK).
  - *Organizing services by function, not agency affiliation or program funding.* In Montgomery County (Dayton, OH), integrated work teams consisting of staff from different agencies have common caseloads, goals, outcomes and a mutually accepted case management protocol. In Kenosha County (WI), integrated teams provide reception services, resource room services and employer services.

2. **Universal Access.** In many areas of the country, WIA's emphasis on serving a universal job seeker and employer population has driven a re-engineering of the entire approach to providing workforce development services.
  - *Career Resources, Inc. (Louisville, KY)* has shifted its entire One-Stop strategy to an "employer-first" focus. In line with this, it offers a full range of services – both free and fee-based -- to employers, and has re-tooled all service delivery processes to support this strategic shift. Career Resources has also expanded its job seeker applicant base significantly.
  - *At the Denton (TX) Workforce Center, the Resource Room* was carefully designed to be the central feature of its One-Stop Career Center. It is intended to reach large numbers of people and help the Center develop its reputation as a provider of value-added services. The Resource Room has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, useful technological resources and extensive personal assistance from staff. In addition, all staff are trained in Resource Room tools and resources, so that they are able to provide services to a universal customer base.
3. **Empowering Individuals.** Several areas have developed unique ways of giving job seekers sufficient information and tools so that they can make informed choices and take control of their careers.
  - *The Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board (Victoria, TX)* provides extensive support and encouragement to customers as they explore career paths and select training courses and institutions. In addition, the Board developed the concept of the Individual Training Account (ITA) as similar to a checking account at a bank. On a periodic basis, the customer is provided with an itemized statement that shows the remaining balance of the ITA.
  - In the *Thumb Area (Marlette, MI) Michigan Works! One-Stop Center*, they use a "tool chest" voucher system that allows customers to choose the

services they want within defined categories, each generally corresponding to the core, intensive and training definitions within WIA.

4. ***Sectoral Strategies for Employers and Job Seekers.*** At the same time that One-Stop systems are working to provide quality universal services, they are experimenting with addressing the needs of segments of the local workforce or workplace community.
  - The *Napa County (CA) Job Connection* has worked with employers in “industry clusters” and has developed and implemented a workforce strategy for each cluster. Clusters have included the hospitality industry, technology and construction.
  - The *Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Airport Coalition* works with employers in a particular industry (aviation and supporting businesses) and geographic location (DFW Airport). The Coalition acted as an intermediary to meet the needs of both employers and job seekers.
  - At *Detroit’s Work Place*, the One-Stop Operator has partnered with specialized organizations to offer extended services to persons with significant disabilities.
  - The *FutureWorks Career Center (Springfield, MA)* offers a wide range of services for limited English-speaking job seekers. These include a Spanish-language welcome meeting, the services of a bilingual counselor, an 18-hour “Working English” training program, a three-hour Computer Basics program in Spanish and a five-hour Job Search Seminar in Spanish. In addition, the Center’s worldwide web site offers information in Spanish.
5. ***Contribution of Information Technology to Service Quality and Design.*** Technology allows workforce development programs to reach more people, provide different, better and more flexible services, and obtain customer feedback. It also

represents a skill set that is becoming increasingly central to success in the workforce.

- Many, if not most, One-Stop systems have worldwide web sites that give information to job seekers and employers about the services offered. Most have good “links” to other relevant sites. The *San Diego (CA) Workforce Partnership* uses the power of the Internet to go further. Through the use of its website, the One-Stop can transact business with job seekers and employers on-line. Job seekers can seek out jobs and apply for them without the assistance of a staff person; they can store resumes and manage their job search activities and information. Employers can post job openings, search for candidates, manage the result of their searches, and e-mail promising candidates.
- A number of One-Stop Centers use their Resource Rooms as a means to promote digital inclusion, by offering high-speed Internet-connected computers as well as self-paced tutorials in popular software packages, and by devoting sufficient staff time to help those who may initially be intimidated by technology. Many also have computer labs on-site and use these to offer job search and other computer-based instruction.

6. ***One-Stop Effectiveness Measures***. Several of the sites visited have grappled with the issue of how to measure the effectiveness of the One-Stop system as a whole, in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Both the *Boston (MA) Private Industry Council, Inc.*, and the *North Santa Clara Valley (CA) Workforce Investment Area (NOVA)* have worked hard to measure the effectiveness of their One-Stop systems. They generally subscribe to the following principles:

- A focus on excellence in customer service contributes to quality programs and outcomes;
- Responsiveness to customers allows the One-Stop system to connect with the articulated needs of employers and individuals, and to shape

operations in conformance with the views and preferences expressed by customers; and

- Crosscutting measures are needed to address multiple funding streams.

Many local practitioners recognize that the passage of a new law does not necessarily mean that “things will happen.” Change requires vision as well as sustained commitment by local and state partners. Those desiring change also benefit from information on what others have done and how they have gone about making program and organizational improvements. The U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration can further this exchange of information by facilitating peer-to-peer communication, visitation, support and exchange of materials. The promising practices examined through this effort represent only some of the encouraging developments taking place in the workforce development field. The promising practices reviewed were nominated and selected between October 2000 and January 2001. In the past year more local areas have implemented and refined additional promising practices that can help inform the workforce investment system as it continues to implement WIA.

## SITE VISIT REPORT OUTLINE

The following reports represent the individual account of each site visit. Each report is structured in the following style:

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**Site Visit Report:** ORGANIZATION NAME and LOCATION (city, state)

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### I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION

*Date and Location of Site Visit:*

Organization:

Type of Entity: (*public, private, non-profit, one-stop operator, one-stop partner, other*)

Contact Person: (w/ phone, fax, email)

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Key Area for Selection:  
Name of "Promising Practice"

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Heldrich Center Representatives:

List of Interviewees:

Attached

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### II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION

#### A. Local context

1. General profile of community in which One-Stop operates: type of area, population, economy, history
2. History of employment and training/workforce development in local community
  - a. One-Stop development in the community
  - b. Stage of WIA Implementation
  - c. Influence of State policies/guidance
  - d. Impact of local Workforce Investment Board

#### B. Profile of One-Stop system

1. How One-Stop Operator was selected/certified
2. Description of One-Stop Operator
3. Major groups of customers

4. Funding streams and approximate \$ amounts
5. Major partners/service providers
6. Physical location(s)
7. Approach to customers

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

- A. Describe the specific purpose(s) of the initiative. What made this purpose seem important in the community?
  - What challenges or issues were being addressed?
- B. Brief background/history of the initiative.
  - Evolution of initiative
- C. If the initiative is part of a larger organizational mission, explain the relationship between the initiative and how the initiative supports the organization's mission and goals.
- D. How do partner relationships affect this initiative?

### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

- A. Describe the key activities that are part of the initiative. How do these activities support the overall purpose of the initiative and offer solutions to the challenge or issue being addressed?
- B. Are there other aspects of the initiative that help achieve its mission? If so, please identify them.

### **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

- A. Describe management practices used that most contribute to the initiative's effectiveness.
- B. How are the data and information collected and used?
- C. How are continuous improvement efforts structured and implemented?

### **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

- A. What outcome measures are used and why?
- B. How do they relate to the overall purpose of the initiative?
- C. How were the planned outcomes developed?
- D. To whom are outcomes routinely reported?
- E. Do you collect comparative measures/data? If so, how?

### **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

- A. Throughout the design and implementation of this initiative, describe lessons learned, suggestions for implementing a similar initiative and planned enhancements or changes, if any.
- B. Describe how this initiative grew out of, if applicable, the development of the One-Stop system.

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: The CTWorks Center, Bridgeport, Connecticut**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and location of Site Visit: March 22-23, 2001, Bridgeport, Connecticut

Organization: The CTWorks Center operated by JobLink, Inc.

Type of Entity: One-Stop Career Center

Contact Person: Madeline Primeau, Executive Director, JobLink, Inc.

Phone: (203) 333-5129 x350

Fax: (203) 339-3799

Email: [primeau@workplace.org](mailto:primeau@workplace.org)

Web site: [www.workplace.org/joblink.htm](http://www.workplace.org/joblink.htm)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Job Seekers

Promising Practice: Individual Training Accounts

The Heldrich Center Representatives: Robin Gwathney, Suzanne Guibert

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Southwestern Connecticut Workforce Investment Area is comprised of 20 towns that make up its service delivery area within Fairfield and New Haven counties. Within the service area, there are two labor market areas – Bridgeport and Stamford. The area is home to 771,288 people and more than 400,000 jobs. The region along the coast is urban/suburban with a less populated region called The Valley extending away from the coast.

According to a report published in January 2000, Connecticut's unemployment rate is the lowest in the nation. Unemployment in Southwestern Connecticut reached a historic low at 2.0% (not seasonally adjusted), in August 1999, and Bridgeport city's rate fell to 3.7%. Since January 2001, considerable economic churning has pushed the unemployment rate up in small increments.

For the region, the dominant industry sector is services (37% of employment), such as business and health services. The next largest segment, at 16% of employment, is manufacturing, followed by retail at 16%, government at 10%, and finance, insurance, and real estate at 9%.

Critical to the success of this region's One-Stop Career Center, called The CTWorks Center, has been the strength and involvement of The WorkPlace, Inc., a not-for-profit organization designated by the state as the Regional Workforce Investment Board. Prior to enactment of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), The WorkPlace, Inc. was both the Private Industry Council and the Employment & Training Service Delivery Agency. When WIA was implemented in Connecticut,

The WorkPlace, Inc. became the Workforce Investment Board and divested itself of the responsibility for operating the WIA-funded employment and training center.

As a result of a competitive bid process, JobLink, Inc. was selected by The WorkPlace, Inc. to operate The CTWorks Center and began operation in July 2000. In addition to operating a One-Stop Career Center in Bridgeport, JobLink, Inc. also operates satellite career centers in Ansonia and Stamford.

JobLink, Inc.'s vision for The CTWorks Center "gives customers optimal access to resources to help them start a career, begin again, or find qualified job candidates." Four principles guide their system:

- Accountability to the customer and to the public;
- Customer choice that is customer-driven rather than agency-driven;
- Universality – making services available to all;
- Integration of services and a fundamental respect for the customer.

The Bridgeport One-Stop is located downtown in a professional building near bus and train lines and next door to a parking garage. Parking is validated for customers at The CTWorks Center. The office is located on one floor, with the main entrance opening onto the street. Upon entry, a customer is met by a "greeter" who makes a preliminary assessment of the needs of the individual and explains some of the services available. The Center serves adults, youth, and dislocated workers. People who need unemployment information are referred to another counter maintained by Connecticut Department of Labor staff. Those customers seeking job search and training services are referred to the member action coordinator, asked to complete a short application, given a short interview to determine preliminary eligibility for WIA, and signed up for any seminar in which they express an interest.

Customers who may be eligible and likely candidates for training are given an appointment to determine actual eligibility. Customers are also given a bar coded *swipe card* to use when they return to the office as a means of identification and to help in tracking services.

In addition to the Connecticut Department of Labor, the Workforce Center's major partners are Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Affairs, The Elderly Services Division and welfare (TANF) case managers. Bureau of Rehabilitation Services staff visit The CTWorks Center regularly because their offices are across the street.

All job seekers can use the following services for free: a self-help area, job search seminars (held weekly), and training for qualified job seekers. During a typical month, the following special seminars are available in Bridgeport: Moving Forward (job seekers share information), Innocent Spouse Relief (tax information), The Employment Picture (a snapshot of the labor market), Job Search for Spanish-speaking Customers, Effective Interviewing, The Earned

Income Credit, Career Planning 101, Job Search on the Internet, and Benefits Seminars. At the satellite offices in Ansonia and Stamford, the following were offered in March: Job Club, Video Interviews, Companies to Contact, The Great Cover Up (cover letters), Job Ready for the 21st Century, and Career Planning 101.

The underlying philosophy at The CTWorks Center is to treat customers with dignity and provide them with high-quality services.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

The purpose of the developing a system for individual training accounts is to provide customers with job skills needed by employers in the broader Southwestern Connecticut labor market area. This promising practice initiative came about because Southwestern Connecticut faces flat population growth, historically low unemployment and a projected growth of 41,500 jobs over the next few years. Workforce skills are a major competitive advantage of the Southwest, and ensuring a continued upgrading of workforce skills will be essential for the region to succeed in the increasingly sophisticated and knowledge-based global economy.

This initiative was established because of the strong leadership The WorkPlace, Inc., has shown in addressing the labor shortage. The WorkPlace, Inc. has identified and assisted employers in tapping alternative labor pools; worked with the education and training community; collaborated with school systems to adjust curriculums; and supported the formation of economic cluster organizations. The mission of The WorkPlace, Inc., is "to develop a well educated, well trained and self-sufficient workforce that can compete in the changing global marketplace. Essential to the mission is the creation of a seamless, coordinated system of education, training and employment that is customer centered . . . meets the needs both of employers for employable people . . ." The individual training account initiative was created to help meet this goal.

Some of the other partnerships and programs put in place by The WorkPlace, Inc., to address the needs of employers and job seekers are:

- WorkPlace Scholarships – job training scholarships provided by private corporations and foundations;
- People to Jobs – a collaboration of transportation providers to extend transportation services to connect low-income workers and employers;
- Welfare-to-Work – services to welfare recipients;
- FlexBuild – provides basic skills and English as a Second Language to employees of three manufacturers in Bridgeport;
- Brownfields Job Training – provides training to residents from neighborhoods in Bridgeport impacted by brownfields;
- Chase Job Start – provides no-interest loans and grants to jobseekers whose job search or job retention is jeopardized by pressing financial needs.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The steps to developing individual training accounts follow a predictable sequence. First, the greeter informs the customer of the availability of training services. Next, a membership coordinator determines the customer's initial eligibility and refers him/her to a counselor to make a final eligibility determination. The customer then participates in a job search workshop that includes instruction on resume preparation, among other things, after which he/she has an interview with an ITA counselor to determine his/her eligibility for training services. Next, the customer participates in an ITA workshop. In this workshop, extra time is spent teaching customers how to find a suitable training vendor. Time is also spent emphasizing the importance of the customer visiting the training facilities, evaluating the environment, checking class schedules, determining placement resources, and checking transportation. After the ITA workshop, the customer goes to an ITA counselor to make another assessment, and to develop an individual employment plan. The counselor reviews the information on training schools obtained by the customer and completes a referral to the selected training vendor. The counselor must then complete the following documents:

- Letter to training provider
- Memorandum of understanding with training provider including payment information and completion and placement benchmarks
- Letter to ITA recipient
- ITA letter of referral including attendance sheet, WIA Payment Requests and a Placement
- Information Form

While the customer is attending school/training, the counselor follows up with the training vendor to monitor the customer's progress. Ultimately, the training vendor places the customer in a job and receives payment.

#### **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

JobLink, Inc. has instituted a number of policies that have contributed to the effectiveness of The CTWorks Center and the ITA initiative. JobLink, Inc. management encourages communication within the various programs with weekly department meetings, an open door and open communication policy, and a suggestion box. They take an active role in operating The CTWorks Center, participate in ITA Workshops on a regular basis as a trainer, solicit new ideas from staff, and keep in touch with day-to-day operations by walking around and engaging staff. Staff are encouraged to sit on committees developing new ideas. Professionalism is encouraged and rewarded. When Center staff receive special recognition from customers, it is also acknowledged by JobLink, Inc. management.

JobLink, Inc. handles data collection through an electronic management information system. They have recently completed a system that links all three offices, and have been informed that the state is currently developing an operating system to link partners in the One-Stop system.

Data is collected monthly from all three Workforce Centers on a large number of data items including characteristics of customers and services provided.

In order to embrace the goal of continuous improvement, JobLink, Inc. collects customer satisfaction surveys at all group seminars. Management and staff review the completed surveys to determine what customers think about the services being provided and to determine if any policies and procedures need to be modified. In addition, The WorkPlace, Inc. hired a consultant to integrate a continuous improvement system for The CTWorks Center.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

This year, the WIB set a goal of 547 individual training accounts for JobLink, Inc. For the first nine months of operation, JobLink, Inc. has written over 300 ITAs, 100 more are in progress, and they have processed over 200 WorkPlace Scholarships (privately funded training grants). The number of 547 was negotiated by the WIB at the beginning of the year based on the needs of workers and employers in the area and the training resources available.

The information on ITAs and all the other measurements are reported to The WorkPlace, Inc. on a monthly basis.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

The JobLink, Inc. team learned a number of lessons while implementing their ITA program.

- Greater emphasis should have been placed on requiring partners to contribute funds to the operation of the One-Stop Career Center;
- The One-Stop management must continue to exhibit patience and savvy in working with partners;
- Negotiation is the key to implementing a successful One-Stop system;
- Contingency plans must be developed for handling expanded numbers of clients;
- Develop different ITA plans for dealing with dislocated workers and for adults. In their experience, dislocated workers need much less assistance than adult low skilled workers in dealing with the one-stop and ITA system;
- There is no single "plan of action" that can be used for all clients;
- Clients should continue to be given training in using the internet;
- Job seeking skills of potential ITA clients should continue to be assessed before being referred to training;

- Staff need to continue contextual capacity building among partners in order to be skilled in multi-tasking;
- Implementing an effective ITA program requires that staff understand that they are on a team and must be responsible for all tasks be implemented in the One-Stop Career Center;
- JobLink, Inc. must continue to hire people from the business side and continue to be very active in promoting the work of The CTWorks Center to employers.

To enhance the program in the future, JobLink, Inc. is considering a number of options. For example, in order to make the ITA system more effective for both the customer and the vendor, JobLink, Inc. may develop a technical assistance package/training program to be used with training vendors. The goal of such a package would be to clarify the program and its various process and paperwork to vendors. Other One-Stop partners could also benefit from special training sessions to clarify the ITA process.

JobLink, Inc. intends to market its fee for service program more widely. Currently, they do charge for some services, but management believes that with effective marketing, the program could be expanded significantly. Developing a comprehensive training package for employers could also serve to make employers more aware of all the services available in The CTWorks Center.

In conclusion, The WorkPlace, Inc, stated that for One-Stop Centers to be effective they have to move, change and evaluate constantly. For WIBs to be successful, they must become a leader – the face, voice, and symbol of workforce development in their area.

### List of Interviewees

Joseph Carbone	President, WorkPlace, Inc.
Adrienne Parkmond	The WorkPlace, Inc.
Madeline Y. Primeau	Executive Director, The Workforce Ctr.
Brenda Liebers Moore	CT Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Denis Claveloux	Senior Career Advisor, The Workforce Ctr.
Richard Litzinger	Career Development Advisor, The Workforce Ctr.
Josesph Caissey	Lead Skill Development Facilitator, The Workforce Ctr.
Mary Matera	Skill Development Advisor, The Workforce Ctr.
Alan H. Gopian	Manager, Enrollment Center & Business Services The Workforce Ctr.
Phillipa Pascal	Customer
Magdalena Kellner	Customer
Sharon Hogan	Customer

# SITE VISIT REPORT: Vermont Department of Employment & Training, Burlington, Vermont

## I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION

Date and Location of Site Visit: April 3-4, 2001, Burlington, Vermont

Organization: Vermont Department of Employment & Training

Type of Entity: State Agency

Contact Person: Ann Marie Nichols, Manager, Burlington Career Resource Center

Phone: (802) 658-1120

Fax: (802) 763-7655

Email: [anichols@pop.det.state.vt.us](mailto:anichols@pop.det.state.vt.us)

Web site: [www.det.state.vt.us/](http://www.det.state.vt.us/)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop Design and Management

Promising Practice: Jump Start Youth Center

Heldrich Center On-Site Team: Laurie M. Santos, Ken Ryan

List of Interviewees: Attached

## II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION

The Burlington labor market area, with a labor force of almost 104,000, represents approximately 30% of Vermont's total labor force. Burlington, with a population of almost 40,000, is the state's largest city, and the center of the local labor market area that consists of 20 towns, 16 of which have a population of less than 10,000. Statewide, Vermont's unemployment rate was 3.5% in January 2001. The Burlington area unemployment rate was 2.2%, the second lowest rate of Vermont's 14 local labor markets.

The Burlington area experienced a 3.5% increase in jobs over the last year. Major growth sectors included manufacturing (5.1%), services (4.5%), and government (10.0%). There are only four employers with more than 1,000 employees in the Burlington areas; IBM, State of Vermont, University of Vermont, and Fletcher Allen Health Care. Major employment sectors are summarized below:

Manufacturing	20%
Retail	20%
Services	32%
Government	13%
Education	9%

Vermont's Department of Employment & Training (DET) has always served as the administrator and operator of workforce development activities in the State. During JTPA, Vermont was a single-state service delivery area and DET had statewide operational control over all activities. Vermont, grounded in this statewide

infrastructure, began building the One-Stop system in the early 1990's. Based on this high level of readiness, Vermont was one of the six early implementing states under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

Vermont's new Workforce Investment Board was created by Executive Order of the Governor in early 1999. This new board continues to provide leadership, vision, and oversight to the workforce system, consistent with the policy foundation established by its predecessor policy board, Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC).

The State WIB has established twelve regional boards to oversee Vermont's twelve One-Stop Centers known as Career Resource Centers (CRC). The State WIB has also established a single statewide Youth Council, building on school-to-work and other partners. Given its pre-WIA status as the presumptive deliverer of all workforce development services (i.e., Wagner-Peyser, JTPA, U.I.), DET was selected as the statewide One-Stop Operator. As a single state workforce investment area, the Career Resource Center in Burlington is considered Vermont's mandated One-Stop Center under WIA. The other eleven CRCs throughout the state also provide core, intensive and training services. This network of CRCs serves as the gateway for the job seeker and employer customers of Vermont.

DET has also developed strong partnerships with state and local agencies in support of WIA goals and mandates. Major collaborations include the Department of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Corps, and a diverse array of community-based agencies. Vermont has designed a seamless, customer friendly approach to providing workforce services to job seekers and employers. The extensive use of technology, both Web- and CRC-based, also provides increasing access to workforce services.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

Jump Start is a youth initiative that has evolved over the last two years in Burlington's CRC. Originally initiated by a staff member dedicated to youth customers, the concept has evolved into a separate youth One-Stop Center (Jump Start) housed adjacent to the main One-Stop Career Center. According to DET staff, the need for a high-visibility youth initiative was motivated by a significant increase in gang activity, drug abuse, and dropouts among Burlington area youth. Now staffed by two full-time professionals, Jump Start provides a focus and serves as a clearinghouse of almost all youth workforce initiatives in Chittenden County. The basic premise of Jump Start is to provide a youth-friendly environment for customers and a focal point for the many diverse community groups that serve youth. In contrast to the mandated partners required by WIA, Jump Start has attracted many "volunteer" partners, all sharing a common mission of youth development.

### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The key components of Jump Start are two dedicated youth staff, the 800-square-foot Jump Start Center site, and the support and linkage with the DET and partner staff of the Burlington CRC. While the actual resources in the Jump Start resource room are

very similar to the resources in the main CRC resource room, the fact that Jump Start is dedicated to youth enhances recruitment via word of mouth and agency referrals. A representative of Job Corps also maintains an office at the Jump Start Center.

In contrast to adult services, which are often self-directed, two Youth Specialists provide personalized intake and assessment services. Based on the needs of the individual, an employment plan is crafted by the youth customer and the Youth Specialist. Most WIA-funded options involve a customized work experience position at local public or private work sites. Very often, the work experience is supplemented with additional services from one or more of the collaborating youth agencies. For non-WIA registered youth, the Jump Start self-help and staff-facilitated services are available. A small number of young people conduct job searches on their own. The following examples illustrate the individualized youth-focused career development services that have been created by Jump Start and partner agencies.

**Lake Champlain Basin Science Center** – involves youth in supportive, learning environment providing tours, developing a Web site, and monitoring water quality.

**Cyber Skills** – a community-based agency committed to technology training and bridging the digital divide in a community-friendly environment. Youth learn computer skills while assisting a diverse group of community residents to become familiar with information technology.

**Youth Build** – working in teams with skilled supervisors, youth are involved in all phases of construction.

**Private Employer** – customer service trainee in an auto parts retail store

**School-Based Initiative** - Ready, Set, Work is an example of creative partnership between local schools and DET/Jump Start. Ready, Set, Work began in the Summer of 2000 at Burlington High School. At-risk students learned the skills necessary to find and keep jobs through work experience and group and individual counseling. DET provided wage subsidies, mentoring support, and job placement services. The initiative was expanded to a year round activity, which includes credit for completion and transition to unsubsidized employment.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Jump Start initiative has a separate identity but is soundly supported by the DET management and staff at the CRC in Burlington. The youth staff, working with the staff of collaborating agencies, is encouraged to experiment with new approaches and new solutions to youth development. For example, the Youth Specialists at DET have created and maintain a database of "youth-friendly" area employers, which is available to cooperating youth agencies.

## **VI. OUTCOMES MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

Specific outcome measures (which will define success) are still being developed. The most tangible evidence of Jump Start's success is the extent to which the initiative fulfills the spirit and mandate of WIA relative to youth programs and One-Stop Centers. Youth programs under WIA are required partners of the One-Stop system.

Jump Start has allowed DET to better incorporate youth programs, develop a broader array of youth services, and reach out to a wider range of youth program partners than was typical before WIA. DET now has plans to incorporate Jump Start in all Career Resource Centers throughout Vermont. DET is also considering specific outcome measures to evaluate the outcome of Jump Start. In addition to WIA's youth performance measures, possible items for documentation include total numbers served both in-school and out-of-school, funds leveraged from non-WIA sources, and number of "youth-friendly" employers participating.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

For local WIA areas interested in enhancing youth development and connections to the One-Stop System, there are a number of lessons to be learned from the Jump Start initiative in Burlington. To begin with, a space dedicated to youth services encourages an environment that is comfortable and welcoming to young people, which in turn promotes recruitment and retention. The space can be adjacent or even within the confines of the main One-Stop, as long as it has a unique identity. Jump Start also attributes its success to the fact that it employs two dedicated youth staff members, which allows for more intensive, comprehensive, and consistent youth services. Youth staff are empowered to design and develop new and flexible approaches based on the needs of individual customers and the resources of collaborating youth agencies.

Collaboration with other youth agencies is also important. Chittenden County maintains a Youth Services Initiative, which is a group of staff from youth agencies that meets periodically to exchange information, explore new concepts, and to network. Jump Start and the leadership of DET are important components in sustaining this volunteer group of front-line professionals. With Jump Start and youth collaboratives forming the foundation, an unusual rapport and relationship has developed among the front line staff of many agencies. The result of this rapport is teamwork and creative solutions to the individual needs of youth. The belief is that eventually these separate but effective youth collaboratives will band together and join the single statewide WIA Youth Council.

### List of Interviewees

Steven M. Gold	Commissioner VT Dept. of Employment & Training
Rose Lucenti	Program Coordinator VT Dept. of Employment & Training
Ann Marie Nichols	District Manager Burlington Career Resource Center VT Dept. of Employment & Training
William Wintersteen	Employment & Training Supervisor VT Dept. of Employment & Training
Cynthia Seckler	Youth Specialist VT Dept. of Employment & Training
John Froment	Employment & Training Specialist (Youth) VT Dept. of Employment & Training
Kathy Henry	Employment & Training Specialist VT Dept. of Employment & Training
Sue Clark	Career Services Manager Northlands Job Corps Center
Warren Hardy	Project Director Community High School
Sara Eastman	Project Director Spectrum Family Agency
Gabriella Tufo-Strause	Project Director King Street Youth Center
Joan Stanlika	Work Site Supervisor Burlington High School
Kenneth Saxe	Employment/ Transition Specialist Colchester High School
6 Youth Participants	

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Denton Texas Workforce Center, Denton, Texas**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: April 4-5, 2001, Denton, Texas,

Organization: North Central Texas Workforce Center in Denton, managed by the North Texas Human Resource Group (NTHRG)

Type of Entity: private non-profit organization

Contact Person: Lloyd Webb, Executive Director. North Texas Human Resource Group

Phone: (940) 566-1402 x321

Fax: (940) 382-1124

Email: [lloyd.webb@dfwinfo.com](mailto:lloyd.webb@dfwinfo.com)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Job Seekers

Promising Practice: The Career Center's Resource Room

Heldrich Center Representatives: K.A. Dixon, Kristin Wolff

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The City of Denton (85,000 residents) is located 30 miles north of Dallas/Ft. Worth, in Denton County (1,000,000 residents). The combination of the old courthouse square and strip malls, together with highway sprawl, give the impression that Denton was once its own little town well outside of the cities of Dallas and Ft. Worth. It now struggles to find an identity more appealing to long-time local residents than "one of Dallas's bedroom communities." Its proximity to the industrial base of the greater Dallas area, the (Perot, Jr.) Alliance complex, and better-than average retail base, together with its educational capital—Texas Women's University (10,000 students), the University of North Texas (25,000 largely commuter students), and North Central Texas College—should help in that regard.

Major employers in Denton include the University of North Texas (5,000 employees), Frito-Lay (2,200), American Airlines (2,000), and Peterbilt Motors (1,888), though employment has been volatile with each of the private-sector firms during recent years. Two major medical centers also employ about 2,000 workers. The nearby Alliance complex (major distribution centers, UPS, light manufacturing, and related secondary and tertiary industries) also employ many Denton residents. The technology industry—a key growth industry in Dallas—has also begun to spread to the North. Although technology firms are largely responsible for generating demand for workers in Dallas, technology workers in non-technology industries are in demand to the North. Denton County's workforce—almost 30% of which has attended college—gives the community a key economic development advantage in the current tight labor market.

Traffic patterns reveal a significant number of workers commuting to Dallas daily, but also show people commuting from Oklahoma and Wichita Falls to the Denton area. The

long established agricultural and horse breeding/ranching industries both employ large numbers, and draw out-of-town investment both from urbanites that maintain livestock in Denton County and from tourism and related recreational activities.

The Denton area—like many others in the south and west—has witnessed significant demographic shifts during the past decade. Recent census figures reveal a fast-growing Latino population of 25%. African Americans comprise about 10% of the population, and small numbers of Native Americans and immigrants/foreign students attending local high schools and universities add to the community's diversity. The Center's staff largely reflects this diversity, as does its customer base—staff (some of whom are bilingual) is engaged in specific outreach to the Latino community to insure that potential customers are aware of the Center's services.

Denton's unemployment rate of 2.8% reflects a tight local labor market. The unemployment rate of the entire greater Dallas/Ft. Worth area remains about 2%, despite several recent (and substantial) lay-offs. Several key features of state and local governance of workforce development efforts give Texas an advantage relative to other states and local workforce boards. For example, prior to the formation of the Texas Workforce Commission, the JTPA program had been run out of the State Commerce Department. This provided longtime local JTPA staff with business and economic development-side contacts and networks atypical of peers in other states. Texas was also an early Department of Labor One-Stop Grantee — by 1995, the state had reorganized its state workforce entities, placing ten formerly separate state agencies managing 28 different programs inside a newly formed Texas Workforce Commission. TANF and Food Stamp Employment and Training, JTPA, Wagner-Peyser, Child Care, Welfare-to-Work, and School-to-Careers are key programs whose resources were then allocated locally through the 28 local Workforce Investment Boards.

In addition, prior to the passage of WIA, many local boards regularly contracted services rather than providing them in-house. As a result, urban areas in Texas (and some rural areas) have strong competitors for local dollars. The talent is deeper than in many areas in the country and the choices for boards are greater. The North Central Texas Workforce Board is staffed by the North Texas Council of Governments, which also staffs other local boards of various kinds and does regional planning with other local and state governing bodies. In Central Texas, this means that it is not always predictable who will represent which body on community planning/projects. This enables considerable information flow—the result is that One-Stop contractors and staff may be equally well versed in labor market information, policy discussions, economic development and other projects. Contractors and board staff have the ability to adjust to new economic conditions quickly.

Perhaps the single most significant difference between Texas and most other states is the local resources base. Local boards procure not only WIA dollars, but also childcare, TANF employment and training, Wagner-Peyser and other program dollars. This enables considerable local decision-making and supports the efforts of local boards and service providers to leverage existing dollars.

There are three key local workforce boards in the greater Dallas area. At the center of the greater Dallas/Ft. Worth area are workforce boards for Dallas and Tarrant Counties. The North Central Texas Workforce Board is responsible for workforce policy for the 14 counties surrounding Dallas and Tarrant. The entire greater Dallas/Ft. Worth area is home to about five million people. The 14 counties—Collin, Denton, Ellis, Erath, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Navarro, Pale Pinto, Parker, Rockwall, Summerville, and Wise—in the North Central Texas Workforce Area comprise 1.3 million residents, and Denton and Collin counties alone are about 80% of that total (a little over 1 million). These two counties are also the fastest growing counties in the state and are home to about equal numbers of residents. The Alliance area is largely responsible for Denton County's more diverse industrial base.

The North Central Texas Workforce Board—which is staffed by the North Central Texas Council of Governments—ran a competitive procurement process and selected the North Texas Human Resource Group (NTHRG) to provide services in five of the fourteen counties. NTHRG had been a longtime provider of CETA and JTPA services (some locals boards had procured for services in Texas well before WIA). NTHRG currently manages eight centers in the five counties for which it is responsible and a satellite workforce center in combination with Tarrant County providers located in the Alliance complex. The North Central Texas Workforce Center in Denton is the focus of this profile. It was the second such center in the State of Texas to pass the State Certification process.

The Center serves all customers, but clearly emphasizes a traditional JTPA/WIA customer base. The vast majority of customers are unemployed or recently dislocated, although employed customers who found their jobs through the Center and seek new opportunities are an emerging customer group. The Center has begun to hold evening hours to serve this new constituency.

The Center receives funds from three sources. Child Care dollars make up 15.69% of the Center budget; Wagner Peyser is 27.45% of the budget; and WIA makes up the remainder, at 57%. Currently, the Center does not administer any fee-based services or programs, although Center staff is exploring that option for the future. Its partners include:

- Workforce Investment Act programs for youth, adults, and dislocated workers
- NAFTA/TAA
- TANF Food Stamps Programs
- Welfare-to-Work
- Green Thumb (older workers)
- Reintegration of Youth Offenders (ROI) program
- Employment Service for Probationers Program
- Employment Service (Wagner Peyser)
- Vets (a veteran's organization)
- UI Benefits programs
- Child Care Block Grant
- Several local community service programs (youth)
- Two staffing firms (will lease space during the next several months)
- Other local community-based services (staff rotate in when needed)

- Referral to other programs including grant programs (e-futures—H1B grant program)

The Center is located in the City of Denton almost within walking distance of the central town square and easily accessible from the freeway and by public transportation. It is a brand-new facility of 20,000 square feet that was developed specifically to house the workforce center. Partners moved in about six months before the site visit—in October 2000.

Another large facility (25,000 square feet) in the same complex is currently under construction. NTHRG expects that a variety of social service agencies and non-profit organizations, together with some for-profit educational and staffing services firms, will begin leasing the property during the next several months. It is scheduled to open in late May. The vision is that two adjoining properties will form a social service, education, and workforce “campus.” Staff at the workforce center expressed frustration that key partners are unable to locate in the new complex because of existing property leases, but were generally optimistic that the “campus” vision would come to fruition.

The Workforce Center features a reception area, three training rooms, the Resource Room, several large rooms where staff meet with customers one-on-one, and a child-care center. Additional space is available for two private-sector staffing firms that have just signed leases and will be moving in during the next several months. The environment there is clean, well lit, inviting, and very customer-friendly. The reception area is particularly well designed. Customers first encounter a very large desk with a low counter (which enables them to see staff ready and waiting to assist them when they enter the building). A much taller side counter accommodates paperwork (customers stand up while signing in) and provides storage space underneath.

The Center distinguishes itself from other workforce centers in the use and management of its Resource Room. When planning the use of space in the new facility, NTHRG took great care in designing and organizing this central feature of its One-Stop Center.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The local Workforce Board nominated the Denton Workforce Center’s Resource Room as a best practice. During our time in the Center, the Resource Room was active and busy, with an impressive amount of customers utilizing the area. Center staff knew many of these customers by name, and were quick to assist and direct all those who required help. The Resource Room is staffed by two full-time employees, with a back-up schedule in place that draws from other full-time Center staff to ensure that the Resource Room has trained staff at all times.

In speaking to several customers in the Resource Room, Center staff, particularly the Resource Room’s two full-time staff, received unanimous praise. Customers noted the friendly and welcoming atmosphere of the Resource Room, the usefulness of the computer and other technology resources (printers, FAX machines) and the extensive assistance they receive from Resource Room staff. In addition to the services they receive, the personal relationship these customers have forged with the staff appears to have contributed in a

large part to their satisfaction (and the effectiveness) of the Resource Room. Customers range from unemployed job seekers to employed job seekers looking for better opportunities, but each commented on the value of having Resource Room staff personally aware of their job search goals and alerting them to opportunities. One customer, despite having a computer at home, came to the Resource Room to use the computer for job searches, commenting on the faster connection and the benefit of having staff handy should she need assistance. Another customer valued the use of the FAX machines and phones to send résumés and follow-up on job leads. All of the job seekers we spoke to noted the valuable help they received in putting together an effective résumé, and praised Resource Room staff for devoting a significant amount of time to assisting them in getting their résumé “just right.” The prevailing attitude of the staff is that no customer should leave the Center without receiving the assistance they need, and it was evident that this philosophy had been clearly communicated to the customers we spoke to.

The North Texas Human Resource Group and Workforce Center staff decided to make the Resource Room the focus of Center services for several reasons. Primary of these was the need to develop a local response to the Workforce Investment Act, which emphasizes a basic level of service for a universal customer base, with more intensive services provided to those who need it. The Resource Room also developed in response to the need to infuse services with technology to help customers develop basic computer skills. Job seekers who lack computer skills are increasingly marginal to the labor market. Many One-Stop Centers, including Denton’s, seek to use their resource rooms as a means to promote digital inclusion.

The local board and its contractors aspire to impact their community in ways that go beyond their current funding base, and seek to develop markets for fee-based services. This means they need to be perceived as value-added among constituents that far exceed the numbers they would enroll in targeted programs—the Resource Room expands the Center’s reach into a broader constituency than its programs.

The tight labor market adds two additional design imperatives: speed and accuracy. Despite recent dot.com lay-offs, the Dallas/Denton area labor market remains very tight. As a result, job seekers can find jobs quickly and most potential WIA customers do not want training unless they absolutely cannot find work. Effective labor-exchange services can both speed up and make more accurate the job search process for anyone who seeks to use the Center.

Overall, the Resource Room is intended to reach large numbers of people and help the Center develop its reputation as a provider of value-added services. Because the Center had identified the Resource Room as a key area of focus early on in the transition to the Workforce Investment Act, they had practiced different approaches and knew what they wanted by the time they had the opportunity to design it from scratch. Early on, the Resource Room was small and crowded; equipment was older and space was less customer-friendly. Staff had to make the transition from seeing the Resource Room as an extended waiting room to making it a central feature of their service design.

Access to state information systems and databases was also crucial for Resource Room services, so when the new facility was designed, two state-funded staff (Wagner-Peyser) were hired to run it, thus allowing customers full access to all information systems from the Resource Room. The Center's relationships with its partners impact the Resource Room's effectiveness and performance in two primary ways: 1) staff from other programs are cross-trained in self-access tools and resources, and therefore actively market them to their customers across programs; and 2) program staff, because they are cross-trained, can both provide back-up assistance in the Resource Room during busy periods, and can effectively advocate for new services or improved designs on behalf of their particular customer groups.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Customers gain access to the Resource Room's services in various ways. First-time Center visitors are invited to an orientation to all Center services (in addition, all those collecting unemployment are required to report to the Center and participate in an orientation). The orientation program includes a tour and demonstration of the services in the Resource Room. At the conclusion of the orientation program, interested customers—about 30%—are invited to apply for particular programs, such as Workforce Investment Act (WIA) youth or adult programs, or are referred directly to the Resource Room. If customers elect to apply for specific programs, additional information and assistance with Resource Room services is provided. Customers who elect to go directly to the Resource Room receive assistance getting started from staff.

Repeat users go directly to the Resource Room after signing in. The Center is currently evaluating touch-screen information systems that will more specifically track the services repeat customer use—this will be particularly important as the Center grows its employed customer base. Staff reported that new customers who require one-on-one assistance are also advised to use the resources on Tuesday evenings—the Center is open late and is less busy than during the day. Workshops—several taught by the Resource Room staff—also attract customers to the Resource Room by making customers aware of what they can do with the electronic and other resources there.

##### *Layout and Contents of Resource Room*

The Resource Room is a large space that houses 16 workstations. Eleven of them offer high-speed internet-connected computers, and the other four provide telephone and fax machine access. Printers and copiers are also available (at the time of our visit, an additional five computers have been ordered for the Resource Room). Three of the computers are equipped with self-paced tutorials on the Microsoft Windows operating system and all Microsoft Office applications, with the exception of PowerPoint (on order). Resource Room staff reserve those computers for self-paced learning, but do open them up for general use when they are available and the Center is busy. Two bookshelves on opposite sides of the room feature a variety of career-related books, résumé guides, Chamber of Commerce materials, economic journals, newspapers and the like.

The computers and workstations are clean and well maintained. The desktop interfaces are also clean—not loaded with a plethora of shortcuts, links, and extra software. While a case

can be made that such icons make resources easy to find, Denton's Resource Room staff felt that the "busyness" was unappealing and intimidated some customers—particularly those for whom English is a second language.

As individuals enter the Resource Room, staff immediately introduce themselves, inquire about the customer's needs, and assist them in getting started. While the world of resources in the Internet is obviously available to all customers, staff tend to direct them to specific resources first. These include national, statewide, and local job banks—America's Job Bank, Texas Workforce Commission's Governor's Job Bank, and the local version of the Governor's Job Bank (Express Jobs), local classifieds, and Monster.com, and WinWay résumé maker. While the national, state, and local job banks appear to house timely and accurate information, the user interface is not terribly user-friendly—it requires keyboard commands rather than the use of a mouse. However, staff are available to assist users in navigating these systems. The staff maintains an extensive list of alternative job search engines in a paper customer guide (rather than in electronic bookmark form) and provides this to customers upon request.

*WinWay* is the primary tool staff encourages customers to use to create their résumés. Though different versions exist on different computers in the Resource Room, the tool is an excellent resource for individuals who do not have current résumés.

The Center's layout also supports the success of the Resource Room. First, the Resource Room is central and visible from the front door—a customer cannot possibly receive a service in the Workforce Center without seeing the Resource Room. Second, the room is very light and open, with plenty of window space. Like the rest of the Center, the Resource Room is clean, well maintained, and tastefully decorated.

Another notable characteristic of the Resource Room is that all the equipment is in good working order, and nothing was half-installed (e.g., no handwritten signs contradicting other messages). There were several additional computers on order, and staff indicated that there would soon be a facilities manager because it was becoming difficult to insure that all of the operational and facilities mechanics were working smoothly.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

There are specific practices that make the Center's Resource Room particularly effective. These include staff, a commitment to cross-training, physical infrastructure, sufficient investments in technology, and the management and capacity of North Texas Human Resource Group generally.

Both management and customers cited the effectiveness of Resource Room staff as a key part of the Center's success. The Resource Room is staffed by two primary employees, who provide hands-on assistance to Resource Room customers, maintain and update job search resources and aids, and take a personal interest in their customers and actively strive for their success. The computers and printers are new (several more on order), maintain new software and operating systems, and staff are well versed in their use.

Staff members make timely and effective service as top priority in the Resource Room. Customers are greeted as they enter, and directed to the resources they need. If a customer is not sure where to start, Resource Room staff will work with that person to determine what their needs are, and how to meet them. "If someone is looking for a job, I make sure they walk out of here with at least three job leads," explained one Resource Room staff member. "If they need help with something else, I make sure that I get them the information they need." Staff help desks are located at opposite ends of the Resource Room—one near each door—making it easy for customers to ask for assistance. The Resource Room maintains two staff persons at all times, and opens up a third desk when it is needed. To ensure that the Resource Room is adequately staffed at all times, all Center staff are required to become "certified" in Resource Room databases, information, and electronic tools (they use the Mary Ann Lawrence competency matrix). This policy insures that additional staff resources are always available when they are needed and increases the skill base of staff whose primary responsibilities do not require knowledge of these resources.

Recognizing the advantage of having a unified set of operations to guide and support Center staff (who are drawn from several different programs), Center management developed an operations manual that clearly articulates the Center's mission, goals, and staff responsibilities. Questions of "who is responsible for what" are addressed in the manual and serve as a point of reference when disagreements regarding the scope of work of individual program staff arise. The manual also helps staff at all levels manage State and Federal monitors and reduced administrative burdens throughout the system. New staff report that the manual is particularly helpful in sorting out who the local board is and what they do, so that they could insure that their work was helping the organization drive toward WIB goals. Finally, the work it took to complete the manual helped solve problems along the way, before they became insurmountable barriers. For example, dress codes and pay scales for employees employed by different agencies but working in the Center were issues that were addressed early on as the manual was developed. Both management and staff members cite this manual as an invaluable resource in both sorting out the work plan for the Center and insuring that the Resource Room, in particular, received a high level of attention.

Like many One-Stops throughout the country, the Denton One-Stop Center continues to work to implement strategies that effectively collect and disseminate WIA mandated performance management information. Currently, Center staff track the number of customers per month (approximately 1200 applications per month) the types of services they are seeking and receive, and how satisfied they are with Center service. Resource Room staff also track their own usage and customer satisfaction data (as Wagner Peyser employees, Resource Room staff have full access to the state data systems as well). However, while the data is collected by Center staff, off-site NTHRG staff manage and monitor the data, resulting in a less effective performance management system: Center staff have difficulty relating the data to an overall performance system and using it to improve performance. Center staff recognize that improvements in this area are needed and are taking steps to create a more effective system. Weekly meetings are held with staff to review performance data and adjust services accordingly. In addition, Center management is considering locating some off-site administrative staff to the Center, as well as hiring more staff to assist in the creation and implementation of performance management strategies.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

Relative to the Resource Room, the Center/NTHRG pays attention to the following measures (in addition to program-specific and required measures):

- The increase in the number of overall Center usage (132% since move);
- The increase in Resource Room traffic (134% since move);
- The increase in job-seeker and employer activities, such as job fairs (3,400% since move);
- Customer satisfaction information.

The customer satisfaction information is used most immediately. Resource Room staff are encouraged to suggest limitless changes that might serve customer better. Other numbers are used at the managerial level and the contract management level.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

Respondents from NTHRG articulated several key lessons they have learned, including;

- Committing to deliver a product that employers believe in, and then producing it;
- Staying on top of opportunity (labor market changes, economic development opportunities, etc.);
- Investing in team-building early and then persevering; while mixing and cross-training staff as much as possible;
- Getting local elected officials (LEO) and other political capital on board early and encouraging them to maintain their commitment (every LEO in town has been to the Center);
- Developing a neutral and final place to document decisions and put resolutions to problems, in this case the policy manual;
- Putting one person in charge of managing the Center;
- Identifying a rumor control help desk (a trusted person that staff from any agency can go to for help).

Denton One-Stop management and staff identified several factors that enabled their success. Strong board leadership provides support and cover for making major changes. Center managers have a high level of authority over all staff, making it easier to resolve problems. WIB staff take the quality assurance principals seriously, and are able to forge good working relationships with contractors. The WIB controls multiple local funding streams, making it easier to manage budgets. And on a fundamental level, just being close to Dallas helps leverage the Center's position in the community. They summarized by saying, "We managed the politics pretty well and got to a place where all the agencies figured out we were wearing the same color jerseys." Finally, customers identified the many dedicated staff members, particularly those in the Resource Room, as being active advocates for their success who are willing to go the extra mile to make sure that get the services they need to find and keep a good job.

### **List of Interviewees**

Sunny Neighbors	Contract Specialist, NTHRG
Lloyd Webb	Executive Director, NTHRG
Cynthia Doyle	Youth Program Manager
Essie Clampett	Business Services Consultant
Jane Krhovjak	Manager of Client Services
Dee Hatchett	Resource Room Coordinator
Kim Klipfel	Resource Room Coordinator

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Detroit's Work Place, Detroit, Michigan**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: July 30, 2001, Detroit, Michigan

Organization: Detroit's Work Place

Type of Entity: One-Stop operator

Contact Person: Alberto Uribe, Executive Director

Tel: (313) 962-9675

Fax: (313) 962-4884

E-Mail Address: [auribe@detroitworkplace.org](mailto:auribe@detroitworkplace.org)

Web site: <http://www.detroitworkplace.org>

Key Area for Selection: Services to Job Seekers

Promising Practice: Services for job seekers with limited English language skills

Heldrich Center Representatives: Robin Gwathney, Suzanne Guibert

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Detroit's Work Place operates a one-stop career center in a modern, attractive, five-story building located at 455 W. Fort Street in downtown Detroit and a second, full-service site in downtown Detroit at 707 West Milwaukee. The city of Detroit has a population of 951,270 that is composed of the following: Black – 81.6%; White – 12.3%; Asian – 1%. Hispanics, of any race, make up 5% of the population (47,167). The major employers in the city, Wayne County, and the surrounding area are the large automobile manufacturers - Ford, Chrysler and General Motors. In addition to the automobile industry, the city of Detroit operates one of the world's busiest inland ports and the Detroit area is a great steel center and a leader in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals, office equipment, paint, rubber products, salt and more than half the garden seed used throughout the country.

The majority of jobs are in the service industry, with 76% working in government. The metropolitan Detroit labor market is unique among large cities in that the number of people employed in goods producing – manufacturing and construction jobs – has increased during the last year. The unemployment rate for the Detroit Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) [SMSA includes the city and the counties of Lapeer, Macomb, Monroe, St. Clair, Oakland and the surrounding Wayne County] has remained at 5% since January, 2001, which is slightly higher than the state rate of 4.9%. However, Detroit's Work Place management report that the actual rate for the city is around 7%, coupled with a high rates of crime and welfare, a significant amount of public housing, and other problems associated with large cities. In March 2000, a study commissioned by *Detroit Michigan Works!* Workforce Investment Board found that Detroit's population is declining, although the rate of decline has decreased in recent years. Persistent and significant poverty levels continue to exist in the City. The study highlighted that the connection between

formal education and preparation for work is weaker in Detroit than in the Region, and Detroit's education attainment levels are less than those for the State and the Region.

In the early 90's, Michigan was one of the states that established "incubator" programs and systems to test workforce development program integration. From this effort, Michigan established its Michigan Jobs Commission. The Michigan Jobs Commission has developed into a comprehensive state economic and workforce development agency. Its core mission of job retention, workforce development, and business climate improvement in partnership with locally governed *Michigan Works!* Agencies remain central to all its activities. In 1996, before the advent of the Workforce Investment Act, the Michigan Jobs Commission established a policy that by July 1997 the *Michigan Works!* service delivery areas had to choose whether or not they wanted to administer workforce development funds (Job Training Partnership Act funds) or operate programs. As a result of this directive, the decided that Detroit's Employment and Training Department would administer the funds and the city would issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for program service delivery.

In May 1996, the Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) responded to City's RFP to provide workforce development services in Detroit and was selected from among several organizations submitting bids. As a result, Detroit's Work Place (a division of JVS) was established and began operation in March 1997. Through a subsequent RFP, Detroit's Work Place was selected to provide WIA services. Also during this time, the City was designated as an empowerment zone by the federal government. When WIA was enacted, the Michigan Jobs Commission established the following organizations as mandated partners in the one-stop career center system: City of Detroit, the TANF Agency, Michigan Department of Career Development – Rehabilitation Services, the Michigan Employment Security Agency, Wayne County Community College and the Detroit Public Schools.

The City of Detroit's Office of Employment and Training, under the direction of Willie Walker, administers the one-stop career center system including establishing all Memorandums of Understanding with the various partners. During the initial planning stage, JVS/Detroit's Work Place, with assistance from the Office of Employment and Training, was successful in completely renovating an old building and hiring all new staff for the new operation. The City staff that had previously provided employment and training services, found other jobs in city government. In addition to Detroit's Work Place, the Office of Employment and Training funds 65 other programs involved in workforce development services.

The one-stop career center is under the supervision of the Detroit Workforce Investment Board (WIB) that incorporates leaders from 42 business, labor, education, community-based and one-stop partner organizations. The WIB has had a positive impact on the operation of the Detroit's Work Place by bringing employers into the system and helping to create a professional, business-like atmosphere at the one-stop career center. The WIB has also begun an extensive community-based

strategic planning process mandated by the Michigan Department of Career Development (MCDCC). The nature of this process includes:

1. Developing an **Environmental Scan and Career Development System Report Card** – creating a synthesis of key community trends and system performance trends that provides an intelligence framework for decision-making and agreement in the community about important facts.
2. Conducting a **Community Outreach/Consensus** effort – publicizing the environmental scan and proposed goals and measures included in the Report Card to receive public comment and gain community support.
3. Determining **Strategic Assets and** developing a **Comprehensive Plan** – identifying and providing evidence for those programs/institutions whose performance is going in the direction of desired outcomes and developing a plan on how each institution will focus/re-deploy its resources to achieve mutually desired outcomes.

At Detroit's Work Place, the one-stop career center, customers are offered the following services through the partners: core services; outreach, intake and orientation; self serve assessments; eligibility determination, career counseling; employability skills development workshops; adult basic education skills remediation; career resource center services; employment development plan initiation; support services; onsite evaluation and preparation for GED testing and skill guided learning programs; training services; and a computer-learning center for Adult Basic Education, GED preparation as well as jobskills training and placement assistance. Funding sources include WIA Adult and Youth, dislocated worker, TANF work first, Jobnet, United Cerebral Palsy, and Youth Opportunity Grants. The one-stop center has 60 employees staffing the two full-service sites. The onsite partners include:

- Angel Land Day Care and Parenting Center – offer monthly workshops focused on family development and operate an onsite fee-based day care facility for employees.
- Child Care Coordinating Council – provides child and family development services.
- Detroit Entrepreneurship Institute, Inc. – a non-profit corporation designed to help person learn skills needed to develop a successful business.
- Employment Central of Detroit – is the state employment service agency dedicated to providing employment services to customers.
- Foundation for Behavior Resources – provides a daily Job Club program for customers.
- Job Corps – provides information on the federal residential employment and training program for young adults.
- Michigan Department of Career Development Rehabilitation Services – assists individuals with disabilities to achieve employment and self-sufficiency and consultation to employers regarding disability issues.

- Wayne County Family Neighborhood Legal Services – addresses the cycle of homelessness with comprehensive and collaborative service.
- Ross Innovative Employment Services – partners with state and local agencies to design and implement innovative job readiness, job placement and career training programs to address the needs of customers.
- SER Metro Detroit SERCO Job Search/Job Placement – working with Wayne County Friend of the Court and Family Independence Agency, SERCO provides resume building, professional life-skills training, supportive services, job placement, GED completion and post employment training services.
- Employment & Training Department, Michigan Works! Agency – promotes the economic self-sufficiency of customers through cost-effective education and training.
- Health Services Technical Assistance Program – provides assessment, case management and treatment recommendations for substance abusers trying to re-enter the job market.
- JOBnet – is an internet-based labor exchange system linking empowerment zone residents to jobs.

These organizations have signed agreements with the Detroit's Office of Employment and Training, as the WIA administrator, to provide services to customers of the one-stop career center operated by Detroit's Work Place.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The unique employment program – One Stop to Success – was funded through a grant to United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) Associations from the US Department of Labor to assist one-stop employment centers in Detroit and Denver to extend effective employment services to persons with significant disabilities. Partnering to provide these services is Detroit's Work Place (a division of Jewish Vocational Services which has a long history of serving people with disabilities), the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Metropolitan Detroit, Inc. and Michigan Department of Career Development Rehabilitation Services. The program is available to persons with significant disabilities who want to work and control the decisions concerning the source and type of employment services they receive.

The main goal of the project is to assure that persons with significant disabilities have access to one-stop career services. The project aims to assist one-stop centers with meeting the needs of persons with significant disabilities by implementing a choice-based, personal budget approach. The choice-based, personal budget approach will help determine if there are additional costs associated with employment of persons with significant disabilities over the typical costs available in one-stop career centers. Also, it encourages the creation of a provider network that is responsible to individual needs and personal budgets.

Another goal of the One Stop to Success project is to assist in the development of an advocacy network of persons with disabilities and their supporters that will assure the expansion of employment services by applicants with significant disabilities.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

With the help of one-stop staff, the customer completes a comprehensive application and receives a complete description of the program and a copy of a brochure detailing the initiative. During this step, the customer must provide documentation of disability, place of birth and selective service; provide proof of citizenship; and completes an application for Michigan Rehabilitation Services, if applicable.

Next, the application is forwarded to the Participant Selection Committee, which is responsible for deciding who will and will not receive project services. This committee is composed of local stakeholders – a person with a physical disability, a family member of a person with significant disabilities, a representative of the local UCP, a vocational rehabilitation representative and a representative of the one-stop center. The target group is persons whose disabilities impact their lives in the areas of communication, mobility and manipulation.

During this step, the one-stop center staff would supply the Selection Committee with certification that the person was disabled in terms of manipulation, communication or mobility and a profile of the potential participant that detailed: age, sex, disability, how the disability impacts chances for employment, education, past work history and financial information. From this information, the Committee would select participants to receive One Stop to Success services.

Participants selected for the program work with a Plan Consultant to discover domestic/residential, educational and work experiences, life activities and any other information necessary to help develop a career plan. The Plan Consultant was paid \$1000 for each "discovery." On average, plan consultants meet with participants about two hours, once or twice a week for 6 weeks. To assist with the development of the career plan, a profile meeting is scheduled with the participant and family members, plan consultant, one-stop counselor and rehabilitation representative (if appropriate), to decide upon a plan to identify potential employers and a proposed budget.

Once a career plan has been designed, a budget meeting is then held. During this meeting decisions are made by funding organization representatives concerning the cost for services and who will pay for the job developer, job coach, job analysis, job site facilitation, and other associated costs.

The next step is identification of a job developer and job coach. With this step the customer/participant enters into a *written contract* with the Job Developer and Job Coach detailing the services that will be provided to the customer. The one-stop staff arrange for the participant (and the participants' family, if necessary) to interview

potential job developers and job coaches and the participant makes the final decision on who should be hired to perform the services under the contract. The participants always have a choice of job developers and coaches. Job Developers are paid \$2000 if they find a job for the participant within 30 days, \$1500 if they find a job within 60 days and \$1000 if the job is found within 90 days. If the participant loses the job within 30 days of their start date, the Job Developer is required under the contract to develop another job at no cost. The Job Developer is paid an additional \$250 to complete a job analysis to assist in successful placement. In addition to finding potential job openings, the Job Developer advocates with employers for the specific participant. In this program, most job developers have multiple customers with whom they work.

As with the job developer, the participant has the same opportunity to interview potential job coaches, hire the job coach that they want and enter into written contract with the job coach. Upon securing gainful employment, the job coach goes with the participant to the job site on the first day, helps the participant to adjust the work and job site, insures appropriate accommodations are in place, and continues to monitor and support the participant as long as necessary to make a successful job match. The Job Coach is paid \$25 an hour for the coaching work and works approximately 20 to 30 hours for most participants.

The participant is followed up 60 and 180 days after placement by one-stop staff.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The success of Detroit's Work Place and its program, One Stop to Success, are due to the commitment of an excellent management team that have remained together through the changeover from JTPA to WIA-funded service. Detroit's Work Place staff were fortunate in that they had numerous transition teams in place before passage of WIA and their partners were involved with the development of the future one-stop system.

The one-stop partners meet every three weeks to discuss the progress of the one-stop career center and to solve operational issues. From time to time, they also plan social activities to involve all the staff. However, the best means to foster closer working arrangements has been the planning and implementation of joint programs such as cross training, job fairs and special placement programs such as for ex-offenders. Detroit's Work Place successfully trained over 250 state and local staff in sensitivity to working with persons with disabilities, including discussion on the suitability of self-service with the disabled person. This cross training was very successful in fostering communication and understanding between partner agency staff.

The WIB has also played an active role in fostering partnerships and improving services by requiring the one-stop to hold focus groups with employers to determine their workforce development needs. From these meetings, it was determined that employers wanted the one-stop to hold life skills training to help customers

understand what was expected at the work place in terms of dress, time management, socialization, commitment to the job, and other related matters. The life skills training program has been successfully implemented.

The One-Stop Center has an employee performance management system and raises are dependent upon successful annual performance reviews.

Performance reports are required from partners and comprehensive monthly reports are produced by one-stop for the Detroit Office of Employment and Training and the Workforce Investment Board.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES**

For the program **One Stop to Success** data were collected on: intake date, acceptance date, program eligibility, profile meeting date, budget approval, grant amount, employment advisor, employment provider, date of employment and employer, status and whether or not a rehabilitation services counselor was designated.

Under the contract, the one-stop was expected to enroll 24 customers for each of 3 years in the contract for a total of 72 enrollments and placements.

To date (the program will end in September, 2001) the program has enrolled 76 people. For the 76 enrolled:

- 31 have been placed in jobs and 3 of those individuals have lost their employment and are looking for work;
- 16 customers are still in the discovery and job development phases of the program;
- 15 are in hold for reasons such as hospitalization, medical issues, etc.;
- 12 customers were dropped from the program for various reasons such as lack of interest, medical problems and moving out of state; and
- 2 customers died.

Another outcome of this specially funded program is that many new agencies involved in helping disabled persons have been encouraged to work with Detroit's Work Place and will continue to do so after conclusion of the grant. Detroit's Work Place also expects to fold some of the specialized services into their regular operation and will continue to fund a specialist to work with this customer group.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

The Detroit's Work Place management and staff indicated there are a number of key lessons learned in the successful implementation of Detroit's one-stop career center including staff development and strategic planning.

True integration takes a long time and that it is usually implemented in small steps.

Changing from a JTPA culture of training first to the WIA culture of work first is difficult for staff to implement, but intensive staff training is essential. Begin the transition to a WIA one-stop system as early as possible, but understand and teach staff that flexibility and adaptability are key ingredients to the new system because change can come at any time. Building retreat days into the planning and implementation of the one-stop system would have been very helpful for staff.

Also, staff mentioned that it is important to appreciate that it is difficult to “not take credit” for individual and agency accomplishments and to embrace the idea of *one unified organization* providing services to a customer. It's essential to set goals, have high expectations, try not to offend anyone and understand that “everyone will not agree with everything, but also to talk in “we's not I's;” The team must establish realistic time frames for completion of tasks and not over rely on customer satisfaction surveys for complete information because the information may not be very current.

The lessons learned from implementation of One-Stop to Success include recognizing the needs of the population being served and planning.

The success of the One-Stop Success program resulted from completely studying the potential limitations of persons with significant disabilities and planning program time frames with this information in mind. Specifically, appreciating the problems – both time constraints and policy issues - inherent in establishing a Selection Committee made up of diverse groups, or planning for a special funding stream, and/or hiring a disability specialist to implement such a program all support the need for proper planning and strategy. Implementing a continuous improvement process assists in eliminating program implementation problems.

Finally, customers with significant disabilities requires understanding that this customer group may experience many more problems than other one-stop customers and that it takes a lot of patience, time and dedication to achieve successes.

### List of Interviewees

	Detroit's Work Place
Jacqueline R. Thomas	Executive Director <i>(at time of visit)</i>
Alberto Uribe	Assistant Executive Director
Kathleen Atkins	Manager Career Services
Omar Brown-El	Program Coordinator
Dolores Bryant	Operations Analyst
Rodney Harden	Director Workforce Services
Clarence Burton	Manager Career Services
Gregory Collier	Corporate Training Liaison
Gregory Hill	Customer

## SITE VISIT REPORT: Department of Social Services, Employment and Training, Oswego, New York

### I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION

Date and Location of Site Visit: April 16, 17, 2001, Oswego, New York

Organization: Department of Social Services, Employment and Training

Type of Entity: Public, One-Stop Operator

Contact Person: Kathleen Casella, Director, Employment and Training Oswego County

Phone: (315) 963-5294

Fax: (315) 963-5263

Email: [KathyC@co.oswego.ny.us](mailto:KathyC@co.oswego.ny.us)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop System Design and Management

Promising Practice: Service-Grid Matrix

Heldrich Center On-Site Team: Duke Storen, Rita Carey

List of Interviewees: attached

### II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION

Oswego County is a predominately rural county in Central New York with a total population of 122,377 people. Within the county there are two primary population hubs, the cities of Fulton with a population of 12,929 and Oswego, with a population of 19,195. Both cities have areas of high poverty and need incentives for attracting and retaining industry. Approximately 26% of the county's population reside in these urban hubs, with the remainder residing in the more rural areas of the county. There are 22 towns and ten villages within the county boundaries.

New York State has designated two Economic Development Zones (EDZs) in Oswego that provide employers with economic incentives to locate in low-income communities. The first EDZ, established in 1991, is in the city of Oswego. After a massive layoff by a major employer, a second zone was established in 1994 in the city of Fulton. Approximately 14% of the county's residents live below the poverty level. Oswego County's public assistance caseload increased 41% over the five-year period from June 1990 to June 1995. As a result, the hardest-to-serve population comprises the majority of the current caseload.

According to NYSDOL's Bureau of Research and Statistics, the annual average unemployment rate for Oswego County for 2000 was 6.4% whereas the federal rate was 4%, the state rate was 4.6% and the Central New York rate was 4.1%. In the past six years, the unemployment rate in Oswego County has risen as high as 9.8%. The percentage of households with children under the age of 18 years that are headed by single parents increased from 14.5% in 1980 to 22.5% in 1990. According to federal census data, the poverty rates for children living in single female-headed households in 1990 was 47.3%.

Oswego County has observed a cycling effect with public assistance recipients. The recipient obtains employment and loses contact with the department only to reappear, unable to retain their job. The agency realizes that staff work begins with providing job-seeking information and potentially continues throughout a client's working life.

One of the most substantial barriers to moving eligible recipients into permanent employment in Oswego County is the lack of transportation. Geographically, only 11.6 square miles or 1 % of the county is urban and 956.4 square miles or 99% of the county is rural. As a result, residents often must travel many miles to a more populated area to access employment opportunities. Oswego County is served by public transportation within the city limits but bus schedules and routes are limited and often not compatible with work schedules. Other barriers to employment include high levels of illiteracy and substantial numbers of people who lack high school diplomas.

There is no indication that business development has occurred in any significant way in Oswego County. There are no replacement industries for the eroding manufacturing industry. Four call centers have indicated a preliminary interest in Oswego County and yet, though the area is fully loaded in terms of the supporting technology, none of the companies ultimately chose to locate there. The center staff believes that this is due to the limited skills of the workforce. Although there is a local college in Oswego, staff indicated that graduates who remain in the county are under-employed.

The New York State Department of Labor has been co-located with the Oswego County Department of Social Services for over ten years. Historically, there has not been an integrated approach to providing services. The WIA-required change in this relationship has been difficult. There was some evidence that, thus far, the two entities have not developed relationships that would lead to integration. Department of Labor orientations are separate from those conducted by Oswego County. The attempt to become integrated is an ongoing challenge for all involved.

All three One-Stop sites (Mexico, Fulton, Oswego) are located on bus routes. The three sites have different public identities: the Mexico Career Center is in the building that houses Oswego County Social Services; the Fulton Career Center is in the Oswego County Government Building and the Oswego Center is in the State Department of Labor building. Each site has a resource room and is equipped with computers for client use. Jobs are posted on the New York State Job Bank.

Population demographics among the three sites vary greatly. Mexico serves welfare recipients almost exclusively; Fulton has a 50/50 split between customers needing public assistance and those laid off due to some major employer shutdowns. In Oswego, approximately 65% are seeking employment; the remaining 35% are seeking welfare assistance.

As customers enter a One-Stop Career Center, they are greeted by a receptionist who determines the purpose of the visit. All new customers receive a brochure and map which direct them to the appropriate staff. Based upon their stated purpose, they may be encouraged to attend an orientation, meet with an employment specialist, or go

directly to the resource room. Since New York State has adopted a phone system for unemployment insurance registration, the DOL staff at the career center sites work primarily with the unemployment insurance recipients who have been deemed in need of assistance in finding a job.

One Stop partners include the New York State Department of Labor;\* VESID (vocational education to disabled); Oswego County Department of Social Services; Rural Opportunities (migrant seasonal farm worker services); New York State Office of Aging (Older Worker Program); New York State Department of Education; Oswego County Opportunities (Community Services Block Grant) and a city/county Youth Bureau. Partnership with HUD is being explored.

\*The NYSDOL relationship has not been formalized with a Memorandum of Understanding and there are no plans to do so at this time.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

The Oswego County Department of Employment and Training, a subset of the Department of Social Services, was named by the Oswego County Workforce Development Board as the operator of the One-Stop System in Oswego County. Employment services in the county are well integrated with social service functions – and the population they serve requires extensive support services. With the One-Stop Center so intrinsically connected to social services and the connection between the need for supportive services and the need for employment and training services so evident, the One-Stop Center staff have responsibility for managing fifteen different funding sources. This array of funding sources requires staff to be aware of all of the nuances of each grant in order to identify the most appropriate path for each customer.

Initially, many front line staff were intimidated. So daunting was the task of selecting the proper funding source, some staff avoided offering certain services for fear of making a mistake. Instead of exploring the best possible options for every customer, staff were relying on familiar programs or asking their supervisors to make decisions for them. Needless to say, this created a significant delay in matching up customers with the training, jobs, and services they needed. Many opportunities for customer services were overlooked while others were over-utilized.

The management challenge facing the center was to give front line staff the information they needed to make well-informed, expeditious decisions. At the same time, management was looking for a way to better monitor utilization of funds from each source. These problems were rectified in an informal but effective fashion, thanks in part to one forward-thinking manager. This manager took the initiative to design a Service-Grid Chart (Attachment A) and circulate it to his peers, who agreed to adopt it.

### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Employment specialists use the Service-Grid Chart during their initial meetings with customers and reference it as long as additional services are needed. By devising this

clear and straightforward chart, frontline staff find it easy to work with clients through the multiple steps of locating training and employment. The steps include:

- Step 1: Determine the customer's needs.
- Step 2: Conduct an initial assessment of eligibility for services.
- Step 3: Review Service-Grid Chart looking for the following information: What programs will provide the needed services? For which of these is the customer eligible? Which programs have adequate funding available?
- Step 4: Make a referral.
- Step 5: In some cases, the Senior Employment Specialist may review the referral before it is finalized.
- Step 6: Employment specialists meet regularly with their supervisors to get current information about remaining funds and to learn of eligibility changes related to any of the grants.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The financial unit of the Oswego County Department of Social Services produces a monthly statement that informs One-Stop Center management and staff of the fund balances in each grant. Financial unit staff are paid by multiple funding streams, particularly TANF and WIA, enabling them to approve and monitor expenditures across multiple programs. Supervisors keep front line staff up-to-date with regularly scheduled meetings to review the funds available under each grant and to report on any revised eligibility requirements or new grants. .

The Service-Grid Chart is truly a living document; since its introduction in November 2000, Center management has revised the chart six times. Thanks to staff feedback, the chart has been revised to be more readable and accessible. And, in some cases, management has revised the chart to accommodate new or changing information. Overall, Center management has been responsive to recommendations and has made changes quickly.

Currently, the Service-Grid Chart is only utilized by the Oswego County One-Stop Center staffs; it is not formally utilized by the Department of Labor or most other partners.

## **VI. OUTCOMES MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

According to Center staff and management, the Service-Grid Chart has significantly improved their ability to serve customers. The chart:

- Ensures that accurate information is available to both management and front line staff;
- Presents information in a uniform fashion, thus reducing likelihood of misinterpretation;
- Provides information necessary for identifying service gaps;

- Provides supporting data for developing new grant applications;
- Ensures utilization of all funding streams;
- Increases staff knowledge of all of the grants, which results in an expanded menu of services for customers;
- Clarifies the “big picture,” reinforcing the importance of making informed referrals;
- Reduces front line staff dependency on management for making decisions regarding appropriate funding source;
- Helps identify over utilized and under utilized funding streams with similar services and determine causes;
- Improves client flow. Staff are now more likely to assess what an individual needs and then find the appropriate funding stream to pay for that service. Before using the service grid, staff tended to determine what program a customer was eligible for and then see what services were available under that program;
- Useful as a training tool for newly hired staff.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

The Service Grid Chart turned out to be more valuable than anticipated. The informal, trial and error approach to introducing the Service-Grid Chart has paid off by enabling quick implementation and encouraging staff buy-in. A key factor in the chart’s future utility is for the Center to continue to make revisions. And, finally, until the relationships between the various entities involved are clarified, the Center’s partners will probably not make use of such innovations as the Service Grid Chart.

**List of Interviewees**

County of Oswego  
Department of Social Services

Kathleen Casella	Director, Employment & Training
Christine Weaver	Coordinator of Client Services
Jeanne Apicelli	Senior Employment Specialist
John Babcock	Senior Employment Specialist
Judy McManus	Senior Employment Specialist
Louise Scheurman	Senior Employment Specialist

Focus Group

Valerie Holiday	Employment Specialist
Eileen Wentworth	Employment Specialist
Sue Carter	Employment Specialist
Adele Ferry	Case Manager
Kim Gonzalez	Case Manager
Gail Stoughten	Community Services
Colleen McBride	Manager, NYDOL
Christine Barnes	Supervisor, NYDOL
Nancy Sharp	Supervisor, NYDOL

## Attachment A

### Allowable Program Activities (Oswego County)

	TANF	SN	NPAFS	SNFS	Work Now 3	Welfare to Work & WAW2	Education for Gainful Employment	New York Works Block Grant 1 & 2	Child Assistance Program	WIA Title I Adult	WIA Title I Dislocated Worker	WIA Title I Older Youth	WIA Title I Younger Youth	Title V	Child Care Block Grant
Assessment/Intake/Case Management		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Basic Skills Training	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Community Service	X	X			X	X	X ~	X							
CORE A										X	X	X	X		
CORE B										X	X	X	X		
Customized Training										X	X	X	X		
English as a Second Language	X	X				X				X	X	X	X		
Entrepreneurial Training	X	X				X				X	X	X			
GED/Ed Training	X	X	X	X		X				X	X	X	X		
Intensive Services										X	X	X	X		
Job Development/Placement	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Job/Work Readiness Training	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Job Search	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X		
Life Skills Trng.	X	X				X		X		X	X	X	X		
Post Employment Services	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Occupational Assessment/Eval.								X (2) ~							
On-The-Job Training	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Pre-Vocational Training										X	X	X	X		
Private Sector Subsidized Employment	X	X				X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Private Sector Work Experience	X	X				X		X ~	X	X	X	X	X		
Public Sector Subsidized Employment	X	X				X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Public Sector Work Experience	X	X	X	X	X		X	X ~	X					X	
Specialized Workshops	X	X	X	X		X				X	X	X	X		
Vocational Training (CRT)/ Occupational Skills Training	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Northeast One-Stop Career Center, Portland, Oregon**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and location of Site Visit: May 31, 2001, 2001, Portland, Oregon

Organization: Northeast One-Stop Career Center

Type of Entity: Private Non-Profit

Contact Person: Abdul Majidi, Executive Director, Northeast One-Stop Career

Phone: 503) 280-9675

Fax: (503) 241-4649

Email: [amajidi@pcc.edu](mailto:amajidi@pcc.edu)

Web Site: [www.workworkwork.org](http://www.workworkwork.org)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Job Seekers

Promising Practice: Job Link Retention Project

Heldrich Center Representatives: Robin Gwathney, Suzanne Guibert

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Northeast One-Stop Career Center is one of five career centers serving the Portland metropolitan area of Multnomah and Washington Counties. Portland, the City of Roses, has a population 437,500 and is located at the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. Located in a valley between Mt. Hood to the east and the Coast Range to the west, Portland is a freshwater port, one of the country's leaders in the export of wheat and lumber and ranks third in total tonnage on the Pacific Coast in ocean-borne shipping. A relatively new city, established in 1844, Portland grew as a result of the California gold rush and discovery of gold in eastern Oregon and the coming of the railroad in 1883. The city is urban in nature; however, it encompasses over 200 parks and has kept its air and water clean because most industries operate on electricity generated from mountain rivers, producing little soot or smoke.

The city of Portland is part of a metropolitan labor market area covering Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, Washington and Yamill counties in Oregon, and one county in Washington State – Clark. This labor market has a total non-farm employment of 965,700 working in the following industries: services – 29%; trade – 24%; manufacturing – 15%; government – 14%; financial, insurance, real estate – 7%; transportation – 6% and construction – 5%. The unemployment rate in the Portland labor market area unemployment rate was 4.3% as of March 2001. This figure is significantly lower than the 5.4% rate for the state of Oregon during that same period.

The Northeast One-Stop Career Center serves the north and the northeast communities of Portland. . For many years, this north/northeast section of Portland has traditionally contained greater concentrations of poverty and a greater minority population than the

remainder of the city. According to America Community Survey Summary Tables, of the 29,128 households in the area, 5,009 or 16% receive public assistance or non-cash benefits and of the 57,357 residents in the community, 21% are minority (Asian – 8%, African Americans – 6%, Hispanic – 3%, other – 4%). These neighborhoods have enjoyed economic growth during the last ten years as new businesses have opened and even corporate headquarters are planning to move to the area. In addition, the community college is expanding, a light rail system is being planned, and the local telephone system has given resources to the city for installation of fiber optics to establish a high technology center for the community. This new development, coupled with the community's close proximity to downtown Portland, have brought about an increase in property values, some new home building, and a general improvement to neighborhoods.

Oregon was chosen as an Early Implementation State under WIA. The state designated Region 2 (Multnomah, Washington and Tillamook Counties) as a site for creation of its One-Stop Career Center system. In the fall of 1997, city and county officials appointed the private, nonprofit organization Worksystems, Inc. (WSI) to administrate the \$27.3 million in workforce development funds for the area. The funding organizations include the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, Oregon Employment Department, Oregon Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, Portland Development Commission, Semiconductor Workforce Consortium, Stream International, Tillamook Bay Community College, US Department of Labor, US Department of Education, Washington County, and Wells Fargo Bank.

WSI is a private, nonprofit, designated as the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) serving areas that include the City of Portland, Multnomah, and Washington Counties. The Board of Directors for WSI is composed of 26 members and it also has an 18-member Youth Council. The Board of Directors with a consortium of city officials and county commissioners provide policy guidance to WSI.

WSI established six One-Stop Career Centers for the region, five of which serve the greater Portland area. WSI selected four of the five One Stop Career Centers in the greater Portland area through a competitive bid process. Three of these One-Stops are operated by Portland Community College and one is run by a community-based organization. The fifth center, the Northeast One-Stop Career Center, is currently administered by WSI; however, Portland Community College won a competitive bidding process to operate the Northeast One-Stop starting July 1, 2001. The WSI administrates the Northeast Center because the community-based organization that had operated the Northeast Career Center since 198 had numerous fiscal problems.

The Northeast One-Stop Career Center, which also operates a small satellite office housed in Housing Authority space, has formed a partnership with 28 organizations to serve its customers. The Center is co-located with a Youth Opportunity Center funded by the US Department of Labor for \$21M over a five-year period and it is easily accessible by a very efficient Portland bus system. In addition to the WIA funded staff, the following agencies are onsite full time: Oregon Army National Guard, Job Corps, The National Council On Aging, Inc., and Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement. The Oregon Employment Department also has a full time Wagner Peyser staff member

stationed at the Center, but this position is partially funded by the Northeast One Stop Career Center. A number of organizations are stationed part-time at the Center including the Albina Ministerial Alliance, Portland Community College, SMS Services, IAM Cares, and the Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Division.

Under the general policy guidance of the WIB, the Northeast One-Stop Center has aimed to expand its customer base from a largely economically disadvantaged population to moderate and middle-income workers, as well as employers. The Center's well-equipped resource center provides weekly workshops on Overcoming Barriers to Employment, Why People Get Hired, Basic Interviewing Techniques, Making the Most of Job Benefits and Your Attitude is Showing. The Center is guided by a philosophy to provide businesses with a pool of qualified applicants and to help job applicants obtain means to obtain self-sufficiency.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The Job Link Retention Project began operation on July 1, 2000. The basic purpose of this project is to provide Northeast One-Stop Career Center customers *who have found a job* with the type of *emergency services* they need to help them retain their employment. The program targets services critical to keeping employees in new jobs through the probationary period and into permanent positions. The telephone hot line services are available to customers enrolled in the program who face barriers in getting to work that include car troubles, lack of transportation, lack of child care, illness, personal problems, emotional and mental illness.

WSI established the project because staff consistently reported seeing the same people return to the Center again and again because they lost their jobs due to poor work habits and attendance often linked transportation, child care, and family problems. Employers also reported that they were losing good workers during the first six months of employment because of the same issues.

Funding for the program was obtained from Enterprise Zone resources. The Portland City Council, in partnership with the NE Economic Development Alliance, developed the Enterprise Zone program. The program focuses on comprehensively and efficiently addressing the training, support services, business growth, and job placement needs of N/NE Portland residents and businesses. Community Contributions Workforce Development funds are targeted at meeting Enterprise Zone businesses' need for qualified employees by assisting N/NE Portland residents in obtaining the skills and training required to do the jobs. The City Council designated WSI as the administrator for these funds. The City Council requires N/NE Portland Enterprise Zone companies that receive property tax exemptions in excess of a certain size to contribute to a Community Contributions fund for the N/NE Community. The Council designated 70% of the funds for workforce training and development. The Northeast One-Stop Career Center targeted \$100,000 of their Enterprise Zone funds for the Job Link Retention Project.

#### IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The Job Link Retention Project includes three major programs: a job retention and information packet, Northeast One-Stop retention workshops, and a Job Link hotline service. Here's how they work.

Each customer enrolled in the Job Link project receives a job retention and information packet that includes information on care and nurturing of the new job, such as keys to advancement, and updating a resume; a list of community resources including the Job Crisis Hotline that references barriers and emergencies that commonly cause people to lose jobs; and a wallet card with relevant contact numbers including the number for the *Job Retention Hotline*.

The One-Stop makes two workshops available to Job Link participants. The pre-work retention workshop is a five-hour program designed to help jobseekers address issues that have been proven to affect job retention, such as critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills. The three-hour retention and advancement workshop assists currently employed clients encountering problems on the job, who hope to advance in their current job, or want to look for another job during evening hours.

The Job Link Hotline service operates 8 hours a day, from 5 AM to 9 AM and 5 PM to 9 PM, and will receive voicemail that is returned the next day during other hours. Employed Northeast One-Stop Career Center clients can call the Hotline regarding anything that affects their ability to work. They receive technical assistance, resource referral, encouragement, and in some cases immediate action to remove the employment barrier. The hotline addresses typical emergency situations and provides concrete, on-the-spot assistance. The Center will intervene in emergencies that include:

- *Car break down* – the Center calls a towing company for emergency services;
- *Lack of transportation* – the Center dispatches a taxi to take the person to their job, issues bus passes;
- *Lack of child care* – the Center makes arrangements to provide temporary child care services and the client can then go to work;
- *Client is sick and/or late for work* – the Center refers clients to a One-Stop Counselor immediately (by pager) for help in contacting employers to make arrangements. Follow-up is done through One-Stop Partner Agencies after work;
- *Personal and family problems* – clients are referred to a Northeast One-Stop Counselor immediately (by pager) for help in contacting employers to make appropriate arrangements. Follow-up is done through One-Stop Partner Agencies after work;
- *Client in jail* – clients are referred to a Northeast One-Stop Counselor immediately (by pager) for help in contacting employers to make appropriate arrangements. Follow-up is done through One Stop Partner Agencies.

The Northeast Career Center enrolls clients in the *Job Link* Hotline service after they begin working. Clients receive a letter describing the program and a wallet card with a special identification number. The card is valid for 6 months and includes the 800 number they call

to access the crisis hot line. The Center has written agreements with taxi companies, towing companies, day care facilities, and automobile garages and body shops to provide services.

The most significant contractor used in the program is a dispatch company. The dispatch company takes calls 24 hours a day and provides linkage with emergency services. It provides a daily log of hot line callers with their identification numbers, the reason for their calls, and how the call was resolved. The dispatch company then calls the pager number to engage follow-up services from the Northeast One Stop Center counselor assigned to this project.

The Northeast One-Stop Center and the dispatcher work together on a daily basis. The Center has trained the dispatcher's staff numerous times as issues arise, and is continuously interacting with them to improve service to the clients, and to determine whether or not complete information is being given to the client and forwarded to the One Stop Center.

Northeast One-Stop Center staff follow-up on all hotline calls to ensure that clients are making arrangements to resolve their transportation, child care or other personal problems since the Job Link Retention Project can provide services only on a temporary basis. Thus childcare services may only be supplied for a few days, cars must be put in working order, and arrangements for bus transportation must be completed. Personal and family problems may require clients working with counselors from Partner agencies after work to resolve their issues.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The One-Stop director holds monthly partner meetings to review progress of the career center and particularly to discuss any new initiatives. The Center holds meetings for the entire staff six times a year. At these meetings, management solicits staff for ideas to improve operations, to discuss new initiatives, and review results of client satisfaction surveys.

Each client who registers for services is provided a client satisfaction survey. The Northeast One-Stop Center asked the Center for Community Research to create a survey and analyze the data for its first year of operation. The report analyzed 112 replies to ten questions on demographic information, services used, services preferred, atmosphere of center, rating of services, and suggestions for improvement. To collect data on clients and services provided, the Northeast Center uses the WSI system call "I Track." While it is in operation at all six One-Stop Centers in the Region, it is not yet available at all partner sites because of technical issues and unresolved confidentiality problems. According to One Stop staff, the system provides all the needed information.

Six-month client follow-up is done by WSI and for those who cannot be reached the Northeast Center is asked to complete the follow-up.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

The Job Link Retention Project tracks outcomes by collecting data on enrollees who received intensive services, enrollees who received core services, calls requesting services, and the nature of the problems and service requested. The Center's management set a target for the Job Link program of 396 placed clients.

As of May 31, 2001, the 428 placed clients enrolled, of which 201 were WIA/Intensive placements and 227 received Core Services placements. Of those enrolled, 14% (61) used the Hotline service. Further, of those using the Hotline, 74% (45) of the service requests calls were for transportation, 8% for personal issues, and 8% for childcare services. The average cost per enrollee is \$500, including overhead.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

The major lesson learned from this project is that the dispatch company selected must be thoroughly investigated to determine whether or not it can provide the necessary services. A lot of time must be spent investigating and lining up the vendors to provide services. Vendors must be willing to work with just a written agreement rather than a contract and they must be screened very carefully to determine whether or not they are able to provide the needed service. Specifically, childcare providers must be investigated thoroughly because of certification requirements; towing companies must be able to provide services to people with disabilities.

In addition, effective monitoring of the telephone calls made to the hot line must be installed at the start of the project. Effective and daily communication between the Northeast One Stop Career Center staff person and the dispatch company was critical to the success of the project. Training and retraining staff at the dispatch company was necessary all throughout the project. Also, the telephone calls to the hotline must be monitored carefully to limit any customer abuse of the program. Program materials for clients must be well designed and clearly state the purpose of the program, its services and the limits of the program.

Originally, the program was planned for emergency hot line services to be extended to working customers for three months; however, the employer community asked the Center to establish it as a six-month program since that was the conventional probationary period for most companies in the area. Center staff would like to extend the time period for working customers to receive emergency services to a 12-month period. Center staff would also like to measure the program success by comparing retention rates from one year to the next.

### List of Interviewees

Maggie Brister-Mashia	Executive Director, Northeast One-Stop Career Center <i>(at time of site visit)</i>
Maria Miller	Employment Specialist Northeast One-Stop Career Center
Mulu Terefe	Employer Specialist Northeast One-Stop Career Center
Brinder Bridges	Northeast One-Stop Career Ctr Customer
Mary Jane Davey	Northeast One-Stop Career Ctr Customer
Patricia Kosta	Manager, Luxury Tow Van
Kassa Teshome	Manager, Green Cab

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: FutureWorks, Springfield, Massachusetts**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: Springfield, Massachusetts, March 15-16, 2001

Organization: FutureWorks

Type of Entity: private One-Stop operator

Contact Person: Rexene Picard, Executive Director

Tel: 413/858-2801

Fax: 413/858-2810

E-Mail Address: [rpicard@futureworks-now.com](mailto:rpicard@futureworks-now.com)

Web site: [www.futureworks-now.com](http://www.futureworks-now.com)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Job Seekers

Promising Practice: Services for job seekers with limited English language skills

Heldrich Center Representatives: Robin Gwathney, Suzanne Guibert

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Springfield is a city of 144,272 people in western Massachusetts, situated along the Connecticut River. Located in Hampden County with a population of 457,612, the county residents are 46% White, 25% Hispanic and 23% African American, and 6% other.

The economy of Springfield City has been good with an unemployment rate dipping to 3.9% in January of this year. In the city there are 3,738 establishments employing 78,561 people in the following primary industries: services (29,619), trade (14,498), government (12,493), and manufacturing (8,190).

Springfield is called the City of Homes because it is famous for a large number of stately Victorian houses on the National Register of Historic Homes. It is also the home of the Basketball Hall of Fame and has an historic area surrounding the Springfield Armory Historic Site that was important in the Revolutionary War.

FutureWorks Career Center is operated by the Employment & Training Institute (ETI), a private for-profit organization that runs One-Stop Career Centers in Massachusetts and Connecticut. ETI was awarded a contract to run a career center in Springfield five years ago, as the result of a competitive bidding process. This was before the enactment of the Workforce Investment Act. It was later selected to be the One-Stop Operator by the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc., and WIA was implemented in July 2000; however, many of the workforce development principles required by WIA were already in place in the career center.

The One-Stop Career Center is readily accessible to the public – it is located in the city center, it is on a bus line, and it has ample free parking. The Center is located in a complex of old brick buildings that have been completely refurbished into attractive

businesses. The Center itself is very large, with numerous individual conference rooms and classrooms and an open modular setting for the reception, resource room, and other functional areas – all located on one floor.

The Center's vision – "to provide state-of-the-art services and technology to enhance the quality of life for our community in the areas of career development, employment opportunities and business support" – is emblematic of the quality and type of services provided by the Center. At reception, *all job/service seekers* are asked to become "members" of FutureWorks by completing a short application, after which they receive bar coded *swipe cards* (identification cards) to use whenever they return to the Center. Using the swipe card helps Center staff determine usage of career center services. At reception, the member receives a copy of the Monthly Calendar of scheduled services and may sign up immediately for any service, usually after receiving an orientation to the Center and a 20-minute interview.

The Center typically conducts the following types of group activities during a month: Orientation to the Center and Services (in English every day and in Spanish once a week); Special Workshops on Job Search/Job Club (seven times a month), Interviewing (2), Resume Critique (5), Preparing for Training (2), Adults Returning to Training (1), Intro to the Internet (2), Resume Writing (2), Negotiation Skills (1), UI Orientation (weekly), Finding The Hidden Job Market (1), and Assertive Communication (1). In addition, the Center conducts a six-hour Computer Basics Training Program at least three times a month and provides open access to the computer lab five times a month to allow those coming out of the training to practice their new skills.

The major partners of FutureWorks are the Hampden County Employment and Training Consortium, the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Service (welfare services), the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training, the Massachusetts Department of Education, and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. The One-Stop Career Center integrates the following programs: WIA core, intensive, and training services; welfare to work services; unemployment insurance services; employment services (Wagner-Peyser); veterans services; Trade Act services; Job Corps services; rehabilitation services; licensed social worker services from the Commonwealth Corporation; and educational services.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

In 2000, the Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC) released a report stating that more than one third of the State's workforce was "ill equipped to meet the demands of the State's rapidly changing economy." The report went on to state that Massachusetts faced two other challenges – a language challenge (195,000 immigrant workers in the State with severely limited English speaking skills), and an education credential challenge (280,000 workers who have never obtained a high school degree). As a result of the report and because of a large presence of Spanish-speaking job seekers in the area, the Center decided to assess this group's particular needs. At the same time, Center staff obtained and reviewed a software package that provides instruction in basic English.

As a result of the MassINC report, FutureWorks' community needs assessment and review of the software package, the staff developed the first phase of the new initiative, Working English. This first segment "introduce[s] limited English speaking customers to a diversity of exercises that include listening, reading, writing, speaking, vocabulary, grammar, culture, testing and review, as well as all the information needed to find and hold a job." Working English is designed to help a job seeker get a foot in the door and gain an understanding of what is expected during employment interviews and on the job.

The first phase of this new program, which began in late October 2000, was so successful with Hispanic job seekers, it was expanded to include a number of other services provided at the Center. The program has now evolved into a full-service approach.

An important partner in this initiative is the Department of Education, with whom the FutureWorks has a memorandum of understanding to assess clients and then refer those with limited English-speaking skills, if needed, to DOE-operated basic skill programs. In addition, the Center's website, [www.futureworks-now.com](http://www.futureworks-now.com) offers information in Spanish.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Customers who participate in the Working English program can take advantage of a wide range of services. They are introduced to the services available at the One-Stop through the Spanish-language welcome meeting, an orientation that includes an office tour and registering as a member. Next comes a short interview with a bilingual counselor and an orientation to the Working English program. After that, the customer attends the 18-hour Working English training program, which takes place over three weeks (three days a week for two hours a day). After they complete the course, the customer may choose to be referred to a job or to use the resource room to conduct a job search. At this point, staff may refer the job seeker directly to the Department of Education for basic skills testing.

The Working English Curriculum is composed of three competencies:

Competency 1: *Communication and Literacy*, is composed of basic vocabulary and grammar plus practical experience in the language requirements for completing a job application.

Competency 2: *Organizing and Analyzing Information*, is composed of discussions on the work place, types of jobs available, information on various government programs such as social security and unemployment insurance, information on fringe benefits, plus practical experience setting goals and actually completing a job application.

Competency 3: *Problem Solving*, is composed of information on getting to work on a regular basis, why people are not hired, things to do before and after a job interview, job responsibilities, how to quit a job, and practical experience in assessing job attitudes.

To support this curriculum, FutureWorks uses a computer-based training package entitled Real English.

Next, the customer attends a three-hour Spanish Computer Basics Program and a five-hour Spanish Job Search Seminar. After completing each of these programs, the job seeker may again elect to be referred to a job, or use the resource room for job search.

Once again, the customer is referred to DOE staff for testing and referral to basic skills training, if needed. Depending upon the type and length of training, the job seeker may also elect for referral to a job or to use the resource room for job search

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

FutureWorks has a participatory management style that fosters an open organization and rewards creativity among its workers. The organization has weekly unit meetings and monthly staff meetings. The management has designated a Coordinating Team (C Team) composed of unit managers that meets often to discuss center issues. It also has a C+ Team composed of unit managers and other staff that meets on a regular basis to develop new ideas and approaches. A recent Corporate Culture Assessment of FutureWorks management indicated that staff rated management high on staff development and providing information to employees. It was from this type of organizational culture that the Working English program developed.

To support this program and to assist with all Spanish-speaking clients, management has recently created a program to teach Spanish to interested FutureWorks employees.

At the conclusion of each of the three workshops conducted in the program, clients complete a customer satisfaction survey to determine what is working and what needs improvement. This information is then used to either continue and/or modify the contents of the program.

The team of four who work on this program meet on an ongoing basis to review accomplishments, discuss the customer satisfaction surveys, and review the progress of the customers. As program improvements are developed, they meet with management to discuss implementation strategies and timing.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

Since the program is so new (five months), outcomes are tracked manually. The following items are tracked: name, Social Security number, date enrolled, date completed, sex, job interest, simple assessment of English capability, telephone number, and comments that identify whether or not the person has obtained a job, entered an English as a second language program, etc. This information is reported to management on a weekly basis.

At this point there are no statistical planned outcomes formally developed because the program is still in its infancy. However, staff conducts the complete program monthly.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

Although this project is relatively new, program staff feel as if they have already learned some valuable lessons:

- A *complete* survey of the needs of a specific community will yield better program design;
- Training plans should be designed to allow flexibility;
- Programs for non-English speaking clients should address both bilingual needs and bi-cultural needs;
- Staff who are creative, flexible, hard working, and truly concerned for the customer will do best in this kind of program.
- Seamless and clear program design and implementation are particularly important to individuals with language and cultural barriers.

FutureWorks plans to enhance the Working English program by developing a “bridge to employers.” Employers need to be educated about people with language barriers and they need to understand that they have an untapped resource in these clients. Having a pre-designated list of employers who have been educated about the program and are available to those who have completed the training will be an important asset to this project.

Staff also looks forward to having the opportunity to provide the program more often.

## List of Interviewees

### FutureWorks

Rexene Picard	Executive Director
Rhoda Peskin	Administrative Manager
Kevin Lynn	Manager Employer Services
Zenaida Correa	Customer Service Representative
Illiana Caez	Career Specialist
Miriam Ramos	Customer Service Representative

### Hampden County Employment & Training Consortium

Jean Symington	Career Specialist (HCETC)
Louie Guerra	Employer Account Representative
Gloria Pagan	Customer

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Golden Crescent Workforce Center, Victoria, Texas**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: June 18-19, 2001, Victoria, Texas

Organization: Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board

Type of Entity: Non-profit

Contact Person: Laura Sanders, Executive Director, Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board

Phone: (361) 576-5812 x281

Fax: (361) 573-0225

Email: [laura.sanders@twc.state.tx.us](mailto:laura.sanders@twc.state.tx.us)

Web site: [www.gcworkforce.org](http://www.gcworkforce.org)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers, Services to Job Seekers

Promising Practice: (1) Consolidated Employer Services Unit (2) Process Technology Program (3) Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Process

Heldrich Center Representatives: Robin Gwathney, Ronnie Kauder

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board (GCWDB) manages the workforce development system in Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca and Victoria counties. The Golden Crescent area borders the Gulf of Mexico in southeastern Texas, and is 100 miles from Houston, Austin and San Antonio. The City of Victoria, with 60,000 residents, is the major population and commercial center of this predominantly rural seven-county area, which has a total population of 200,000.

The local economy is dominated by the petrochemical industry, with Alcoa, Dupont, Dow (previously Union Carbide), BP Chemicals and Formosa Plastics Corporation having large facilities in the two largest counties (Victoria and Calhoun). This industry is both the economic driver and highest-paying industry in the region. The City of Victoria is a center for medical services, with two hospitals. Other portions of the workforce area have significant amounts of agricultural industry (predominantly poultry farms and soybeans), retail trade and manufacturing. The area has a small-town feel, where people have worked together and know each other well. It is a community where most people support a "work first" approach, and where the prevalent view is conservative on government spending. Popular recreational activities include fishing and hunting.

With its heavy dependence on the chemical plants, the area has seen economic ups and downs. The economy suffered when the oil and gas industry went through difficult times in the mid 1980's. More recently, unemployment rates in the area have fluctuated from a high of 5.9% in 1994 to a low of 3.3% in 2000. Unemployment rates in 2001 have hovered in the 3.5% range, although there has been a slight rise recently. Unemployment rates also vary

within the workforce area, from a high of 7.1% in Calhoun County to a low of 1.3% in LaVaca County.<sup>2</sup> At the time of the visit, people were concerned about rising gas prices and the effect this would have on the local economy.

With the passage of Texas House Bill 1863 in 1995, the state of Texas consolidated more than 20 workforce-related programs under one state agency—the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). After the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was enacted in 1998, Texas “grand fathered” its newly consolidated workforce development system, and was an early implementing state under WIA.

The “portfolio” of each local Board is slightly different. While the TWC contracts with each Board for a basic set of programs, each Board may have additional local programs or funding sources.

The Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board is responsible for:

- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) CHOICES (welfare-to-work) program
- Food Stamp employment and training
- Adult Basic Education for Welfare Recipients
- School-to-Careers
- Rapid Response
- Unemployment Insurance Profiling
- Child Care Management System
- Project RIO (ex-offenders)
- Communities in Schools
- Older worker programs

Its current annual funding level is approximately \$7 million, of which \$3 million is in childcare funds and \$1.8 million is WIA, with additional funding from various sources, including TANF, Communities in Schools, Rapid Response, and the food stamps program.

As required by Texas law, the Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board used a competitive procurement process to select a program manager. The current contractor is the Texas Migrant Council, a non-profit organization headquartered in Laredo, Texas. The Texas Migrant Council and all partners function under the name “Golden Crescent Workforce Center.” In addition to the main full-service center in Victoria, the Golden Crescent Workforce Center operates satellite locations in each of the six other counties, providing unusually good coverage in the rural areas.

Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board has assumed an active role in employer services. The Board provides leadership in this area, and works closely with the Texas Workforce Commission (state) staff as well as its contractor (the Texas Migrant Council) staff to provide services that meet the needs of businesses in the area.

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<sup>2</sup> These figures are for May 2001.

The Board and its Workforce Centers project a very professional image, both interpersonally and through its materials and website ([www.gcworkforce.org](http://www.gcworkforce.org)). Materials are attractive, well written, and customer-focused. Locally-developed materials include brochures on particular topics, such as *Saving Time and Money Recruiting*, *Employer Services and Programs*, *Child Care Resources: Building a Quality Workforce*, a periodic newsletter called the *Golden Crescent Express*, bookmarks with *Job Interview Hints*, guidelines for using the Golden Crescent Workforce Center, tote bags, pens, and mouse pads. They also distribute publications of the Texas Workforce Commission, such as *Tax Savings for Texas Employers*, *Hire Smart*, *Hire Free*, *Hire Texas*, and *Texas @ Work*, a monthly newsletter.

The Board has the mission of creating a skilled labor force and vibrant economy in the seven-county area through its workforce development initiatives.

### III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE

The overriding philosophy of the Golden Crescent Workforce Board is the importance of operating in a fashion that is customer-friendly to both employers and job seekers. This has led to an approach in which individual program identities are de-emphasized and there is a focus on letting customer needs drive the system.

Three initiatives are being profiled in this report. Two fall under the heading of Employer Services and one under Job Seeker Services.

#### Employer Services

**Consolidated Employer Services Unit.** Comprehensive in its reach, the Golden Crescent Workforce Center's Business Services unit provides a high level of free service to employers, which is virtually unheard of elsewhere. The Workforce Development Board recognized that the Public Employment Service had been cut to the point where it could not provide an optimal level of service to employers with its own resources. Therefore, WIA and other funding sources are used to truly serve the employer customer. The consolidated unit is under the supervision of an experience staff person from the Texas Workforce Commission. Even with expanded resources, the staff works hard to provide a full range of services. Virtually all-local employers go through the Golden Crescent Workforce Centers for their entry-level and mid-level workforce needs.

**Process Technology Program.** The Petrochemical industry, like many industries, has become more technical and sophisticated over the years, requiring employees with increasing levels of knowledge and skill. Locally, the industry has been experiencing job growth, but there was no local source for employees with the technological skills needed. Beginning in 1997, six to eight local companies partnered with Victoria College to develop what became a two-year A.A.S. degree program in Process Technology. The program is a joint effort between The Victoria College and Alcoa, BP Chemicals, DuPont, Formosa Plastics, Equistar Chemicals, Seadrift Coke, Testengeer, and Union Carbide. The Golden Crescent Workforce Center provides Individual Training Accounts for eligible recipients/customers.

## Job Seeker Services

***Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Process.*** With the implementation of WIA in Texas, on July 1, 1999, the Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board adopted a new policy and process for ITAs, which were a new concept. The policy was developed by a committee of board members and staff and is very thoughtful and thorough. It is based on the premise that ITAs place training resources in the hands of the customer rather than being directed to the training provider by the Board. The process went into effect on October 1, 1999. The ITA process is called ASSET (Account for Successful Educational Training), a name that was the winning submission of a contest conducted among the staff.

The new policy was developed in order to make the process of training approval both more rigorous and more supportive. One unusual feature of this ITA process is the requirement that each customer appear in person before an ITA Review Committee as a final step before approval for training grants. This Committee is comprised of a Board member, a Board staff person, a Career Center staff person and a prior customer. The individual appears along with his/her Career Consultant. Committee members believe that it encourages those who are sincere and really want the training, while filtering out others. The process has had the effect of boosting the self-confidence of the customer.

In addition, Golden Crescent developed the concept that the ITA should be "similar to a checking account at a bank." The customer is informed that X amount of money will be spent towards his/her education at a Certified Training Provider. On a periodic basis, the Board then provides the customer with an itemized statement that shows the remaining balance of the ITA. The State of Texas is adopting this concept and system.

## **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The Golden Crescent Workforce Center has positioned itself well as the first point of contact for local workforce information and assistance. Key service activities profiled include:

Employer Services. The Workforce Center's goal is to provide employers with an accessible quality labor pool and skilled employees.

***Consolidated Employer Relations Unit.*** This unit, with a staff of 13, provides a full range of services to employers. It is staffed by individuals from the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Migrant Council, and is supplemented by participants from the STEP program (Seniors). The following services are provided:

- Recruitment and screening. Jobs are listed in the HIRE Texas (job bank) system. Employers can choose "Level I," a broadcast posting where all job seekers can see the name of the employer, "Level II," where the job seeker must talk to a staff person about a referral, and "Level III," where an immediate "live search" of the applicant data base is performed. For all levels, assigned employer service representatives actively search for applicants that meet job requirements.

- Formosa Plastics Corporation, a large local employer (2,100 employees), uses the Golden Crescent Workforce Center as its main source of recruiting hourly workers. The company lists its jobs; the Golden Crescent staff does all pre-screening, verifying that candidates have met minimum qualifications, and sets up interviews. Golden Crescent staff then solicits feedback from the employer about the candidates interviewed.
- When requested by an employer, staff will collect documentation required in the application process such as transcripts, licenses and certifications, as part of the application process, or they may simply view the documentation to verify the information for the employer.
- Recruitment takes place on-site at Golden Crescent job centers as well as at job fairs. With Centers in all seven counties, this is a convenience for both employers and job seekers. Job fairs are sometimes held in collaboration with other programs. For example, the Business Services and Youth Services units held a “Youth Fair” for private and public summer jobs – subsidized and unsubsidized jobs together.
- Labor market information, such as customized wage surveys and labor law information.
- Connecting employers to funding for on-the-job or customized training programs.

In all, the Business Services unit provides an unusually high level of basic service at no cost. Local employers stated that they use the services of the Golden Crescent Workforce Center because it saves time and money and because there is a high level of professionalism and trust that has been earned over the years. There is open and frequent communication between businesses and the Workforce Center. The Employer Services unit goes the extra mile for employers and they understand the value of this and appreciate it.

***Process Technology Program.*** In 1997, with the involvement of the Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board, Victoria College, which is the local community college, assembled an advisory board to develop a curriculum for a new process technology program for the petrochemical industry in the local area. Victoria College had been offering short courses, but clearly more was needed. There was growth in the number of jobs and in the technological skill required for these jobs. The development of this course and credential made it clear to individuals seeking to enter the industry that hiring requirements were now different than they had been for earlier generations of workers.

DuPont provided subject matter experts in the development of the course. The program was able to secure public funding to pay for the use of Work Keys to analyze jobs and identify competencies required at both entry and “effective” levels within the industry. DuPont also made a large financial contribution to the College in support of the petrochemical lab, which has the latest equipment and technology. Over time, a four-semester course was developed leading to an Associate’s degree in process management. The curriculum is not strictly technical – it includes human relations and communications skills as well. Currently, there are 160 students in the course at any one time; these may be day or evening students. The

majority of people who have taken the course are individuals who already have degrees (but in other disciplines), individuals whose parents work at these plants but they need further education in order to work there themselves, and people who have been doing other jobs at the plants and want to prepare for more skilled jobs. The majority of students are over 27 years old.

### Job Seeker Services

**Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Process.** The Board is clear on its “work first” philosophy and communicates this to job seekers. Job seekers are encouraged to look for jobs and must demonstrate that they have utilized Core and Intensive Services prior to being considered for training services. By Board policy, education and training services are geared toward populations targeted by the Board, which have higher than average unemployment and poverty rates, and lower than average education or skills. These include:

- laid-off workers
- welfare recipients
- food stamp recipients
- individuals who are basic skills deficient (9th grade education or less)
- school drop outs
- "at-risk" youth
- ex-offenders
- individuals age 55 or older
- individuals with disabilities
- long-term unemployed

After it is determined that the customer is unable to obtain suitable employment, is in need of training, and has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate, then training is considered. An extensive assessment is conducted, including both formal assessment instruments and one-on-one conversations with a Career Consultant, and an Individual Employment Plan is prepared. Extensive support and encouragement are provided to the customer while he/she explores a career path and selects a training institution.

As described in the written Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy, “After determining that a customer should be considered for Training Services, the Career Consultant’s responsibility shifts from a decision-maker to coach. They should work with the customer in providing support and encouragement while the customer explores which career path they believe would benefit them.”

In this customer-driven system, the training service phase is an information-rich environment for the customer. With help from the Career Consultant, customers are expected to research training provider requirements, visit the campuses they are interested in, and, if the new occupation is unfamiliar, research and tour an employer’s operation. Based on this information as well as the assessment results and individual counseling sessions, the customer is able to make an informed choice.

The Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board allows a maximum training period of two years and strongly encourages degree and certificate programs. It will allow someone to complete a Bachelor’s degree if he/she has less than two years remaining. The overall

average ITA amount is \$5,000. However the majority of customers receive ITAs in the health field at the local community, with costs averaging \$3,000.00. The overall average is misleading because of one proprietary school that is more expensive than the community college.

After a choice is made, an ITA agreement is drafted, and the customer must meet with the ITA Review Committee.

Before meeting with the Committee, the individual must complete a questionnaire, which includes the following questions:

- Why did you choose this particular career path?
- What Training provider did you choose and why?
- What is the success rate of this Training Provider in relation to its graduates?
- What is the starting wage for this Training Provider's graduates?
- Have you considered where you would like to work? IF so, where?
- What barriers (childcare, transportation, etc.), if any, do you anticipate having that might prevent you from attending class on a regular basis?
- Have you put together a budget to determine what costs might be incurred during this training period? If so, how do you plan on covering any unfunded costs?

The completed ITA questionnaire and ITA Agreement are forward to the Committee members for review prior to the meeting.

The Committee has a published schedule but appears to also meet on an as-needed basis. The individual customer appears with his/her Career Consultant.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Golden Crescent Workforce Board has a staff of 11; the Workforce Centers have 106 "team members," including 80 who work for the contractor (the Texas Migrant Council – TMC), 12 who work for the state (Texas Workforce Commission – TWC) and 14 who work for the Senior Texas Employment Program (STEP). An employee of the TWC supervises the Employer Services function; Job Seeker services, youth services and employees of TMC supervise childcare services. It is clear, however, that staff people do not identify according to agency – all identify with the Golden Crescent Workforce Center.

Within the Employer Services unit of 13, there is one manager, one person who staffs the employer hot line, eight Employer Service Representatives, and one workforce technician who provides administrative support. Of the eight Employer Service Representatives, one is assigned to each of the six smaller counties; and two are assigned to Victoria County. There is also a combination of geographic and industrial assignments.

Under the leadership of its Executive Director Laura Sanders, the Board maintains close ties to the program operation and provides direction and guidance to the entire effort. The Board plays a lead role in employer services, especially in establishing partnerships with industry, helping to secure funds for training, and otherwise responding to employer needs. At present,

the biggest gap in the system is felt to be adequate programs and funds for the training of incumbent workers (this is allowed, but eligibility requirements restrict its use considerably).

## VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

Given the strong customer focus, it follows that customer use and customer satisfaction are important success measures. Within the Employer Services function, the manager tracks new job orders, on-the-job (OJT) contracts, referrals, placements, and job developments (working with individual job seekers). They publicize the fact that staff average 160 business contacts per month. They use the data collected to sell their services to other employers. For example, one promotional piece mentions that staff recently processed over 700 applicants in two days for a large Calhoun County employer.

Within the Process Technology Course, 70-75 students have graduated from the program. Of these, 90% have acquired jobs. Many of these have been in the local area, although some have been in Houston and in Corpus Christi.

In terms of the ITA process, all agreed that the investment required by the new process has encouraged those who are serious about wanting training.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

The Golden Crescent Workforce Board and Workforce Centers are impressive in many ways. Some lessons learned include:

- ***There is no substitute for hard work.*** Both Board and Workforce Center staff are professional and hard working. It is only through the constant, day-in, day-out attendance to business that success can be achieved.
- ***There must be sufficient staff devoted to the Employer Services function.*** Across the country, there appear to be fewer and fewer State (Employment Service) staff available for the employer services function. Local Boards and One-Stop operators must allocate funds for employer services in order to have a meaningful role with the business community.
- ***There are advantages to being a small community.*** In the Golden Crescent area, there is the sense that people know each other, accept each other, and have learned to work together. The population to be served is a manageable size, and sharing among agencies is possible.
- ***In order to have a broader and deeper community impact, the local workforce system must work to help strengthen local industry in any way it can.*** The leaders of the Golden Crescent workforce system do whatever they can to maintain close ties to important industries in the area and to facilitate initiatives.
- ***Employers respond positively to the customer focus.*** More and more employers are using the local workforce system because it hears what they want and it delivers.

Meetings that involve employers are early (7:30 am), short (1/2 hour to 1 hour) and to the point. The services employers want most – recruitment and screening – are delivered in a timely, professional way.

- ***Strong systems take time to build.*** The consolidated workforce system in Texas began in 1996, giving areas time to develop their systems. In addition, Texas was an early implementing state under WIA, and has had a year more than many states to implement WIA-specific requirements, such as ITAs. Within Texas, the Golden Crescent area is a leader, especially in the area of ITA policy and process, having taken the time to carefully consider its implementation of this new requirement.
- ***Leadership is key.*** There are close ties among the Board, State, contractor, college and industry. The leaders are thoughtful, open, creative and businesslike. The system is constantly improving its services and programs in response to expressed customer needs.

### **List of Interviewees**

Laura Sanders                      Executive Director  
Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board

Brittany Hollas                      Business Services Coordinator  
Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board

Linda Pulliam                      Manager, Business Services  
Texas Workforce Commission

Juanita Snider                      Career Consultant  
TMC Workforce Solutions, Edna, TX

Gay Bruns                      Business Services Specialist  
Texas Workforce Commission

#### Process Technology Program

Lamar Garrett                      Coordinator – Chemical  
Victoria College Process Technology

Jack Young                      Occupational Services Coordinator  
Victoria College

Cef Aguilon                      Training Coordinator, DuPont

Janet Kutchka                      HR Supervisor, DuPont

Ann Isaac                      Dean of Instruction, Victoria College

Jennifer Ortiz Garza                      Counselor, Victoria College

Maryann Beahm                      Career Specialist, Workforce Center

Bea McClure                      Interim Director, Victoria College

#### Customers

Darren Drastata                      Human Resources Manager  
Formosa Plastics Corp.

Oscar Hinojosa                      Job Seeker/Participant  
Process Technology Program

## **SITE VISIT REPORT:** Thumb Area Michigan Works! Career Center, Marlette, Michigan

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: July 2-3, 2001, Marlette, Michigan

Organization: Thumb Area Michigan Works! One-Stop Center

Type of Entity: Public Training Consortium

Contact Person: Marvin N. Pichla

Phone: (517) 635-3561

Fax: (517) 635-2230

Email: [www.thumbworks.org/](http://www.thumbworks.org/)

Web site: [www.thumbareaworks.org](http://www.thumbareaworks.org)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Job Seekers

Promising Practice: Thumb Area (MI) Employment and Training Consortium Tool Chest (Specialized Job Training Assistance Voucher Program)

Heldrich Center Representatives: Laurie Santos, Henry Santos

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Thumb Area Michigan Works! Agency provides job training assistance services to residents in a mostly rural area on the banks of Lake Huron in the Thumb Area peninsula in Eastern Michigan. The Thumb Area Michigan Works! Employment and Training Consortium serves the four counties of Lapeer, Sanilac, and Tuscola. The four-county population is approximately 220,000. The demographics are reported as 95% White, 3% Hispanic and 2% other. The area is rural and traditionally agricultural. Local industry consists of manufacturers providing plastics and component parts to the auto industry. Most businesses are fairly small and it is reported that the recent slow down in the automotive industry has taken a significant toll on local employers, forcing downsizing or complete plant shut downs. At the time of this report, the unemployment rate appeared to be creeping steadily upward toward 6.5%.

In 1996 The Employment and Training Consortium introduced the Tool Chest concept, a voucher system that was reported by a 1999 Department of Labor study as a "radical change from the past in how employment, training and support services are purchased." Thumb Area Works! is a part of the Michigan Works! System, a comprehensive workforce development system composed of federal and state-funded programs to designed to prepare state residents for employment opportunities. The Michigan Works! System consists of 25 local agencies that are governed through a partnership between the Workforce Development Board and local elected officials. The Thumb Area WDB consists of 38 private sector representatives, four County Commissioners and eight County Commission Representatives. The board is designed to provide representation from private industry, education, economic development, social services, organized labor, and community-based organizations.

Through the private-public partnership, Thumb Area Michigan Works! workforce development system delivers programs in four essential areas: Work to Work, Unemployment to Work, Welfare to Work, and School to Work to meet the specific needs of their residents. The Thumb Area workforce development system fundamentally shares the statewide Michigan Works! guiding principles of:

- Universal access by employers and job seekers,
- Easy customer access,
- Service delivery driven by customer needs,
- Services that are market driven through private sector leadership,
- Integration of services across agencies and programs,
- Maximum utilization of local resources,
- Accountability focused on results and documented by performance measures.

Local Michigan Works! agencies administer and manage the day-to-day operations of a wide variety of workforce development programs and related support services that assist employers to find skilled workers and job seekers prepare for, find, and retain gainful employment. Programs are also available to help prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force and to help individuals who are particularly disadvantaged obtain the training necessary to obtain and sustain a job.

Thumb Area workforce development programs are administered locally through the Workforce Development Board. The board in partnership with local elected officials develops, implements, and oversees the local programs whose funding is under their direct control. Those programs include WIA, Work First, Welfare to Work, Parolee and Inmate Employment Services, Transportation-to-Work, School-to-Work, Displaced Homemakers, Employment Service, NAFTA, and TAA. In addition, the local partnership has planning authority for other programs that influence the local workforce development agenda. These related programs include Vocational Rehabilitation, Vocational Education, Adult Education, Unemployment Insurance, Career Preparation, Veterans Employment Insurance, and Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers. Local elected officials appoint the local Workforce Development Board members. The WDB chair is a representative of the private sector and is selected from the WDB membership.

It is the local board that approved the Tool Chest voucher system in 1996 and has continued to promote it as an effective system for delivery of employment, training and support services. There does not appear to be any state promotion of the concept. The local agency has been granted ample latitude to apply the voucher system to best serve the needs of clients. As the local Director reported, "Vouchers are definitely the way to go. We've come up with some real wild stuff that falls under service delivery guidelines. We have has a great time with it and so do the participants when they start to feel the freedom of it." It is reported that Thumb Area Works! is the only organization in the state and the only region in the country applying a TOOL CHEST model.

### III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE

The Thumb Area Michigan Works! TOOL CHEST is a voucher system that awards eligible clients with individual debit accounts to purchase education, training, or other support services available in the local marketplace. The mission is to provide clients with resource to overcome the barriers that might preventing them from attaining full-time employment and self-sufficiency. The amount awarded to each individual's financial account is determined based on the number of workforce development funding sources the individual is eligible for under workforce development and other social service programs being administered by the agency.

Once eligibility has been determined and a financial award or "scholarship" has been assigned, the individual receives a set of vouchers (which are designed to resemble bank checks) that they "spend" under the advisement of a trained workforce specialist. Vouchers can be used to purchase services from public or private schools in the local area, as well as at a range of retail suppliers (e.g. for work clothes, safety equipment, job-related supplies). Each client has an established limit in their account based on their total eligibility for the various programs being run by the agency during the program year. As a result, limits vary from person to person. The tool chest "scholarship" must be spent within one year. Some fund sources require utilization within six months.

Any client seeking employment, education and/or training services is required to complete a universal application that determines comprehensive eligibility. The information contained in the application is used by workforce specialists to "calculate" financial eligibility across the major funding streams. The resulting financial "scholarship" is set up as an individual development account or Tool Chest. TOOL CHEST consultants assign eligibility criteria to each applicant based on their individual circumstances. At the start of each program year Works! establishes a set dollar amount that can be awarded per person for each program that it administers.

The per person dollar amount is determined by the Total Training Grant Dollars allocated to the program for the year divided by the forecasted number of clients expected to be served. For example, if the WIA Barrired Adult training grant fund for the program year is allocated as \$250,000 and an estimated 250 clients are expected to be served during the grant year, the per person individual grant amount would be \$1,000. Clients receive the per person dollar amount that is available under each program they qualify for. The sum total of individual program grants makes up the value of their total Tool Chest account. For example, if the person were eligible for funds according to WIA Barrired Adult and Work First/WtW he or she would be eligible for a total voucher of \$1,600. The overall objective of the program is to get people working by providing short-term grants that enable them to overcome short-term barriers.

## 2001 TOOL CHEST AWARD PROJECTIONS

FUNDING SOURCE	TOTAL TRAINING GRANT	PROJECTED TOTAL/COST PER NUMBER SERVED	INITIAL TOOL CHEST VALUE
WIA Barrired Adult	\$250,000	250/\$1,000	\$1,000
WIA Dislocated Worker	\$300,000	300/\$1,000	\$1,000
WORK FIRST/WtW	\$600,000	1,000/\$600	\$500
DHP	\$24,000	20/\$1,200	\$500
WIA Barrired Youth	\$400,000	260/\$1,500	\$1,000
FSO	\$100,000	50/\$2,000	\$1,000
Wagner Peyser	\$350,000	8,000/N/A	N/A

When clients initially engage with TOOL CHEST they receive the opportunity to complete an assessment process that determines interests and employment goals. The workforce specialist assists the client in making informed decisions about the types of services that will best address their goals. Clients are given options to choose from and are allowed to investigate options before making a purchase. Once the client determines they want to purchase an item out of the tool chest, they must obtain the signature and approval of their assigned workforce specialist. No cash expenditures can be made out of their account until approval is granted. The purpose of this approval process is to allow trained specialists the opportunity to help the client make the best value decision for the dollars spent. It also allows the specialist the opportunity to provide alternatives and share consumer satisfaction information about a particular vendor.

The workforce specialist is assigned as an advocate not a gatekeeper. The only criteria is that the requested service is allowed under the guidelines of one of the programs for which the client is eligible and that the value of the service does not exceed the "scholarship" balance remaining in the individuals tool chest account. If these criteria are satisfied, the client may purchase the service. The agency culture supports case managers being innovative and pushing the limits on interpretation of guidelines is encouraged. Local management wants to make sure that the job seeking individuals are offered the maximum choice and input when determining their individual path to success. Each purchase a client makes withdraws funds from the account until all funds have been exhausted. All expenditures are supposed to be spent within one year although some programs carry six-month windows of opportunity. Clients can request and have been previously approved for extensions on the one-year period, but this requires prior authorization and is handled on a case-by-case basis. The burden for properly budgeting and making good cost-benefit decisions is clearly placed on the client. The overriding philosophy is that individuals, with some guidance, know what is best for their own futures.

Clients shop for their own services from a very detailed menu provided in the tool chest catalog. However, clients are entitled to shop for services outside of the tool chest menu. The system is open to all vendors in the service delivery area with the exception of those that have been eliminated for performance or quality reasons. The agency keeps a close eye on vendors and rates their services in order to protect consumers from being duped by organizations scheming to prey on residents with voucher dollars. Workforce specialists play a crucial quality

control role in maintaining information about the highest performing vendors and assisting clients in making the best value decision. Client purchases are not subsidized. Clients pay the market advertised price for the service. Cost benefit decisions are the responsibility of the client. Once an individual exhausts their "scholarship" or checking account, they cannot purchase additional services unless they use their own funds. Clients can use the funds incrementally. For example, clients can apply some of their account to complete a pre-requisite skills certification class and then several months later use the balance to purchase tools required to obtain an open position as computer field service technician.

Funds that are not used by individuals are recycled so that other clients can use them. For example, if an individual is granted a tool chest award, and has either dropped out of a training program, failed to meet with a workforce specialist in months, or perhaps even found a quality job that has reduced the need for intensive employment services, workforce specialists can credit the balance of that individual's account back to another account that is active. Recycling unused dollars is tricky because individuals are entitled to utilize the funds for one year, and recycling prior to the end of that period could result in an individual not having the funds to use when he or she decides to take action. The only way to ensure that confusion is eliminated is for the workforce specialists to maintain up-to-date information about the status of their clients.

The mission of the TOOL CHEST is to allow clients to develop, create and put in practice their own plan for employment development. Staffers refer to the intention of the process as "getting married to the task of getting a good, full-time job." Allowing clients to take greater part in designing, budgeting, and achieving individual employment goals invests them in the outcomes, respects their dignity as adult decision-makers, and motivates them to complete and apply the training or services they receive.

One intriguing aspect of this promising practice is that spending appropriations serve as a forecasted budget but do not prohibit the agency from serving more or less clients within any single program. For example, if needed, the agency could serve 300 WIA Barrired Adult grants instead of the projected 250 by drawing fewer grant dollars from other programs. The TOOL CHEST system sees the Total Training Grant for all programs as a pool of dollars to be distributed based on consumer circumstances. Therefore, on an annualized basis, the actual allocation of vouchers or grants within each funding source may vary substantially from the forecasted Total Training Grant allocation. To the managers of the system this is insignificant. Their core philosophy is that the state's Total Training Grant dollars simply defines their "kitty" to draw from. The most important objective is to serve the needs of the clients. Once universal eligibility is determined, the philosophy is that nobody is to be denied the fullest possible range of opportunities and all clients will be served until the Total Training Grant dollars are expended.

This system appears to be completely customer driven with the main objective being to help people become employed in the short-term. It is a refreshing and simplified process approach that would appeal to workforce development specialists who feel the current WIA guidelines are too confusing to interpret properly. It is important to note that the system does go to great lengths to diligently account for all expenditures. In interviews with the controller and administrative personnel, it was reported that at times the client driven approach does create

some compliance and bookkeeping challenges. However, in the same breadth, these administrators flash a smile and reiterate their unwavering support for the voucher system and its indiscriminate method of awarding resources to self-directed individuals who want to take control of their future.

The Director of the program reports that the voucher system empowers clients to create and put in practice their own plans for employment. He also feels that it empowers schools and service organizations to get better outcomes for their dollars invested. The voucher system is a departure from employment systems that offer opportunity but not alignment with individual goals or interests. Enrollment in training programs that are aligned with individual career interests is reported as resulting in higher completion and placement success

By using the voucher approach, TOOL CHEST saves time and labor by expanding the range of choices for its participants without increasing the traditional contracting and administrative costs. Works! Director Marvin Pichla reports that traditional educational institutions have initiated flexible schedules and customized training to take advantage of TOOL CHEST funds. He also reports that there has been a 15-20 % increase in the number of service providers. In addition, by eliminating the contracting process, TOOL CHEST no longer has to procure services through an RFP process, nor are they limited to brokering specific suppliers. Clients make their own market choices resulting in expenditures being spread out among a greater variety of suppliers.

According to supporters there is also a psychological benefit to the voucher system. It respects the dignity of the individual by not labeling them as "recipients" of a specific state or federal program, eliminating the stigma often associated with social services. In this system it is transparent as to where the source of funds have come from. As Jerome Lewis, Deputy Director of the agency stated, "*Vouchers are an equalizer. It doesn't say on the voucher that the person is handicapped, on welfare, or a dislocated worker.*" The objective is not to label or blame someone for their circumstances but to eliminate any barriers that are preventing gainful employment. Numerous anecdotes were shared during the site visit as illustrations. It was reported that one woman used her account to fix her teeth so that she could improve her appearance and speech ability. Another used her account to purchase lingerie (e.g. work clothes) so that she could pursue an exotic dancing career. Perhaps a more wholesome example is that of the single mother who used her funds to purchase equipment and supplies to start up her own day care facility, a venture that has now expanded significantly. (She is now a member of the Workforce Development Board). Others have chosen education, training, certification in technical areas, GED completion, or computer training. Some use the funds to acquire needed transportation. In each case, individuals determined the best use of their money.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Upon entering the program, participants are presented with a menu that includes post secondary, vocational, and general education; job coaching and supportive employment services; private placement services; public health and mental services; child care; transportation and budget or family counseling. The menu also includes prices for these services if available.

There are three TOOL CHEST levels available to clients and each level is assigned a timeframe for completing the use of the funds. Each level corresponds generally to the Core, Intensive, and Training classifications associated defined in the WIA. Level 1 TOOL CHEST services are open to all residents and are on-going with no time limitations. Level 2 TOOL CHEST services have a six-month timeframe, and Level 3 must be completed within one year from the date of the award. Waivers for extensions may be granted based on special circumstances.

The Level 1 TOOL CHEST is made up of a wide variety of free self-starter employment service opportunities and is available to everyone. There are no special application forms or qualifications. Services include access to Michigan's Internet based electronic labor exchange to post a resume or view employer job listings. Internet-based services include access to Michigan's Talent Bank, Michigan's Job Bank, Community Services Directory, Labor Market Information, and Michigan's Career Education Consumer Report. In addition a workshop titled, *Job Hunting and the Workplace* is offered to assist those who are newly entering or attempting to re-enter the workforce. For special needs customers (veterans, persons with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farm workers) there are personalized employment development services. Case Managers assist all clients in locating and obtaining services. All clients that utilize Level 1 services receive an "All in One Folder" that includes a 37-page job search handbook and three Occupational Test Instruments (Wonderlic Personnel Test, Employee Reliability Test and Test of Adult Basic Education) for self-analysis of skills and interests.

The Level 2 TOOLCHEST is referred to as the Minor Upgrade and Improvement Package, designed to help those who face fewer barriers to employment. Level 2 services require the completion of an application. Clients are awarded \$500-\$1,000 scholarship style cash grants to be used to purchase any of the following short-term and low-cost development opportunities:

- Technical/Career Education
- High School Completion
- Career Counseling
- Job Coaching
- GED Preparation/Testing
- Team Building Training
- Computer Awareness Sessions
- Employer Specific Training
- Occupational Seminars
- Job Retention Training
- Safety Equipment
- Licensing and Certifications
- Budget Counseling

The standard Level 2 TOOL CHEST is awarded for a six-month period

The Level 3 TOOL CHEST is referred to as the Major Building and Enhancing Package and is designed to help those who face a larger number of barriers to employment. Dollar awards are once again determined through the application and eligibility process. This level of service is customized to assist those requiring longer –term training and support in order to become

self-sufficient. Packages would be derived from course offerings provided by county-based technical/skill centers and/or community or private colleges. Training packages have been designed for health occupations, manufacturing occupations, retail food/service occupations, and technology/office occupations. In addition to training opportunities, Level 3 services also may include transportation assistance, day care, car repair/purchase, occupational clothing, protective eyewear, job-specific tools, and equipment. Level 3 awards are assigned for one year.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Director reported that his vision of choice, individual accountability and initiative has not always been equally supported by agencies in all four counties. It was reported that earlier this year the agency had internal philosophical differences as to what requests would be permitted under program guidelines. The Marlette-based team discovered that when satellite offices called the central administration agency to qualify a voucher request they were increasingly being denied on the grounds of "program regulations and reporting restrictions." Interestingly, central administration is co-located in the same offices as the Director who is a passionate champion of the "can do" approach. Under Michigan state guidelines, all administrative staff in the county service centers is sub-contracted to employees from partnering agencies. For example, one center might have five case managers from five different partnering agencies. The sub-contracting arrangement creates a management challenge in that all associates at the center work to administer the system, but some functionally report to an external supervisor at the sponsor agency. Conflicts in leadership styles among service center employees caused internal strife not only among case managers themselves but also between case managers and the administrators that support them. The end result was that front-line managers stopped taking risks, allegiance to the client and the overall mission appeared to deteriorate, and the critical thinking around how to best remove barriers and create opportunities waned.

In response, Thumb Area Works! leadership has decided to franchise each service center and make them completely autonomous cells. Each center will determine its own objectives, policies, internal employment policies, and service level agreements in order to serve the requirements of their local population. Administration will be decentralized and each service center will be accountable for its own operations. The belief is that by forcing local administrative teams to take responsibility for the center, staff members will begin practicing greater creativity and accountability and return to the principle of adding value for clients.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

The most notable evidence of success at Thumb Area Works! Is its ability to use all its funds each year. Since the adoption of the Tool Chest, Thumb Area Works! Has spent its entire allocation of funding for all programs. While many other programs are unable to find appropriate mechanisms by which to expend their resources, Thumb Area Works! Is able to legitimately expend everything.

A second measure of success is the recognition the Tool Chest system receives around the country. Several national reports, journals and newspapers have written features

on the innovativeness and uniqueness of the tool chest approach. Thumb Area Works! Leadership has been invited to several conferences and meetings around the country to present their system.

Finally, and perhaps more importantly, are the letters of appreciation and the visits that the staff receive from former participants who return to the office to express their gratitude. Some of the case managers kept pictures or letters written to them by individuals who creatively used their Tool Chest vouchers and are thriving in the labor market. Some former participants have gone on to open successful businesses of their own. Both Thumb Area Works! Staff and leadership agree that this is the most important outcome measure they monitor.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Clients do not need to be labeled.**

The voucher system demonstrates that by removing the label attached to the funding clients will learn to view the opportunity as it is intended by the spirit of the legislation—a tool to become employable and self-sufficient.

### **Vouchers change the challenge.**

It appears that the voucher system shifts the focus of the challenge away from remediation to barrier reduction. The whole spirit of the program seemed to remove the personal stigma associated with not having employment. The focus seems to be more solutions oriented, asking the question, “What is in the way of you getting employed and how do we remove the barrier?”

### **The system works best in a rural or small town setting.**

It was clearly stated that this type of system would be difficult to replicate in larger populated urban environments where there is stiffer competition among agencies and more turf grabbing and protection of funding and program dollar allocation.

### **The Case Manager plays the key role of objective broker.**

The case manager or workforce specialist must be objective in recommending outside services and must constantly collect data to track client satisfaction with vendors to ensure quality services. In addition, case managers need to make sure that clients are using their scholarships and completing the assigned training or support services. If necessary, funds that are not being taken advantage of must be recycled so that more active service seekers can benefit.

### **Keep an eye on the accounting and reporting.**

Accountants mentioned that this block grant type of award system required weekly reporting and follow-up to properly track expenditures. In addition, given some of the creative service purchase requests that are likely to come up, staff members need to be savvy enough to know how to qualify the purchase under one of the program’s guidelines.

**Provide some limits.**

In a small, close-knit, rural county this open voucher system can work. However, in a more politically, socially and economically diverse environment, there is potential for exploitation of the system to benefit the financial position or political status of both individuals and service providers. In addition, if a system were to maintain a larger customer/supplier base, it would need to rely heavily on automation and information technology to manage the purchase options available to clients.

**Involve employers in the process.**

There appears to be an excellent opportunity for private employers to either set up their own academies or partner with training academies or education institutions to develop certification courses that would attract voucher holders. By establishing certification for specific employment opportunities, employers could create their own on-going labor pool and help job seekers use “scholarships” to not only qualify for a general industry, but more specifically, for explicit jobs within industries. This promotes even further the idea of public private partnerships to help employers find qualified workers and job seekers to find desirable employment opportunities.

## List of Interviewees

### Thumb Area Works!

Marv Pickla	Director
Jerome Lewis	Deputy Director
Kelly Cook	Fiscal Controller
Carol Palmer	Fiscal Technician
Deanna Sweeney	Fiscal Technician
JulAnn Kuenzil	Records Controller
Rita Lopez	Records Technician
Val Fusee	Records Technician
Jody Wilson	Services Controller
Case Managers	

## **SITE VISIT REPORT:** Grays Harbor Career Transition Center, Aberdeen, Washington

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and location of Site Visit: June 7, 2001, Aberdeen, Washington

Organization: Grays Harbor Career Transition Center

Type of Entity: Public, One Stop Operator

Contact Person: Ronnie W. Schmidt, Manager, Grays Harbor Career Transition Center

Phone: (360) 538-2340

Email: [rschmidt@ghctc.org](mailto:rschmidt@ghctc.org)

Jo Vanucie, Administrator - Washington State Employment Security, Co-Manager Grays Harbor Career Transition Center, 511 W. Heron, PO Box 1747, Aberdeen, WA 98520

Phone: (360) 538-2385

Email: [jvanucie@esd.wa.gov](mailto:jvanucie@esd.wa.gov)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: Employer (Business) Assistance Program

The Heldrich Center Representatives: Karen Dixon, Rita Carey

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Grays Harbor Workforce Center provides services to Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties, with a total population 100,000. Declines in the core industries of lumber, milling, papermaking, and fishing have hurt economic conditions in the two counties in recent years. Local business and workforce leaders and policymakers are well aware of the need to diversify the regional economy beyond this natural resource base into other areas.

Between the years of 1988 and 1993, Grays Harbor lost 30 percent of lumber and wood products employment. In June 2001, another pulp and paper equipment manufacturer announced a permanent closing, which will result in the loss of 100 local workers. Rapid Response survey records indicated that employees of that mill averaged \$35,000. - \$50,000 annual salary. However, timber still remains the primary employer in the Grays Harbor community. Boise Cascade will bring a 150-person mill on line in spring, 2002; Sierra Pacific Timber is planning to place a 120-person sawmill in Aberdeen. A number of small cedar mills as well as a 250-person paper mill currently operate in the region.

The charter fishing business had also been hit hard. This industry had historically been a strong source of employment providing good wages. In 2001, charter fishing was affected by the scarcity of salmon and the placement of this resource on the endangered species list, which caused the season to remain closed.

These job losses in timber and paper as well as fishing have nearly been offset by substantial job growth in retail trade and services. . However, pay rates in these growing sectors are generally far below the jobs they are “replacing.”

Adjusting for inflation, the average wages have declined over the last decade. Per capita income declined from \$29,549 in 1982, a peak year, to \$21,646 in 1992. Incomes have risen slightly during the last three to four years, however; in 1998, the last year for which figures are available, the average wage in Grays Harbor was \$25,269 - about three-quarters of the state average of \$33,381.

While a growing trade and services sectors have created new jobs, job growth has not been sufficient to meet the demands of the labor force. Since 1990, the Grays Harbor County labor force grew by 690 but the number of those with employment fell by 900. The unemployment rate during this period grew from 8.8 to 14.2 percent in Grays Harbor County.

Efforts are underway to improve the economic situation. Local economic development councils have made business retention and attraction high priorities. Lumber and wood products will continue to be the economic base for the county; at the same time, tourism is being promoted as a provider of jobs. The recent development of a casino, managed by the Quinault Indian tribe, has added jobs to the area. Casino jobs provide a comprehensive health insurance benefit and reasonable wages for the service industry. Travel to the casino is a deterrent for some, but the county and casino management are exploring options for providing transportation from appropriate locations.

The state of Washington is engaged in the first round of certifying One Stop Centers. Grays Harbor Workforce is the name of the collaborative employment and training service center in Grays Harbor County and consists of the following partners: Grays Harbor Career Transition Center (formerly a separately located entity that administered JTPA programs); Washington State Employment Security Department; Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Grays Harbor College; Re-Employment Support; Coastal Community Action; Timberland Opportunities; Chamber of Commerce Employer’s Assistance Project; Mature Worker/Green Thumb; Grays Harbor Youth; Goodwill Industries; Veteran’s Affairs; QuinWorks; SCA Pacific. Grays Harbor Workforce has applied for certification.

Grays Harbor Workforce is located in the city of Aberdeen, WA and serves all job seekers in Pacific and Grays Harbor counties. Demographic statistics indicate that populations of the two counties are primarily white/Caucasian – 87% - 91%; Indian, Eskimo & Aleut: 3% - 4.7%; Black/African American: less than 1% and Hispanic Origin: 2.5% - 3.9%.

The Washington State Employment Security Administrator and the manager of Grays Harbor Career Transition Center provides leadership in the Career Center (Grays Harbor Workforce). Their commitment to providing a seamless delivery of services was

evident throughout the interviews and in the comprehensive program design. Efforts to create a physical space that would best represent an integrated approach to delivery of services resulted in removal of a wall that appeared to separate services. Rotation of reception desk assignments includes all program staff. The desire to present a unified workplace that invites and rewards strong collaboration among program staff was evident throughout the site visit in all discussions with personnel.

The Career Center space incorporates very clear signage and well-designed printed materials. On entering the Center, a large sign lists services. The reception desk is prominently located in direct view of the entrance. Those seeking employment can see a staff person on their first visit. Jobs are listed in the state database and can be viewed with a counselor or in the resource room. The resource room is well equipped with computers and print materials. Staff assistance is available. Staff reported that 3000 people a month use the center, an increase in traffic over last year.

It was the view of staff that the greatest change in Washington under WIA is the focus on business. The promising practice for which they were nominated is an employer-focused initiative called the Employer's Assistance Project (later referred to as the Business Assistance Project).

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The Employer's Assistance Project/WebMatch was launched in mid-April 2000 in Grays Harbor County, Washington. This grant-funded program, administered by the Grays Harbor Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Grays Harbor WorkForce Career Transition Center and the Economic Development Council, is an employer-based program that provides services to employers who hire current welfare recipients.

The business engagement strategy builds on the local strategic plan for the Pacific Mountain Workforce development area, of which Grays Harbor is a part. The Plan was developed through a series of community forums and focus groups in which business leaders were key participants. Training was provided for management and staff, at the direction of the local executive directors of key partner agencies. The curriculum emphasized the importance of serving the needs of business and ways to design services that meet those needs.

The employer assistance project is designed to assist employers, recruit workers, and assist welfare recipients with finding jobs. A key premise of the project is the belief that successful job retention begins with appropriate placement.

Resources deployed include:

- Welfare-to-Work funds which staff the Employer Assistance Project and developed a database for job matching.
- Space and facilities provided by the Chamber of Commerce;
- Space allocated at the Career Transition Center.

The chamber launched a marketing campaign to encourage employers to participate and the president continues to promote participation among its members. Two business representatives and a client data base manager are the frontline staff for this initiative. Once an employer indicates an interest, he or she meets with the business representative, who becomes the one point of contact.

What may be somewhat unique is the relationship between the Chamber and the Career Center. During the on-site visit, the president of the Chamber was enthusiastic about the partnership with the Grays Harbor Transition Center and commended the staff for their collaboration on and support of this initiative.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Participating employers list openings with the business representatives at the Career Center. Business representatives meet with the employer to define work requirements, and match requirements to the skills and abilities of eligible job seekers using the WebMatch database. The database contains names and skill levels of the Welfare-to-Work and WorkFirst job seekers.

Referrals of appropriate candidates are forwarded to the employer. Employers select candidates for interviews from the applications, and notify the business representative who then contacts the candidate.

The employer interviews candidates. If the candidate and employer believe there is a match, the candidate is hired and the business representative is notified. Prior to hiring, the Business Assistance Representative meets with the business to provide information on specific training, tax credit, and support services available to the respective hire. Bonding of employees when appropriate is provided, as well as background checks on referred employee.

The business representative may also contact the newly hired employee to discuss preparation for work and/or to deal with issues that surface. If the employer has a problem with a referred employee, or discerns that the employee may have a problem, he/she calls the business representative who intervenes. Ongoing support is available to the employee and employer in the initial stages of employment.

#### **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Grays Harbor Chamber of Commerce working closely with the Grays Harbor Transition Center and Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council (WIB), an operating partnership, manages the Employer's Assistance Project (currently referred to as the Business Assistance Project). In addition to these affiliations, the program works with community and state agencies, the Grays Harbor College, the Economic Development Council, and the Quinault Indian Nation. Staff of the Business Assistance Project work directly with these partner agencies.

Three front line staff and three support staff staff the Business Assistance Project. To date, staff have made over 400 business presentations and have signed 125

businesses to work with the Chamber of Commerce on this project. Program activity is recorded and monitored by the Chamber of Commerce, the WorkForce Transition Center management and the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council. Goals established for the first year

were straightforward: expand penetration into the business community by serving 50 new businesses and assist 100 workers in finding work.

## VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

After nine months of program operation the following results were achieved:

Businesses Registered:	Goal: 100	Actual 141
Job Seekers Hired:	Goal: 100	Actual 121

Additionally, the data recorded show that 44 job seekers were matched to temporary work, providing them with additional work experience. Six hundred and sixty eight job seekers are registered. Detailed reports are attached.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

The operating partners believe that the success of this project has been influenced by the following characteristics:

- Business is viewed as the primary customer;
- The initiative was spearheaded by the Chamber of Commerce;
- It has been a collaborative effort of area community service agencies;
- An effective matching system was developed for the project.

### **Business as Customer and the Role of the Chamber of Commerce**

Employer needs drive the work of the Employer's Assistance Project. In spite of the high unemployment rate, area employers made it clear they were unable to hire and/or maintain competent employees. Employers described this problem during the interviews with the Heldrich Center staff. Small companies were devoting an inordinate amount of time to recruitment, selection, and retention efforts. Although comparative data were not available, employers stated that better selections were made when candidates were pre-screened and that this resulted in greater retention.

Employers stated that turnover was a serious problem and attributed it to lack of life management skills. The Employee Assistance Program provided a screening and referral process that not only reduced the amount of time spent conducting interviews, but also provided a resource person whom the employer could contact when a problem on the job occurred. The Employer Assistance Program caseworker followed through with an appropriate intervention designed to prevent job loss. Although not always successful, these interventions were successful often enough to receive a positive

evaluation from the employers. Employers that have hired through this project consistently cited the ongoing support. "If there's a problem, I know whom to call." was a frequent remark.

The fact that the Chamber of Commerce spearheaded the program had two positive effects on outcomes. First, it gave program personnel access to businesses in order to market the initiative and second, it was perceived as having a business perspective since the Chamber of Commerce works on behalf of business interests. Although Chamber membership was not required to access the program, by spearheading this program, the Chamber was able to feature one more membership benefit to members. This was viewed as a win for the Chamber and a win for its membership.

### **Collaboration with Community Service Agencies**

Community service collaboration was a key factor in the success of the Employee Assistance Program. Many Grays Harbor community service agencies have had an ongoing relationship with the Chamber. The Career Transition Center ensured that planning was done in cooperation with all partners. A referral form to the Employee Assistance Programs facilitated agency referrals. All job placements were reported back to the referring partner. Credit for all activities can be tracked for all partners and for the Employer Assistance Project. It was clear that the relationship was not merely one of cooperation, but that it was a strong example of collaboration at its best, which results in comprehensive services to customers.

### **Matching Accuracy**

An effective matching system is critical to the success of such a project. Retention is strongly influenced by the accuracy of the referrals and employers quickly lose faith in a system that provides inappropriate referrals.

Grays Harbor developed a *WebMatch* program that the staff and employers believe is exceptionally accurate when matching skills with job requirements. There are plans under way to take it through another developmental phase and then market it to other agencies.

### **An Indirect and Important Benefit of the Program**

Although the objective of the program was to provide capable employees to employers and to provide steady employment to jobseekers, a natural outcome of its success has been the strengthened relationship between the Career Transition Center and the business community. Credibility has been established; relationships have been developed; and doors have been opened for additional collaboration.

**List of Interviewees:**

Grays Harbor WorkForce Transition Center

Ronnie W. Schmidt

Manager

Jo Vanucie

Co-Manager/Administrator,  
Washington State Employment Security

Coleen Chapin

Client Database Manager

Grays Harbor Chamber of Commerce

LeRoy Tipton

President

Business

Debbie Bland

Canned Foods Company

Dave Trusty

Briggs Nursery

Dan Catron

Guards Wood Products

Debbie Martin

Quinault Beach Resort

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Workforce Essentials, Clarksville, Tennessee**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: March 12-13, 2001, Clarksville, Tennessee

Organization: Workforce Essentials, Inc.

Type of Entity: Private non-profit, member of One-Stop Operator Consortium

Contact Person: Robin Dunn, Director, Commercial Services Division

Phone: (931) 551-9110

Fax: (931) 551-9026

Email: [rdunn@workforceessentials.com](mailto:rdunn@workforceessentials.com)

Web site: [www.workessentials.com](http://www.workessentials.com)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: Commercial Services Division

Heldrich Center Representatives: Laurie M. Santos, Ronnie Kauder

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Workforce Essentials covers a nine-county area of Tennessee north and west of the State capital of Nashville. The area served is large – 70 miles from east to west and 60 miles from north to south, with a total population of 500,000. The region is very diverse. It ranges from Williamson County, close to Nashville and the richest county in Tennessee (where many country-and-western singers own homes), to Montgomery County, the largest county in the area, with a population of 150,000, to a number of poorer and very rural counties. Clarksville, the largest city, and the commercial and industrial center of the workforce investment area, is in Montgomery County. Clarksville is a 45-minute drive from Nashville.

Two counties – Montgomery County and Stewart County – are adjacent to Fort Campbell, which straddles the Tennessee-Kentucky border, and is home to 20,000 active military personnel and more than 10,000 of their family members. This area of Tennessee has been growing in both population and employment for the last five years. Fort Campbell is the single largest economic force in the area, having an impact well beyond the employment of 10,000 civilians. Health care is the next largest industry. There are also quite a number of manufacturers, in industries as varied as automotive parts (there are Nissan and Saturn plants in the Nashville area), printing, air conditioning and heating, and construction materials. Many people in the surrounding, rural counties commute to Clarksville to work and some commute to Nashville. In the most rural counties, employment is generally limited to local government, retail, and hospitality.

Before the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the area was an 11-county Service Delivery Area under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Prior to 1992, JTPA programs were operated by each of the 11 counties, and the area had

been cited by the State for poor performance. In 1992, an incorporated Private Industry Council, known as the North Tennessee Private Industry Council (PIC), under the leadership of Executive Director Ross Jackson, became the operator of JTPA programs in the 11-county area, and soon replaced the 11 county-run programs.

The organization has matured in the last nine years. The culture of the organization, the experience of its staff, and the development of the organization's leadership have all benefited from experiences gained over this period. Many of the concepts promoted under WIA, such as the importance of business involvement and customer satisfaction, were already in place in North Tennessee.

With the implementation of WIA, the State of Tennessee reorganized local service areas. The 11-county Service Delivery Area served by the North Tennessee PIC lost two counties and became a nine-county workforce investment area. The operating arm of the North Tennessee Private Industry Council, Inc. became Workforce Essentials. Due to the stricture under WIA that boards may not operate programs, Workforce Essentials has its own board, separate from the newly formed Workforce Investment Board for the area.

Before implementation of WIA, the North Tennessee Private Industry Council, Inc. had an annual operating budget of approximately \$10 million; at present, the budget is between \$6 million and \$7 million, of which \$1.9 million is represented by formula WIA funds. Workforce Essentials has recently secured a number of special discretionary grants, including a \$2.8 million technical skills training grant award under the H-1B program, and a \$4.1 million grant to continue operating its Fort Campbell Career Advancement Center and to establish a National Leadership Learning Academy for areas adjacent to large military bases.

Workforce Essentials has formed a consortium with several other organizations to become the One-Stop Operator for the area. The Consortium Agreement is structured with four full members (the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development, the Tennessee Department of Human Services, the Tennessee Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Workforce Essentials) and two affiliate members (the Tennessee Technology Center at Dickson and the Mid-Cumberland Community Services Agency).

There are One-Stop Centers or satellites in all nine counties as well as the Career Advancement Center at Fort Campbell. The largest, full-service One-Stop Center is in Clarksville, the area's principal population center. All counties, however, have permanent Career Center offices providing career development services to residents in all areas. Local workforce development professionals expressed concern that, with diminishing public resources (due to such factors as the expiration of the federal Welfare-to-Work program, the move to call-in initial claims for unemployment benefits, and declining WIA allocations), there may not be enough funding to complete the One-Stop concept as originally intended.

Workforce Essentials enjoys great political and community support and has been in the forefront of the quality movement, both within the state and nationally. Workforce Essentials was inducted into the State's quality program; it is a charter member of the Enterprise, the U.S. Department of Labor's main quality initiative; it was nominated by the National Association of Workforce Boards for the Ted Small award; and members of its staff are Baldrige examiners. All of Workforce Essentials' materials are attractive, well written, and professional. In addition, Workforce Essentials maintains a toll-free number and a website at [www.workforceessentials.com](http://www.workforceessentials.com).

Workforce Essentials abides by the following principles:

- It will operate like a business. (In fact, all employees refer to Workforce Essentials as "the company.")
- It will not be like the typical "government program."
- It will be entrepreneurial and opportunistic.
- It will have a diversified funding base.
- It will be employer-focused.
- It will be pro-active.

### III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE

Workforce Essentials' Commercial Services Division exemplifies several of the principles outlined above – it runs like a business; it is entrepreneurial and opportunistic; it is employer-focused; it allows for a diversity of funding; and it is always evolving. The Commercial Services Division provides fee-based services to businesses and individuals. This activity began in 1995 with one product, which generated \$15,000 in revenue. By Program Year 2000, there were numerous products and gross revenues exceeded \$750,000.

In general, these efforts were made in response to customer demand and opportunities in the marketplace. Before each new product or service is implemented, a business plan is prepared that details the market for the service, the competition in the marketplace, investments that must be made, resources needed to be successful, and the expected revenue stream.

### IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The main products fall into two categories: services to businesses and services to individuals.

Services to Business:

**Substance Abuse Program Management.** This service, initiated in 1998, was developed in response to employer needs when new laws regarding substance abuse were enacted. Workforce Essentials assists employers by helping them to become "drug-free workplaces," in compliance with Tennessee's relatively new Drug-Free Workplace law. The program also helps companies comply with the U.S. Department of Transportation mandate regarding drug testing of Commercial Drivers License drivers.

Workforce Essentials offers complete program management to its substance abuse program clients. In addition to a host of services, including policy development, supervisor training, and employee education, this includes actual drug testing at the ten career center locations in the area.

**Skill Assessment and Recruitment.** With this service, Workforce Essentials offers employers a variety of assessment tools that assist companies in making sound human resource decisions. These include assessment instruments that:

- measure education or basic skill levels;
- evaluate “soft skills” ;
- measure specific job-related aptitudes or abilities;
- assist in determining job performance factors to match the right person to the right job.

**Business Consulting & Training.** For the last seven years, Workforce Essentials has employed a former corporate trainer with 20 years’ experience, contacts in the business world, and an excellent reputation in the community. Over the course of her employment with Workforce Essentials, she has provided services to approximately 150 local employers in the following areas:

- Team building;
- New hire orientation;
- Leadership training;
- Executive coaching, especially with communication problems;
- Diversity training;
- Sexual harassment training;
- OSHA compliance training.

These services are offered to help local employers with human resource problems or issues that they have identified, such as high turnover.

- Other business services include such items as defensive driving classes, human resource consulting, employee surveys, computer skills training, and employment physicals.

### Services to Individuals

**Driver Education.** In 1995, the high schools in the local area stopped offering driver education classes. Recognizing the need in the community and the revenue opportunity, the North Tennessee PIC (now Workforce Essentials) decided to offer driver education classes. At present, the organization has two full-time instructors and five to six part-time instructors and offers a driver education course that includes 30 hours in the classroom and six hours behind-the-wheel. To date, more than 2300 individuals have graduated from these courses.

Other services for individuals include defensive driving classes, for those receiving motor vehicle citation; bad check resolution, for those convicted of writing bad checks; tutoring; and the Teen Highway Program.

### Other Services – Tried and Discontinued

**Childcare Center operation.** In response to a shortage of childcare services in one of the more rural counties, the organization made the decision to renovate a building in Erin, in Houston County, for use as a childcare center. The childcare center operated for approximately two years, in 1998-1999, and was then discontinued. It appears that other sources of childcare services were available. The facility previously used as the childcare center is now the Career Center in Houston County.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Commercial Services Division is a separate division of Workforce Essentials. Its manager reports directly to the president and CEO of Workforce Essentials, who is the driving force behind this and other initiatives. With a business background, he is entrepreneurial and is able to think creatively. The organizational mission is to assure that workforce needs in the local area are being met. It is believed locally that this requires close ties to business and the employer community and close ties with economic development organizations. The president and CEO's motto is: "Nothing's ever perfect. Nothing's ever finished."

Workforce Essential's management team believes that a dynamic organization offers diverse tasks to its staff and alleviates such common problems as staff burnout. Workforce Essentials uses a reward system to recognize employees' ideas and contributions. In addition, there is opportunity for movement within the organization. Staffs within the organization pride themselves on their hard work and customer focus.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

Given the business nature of the Commercial Services Division, Workforce Essentials tracks both the revenue and costs associated with each product and service and looks at the financial bottom line. Tracking revenue allows managers to ascertain whether the program appears to be successful, whether additional effort needs to be made in marketing or program management, or whether the effort should be discontinued.

The total revenue for Program Year 2000 was \$781,248. The largest components of this revenue were the Substance Abuse Program Management, which generated approximately \$220,000 and the Driver Education program, which generated approximately \$175,000. Net revenue (profit) is between 10% and 20% depending on the product or service. The Workforce Essentials board makes decisions about how to use the net revenue. In the past, it has been used to investment in new services (such as the building renovation for the childcare center), staff retreats, awards banquets, legal fees, and workforce development-related trips for board members. Revenue and costs are tracked on a monthly basis.

The Commercial Services Division is understandably attuned to customer satisfaction. Within the Business Consulting and Training area, outcome measures are decided jointly with the client company at the time of contract development. There is a mid-

project assessment and an end-of-project summary report. In addition to achievement of goals, the issue of customer satisfaction is addressed.

In addition to business success and customer satisfaction, there is the issue of whether the product or service is consistent with the core mission of the organization. While all activities are related to workforce development in some way, some are more peripherally related. The operation of the childcare center is an example of this. Part of the decision about how much effort to put into developing or improving a product or service relates to the centrality of that service to the mission of the organization.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

The Commercial Services Division is clearly an example of pro-active, entrepreneurial behavior in a non-profit organization. It is unusual within the workforce development world and is unusually successful.

In an effort such as this, the following are critical factors:

**An entrepreneurial self-image and spirit are necessary.** Workforce Essentials does not see itself as an organization that simply administers programs. It sees itself as a force in the community that helps individuals and employers to reach their goals. If this means different types of services than those prescribed in programs, then Workforce Essentials will find a way to deliver the needed services. They find a way to say “yes” to customer needs.

**Leadership – both board and management – needs to be completely behind this type of effort.** In this case, board members work with the management of the organization to create, sell, and support new ideas. The board elects to support new ideas with the financial reserves generated by previous activities. The board also represents political support within the local community.

**Organization staff need to have a broader focus.** An effort such as this requires that staff see themselves and the organization from an economic development perspective. They need to ask themselves what they can do that will strengthen the economy in the local area.

**Business planning is critical, but so is the ability to try new things.** Successful business people plan carefully and do not take undue risks, but they are able to move ahead. The same is true for fee-for-service activities like those described here.

**A Commercial Services Division does not appear overnight.** It is clear that many years of hard work, most of which pre-date the Workforce Investment Act, have gone into the success of this business within a non-profit workforce development organization.

## List of Interviewees

Ross Jackson	President, Workforce Essentials Inc.
Robin R. Dunn	Director, Commercial Services Division
Marla W. Rye	Vice President and COO
Andrea Dillard	Vice President, Operations
Susan Herrington	Training Consultant
Diane Lynch	Project Director, H-1B Grant
Jerry (JD) Wallace	Career Center Manager, Clarksville (Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development)
Kim Rye	Career Center Manager, Clarksville (Workforce Essentials Inc)
Rick Huston	Recruitment Manager, Florim USA
Ronald Irlinger	Human Resource Manager, Florim USA
Greg Gallup	Human Resources Manager, Standard Gypsum LLC
Michelle Hunt	Senior Case Manager, Houston County
Duane Pryor	Case Manager, Houston County

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Airport Work Coalition**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: June 13-14, 2001, Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas

Organization: Dallas Workforce Board,

Type of Entity: Public/Collaboration

Contact Person: Glenn Weinger, Manager, Employer Services, Lockheed Martin (Dallas County One-Stop Operator)

Phone: (972) 276-8361 x133

Fax: (972) 272-6469

Email: [glenn.weinger@twc.state.tx.us](mailto:glenn.weinger@twc.state.tx.us)

Web site: [www.worksource.org](http://www.worksource.org)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: DFW Airport Work Coalition

Heldrich Center Representatives: Leela Hebbar, Ronnie Kauder

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Airport, located midway between these two cities in Texas, covers a vast 30 square mile area larger than the island of Manhattan. It sprawls over four towns including Euless, Grapevine, Irving, and Coppell. When DFW Airport opened in 1974, it was in a sparsely populated area, an easy 20-minute drive from both Dallas and Fort Worth. DFW Airport's "anchor" tenant was American Airlines, which relocated its headquarters, largest maintenance facility and major hub from New York. Local residents describe the glamour that surrounded the opening of DFW Airport and the attraction it held for job seekers. It seemed that everyone wanted to work at the new airport.

The "metroplex" area, as it is known, has grown substantially in the last 25 years. Its population is now just over 5 million (Greater Dallas Chamber Newcomer and Relocation Journal, 2001), and is projected to increase. The area between Dallas and Fort Worth has become residential, commercial, and industrial. Traffic congestion has intensified and public transportation has not kept pace. American Airlines has become the largest carrier in the U.S. in a substantially bigger aviation industry. Air travel has become less glamorous. The aviation industry has changed. People are no longer clamoring to work at the Airport, nor is the Airport easily accessible to much of its potential workforce. DFW Airport and surrounding airport-related businesses account for up to 100,000 jobs. DFW Airport is expanding as construction at the airport continues.

As with the entire U.S. economy, the Dallas/Forth Worth area has experienced major economic shifts within the last 20 years. For many years, the Dallas economy was

dependent on the oil and banking industries, both of which “crashed” in the mid-to-late 1980’s, with low oil prices and the savings & loan crisis. Downtown Dallas became a “ghost town.” Since that time, the economy of the area has rebounded and become diversified. Dallas/Forth Worth is a major transportation hub in air, rail and freight (trucks), and has benefited since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It has become an attractive area for business because of its workforce, climate, relatively low cost of living, transportation network, geographic location, and pro-business climate. Demographically, the area has a fast-growing Latino population. For the last several years, the labor market in the metroplex area has been tight, with unemployment rates hovering around 3% from 1997 through 2000. At present, unemployment rates are slightly higher, running closer to 4%.

Employment and workforce policy in Texas changed significantly in 1996 when the Texas legislature enacted a law (known locally as House Bill 1863) that consolidated 20 workforce programs under the newly-created Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). Twenty-eight (28) local workforce development boards were created. Over time, these boards have been given jurisdiction over a host of workforce-related programs, including but not limited to:

- Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), later replaced by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) CHOICES (welfare-to-work) program
- Food Stamp employment and training
- Adult Basic Education for Welfare Recipients
- School-to-Careers
- Rapid Response
- Unemployment Insurance Profiling
- Child Care Management System
- Transportation Services
- Vision Correction

In addition to consolidation of programs under one authority, a second goal of the law was to reduce direct service provision by government agencies and allow the local Boards to select service providers. House Bill 1863 requires that all local Boards competitively procure a program operator, who operates WIA programs as well as the many others overseen by the Boards. The Dallas County Workforce Board selected Lockheed Martin IMS, which has continued in this capacity for the last 5 years. These entities are located in a 30-mile radius around Dallas. The Dallas Workforce Board is pro-business and wants to be of value to the business community. The Board believes that Lockheed Martin, as a private company, presents a “business-to-business” image to employers.

After the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was enacted in 1998, Texas requested and received approval to “grandfather” its newly consolidated workforce development system, and became an early–implementing state under WIA. Lockheed Martin and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) jointly run the 10 One-Stop Centers, called

WorkSource of Dallas County – 5 Centers are managed by each entity. Lockheed Martin and the TWC work closely together in the area of employer services. Lockheed Martin has a staff of 7 in the Employer Services function. All are housed at WorkSource Centers.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The DFW Airport Work Coalition is a collaborative effort among three workforce development boards and DFW Airport area employers. The program operators for the three workforce boards are: WorkSource for Dallas County, Work Advantage for Tarrant County (in which Fort Worth is located) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments. The Dallas and Tarrant County areas are adjacent to each other and form the core of the metroplex area. The North Central Texas area is comprised of the 14 counties that form a ring around Dallas and Tarrant counties. Although not an official partner in the project, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has been a key player and major supporter of the Coalition. North Lake College, with a large facility adjacent to the airport, has also become closely tied to the Coalition. The National Association of Workforce Development Professionals recognized the DFW Airport Work Coalition in 2000 with the presentation of the Ted Small Award for the best public/private partnership.

The origins of the Coalition date back to 1997 when DFW Airport employers were experiencing an acute shortage of workers. This coincided with both welfare reform and workforce development system reform in Texas. A few major airport employers sought the assistance of Lockheed Martin, which had received publicity after the award of its contract from Dallas County to administer both welfare-to-work and workforce development services.

The Manager of Employer Services for Lockheed Martin convened meetings with employers at DFW Airport and other key players to explore needs and opportunities. The parties that became the driving forces behind the emerging Coalition included:

- United Parcel Service (UPS)
- American Airlines
- US Sprint
- LSG Sky Chefs
- Hilton DFW Lakes
- DFW Airport Authority
- Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)
- Lockheed Martin Vought

The labor market was extremely tight, and employers were finding it increasingly difficult to recruit the employees they needed. Many employers became interested in populations that they had not drawn from before, especially the welfare-to-work population. In addition to the general labor shortages that are part of a robust economy, they identified a number of major issues that had to be addressed, including transportation, recruiting less traditional populations, and childcare.

The complete lack of public transportation to DFW Airport loomed as a huge barrier. One Coalition member referred to DFW as the largest airport in the world with the worst public transportation (in fact, it is the second largest airport in the U.S. and third largest in the world). John Quinn prepared a report for the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) in November 1997 that illustrated with maps:

- Welfare (TANF) recipients' residences, by zip code;
- Concentrations of employment areas, by zip code;
- Current public transit network (DART and Fort Worth's "T") by zip code.

When these three maps were overlaid, it became clear that lower-income workers resided in the cities of Dallas and Fort Worth where there was no meaningful public transportation to DFW Airport. The one available bus route took 2 ½ hours from downtown Dallas to DFW Airport.

In 1997-1998, DFW Airport area employers were finding it increasingly difficult to find quality employees using the recruitment sources they were accustomed to. They needed to reach organizations that had contact with less-traditional populations. These included community-based and faith-based local organizations, organizations that work with particular populations, such as youth, women, handicapped and specific ethnic groups, and organizations that are geographically based, such as housing authorities. Airport employers had limited knowledge of the groups they could reach and little experience with this type of recruitment. They wanted to become known in the community and market the airport as a good place to work, which would then increase the flow of employment candidates.

The lack of affordable and flexible childcare also hampered hiring efforts. A key issue in airport-related employment is the hours of work. Much of the work is late night, early morning, or part-time.

Companies at the airport also faced a retention problem. While much of this problem is attributed to the hours of work (often midnight to 7 am), part-time work, and transportation and childcare issues, internal management/training issues were identified by employers as well.

As a result of these meetings and the identification of common issues, the public and private organizations involved decided to partner to address these issues. They decided to reach out to and include other employers, the Tarrant County and North Central Texas Council of Governments workforce development organizations, the Fort Worth T (public transportation), community colleges, and other agencies to add value and be part of the solution. The group formalized itself under the name "DFW Airport Work Coalition."

#### IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The DFW Work Coalition formulated a mission statement, set up an organizational structure, established goals, and developed task teams to accomplish these goals. The mission statement is as follows:

1. Our mission is to foster a public/private sector partnership dedicated to meeting employers' needs for a skilled workforce, and low income individuals' needs for quality employment opportunities.
2. Focused recruiting and outreach, information sharing, and joint efforts to facilitate and sustain employment will accomplish this.

These were initiatives shared by the private and public sector. Each sector's commitments and responsibilities were clear. For example, the private sector committed to providing "quality career opportunities with a focus on persons who are low income or on public assistance." The public sector committed to coordinating "public initiatives to serve employers' needs and meet the needs of job seekers." All partners agreed jointly to "participate in shared events to link potential employees with employers (e.g. mixers, job fairs)," and to "create task teams to identify and implement solutions to remove obstacles to employment."

The coalition embarked upon implementing a series of major activities to carry out these two missions. The initiatives included:

- **A major community networking breakfast.** It is clear from all accounts that an enormous effort was made in planning and conducting this very successful event, held in June of 1999. The goals of this breakfast were to introduce community leaders to employers and job opportunities, expand employers' networks for recruiting, exchange information and begin to develop relationships between employers and community leaders for mutual benefit, and expand awareness of the Coalition.

This 2 ½ hour event included a marketing video for the project and brief presentations. 40 airport area companies with 80 representatives, 120 community organizations attended it with more than 200 representatives, and three workforce areas. It is credited as the event that motivated many attendees to work together. Further, some employers said that it resulted in an increased flow of applicants to their companies.

- **Special events and networking opportunities.** Coalition members proactively went into downtown Dallas and gave people free bus passes to DFW Airport. When they arrived at the Airport, they were given tours of airport facilities and Sky Chefs provided snacks. Community organizations unfamiliar with the airport were invited to tour airport facilities, especially of those companies with employment needs, such as LSG Sky Chefs and UPS.
- **Introducing Texas Workforce Centers (now WorkSource) to a new group of employers and community partners.** WorkSource Centers, especially the one

closest to DFW Airport, are now much more closely involved with the aviation industry and airport employers, and also have more community partners to work with. This has increased the use of the State's Job Bank, increased job seeker use of WorkSource Centers, and increased the number of employers participating in job fairs and on-site interviews.

- **Ongoing job fairs.** Job fairs have been held at employer locations, such as the DFW Hyatt Regency or American Airlines Training Center, and at community locations, such as Bill J. Priest Institute, El Centro Community College or MLK Community Center. These job fairs have attracted over 5,000 attendees altogether. With the greater involvement of WorkSource Centers, job fairs are also held at local One-Stop centers.
- **Information sharing.** Monthly sessions have been held for employers and community organizations. Some of these have included speakers from public agencies on topics such as tax credits, childcare resources and state training grants (Smart Jobs/Skills Development Funds). Others have involved sharing among employers of promising human resources practices. Examples of these include "Language of Respect" training and "Family Friendly Work Policies."
- **Supporting increased public transportation to and within DFW Airport.** As noted earlier, transportation was a major issue in the employment of low-income populations. With the support of airport area employers, DART introduced an express bus route from Dallas to DFW Airport, which takes 1 hour and 15 minutes to reach the airport from downtown, half the time of the old route. To encourage this investment by DART, airport area employers committed to purchasing certain numbers of bus passes for their employees. DART also introduced new shuttle services within the airport that stop at employment locations other than the passenger terminals. In addition, in October 2000, a commuter rail line was extended to reach the periphery of the airport.

## V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The DFW Airport Work Coalition is a shared endeavor of three workforce boards, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and key airport employers. It has functioned without a permanent home or staff since its founding, but all partners agree that it needs both in order to have consistency and stability. One partner described the Coalition at present as "all dressed up with nowhere to go." The airport is a special type of industrial park. It has many employers and jobs in one large location, but all are part of a distinct industry – one that is highly competitive and functions within a structure of federal regulation. For example, federal regulation requires that any employee, regardless of company, who must work on the "ramp" be subject to an FAA-required 5-year background check.

An on-site or near-site Career Center location would facilitate both employment in the geographic area of the airport as well as a specialization in the needs of airport employers. However, being an entity under three jurisdictions presents challenges. The three workforce boards have agreed to provide modest funding in support of the

Coalition. North Lake College, with an attractive facility very close to the airport, had initially agreed to provide permanent space, but it is unclear at this point whether that will occur. It is also unclear whether companies would contribute to the cost of making this Coalition a permanent entity.

Organizationally, the DFW Airport Work Coalition has members, which include some of the major employers at the airport, the workforce areas, DART, the Airport Board, North Lake Community College and several others. An employee of the DFW Airport Board represents smaller concessionaires at the airport. Until recently, Coalition members met on a monthly basis, but now meet on a quarterly basis. Coalition members credit Glenn Weinger, Manager of Employer Services for Lockheed Martin IMS, and John Quinn, Project Manager for Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) as being the two people who “made things happen.” Both of these individuals have many other responsibilities. In addition, many employer Coalition members have spent countless hours of “extracurricular” activity contributing to this effort.

Coalition members have discussed the possibility of incorporating, but there does not seem to be movement in that direction at this time.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

In general, Coalition members measure its success by whether the Coalition’s activities helped to address the four issues that were identified at the outset: transportation, ability to access more employment candidates, childcare, and high turnover. Substantial progress has occurred in most of these areas.

- There has been a major increase in the availability of public transportation to the airport and this has made a big difference to job seekers and employers. Between 40% and 50% of LSG Sky Chefs employees use the new express bus to get to work. Managers of other companies noted that public transportation is a big retention tool. Dallas Area Rapid Transit reports that over 1,000 people/day now use public transportation to the airport.
- Human resource managers from airport companies such as UPS and LSG Sky Chefs have experienced dramatic increases in applicants during a continuing period of low unemployment and general labor shortages. The HR Manager from UPS no longer faces a shortage of workers and he directly attributes the change to the work of the Coalition. This has included a number of hires of welfare-to-work participants. All of the employers interviewed attested to the greater flow of employment candidates due to the Coalition.
- In its capacity as operator of the local childcare management system, the local workforce board has been able to assist with federal, state and local childcare subsidies for eligible families. It is unclear to what extent childcare remains a major issue. Opinions among Coalition members varied. One believed that there must be

a major federal program for more widely available affordable childcare; others were less vocal about this issue.

- As noted above, public transportation has helped employers with retaining employees. Given the hours of work for many airport jobs, turnover is a fact of life for many airport employers. However, many companies are moving towards training for managers in the “language of respect” and to human resource policies that are family-friendly and these are reducing turnover.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

The DFW Airport Work Coalition is a good example of a successful industry-specific initiative. Those involved in this initiative are energetic and committed. Key lessons learned from this initiative include:

**To partner with business, you must listen to them.** Lockheed Martin’s responsiveness to employers was mentioned repeatedly. This employer-first focus is embedded in both the rhetoric and activities of the Dallas Workforce Board and its program operator.

**If employers are to stay involved, something has to get done.** Employers were facing serious hiring problems, and needed movement towards helping to solve their problems. The Manager of Employer Services from Lockheed Martin IMS, with the assistance of additional staff, made most of the activities happen. The representative from DART made the transportation happen. There were also champions among the employers, notably representatives of LSG Sky Chefs, Hilton DFW Lakes and UPS.

**Joining together to solve common problems can be powerful.** Airport employers chose to collaborate rather than compete to address the issues they were all facing in finding and retaining the workforce they needed. They decided to jointly market the airport as a good place to work – and everyone emerged a winner. DART put \$2 million into the project with the commitment from companies to buy bus passes for their employees. Coalition members stressed the importance of focusing on issues.

**Address all of the issues.** The Coalition addressed the issues of most importance to airport employers, including those that fell outside the usual jurisdiction of workforce development programs, such as transportation. The transportation issue was addressed in a systemic way, dealing not only with the immediate needs of current and potential employees, but leveraging this issue to look at the larger traffic congestion problems related to reaching the airport. Similarly, retention issues led management of many companies to examine their own practices and make necessary changes.

A discussion that began with the issue of getting low-income populations the public transportation they needed to get to jobs at the airport is now a larger discussion of public transit systems in general in the Dallas/Forth Worth metroplex area. There is increasing auto traffic congestion as well as commuting in all directions within the

metroplex area. A proposal for a “park and ride” for commuter from the airport into downtown Dallas has been proposed, but has not yet happened.

**Bridge the gap between community organizations and employers.** Community organizations were somewhat intimidated by the airport. They not only perceived it to be a great distance away, but also did not know the quantity and variety of jobs available. Employers became aware that they had to be pro-active in reaching a new workforce. Acting as a labor market intermediary, Lockheed Martin was able to change perceptions of employers and community organizations, and thereby facilitate productive relationships.

**Leadership is the key.** Someone must take the lead. It does not appear to matter whether it is an employer, a workforce development organization or even a transit agency. Whoever takes the lead must step out of their traditional role to bring diverse groups and individuals together to work on common issues. A shared leadership team approach emphasizing coordination and collaboration will contribute greatly to the success of the initiative.

The DFW Airport Coalition has accomplished a great deal. It has taken advantage of a tight labor market and welfare reform, where motivation was high on all sides to work together for mutual benefit. Lasting relationships have been established, and the workforce development system has positioned itself well as an intermediary. It remains to be seen whether the initiative will find a permanent home, and whether motivation and commitment will be sustained.

## List of Interviewees

### Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Airport Coalition

#### Key Coalition Contact People

Glenn Weinger  
John Quinn

Manager, Employer Services Lockheed  
Martin IMS (One-Stop Operator for Dallas County)  
Project Manager, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)

#### Employer Customers/Coalition Partners

Jennifer Barillas  
Viridiana Guzman  
Tom J. Mullen  
Tracy Reep  
Lucy Rios  
Gracie Vega  
Jose Vega

HR Manager LSG Sky Chefs  
HR Recruiter LSG Sky Chefs  
HR Manager, United Parcel Service  
Management Recruiting  
Carlson Restaurants Worldwide  
Sr. Director, HR, Carlson Restaurants Worldwide  
Director, HR, Wyndham Arlington - DFW South  
HR Manager Hilton, DFW Lakes

#### Workforce Board Coalition Partners

Laurie Larrea  
John Thomas  
Judy Bell  
Riley Miller

President, WorkSource for Dallas County  
Deputy Director, WorkSource for Dallas County  
Bus. Services Coordinator, Work Advantage  
(Tarrant County Workforce Board)  
Senior Business Service Coordinator  
North Central TX Workforce

#### Additional Coalition Partners

Charles Cooley  
Tom Morton

Mgr, Airport Concessions  
Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport  
Special Asst to the President  
North Lake Community College

#### One-Stop Partners

Mark Kerssemakers  
Lester E. Woolbright  
Melissa Loyd

Program Coordinator, Texas Workforce Commission  
Dallas Workforce Area  
Assistance Program Coordinator  
Texas Workforce Commission  
Manager, Dallas One-Stop Center  
Texas Workforce Commission

HR = Human Resource

*An Addendum To The Dallas Fort Worth Site Visit - Another Example Of A Public/Private Partnership That Resulted In Increasing Employment At Local Airport*

**I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: June 14, 2001, Fort Worth, Texas

Organization: Tarrant County Workforce Board

Type of Entity: Public/Collaboration

Contact Person: Judy Bell, Business Services Coordinator, Tarrant County Workforce Board

Phone: (817) 531-6760

Fax: (817) 531-6754

Email: [judy.bell@twc.state.tx.us](mailto:judy.bell@twc.state.tx.us)

Web site: [www.workadvantage.com](http://www.workadvantage.com)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: Alliance Opportunity Center

Heldrich Center Representatives: Leela Hebbar, Ronnie Kauder

List of Interviewees: attached

**II. SATELLITE CENTER DESCRIPTION**

Alliance Airport is located in Tarrant County, approximately 20 miles from downtown Fort Worth. Alliance is a commercial airport that is used mainly for distribution and cargo flights. There are no passenger flights from this airport. There are more than 100 companies on the airport property, employing more than 16,000 people. The largest tenant is American Airlines, which maintains its largest maintenance base at Alliance. Airplanes are flown the short distance from Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Airport to Alliance for maintenance.

Most of the companies at Alliance are not directly related to the aviation industry, but find Alliance Airport a convenient location for their business purposes. On-site companies include Mitsubishi, Southwestern Bell, AT&T, and JC Penney, among many others. Several properties at Alliance are currently under construction for companies such as General Motors (distribution center), UPS Logistics Group (logistics and technology center) and S.C. Johnson & Son (warehouse and distribution center). There is an on-site childcare center. The airport developer and operator is the Hillwood Development Corporation, which is closely associated with the Perot family.

As required by Texas state law, the Tarrant County Workforce Development Board used a competitive procurement process to select a manager for the seven One-Stop Workforce Centers and 2 satellites in Tarrant County. The current contractor is The Workforce Network (TWN), a non-profit organization, which functions under the name and umbrella of Tarrant County's Work Advantage. TWN, along with the other partners oversee the daily operation of the Alliance Opportunity Center (AOC). Supervisory staff

from the two Workforce Boards, Tarrant County College, the Chamber, and Texas Workforce Commission oversees the project.

## 1. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE

Three years ago, the Hillwood Development Corporation took the lead in establishing the Alliance Opportunity Center. Hillwood brought together the local community college (Tarrant County College), the Tarrant County and North Central Texas workforce boards, and the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, with the aim of establishing an on-site employment center. Hillwood provided the building for this center.

Local employers were receptive to the idea of a centralized employment center, one point of contact for the employer and the job seeker. The AOC staff (partners<sup>3</sup>) made presentations about the center to an employer human resources group, made up of airport employers that meet quarterly. Initially, approximately 50 companies began using the center's services. Now, three years later, 100 companies use the center to post job openings, and 35 companies keep their employment applications at the center.

## 2. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

As a satellite on the premises of a large industrial park, Alliance Opportunity Center is the central location to which job seekers come if they are interested in working at any of the companies at Alliance. Similarly, employers may use the Center to assist with their human resource needs. Key activities of the Center include:

- **Recruiting for employers.** The Center solicits job openings from and lists employment opportunities for companies at Alliance. It publishes a list of openings in hard copy, and broadcasts every new job posting to more than 100 organizations by e-mail. The recruiting area is quite wide, with recruitment into many of the 14 counties that are part of the North Central Texas Workforce Board area as well as the Texoma Board area. The most common types of jobs listed are warehouse/distribution jobs, but there are others, such as aviation-related, customer service, engineering, hospitality, security, maintenance and manufacturing. In addition to day-to-day recruitment, the Center conducts job fairs on-site for companies.
- **Acting as a labor market intermediary between employers and community organizations.** The staff at the Center have gained the trust of both employers and community organizations. They went door-to-door to meet and establish relationships with companies at Alliance. They "sold" the center at every quarterly meeting of the Alliance Human Resources Association. They invited community organizations to Alliance. They arranged tours within companies at the airport and provided refreshments and lunch.

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<sup>3</sup> Hillwood Development Corporation, the WorkAdvantage Board of Tarrant County, the North Central Texas Workforce Board, the Texas Workforce Commission, Tarrant County College and the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce.

- **Referring applicants.** When job seekers are interested in a particular job, the Center may do one of three things, depending on its relationship with the company. The job seeker may fill out the company's application at the Center. Approximately 30 –35 companies allow applications to be taken at the Center. The Center will fax resumes to the company, or refer the individual to the company. If an applicant requires additional services offered through the One-Stops, that person is referred to the One-Stop closest to their residence.
- **On-site courses.** In addition to the Center serving as a central hiring location for airport employers, Tarrant County College offers courses on-site. These include courses in popular software applications as well as English-as-a-Second Language and Spanish for supervisors. In general, companies at Alliance pay for these courses, which are attended by existing employees.
- **Rapid Response - assistance with downsizing.** In an industrial park of this size, there are bound to be some instances of workforce reductions. The Workforce Board Rapid Response Manager and contractor staff provides rapid response services as well as assistance for individuals affected. Through a special grant related to a recent downsizing by Nokia, additional funds were allocated to the Center.

### 3. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

As mentioned above, Alliance Opportunity Center is one of nine Work Advantage Workforce Centers in Tarrant County. The Center has a staff of five. Two staff members, including the Coordinator, are from Work Advantage (Tarrant County); one staff person is from the North Central Texas Workforce Board in Denton, one is from the Texas Workforce Commission (State) and one is from Tarrant County College. The Hillwood Corporation subsidizes 1/2 of one staff person. Approximately 12 One-Stop Centers from the two board areas (Tarrant County and North Central Texas) refer candidates to the Center. In addition, the Alliance Center circulates its job openings, via e-mail, to more than 100 organizations, including many community organizations.

### VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

The Center measures its success by whether job seekers and companies in the area use its services and by whether they are satisfied with its services. In the three years of its existence, more and more of both are using its services. The scope of offerings is expanding with the presence and on-site course offerings of Tarrant County College.

The Center is active, with increasing numbers of job seekers using its services. Based on customer surveys, most people who use the Center report they were referred by a friend (word-of-mouth), by another workforce center, or by companies.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

Staff and stakeholders at the Alliance Opportunity Center share a number of lessons they have learned, which include:

- **The airport manager, Hillwood Development Corporation, was a driving force.** Hillwood is the developer and operator of Alliance, and saw the value of an on-site career center early on. Hillwood brought the key players together and motivated them to establish the Center. Hillwood sponsored a “grand opening” for the Center in May of 1998 and has done a lot of promotion of the Center with businesses in the park.
- **The atmosphere at the Center is cooperative and collegial.** All organizations describe the center as a true partnership. All the staff identifies themselves as part of “Alliance Opportunity Center” rather than as staff members of their employing organizations. They believe that you cannot be territorial.
- **Bringing a Coalition together is always a challenge.** Even with support from the airport manager and cooperative agencies, operating a successful collaborative center is a step-by-step process. The people involved must be creative, flexible and committed.
- **Transportation and affordable housing remain challenges.** As with the entire Dallas/Fort Worth area, public transportation is an issue. There is little public transportation to Alliance, which effectively limits employment to people with cars, which many potential employees, especially from low-income communities, do not have. Companies at Alliance are eligible for tax abatements if they hire individuals from certain zip codes, but these individuals are often the ones without access to cars. There is also very little affordable housing close to Alliance. In some cases, companies at Alliance have had to raise wages in order to attract a workforce.

**List of Interviewees**

Judy Bell	Business Services Coordinator Work Advantage (Board)
Riley Miller	Senior Business Services Coordinator North Central Texas Workforce
Janet Benton	Employer Services Representative Alliance Opportunity Center (Work Advantage)
Joe Jernigan	Coordinator, Alliance Opportunity Center (Tarrant County College)
John Quinn	Project Manager Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Career Resources, Inc., Louisville, Kentucky**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: March 19-20, 2001, Louisville, Kentucky

Organization: Career Resources, Inc.

Type of Entity: Private non-profit; One-Stop Operator

Contact Person: Flo Barber, Vice President, Business Services Division

Phone: (502) 574-3824

Fax: (502) 574-1286

Email: [fbarber@louky.org](mailto:fbarber@louky.org)

Web site: [www.careerresourcesinc.org](http://www.careerresourcesinc.org)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: Business Services Division

Heldrich Center Representatives: K.A.Dixon, Ronnie Kauder

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **II. ONE STOP DESCRIPTION**

Career Resources, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization that currently provides workforce services in a seven-county area in and around Kentucky's largest city, Louisville.<sup>4</sup> The metropolitan area has a population of just over 1 million, which reflects an increase of 50,000 during the 1990s. The Louisville area has experienced substantial job growth within the last 10 years, as a result of a good economy, population growth, and increased commuting into the area for work. As has happened across the country, there are some recent signs of an economic slowdown. The area's economy has grown and changed in the last 10-15 years.

Louisville is well known as the home of many American icons, such as the Kentucky Derby, the Louisville Slugger bat factory, and the corporate headquarters of Kentucky Fried Chicken. It is also the largest international hub of United Parcel Service (UPS), which now employs 16,000 people in the area, and whose presence has led to tremendous growth in companion businesses, such as regional and national distribution centers, inventory control systems and other logistics enterprises. Until recently, Philip Morris had a large cigarette-manufacturing factory in Louisville (now closed), reminding us of the changing fortunes of Kentucky's largest agricultural crop, tobacco. The Louisville area has also long been home to two large Ford automobile manufacturing plants. As of March 2001, the unemployment rate for Greater Louisville was 3.1%. The population of the area is 86% white, 13% African-American, and less than 1% each Hispanic and Asian, although the numbers of Hispanics in the area have grown recently, especially in some of the more rural areas surrounding Louisville.

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<sup>4</sup> The seven county area includes Jefferson (in which Louisville is located), Trimble, Henry, Bullitt, Oldham, Shelby and Spencer Counties.

The Louisville area has been in the forefront of advances in the public workforce development system since 1988, when four public entities in the local area came together as a collaborative under the name Job Link.<sup>5</sup> The goal of this collaborative was to serve job seekers and employers in a more efficient manner than had previously been possible. Three One-Stop centers were opened, with staff from all four organizations stationed at these centers. In 1995, Kentucky received a One-Stop implementation grant, of which Louisville was a significant part. In the same year, because of its status as a pioneer in the One-Stop effort, Louisville received a grant directly from the U.S. Department of Labor to be a "One-Stop Learning Lab."

In 1996, the four Job Link partners agreed to form a not-for-profit corporation under the name of Career Resources, Inc (CRI). Soon after, Career Resources' Board of Directors, which had been composed primarily of representatives of its public partners, recognized the need to include more private sector members and reconstituted the Board to do so. As Career Resources struggled to perform as a collaborative, the CRI Board of Directors, concerned about responsiveness to customers as well as accountability, made the decision in 1998 for CRI to move forward in developing a staff of its own. With the passage of the Workforce Investment Act in 1998, and Kentucky's decision to be an early implementing state, Career Resources, Inc., as a non-profit corporation, competed for and won designation as One-Stop Operator for the seven-county Workforce Investment Area.

Career Resources, Inc. has changed and developed in the course of its existence. Until July 1999, Career Resources' primary focus was on delivering services to the unemployed job seeker and those with barriers to employment. Most employers viewed Career Resources as the place to list their low-skilled, entry-level jobs. Beginning in July 1999, led by its Board of Directors and new leadership, Career Resources shifted its strategy to an "employer-first" focus. The organization believed, and continues to believe, that it can best serve all of its clients – businesses, individual job seekers and the community – by knowing the job and skills needs of the workplace, and by being able to respond to these.

Career Resources currently operates four One Stop "Solution Centers," two in Louisville and two in the more rural parts of the workforce investment area (Bullitt County and Shelby County). These centers offer the full range of self-service and staff-assisted job seeker services. One of the Louisville Centers is in a conveniently located facility with the on-site presence of most mandated One-Stop partners; the other is in the Riverport industrial park, which has more than 100 employers, employing more than 6,500 people. In the first nine months of the current program year, more than 10,000 job seekers have paid almost 30,000 visits to these centers. Career Resources generally employs a strong customer focus, including policies such as asking job seekers to fill out a "Report Card" upon their first visit to a Solution Center.

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<sup>5</sup> The four organizations were the Louisville/Jefferson County Private Industry Council, the Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Kentucky Department of Employment Services and the Jefferson County Public Schools.

With CRI's increasing use of opportunities afforded by new technology, job seekers and employers need not physically visit a Solution Center to receive services. Career Resources is using its technological capabilities to provide more and better services to job seekers and employers through the Internet. In the first 10 months of this program year, there have been more than 250,000 "hits" to Career Resources' website, [www.careerresourcesinc.org](http://www.careerresourcesinc.org).

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

At the time that Career Resources began to focus on its "employer first" approach, it embarked on an impressive strategic and business planning process. In the Fall of 1999, CRI developed a "transformation plan," deliberately choosing this name to support the theme of change in all strategic areas. This plan clearly defined the corporation's overriding goal, mission, priorities, and success measurements. Career Resources then developed goals for the start-up year that ended on June 30, 2000 and a detailed business plan for the July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001 year.

As stated in its business plan, Career Resources is guided by a vision to be a premier consultant on workforce solutions nationwide. Its mission is to customize workforce solutions for businesses, individuals, and the community. The business plan identified two keys to success as critical:

- The establishment of a Business Services Division and a plan to provide customized human resource consulting services for competitive fees, and;
- A retooling of all service delivery processes, including the education and training of staff, to support the strategic shift.

Performance is measured against benchmark goals spelled out in the business plan. CRI also aims to diversify its funding base through this initiative. In five years, CRI would like to have less than 50% of its funding come from one source.

The Business Services Division, established in late 1999, under the guidance of a Vice President of Business Services, provides a full range of services, both free and fee-based, to employers. When the unit was established, its first priorities were to:

- Define and market core (no cost) services to employers;
- Implement a system to automate and standardize job postings;
- Identify an external partner network to provide high-quality training, consulting, and other value-added services to businesses on behalf of Career Resources;
- Identify, propose, and deliver customized services to employers for competitive fees;
- Redesign all processes to support the employer first philosophy.

The Vice President of Business Services is an experienced Human Resources professional with an excellent reputation and extensive contacts in the Louisville area. Team dedication, energy, and creativity have been critical to Career Resources'

success. Her goal is to deliver critical and high quality workforce services to employers, at no cost where feasible, and at competitive rates where necessary.

#### IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The services and products offered by the Business Services Division are extensive. Some of the more popular services and products include:

- ***Posting job openings from employers and referring interested applicants.*** Employers show the most interest in this no-cost service. Job openings are posted on Career Resources' website and at the One-Stop Solution Centers. In the Business Service Division's start-up year, there was a 77% increase in business clients and an 87% increase in job listings. Key to increasing job listing from employers was expanding the applicant base beyond low-skilled, entry-level job seekers. The Business Services Division played a key part in attracting additional job seekers to the Solutions Centers and website.
- ***Pre-screening applicants.*** This fee-based service includes anything from pre-screening résumés or applications against job requirements to telephone screening, and coordinating other types of pre-employment checks and testing. For example, one area high-tech employer required high-volume screening of applicant résumés submitted on-line as well as telephone pre-screening of applicants and referral to various branch offices for interviewing. According to the employer, Career Resources was extremely conscientious in performing this service, and called regularly to do a quality check.
- ***Résumé Exchange Service.*** Businesses subscribe to this service that provides them with résumés in up to 17 categories twice each month. Businesses can subscribe for a one-time distribution, or for three months, six months or a year. The cost depends on the "plan" they subscribe to and the number of categories in which they request résumés.
- ***Training.*** The Business Service Division also offers fee-based training services for employers on such topics as diversity awareness, sexual harassment, manager/supervisor skills, leadership development, team leadership, and developing and implementing performance management systems. All are customized and are priced per project.
- ***Human Resource and Employee Relations Consulting.*** The Division offers these fee-based customized services at competitive rates, in areas that include the review and rewrite or development of employee handbooks for companies, and providing employee relations consulting to companies on a retainer basis.
- ***Workshops.*** The Business Services Division is currently offering an extensive menu of fee-based workshops, open to any business or human resource manager or staff person, on a range of topics that include Effective

Interviewing, Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback, Employment Law, and Setting and Achieving Goals for Your Team.

- **Employer Surveys.** CRI surveyed all employers on site at the Riverport Industrial Park, in southwestern Jefferson County. Topics included employment practices, benefit practices, and pay practices. This information was then collected and the data (without identifying any individual employer) was organized into a report that was sold to employers in the Park. With the results of this survey, employers were able to compare their own rates of pay, benefits, and other employment issues (such as turnover, pre-employment screening practices, incentive plans) with other employers in the Park.

In order to deliver the products and services listed above and others, Career Resources, Inc. uses its own staff as well as an external partner network of professionals with particular areas of expertise within the Human Resources field. These external partners are selected and approved by Career Resources. The organization currently has 22 external consulting partners who are experts in a variety of areas such as compensation and benefits, personnel testing and assessment, training, organizational and management, employee relations, and many others. There are written agreements with external partners.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The staff of the Business Services Division consists of four business services consultants and an administrative assistant, all of whom report to the vice president for Business Services. Each business services consultant is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with employers and for marketing core and fee-based services within his/her assigned coverage area. Each consultant also works with a Solution Center to assure the efforts, communication, and plans of job seekers and businesses are smoothly coordinated and integrated. One Business Services Consultant is stationed at a rural Solution Center full-time; the others spend time at the Solution Centers.

The Business Services Division Vice President and CRI President work as a team to lead the effort to transform Career Resources into an employer-first organization. Both believe strongly that this transformation will benefit job seekers, employers, and the local economy in general. This view is supported by organizations in the area whose job it is to attract and retain business. Both the Riverport Authority and Greater Louisville, Inc. (a combination Chamber of Commerce and economic development authority) attest to the helpfulness of Career Resources, Inc. in working with existing and prospective businesses.

The Business Services Division represents the best in strategic thinking, careful analysis, customer focus and complete dedication to the mission of the organization.

In making its plans, Career Resources did a careful market analysis that included a look at key business and human resource trends in the area, an analysis of those with

whom Career Resources might be competing, and an identification of Career Resources' market niche. In addition to this external market analysis, CRI looked at internal trends, specifically the knowledge and experience of its staff, the perception of CRI in the community, the state of its own technological capabilities and infrastructure, and the quality of its services.

Informed by both the external and internal trend analyses, Career Resources developed goals and objectives against which it would measure its performance.

## VI. MEASURING OUTCOMES AND SUCCESS

- The Business Services Division has identified clear goals and measures for its performance. These goals include: To deliver high quality free and customized fee services to clients;
- To increase the number of clients that are informed about both free and fee services and using both;<sup>6</sup>
- To achieve gross revenues of \$174,000 (almost a 200% increase over the previous year).

In addition, CRI has outlined the following objectives as part of its business plan for program year 2001 (July 1, 2000 – June 30, 2001):

- New and repeat business clients 2000 (59% increase)
- Résumé Exchange Service 74 (500% increase);
- Job openings 9786 (59% increase);
- Average wage of postings \$14.20 (35% increase);
- Broaden external partner network by 5 companies/individuals and maintain average fee split of 40% for the external partner and 60% for CRI;
- Increase marketing and communications to employer clients through use of Access data base and new product and price listing for business services;
- Design, develop and deliver two new products, namely regional workshops for employers, and industrial wage and benefits survey.

Career Resources collects and analyzes information to ascertain whether these goals are being met. They analyze data and take action where needed. In addition to CRI's overall corporate goals, the organization as the One-Stop Operator under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) has contractual goals related to WIA that must be met (e.g. core, intensive, training services, referrals, placements). Goal achievement forms part of the way in which employees are evaluated and compensated.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

The Business Services Division is an example of a serious employer-first approach that permeates the entire One-Stop system. The leaders of the organization are thoughtful,

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<sup>6</sup> The first two goals are quoted from the Career Resources, inc. Business Plan for July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001.

dedicated, creative and entrepreneurial, functioning within a non-profit organization. This approach is impressive and unusual within the workforce development system. In an effort such as this, the following are critical factors:

- **Leaders – both board and management – must be committed to change.** They must be willing to make drastic strategic changes to move forward to achieve a new way of doing business. Sometimes these changes make people uncomfortable, but are necessary in making this type of transformation.
- **Customer service and customer success must be paramount.** It is clear that Career Resources is indeed managed on business principles including a high level of customer service and responsiveness to the community. Job seeker and employer success cannot take a back seat to partner relationships.
- **Strategic and business planning is critical.** Career Resources went to substantial expense and effort to form and follow a strategic planning process. The process included an outside facilitator, and led to an ambitious business plan to which everyone in the organization was committed.
- **Both free and fee-based services have a place in serving employers.** The free job listing service provided by Career Resources was the most attractive and popular service to employers. However, all employers have human resource needs that go beyond listing jobs and attracting applicants. Career Resources is able to identify these needs and provide them within a reasonable fee structure. This capability allows them to more fully serve the human resource needs of employers, while earning some needed and flexible funding for the organization.
- **The experience and customer-focus of the organization's leadership are key to success.** Both the President and Vice President of Career Resources bring to their positions the experience and know-how needed to transform the organization. Their commitment to customer satisfaction, customer success and the economic growth of the community are clear.
- **Organization and staff development are important, as is the use of external resources.** In order to accomplish the goals set forward in the Business Plan, a great deal of organization and staff development are needed on an ongoing basis. In addition, the careful use of external resources can give the organization capabilities to serve employers in a way that would not be possible otherwise.

### List of Interviewees

Carletta Buckman	<u>Career Resources Inc. Staff:</u> President, Career Resource
Flo Barber	Executive Vice President, Business Services Div.
Kris Phillips	Business Services Consultant
Lee Scharfenberger	Business Services Consultant and Manager, Shelbyville Workforce Solutions Center
Julie Schum	Business Services Consultant
Rob Jordan	Director of Operations
Kim Katz	Director of Operations
Kimber Smith	Interim Director of Operations
	<u>Employer Customers</u>
Audwin A. Helton	President, Spatial Data Integrations
Rose Schreck	Director of Recruiting, Darwin Networks
	<u>Partners in Employer Services</u>
Larry McFall	President, Louisville & Jefferson County Riverport
Hense Bennett	Director, Workforce Services Greater Louisville, Inc. The Metro Chamber of Commerce

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Napa County Job Connection, Napa, California**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: April 2-3, 2001, Napa County, California

Organization: Napa County Job Connection

Type of Entity: One-Stop Operator

Contact Person: Marty Finnegan

Phone: (707) 259-8362

Fax: (707) 259-8362

Email: [mfinnegan@co.napa.ca.us](mailto:mfinnegan@co.napa.ca.us)

Web site: [www.northbayemployment.org/county\\_sites/napa.asp](http://www.northbayemployment.org/county_sites/napa.asp)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: Industry Cluster Strategies

Heldrich Center Representatives: Carl Van Horn, Don Baumer

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Napa County is located in the North Bay area of San Francisco, roughly 50 miles north of Oakland, California. The county population is 124,000; the largest city in the county, also named Napa, has a population of 72,500. Economically, culturally and politically, the county is dominated by the wine industry. Napa County is home to some 231 wineries, which control most of the land. Opportunities for population growth and business expansion are quite limited. Indeed, the county operates under "no growth" policies approved by voters in referenda passed in the early and mid-1990s. One example of these no growth laws is a measure that limits residential development to areas of 165 acres or larger. The wineries, and farmers who sell grapes to the wineries, own virtually every tract of land of that size in the county, effectively giving them control of urban growth. Agriculture and the tourism related to it have become very significant sectors in Napa's economy, but the county also has a number of technology firms, a state hospital, and an airport.

The Napa County Job Connection (hereafter referred to as the Job Connection) grew from a Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) organization, which was called the Napa County Training and Employment Center (TEC). This new entity was created under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and implemented by July 2000 soon after the county formed its Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Napa County is the employer of the Job Connection staff and operates the One-Stop Center in collaboration with the county Health and Human Services (HHS -- welfare) office, and the state Employment Development Department (EDD -- Employment Service). They also work very closely with what is called the Adult School, which is responsible for vocational education directed primarily at adults and is connected to the school system for Napa (city). The One-Stop Center has been operating since 1985, but reopened in 1998 in a new suite of county

offices, leaving their previous location that was on the same campus as the Adult School (where they were also co-located with HHS and EDD).

The Job Connection Director describes the WIB as a strong and independent group of leaders from the public and private sectors. It has 31 members, 8 to 9 of whom were part of the JTPA Private Industry Council (PIC). The WIB has constituted itself as a private non-profit entity, and actually draws its main staffing (a part-time director) from a regional collaborative organization called the North Bay Employment Connection (NBEC), a planning and grant-writing organization that serves Napa, Solano, Sonoma, and Marin counties. The NBEC was created by the JTPA directors of the four counties several years ago and is headed by a former Napa county director. This arrangement (organizational and staffing) was instituted in part to give the WIB an identity separate from that of the old PIC, and to emphasize its new role as a developer of partnerships under WIA. One of the Napa county supervisors sits on the WIB, and the move to non-profit status did not appear to cause any political concern among the five elected county supervisors (three Democrats, two Republicans).

To date, the state's role in Napa County's WIA operation has been minimal. Concern was expressed about the state's slowness in releasing its funding; however, as suggested above in the reference to the NBEC, Napa does enjoy a healthy regional cooperative relationship with its WIA counterparts in neighboring counties. For example, the Napa Director recently brought in an experienced hand from Marin County to provide training in WIA and its regulations for all One-Stop Center staff members.

The One-Stop Center conforms very well to WIA's legislative intent. That is, the relevant partners (Job Connection, HHS, EDD) are co-located in the same facility (a rented office building in a commercial park), which is open to customers of all sorts. In fact, the director estimates that the customer mix is roughly 1/3 WIA eligible, 1/3 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) clients, and 1/3 Employment Service customers. The One-Stop performs assessments and provides job readiness training on-site and has close connections with training providers such as the Adult School, the Regional Occupation Program (ROP -- vocational training primarily for youth and adults run by the county school system), the Napa County Community College and others (see description of industry cluster programs below). They plan to open a Learning Laboratory within the next month, providing on-line instruction for incumbent workers and intensive services for those clients most in need. Although the presence of the One-Stop in the commercial park is not particularly well marked, the atmosphere inside the center is friendly and welcoming and outside signage has been ordered. The county's WIA funding for this year was approximately \$750,000.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

The Napa County Job Connection has achieved a good deal of success in working with local employers through what are called "industry clusters" to identify and treat the employers' workforce problems. In order to do this the Job Connection Director and staff have worked very closely with the Napa Valley Economic Development Corporation (NVEDC). Indeed, the NVEDC took the lead in the strategic planning that led to the

identification and then mobilization of the industry clusters. Beginning in 1995 the NVEDC undertook planning and analysis efforts designed to promote economic development, particularly in industries other than the wine industry. The goal was to diversify the local economy. The key concept they employed in this strategic planning exercise was that of an industry cluster: a group of businesses that are close to one another geographically, and share mutual interests and connections in terms of the products they produce, the services they provide, the technologies they employ, the skills required for successful employment (see diagram in Appendix B). The plan was to get members of these clusters together in meetings to identify their critical needs and then to figure out ways of helping them to meet those needs (see Appendix B). By 1998, NVEDC planning had identified three industry clusters: Technology, Hospitality and Tourism, and Food and Beverages. In two of these clusters, Technology and Tourism and Hospitality, the shortage of labor, both in terms of quantity and quality were identified as the most critical need.

The NVEDC is a non-profit membership organization that traces its roots back 20 years or so. With the possibilities for growth in the number and sizes of businesses in the county being quite limited by county zoning and permitting policies, the NVEDC has become an important vehicle for companies to use in dealing with the problems they face. These problems go well beyond the workforce, encompassing everything from infrastructure, to marketing, to product quality standards. The NVEDC board is similar to the PIC, and now the WIB, in that it brings public and private sector leaders together to discuss county issues. Thus there is a natural confluence of interests and functions between the Job Connection and the NVEDC, and both agencies appear to take full advantage of that. The Job Connection stands at the center of the efforts being undertaken to attend to the workforce needs of the clusters. Working within the cluster environment underscores a key point for the public agencies involved, which is that workforce training should be directed at jobs that employers have identified as being important to them, rather than on jobs that look good on paper, but may never be in demand.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Presently, the Job Connection and the NVEDC are focusing their attention on the technology, hospitality and tourism, and construction (a recent addition to the cluster list) clusters. Each stands at a different stage of planning and/or implementation, but the process for developing and implementing a workforce strategy is essentially the same for each cluster. After the clusters have identified workforce concerns, employers within the clusters begin a series of meetings with officials from county agencies and non-profits to accomplish three specific tasks. First, they have to agree on the core skills that are required of successful employees in cluster businesses. Second, they have to construct carefully delineated job descriptions and career ladders for business sub-clusters within the larger clusters. For example, within the hospitality and tourism clusters leaders designate sub-clusters for lodging, restaurants and wineries. Finally they have to agree on the appropriate curriculum for training courses that aim to prepare individuals for careers in the cluster.

The most fully developed cluster workforce strategy is in the area of hospitality and tourism. Over the last two years they have engaged a group of cluster employers to define core employee skills, develop career ladders, and agree on a skill-training curriculum. All of these tasks were completed by the end of 2000, and the first class of what is being called the Hospitality School began in January and is now near completion. The ROP is funding the 80-hour state-county training program, which will be conducted on-site in an area hotel and a restaurant. There is no course fee for the students at this time; however, in the future, in order to keep classes small, a fee will have to be charged. The principal focus of the course is on the services, products, customers, and economics of the tourism industry with, of course, particular attention paid to tourism in Napa County. Graduates, after displaying a series of competencies, will be awarded a certificate. According to local officials, Napa Community College will begin offering more advanced hospitality courses in the near future.

The composition of the first class of the Hospitality School surprised some of those involved in the planning including the Job Connection Director, NVEDC director, and the head of the ROP, in that it attracted somewhat higher ranking employees in the industry than they expected (managers rather than waiters and service staff). It began with 12 students, but currently enrolls 9, all of who are expected to graduate. Most of the students are current employees, thus the program is directed more toward upgrading the skills of incumbent workers than preparing people for entry-level jobs.

The ROP, the Napa Valley Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB), NVEDC and the Job Connection have beefed up publicity about the program, and there is a waiting list for the next class. Achieving high enrollment is very important for the ROP because it's funding from the state is based on enrollment levels. It is expected that in the future increasing numbers of students for the classes will be referrals from the One-Stop Center. The Hospitality School has received favorable treatment in the local newspaper, and seems to be off to a good start. Interviews with employers and the CVB staff confirmed that the program has the strong support and involvement of private employers.

The technology cluster, which includes suppliers, manufacturers, and marketers, and firms specializing in everything from biotechnology to telecommunications, first emerged during the 1995 NVEDC planning exercise. The principal result of these earlier cluster discussions was the creation of New Technology High School in the Napa (city) school district. This branch of the high school system takes promising students and attempts to prepare them for careers in technology. At least some of the graduates launch their careers with Napa County firms. Beginning in 1997, a new round of discussions among employers in the technology cluster that focused on the core skills of desired employees resulted in the identification of a new job description: Knowledge Administrator. The idea is that skilled employees are needed to bridge the gap between clerical and data entry workers and the managers in most technology firms. Knowledge Administrators would "manage the processing, flow, access, sharing, distribution and storage of key data" (NEVDC, Hewlett Foundation Grant Proposal, April 2000). After the Knowledge Administrator job description was agreed upon, the cluster went to work on developing the career ladder and the training curriculum. This process is nearly complete and they plan to offer the first course in this new training program by September 2001.

The implementation of the Knowledge Administrator training program will involve nearly all the Job Connection actors identified previously, and others. The blueprint for the program was first laid out in a grant proposal the NVEDC made to the Hewlett Foundation last year. The Hewlett grant, which they received, will support participants that meet the definition of "working poor" (basically, adult heads of households earning less than \$12.79 per hour). Other enrollees in the first course will either pay their own way (cost is expected to be \$200), or get support from their employers. The Job Connection (One-Stop) will handle intake, orientation and referral of participants. The actual training will come in two blocs. Basic employability, literacy and math skills will be taught by the Adult School. The technical skills will be taught by a combination of the ROP; the Community College; the Adult School; Pacific Union College, a private four-year college in the county; and New Horizons, a private technology training institution. The first course will consist of 180 hours of instruction, and they expect that many, if not most, of the students will be existing employees of technology firms who are looking to upgrade their skills in order to climb a career ladder.

The most recently formed cluster, construction, has also made workforce issues one of its top priorities. With the help of NVEDC and the Job Connection, cluster leaders are actively discussing job descriptions, career ladders and training programs that would meet the needs of cluster employers. The cluster includes firms involved in heavy and light construction, contracting, lumber, stone, concrete, glass and construction supplies. Most of the cluster companies are small; there are about 3,000 construction employees in the county and 1,200 employers. There is essentially zero unemployment in construction in the county, but many of the skilled, and even the unskilled, construction workers are older (40s and 50s). They believe that younger people are not entering the construction field because they perceive the work to be difficult, the wages to be low, and advancement to be problematic (technology fields tend to be the comparative reference). The employers and union representatives want to get the word out to high school and college students that these perceptions are inaccurate; that careers in construction are both feasible and desirable.

The principal vehicle they have seized upon to provide training for present and future construction employees is a trade school. Such a school would provide mathematics and literacy instruction along with vocational training in the construction trades, such as carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and metal works. The students would be either high school juniors and seniors or adults attending afternoon and evening classes. Upon completion the students would have the equivalent of pre-apprenticeship training, and would be ready for actual industry apprenticeships or for further education and training at the Community College. Officials from both the city and county school systems have been participating in these discussions, and appear to be in full support of the trade school concept. One potential conflict is that the county school officials view the trade school as being more or less an adjunct to their alternative school for troubled youth, while business and union cluster participants would not be happy to have the alternative school enrollees serve the primary client group for the trade school.

Those involved in the construction cluster discussions are optimistic that they can initiate the trade school by September 2001, although some local officials think that January 2002 is a more realistic target. The plan is to renovate the Napa (city) high school classroom that is currently used for a carpentry course so that it will be equipped to handle up-to-date instruction. The expectation is that industry would supply at least some of the equipment and materials needed for the classroom renovation. This classroom would then be used for high school students during normal school hours, and adults in the late afternoons and evenings. The ROP would provide most of the construction-related instruction and the Adult School would see to the mathematics and literacy components. Over the longer term, the county will be applying for special funding from the state (Necessary Schools Grants) to renovate the facility that will house the alternative school next year, which is located in close proximity to Napa high school, in order to have the capacity to mount a full-blown trade school. If completed, the trade school would represent something of a rebirth for vocational education in a state where such education has not prospered in recent years.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The planning and management practices employed by the clusters draw heavily from the strategic planning and performance management paradigm taught in most American business schools and incorporated in the statutory language of WIA. Indeed, the NVEDC makes reference to the work of the Stanford Research Institute and a consulting group by the name of the Economic Collaborative in the introduction to its 1998 report entitled *Our Valley's Future: Napa Valley Selected Industry Cluster Process*. As already described, the industry cluster process depends on establishing functioning public/private partnerships, conducting extensive discussions with clients/customers (especially businesses), identifying and prioritizing the cluster's goals, needs, and objectives, specifying activities and commitments that can and will be undertaken to realize the objectives, and detailing the measurable outcomes that will be used to determine the degree of success of various cluster endeavors. In their initial meetings each of clusters is supplied with a good deal of "benchmark" data, collected by the NVEDC, and the directors of the NVEDC and the Job Connection typically serve as facilitators of cluster workforce discussions. Continuous improvement and refinement of objectives are often the topics of cluster discussions.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES /EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

The outcome measures for the workforce training programs in the technology and construction clusters are still being developed with the final curricula. However, the ROP, in conjunction with the Job Connection, has developed a standard model for its training programs that includes both participation and outcome requirements. Thus in order to receive certification in carpentry, for example, a student would have to demonstrate specific competencies at the end of a carpentry course. The outcomes are discussed and approved by cluster participants as part of the curriculum development process. In the case of the Hospitality School, the outcomes envisioned include demonstrated competencies in the curriculum approved by the industry cluster curriculum committee. Graduates have to achieve a minimum of 22 out of 27 agreed upon core skills in order

to receive a Work Readiness Certificate. The industry has expressed, through an NVEDC survey, its willingness to recognize holders of the Certificate over others when making hiring decisions, thus increasing the value of the Certificate locally.

Overall, the outcome of the industry cluster process for the community has been to increase the capacity of the county's educational institutions to respond to the needs of area businesses. In addition, the One-Stop staff, primarily government employees, has gained credibility with private sector employers and is now being invited into businesses that had been closed to them in the past. This has created new employment and training opportunities for all those using the One-Stop Center and WIA programs. The cluster work has also led to the One-Stop's "Building Quality Employers" initiative, which assists individual businesses in developing career paths, identifying skills sets for specific jobs, and providing subsidized training for employees.

The Job Connection and the NVEDC, working in partnership with one another, have done an excellent job of leveraging available resources from state, county and local educational programs.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

The primary lesson of the Napa County Job Connection's success in fostering industry clusters that develop promising workforce strategies and programs is the value of partnerships. The partnerships between the Job Connection, the NVEDC, the ROP, and the Adult School are especially well grounded and longstanding. Through the NVEDC comes a strong connection to local employers and to some extent unions. The genuine commitment of employers to work with the Job Connection and other public agencies to address their workforce needs is evidenced by their extensive participation in cluster activities. The county's One-stop is convinced that the cluster approach has been an effective strategy for helping employers improve the skills of their workforce that will establish the Job Connection as an important source of the employers' new hires in the future.

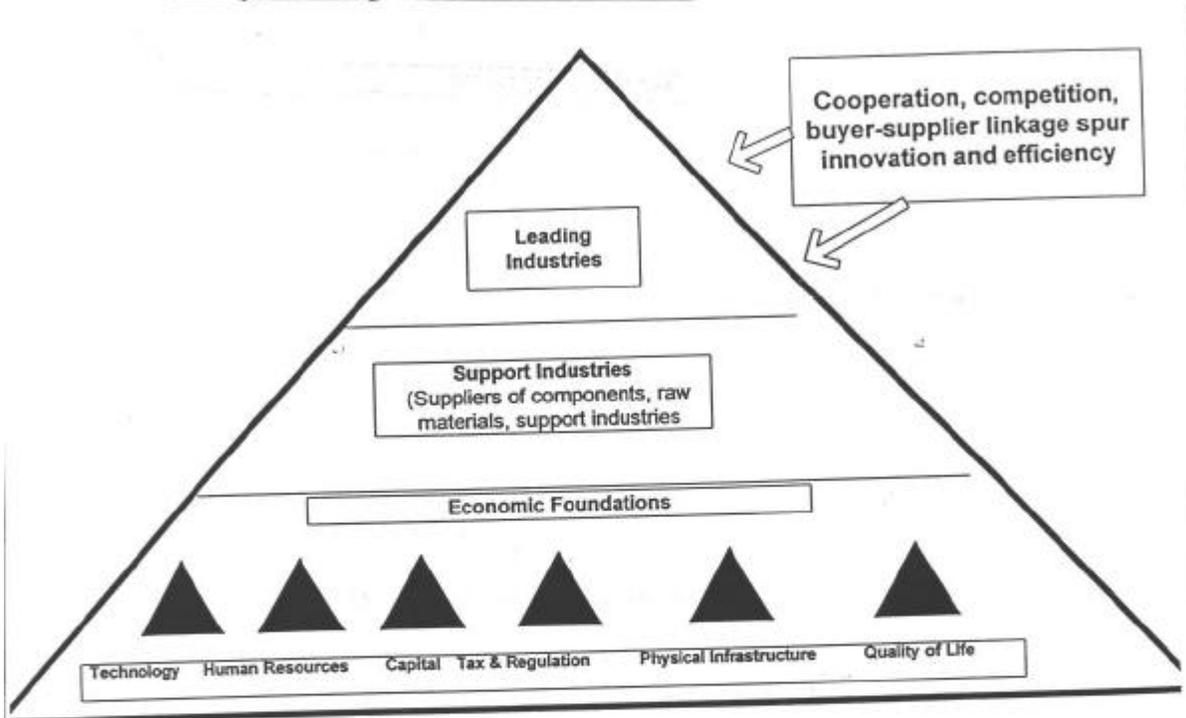
The public agencies in the county seem to cooperate very well; indeed, everyone interviewed attested to a public spiritedness that pervades county and community governance. The accepted goal of cooperative ventures is to improve the quality of life in the county, and the public and private sectors sense a mutual obligation to participate in civic affairs in pursuit of this goal. Partisan politics, turf politics, narrow self-interest have rarely shown themselves in the planning and programming efforts that have been undertaken in recent years. The One-Stop Center benefited from this same public spiritedness when the county agreed more than ten years ago, without apparent hesitation, to move the Job Connection to a new location and to co-locate HHS and EDD at the site so as to bring the one-stop concept to fruition.

### List of Interviewees

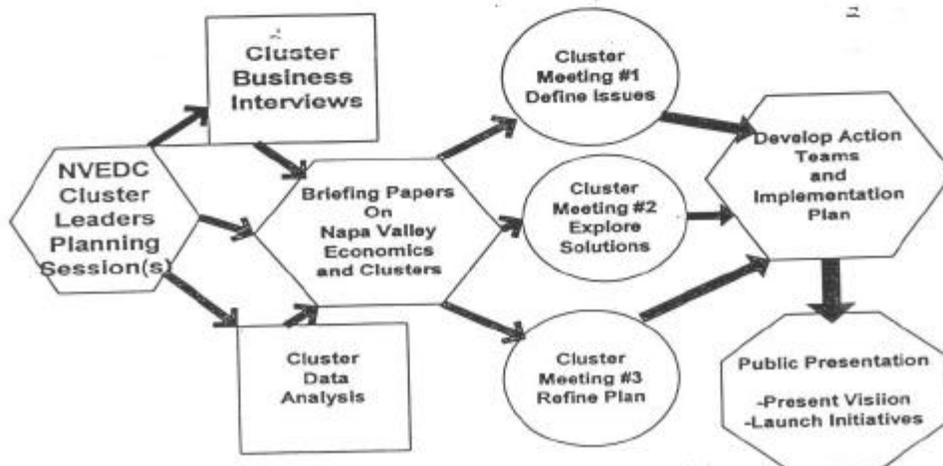
Marty Finnegan	Director, Napa County Job Connection
Celine Haugen	Executive Director, Napa Valley Economic Development Corporation
Barbara Nemko	Superintendent, Napa County Schools
M.L. Oxford	Director, Regional Occupation Program, Napa County Schools
Rhonda Slota	Director, Adult School, City of Napa
Erna Stevenson	Executive VP, Solano-Napa Builders Exchange
Ken Slavens	Field Representative, Carpenters Union 751
Edgar Fried	Dey Laboratories Inc.
Reynaldo Zertuche	Embassy Suites Hotels
Richard Thornberry	Embassy Suites Hotels
Daniel Howard	Executive Director, Napa Conference & Visitors Bureau
Gordon Larum	Special Events Manager, Pine Ridge Winery

Appendix B: Napa County Site Visit Report

Industry Cluster Diagram and Cluster Process Model:



The diagram below details the stages of the process.



# **SITE VISIT REPORT: Trident One Stop Career Center, North Charleston, South Carolina**

## **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: June 18-19, 2001, North Charleston, South Carolina

Organization: Trident One-Stop Career Center

Type of Entity: Private Non-Profit, Member of One-Stop Operator Consortium

Contact Person: Paul L. Connerty, Manager

Phone: (843) 574-1800

Fax: (843) 574-1808

Email: [paulc@toscc.org](mailto:paulc@toscc.org)

Web site: [www.toscc.org](http://www.toscc.org)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: NUCOR Employment Services Initiative

Heldrich Center Representatives: Laurie Santos, Henry Santos

List of Interviewees: Attached

## **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Trident Career Center provides services to the Charleston Metro Area that consists of three counties – Berkley, Charleston, and Dorchester. The area stretches along the central and southern South Carolina coast. The region includes over 90 miles of Atlantic coastline and reaches some 50 miles inland towards the intersection of Interstates 26 & 95. In total, the metro area includes some 3,163 square miles of land and water. The region is a geographically diverse mixture of rural swamps, farmland, inter-coastal waterways, and beachfront. Historically, the region's economy has been defined by cotton production on lavish inland plantations, commerce through the Charleston port, military activity at the Charleston Naval Yard, and tourism at the beaches and historic downtown area.

Census figures show modest population growth in the last decade from a total of 506,875 in 1990 to 552,803 reported in 1999. The racial composition of the Metro area is reported at 67.8% white, 30.2% black, and 1.9% other. The median effective buying income after taxes is \$41,799 with Charleston County reporting the highest household income at \$44,158. Unemployment is listed at 3.1%, but it is reported that given the recent downturn in the economy, June and July numbers are likely to rise to the 4 ½ - 5% level. Employment sector statistics reveal that services (hotel, restaurants, entertainment) account for 28.3% of local employment, Government 20.7%, Manufacturing 9.2 %, Construction 7.8%. The city of Charleston attracts 3, 700,000 visitors a year to its beaches, inter-coastal waterways, and historic attractions. The annual impact of tourism on the local economy is \$3.2 billion dollars.

There is however, a contrast to the beaches and the historic downtown art districts. Along the coast away from the resorts and inland across the inter-coastal waterway, a very rural,

formerly agricultural region is struggling to develop “clean industry” opportunities and secure an economic future less dependent on tourism and government (military contracts specifically) to fuel job creation. In years past, the area was largely dependent on the military and education related institutions as primary sources of higher skill, higher wage jobs. In the mid 90’s the Metro area was sent into crisis mode as defense spending reductions forced the closure of the Charleston Naval Yard. Outside of local government, retail and hospitality, the Naval Yard was the most significant employer in the area. At stake was not only the consumer power of the military personnel living and purchasing in the area, but the wide array of defense contracts awarded locally to provide goods and services to the base itself. In addition, there was a whole spin-off supply chain business that targeted the Naval Yard and the government as its primary customer.

Prior to WIA the area was a tri-county Service Delivery Area under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Before the Naval Yard closure many of the current partners operated fairly independently. Closure created a legitimate crisis that encouraged a reduction of the turf competition between agencies and stimulated a collaborative effort to mitigate economic disaster. During the closure transition period, physical space at the Naval complex was allocated so that services could be co-located in an effort to make services more efficient, serving not only the military personnel that would be dislocated by the closing, but also the contractors, tradesmen, manufacturers, and service providers whose livelihood and major source of revenue would be eliminated. This co-located community on the military base in the midst of such a rapid response effort was very successful and gave rise to a vision and a commitment to creating a one-stop system approach for future workforce development needs in the Charleston region.

Migrating dislocated workers off the Naval Yard and into the local job market created new awakenings among partners within the former JTPA services delivery community. The experience of working closely with employers, of listening to their needs and requirements, taught workforce development specialists that they needed to become more creative and entrepreneurial. They needed to listen to the business requirements of the organizations that were creating and sustaining jobs. They learned that in order to respond swiftly to opportunities to collaborate with employers and to serve job-seeking clients they needed to become more efficient, less encumbered by administrative requirements, paperwork, interference from state policy, and guidelines. The rapid response time during the Naval Yard closure also established a new rhythm for how organizations would be expected to perform and also became the benchmark for how employers expected service agencies to deliver.

Based on the success of the workforce community during the closure response, the successful migration of workers off the base and into the local job labor market, the Trident One-Stop and its partners now enjoy a fair amount of autonomy in their delivery of services. The state allows the system to operate fairly independently and does not dictate policy, strategy or any special guidelines. In fact, it was reported that the state now utilizes Trident as an incubator of new ideas, systems, and service approaches that can potentially be replicated in other parts of the state.

Currently, Trident is engaging the WIB to become more proactive in helping Trident develop more clients. In a recent presentation to the WIB, Trident management listed the following actions required of the WIB to support Trident's growth and success - serving as an ambassador; utilizing the system; referring customers; seeking input from the expert staff. The One-Stop aims to establish its presence with the same authority and utility as its preceding JTPA body had during the Naval Yard closure. To accomplish that end Trident would like to see the WIB members use Trident's services and promote its involvement in the local business community.

The system itself operates according to a hub and cluster model. The largest full service center is the Trident One-Stop Career Center (TOSCC) and is located in North Charleston. There are additional centers, one at the Berkley One-Stop Career Center (BOSCC) in Moncks Corner, SC and the other at the Dorchester One Stop Career Center (DOSCC) in Summerville, SC. Each center plans on developing satellite facilities. During previous projects with employers, the centers have established interim satellite facilities at fire stations and school facilities to make access more convenient for clients. The physical location of the current one-stop hub in North Charleston was chosen during the period of the Naval Yard closing. The school board located the building and planned to use it to provide JTPA services to dislocated workers. Most of the current partners took advantage of the space and co-located in the facility. This was the first type of co-located arrangement for workforce services in South Carolina.

The state viewed the arrangement as an innovative approach, and very quickly the location was receiving curious visitors from within the state and across the nation. Once WIA was announced the site was positioned as the pilot One-Stop Career Center in South Carolina. The Center was officially opened in July of 2000, but took until August 2000 before any meaningful activity was started. The Nucor Steel project began in October 2000. (This public private partnership is the focal point of the Promising Practice Study).

All partnering organizations have leases and pay rent plus a fee for shared services, such as information technology, maintenance, housekeeping, and utilities. While all residents are on the same network, most still also maintain access to their own information systems, a fact that sometimes creates compatibility and security issues for the network administrator at the facility. This systems integration challenge provides a definite opportunity for future investigation. Co-locating partners that maintain independent IT platforms but still have the need to participate as part of a shared IT community is a short term challenge for the management team at the Center.

The advantage of the current hub space is that it is ample in size, comfortably provides facilities for all partners, provides accommodations for assessment, training, and large meetings. Discounted public transportation brings clients right to the front door. However, despite the reduced rate transportation, the facility is out of the way, located in a light industrial park, invisible from any main arteries or thoroughfares. It is not a facility that is likely to be attended by pedestrian traffic or random passers in automobiles. One would need to have a specific intention for going to the facility.

The major customers of the system in terms of business employers include Alcoa, Bayer, Behr Heat and Transfer Systems, Bosch, Dale Carnegie, Dupont, Engineering Test Service, Gates Ruber, Holsett Engineering, Lowes, Mediterranean Shipping Company, Michaels Arts and Crafts, Mikasa, Multiplastics Corporation, Metal Traces, Inc., Nucor Steel, Norton McNaughton, Santee Cooper, Truss Systems, University Medical Associates, Wal Mart, Westvaco, and various temporary placement agencies.

The major partners/service providers are the County of Charleston, Trident Technical College, South Carolina Employment Commission (Job Service), Berkley County School District Adult and Community Education, Goodwill Industries of Lower South Carolina, Charleston County Department of Social Services, Berkley County Department of Social Services, Charleston County Human Services Commission, Palmetto Community Hope Foundation, South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, Telamon Corporation, Job Corp Placement Services, North Charleston Senior Citizens Center, and CARTA Discount Bus Pass Program.

The system defines its mission statement as *"To provide businesses with skilled workers through a collaboration of quality employment training services offered by multiple agencies in one location."* There are four major guiding principles that dictate the approach of the system. The first principle is *universality*: One-Stop Centers serve all businesses and individuals, offering a range of services based on individual need. The second principle is *customer choice*: Businesses and individuals may go to any location. The centers compete for their business and are flexible and sensitive to customer satisfaction. The third principle is *integration*: Services and programs now administered separately by federal, state, and local governments are consolidated at the One-Stop Centers. The fourth principle is *be Performance driven*: Centers are judged by clearly measurable outcomes and future funding is based on their success in meeting the expectations of their customers. It is clear that one implicit outcome supported by the system is development of the Trident area as a viable location for business investment, accomplished by helping ensuring that employers can attract and hire job seekers with skills that match their needs.

To businesses, the center provides meeting space (conferences, training, career fairs, interviews), applicant screening and interview services, specialized assessment testing, Work Keys Profiling, customized training and curriculum development, access to job service for job listings and job applications, computer applications training, employability workshops and basic skills training for employees. To job seekers, the centers provide WIA services, access to job search resources (Internet, Job Listings, Copiers, Fax, Reference Materials, Resume Software), Career Counseling, GED preparation and High School Diploma Classes, Computer Application Training, Skills Assessments (Work Keys, Aptitude, Internet Skill and Personality Inventories, Work Samples), professional resume preparation, clothes closets, workshops, transportation, typing tests, unemployment insurance claims assistance and job service registration.

### III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE

The promising practice highlighted by this review focuses on a customized package of recruitment, hiring and selection services, and training support provided to Nucor Steel during their start-up of a Greenfield operation in the area. Nucor Steel is now the largest employer in the north 'low country.' The Trident center together with Trident Technical College (a one-stop partner) worked with Nucor to develop specific criteria for screening and hiring entry-level workers, provided services to attract and select the most qualified workforce, provided technical training assistance to enable a smooth and successful start-up of operations. This initiative was extremely important to the community because it was the first significant public-private partnering opportunity involving the One-Stop system and was viewed by most as a watershed opportunity to demonstrate the capability of the One-Stop to support future strategic business initiatives of local employers. It also was important because it would provide an example of how key partners, namely the Technical College and the One-Stop could effectively collaborate and divide "turf" so that each organization provided services commensurate with their core competencies. This would be a model for marketing the systems services to existing employers and future planned projects such as the massive bridge construction project scheduled to begin in 2002. Clearly, this type of service to employers is at the core of the One Stop's mission.

The challenges facing the project in the beginning involved two critical factors. The first was ensuring effective collaboration with the technical college. The second was developing the capacity to train the One-Stop staff and manage the overall recruiting, application, and assessment process for starting up the plant on schedule. In both instances, the project accomplished its objectives, and in large measure that can clearly be attributed to the leadership skills of the One-Stop manager. His ability to foster an effective working relationship with administrators at the college has enabled the college's workforce development staff to "let go" of the hiring and selection process. Previously, job profiling and assessment for hiring was a core competency of the college's workforce development services portfolio. In addition, the manager's organization and process engineering skills led to the creation of work flow diagrams and projects plans that created collateral to convince Nucor Steel that the project would be successful. The manager, who has a strong background in quality control, and commitment to Total Quality Management, ensured that the workforce specialists who would execute the project were properly trained and that specific procedures for implementing services were fully documented and communicated. The Center's recruitment and assessment project succeeded in large part due to the manager's attention to detail, organization skills, and process approach.

In interviews with Nucor Steel, employer representatives consistently credited the One-Stop's efforts in recruiting, assessment, selection and pre-employment training as the most crucial factor leading to what is widely considered a very effective start-up. It is important to note that the level of effort required to process more than 700 applicants did require workforce development specialists to work 12-14 hour days including some weekends. It was noted that this type of commitment and extra effort by staffers was unique at the time and represented a monumental shift away from the "government employee mentality" toward a more customer-focused, service-oriented quality orientation. The leadership of the One-Stop manager, including his focus on quality, on high performance, and promotion of

guiding principles, created the environment conducive to this level of service effort. It will take sustained leadership in the future to handle increasing workloads of this nature.

In the future, replicating this project with larger numbers of employers will require that the One-Stop manager will need to develop staff that possess a dedication to high performance. Future growth will also require the development of additional external supplier relationships within the community of training and human resources organizations. Failure to do so will risk the branding of the Center's services resulting in employers assuming that their ability to provide value service offerings is limited only to the talent and capability of the Technical College, a contradiction of the guiding principle of *Customer Choice*.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Key service activities include job analysis, recruiting, skills assessment, new hire orientation training and technical support. Trident Technical College used ACT's Work Keys to complete the job analysis of key jobs in the Nucor plant. During the process, certain One-Stop associates were certified in the Work Keys Process. The college used job analysis data to help define the skill levels needed to perform key job tasks within the plant, focusing specifically on those jobs for which the mass hiring would fill. The definition of skill levels led to the selection of assessments administered to all applicants as a screening device to certify entry-level skills.

In order to best serve clients and carry out the One-Stop's dedication to universal access, the Trident set up numerous satellite facilities in more remote rural districts, thereby attracting the broadest and most diverse applicant pool. Application centers were set up in schools, local firehouses, and community centers to ensure that all individuals would have access to the selection process. Newspaper ads, flyers in school children's homework folders, and church bulletins attracted 700 applicants during a time when the published unemployment rate was 3%.

The One-Stop received all applications and managed the process of creating a database of candidates with files containing all the required paperwork and personal documentation. Once the assessment battery was created, Trident One-Stop workforce specialists were trained to administer and score the assessments. About 400 of the 700 applicants paid \$30 to complete the Work Keys assessment process; these payments covered Trident's costs and in fact yielded a profit to the One-Stop. Based on the Work Keys assessment process, 150 people were selected for the interview process and of that 150, 52 were selected to participate in the pre-employment/orientation training program.

Trident Technical College developed an orientation program addressing many topics associated with the US DOL Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) foundation competency classification. Certifying and completing this program was a pre-requisite to being interviewed for a full-time position at the plant. Of the 52 members of the initial class, 50 were awarded full-time jobs in the plant, according to Trident Technical College and Nucor. During the training period, attendance was reported at 98%. The two students that did not complete the training were interviewed and hired prior to the end of the program. A second group is now in training and early reports suggest similar

participation rates with the expectation that most will secure full-time employment. Clearly, Nucor, the Technical College and the One-Stop are delighted.

It should be noted that while the Technical College reports developing and delivering technical training assistance in the area of electronics and maintenance, the site interviews at the Nucor did not corroborate that any Nucor technicians had actually completed training certification. It was also not corroborated that any customized machine operations training had been created. Nucor executives recounted using only a traditional OJT training method to prepare line operators. Therefore, it remained unclear upon completion of the visit as to whether the Technical College had actually delivered any training beyond the initial new hire orientation.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

As mentioned earlier, Trident benefits from having a manager who possesses a strong background and commitment to Total Quality Management principles. He has established a clear mission for the One-Stop and adheres and urges staff to hold to a set of guiding principles for the organization. In addition, he has initiated a system of metrics to monitor performance and has created numerous cross-functional improvement teams that include not only One-Stop workforce specialists but also include resident partners.

The Trident One-Stop Career Center (TOSCC) reports to the Trident Workforce Investment Board with the TOSCC Manager reporting to the WIB Executive Director. Reporting to the Trident Manager is a Program Manager for Business Development, a Program Manager for Customer Services and an Information Systems Manager. The Manager for Business Development is responsible for WIA Services, Assessment, Work Keys and Dacum, LLEBG/CARE and the Resource Center. The Manager of Customer Services is responsible for Intake, CARTA (reduced rate transportation services), WIA/WtW Eligibility and overall Facility Usage. The Information Systems Manager obviously handles all technology management, equipment management and control.

The leadership team at the Trident One-Stop Career Center also manages the Berkley One-Stop Career Center (BOSCC) and the Dorchester One-Stop Career Center (DOSCC), although there is an effort underway to make those sites more autonomous and self-directed within the system. The Berkley One-Stop Manager reports to the Trident Manager and is responsible for administering the WIA Adult Program, WIA Youth Program and the Welfare to Work Program. In addition there is a long list of partnering agencies represented at the Berkley facility. The Manager of the Dorchester One-Stop also reports to the Trident One-Stop Manager and is primarily responsible for administration of the WIA Adult Program. The partner list is much smaller for this facility but there is a prospect list and efforts are underway to expand the services represented at the site.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

As required by WIA, the One-Stop collects data on provision of core, intensive and training services. For the period of July 2000-May 2001 the customer flow for the system was

reported as 13,088 for the hub facility at North Charleston, 3,060 at the Berkley Center and 1,834 at the Dorchester facility. The cumulative delivery services for all three facilities according to WIA classifications resulted in 17,974 receiving core services, 154 receiving extended core services, 57 receiving intensive services and 6 receiving training services. However, it must be noted, that as a result of an administrative miscue none of the 700 participants in the Nucor Steel project were registered as WIA clients. As a result, the One-Stop lost out on significant opportunity to report a huge success in terms of serving clients at the Extended, Intensive and Training service classifications.

In addition to tracking client usage of the system, a monthly customer satisfaction survey is administered. Results are shared at the monthly WIB meeting and used as targets for improvement by the cross-functional improvement teams. Listed below are the survey measures and year to date rankings:

- **Clients are highly satisfied with customer service at the Center (76%)**
- Clients will make use of the center again (97.3%)
- Clients will recommend the career center to others (77.3%)
- Center was highly responsive to customer needs (78%)
- Center was faster than typical public service organizations (72.4%)
- Employees at the Career Center are helpful and cooperative (75.2%)
- Center employees are good at resolving customer problems (74%)

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

Because the success of the Trident/Nucor initiative depended clearly on the skills and commitment of the lead manager, the core lessons learned by the One-Stop revolve around institutionalizing practices and training others to incorporate quality principles in the organization's ongoing work. The lessons include:

**Enrollment must be a priority handled by the One-Stop.** On a practical note the major lesson learned is that in order to be able to account for and receive credit for services, all employer service projects must begin with the registry of clients into the system. Trying to go back after a project like the Nucor steel project and register 700 plus people into the system is an administrative nightmare. Failure to report obviously prevents a success story from duly recognized.

**Workforce specialists must receive project management training.** If the Centers are going to continue to provide these types of project services to employers, the staff at the Center will have to be able to manage projects and multiple priorities to the level of performance that the private sector holds their staff accountable for.

**The Center must market its services during periods of full employment.** When job seekers are not flooding the market, the Center needs to proactively engage the employers to identify expansion projects, closings, major initiatives for which the One Stop and its partners can provide both resources and services. They must broker their services and make sure that employers understand, for example, that more than linking job seekers to job

openings, they can provide job analysis, recruiting, hiring, assessments, training, and other custom employer services.

**Meeting the needs of employers is not a 9-5 job.** Providing the type of intensive training and customized services required a shift in thinking. Workforce specialists needed to work around the clock and had to be willing to work past their normal eight-hour day. The work ethic of being in attendance until the results are delivered is reported as a shift in traditional thinking.

**Changing profile of the workforce development staff.** Providing these types of services internally forces the Center to re-think the profile of the workforce specialist. If the Center is going to own the delivery of these types of services, they will need to recruit and train professionals whose competency base may be different than that of the "case worker" that was engaged in JTPA. While there is a strong need for the counseling and coaching competencies of those that deal directly with job seekers, particularly chronically dislocated or underemployed populations, the services associated with intake, eligibility enrollment, job search counseling and placement services may be a very require different skill set and experience base than that of a project manager or human resource development specialist.

**High performance leadership and experience required.** In order to unite multiple agencies toward a common goal, operate under the principles of Total Quality, implement high performance systems and create a team environment, the leadership of the One-Stop requires someone with practical experience in the application of these concepts. The leadership of this One-Stop happens to relate to employers and the special interests of members of the WIB. He is also able to see the big picture and stay above turf wars. He is not seen as a social services bureaucrat and his disciplined approach to running his own organization earns him credibility with the employer community and puts pressure on partnering organizations to operate more progressively. This seems to be a starting point for defining the profile of the One-Stop leader.

**Develop an economic model.** It would seem from interviewing the employer that the One-Stop system could expand its opportunities if they could develop and publish a calculated return on investment for their services. Aside from being the right thing to do, the One-Stop was able to spell out the cost savings of a) outsourcing the recruiting and hiring, b) creating the right job-person match with the selection system, c) ensuring the success of employees within the first 90 days, a fact that research supports as the leading causal factor contributing to turnover.

## List of Interviewees

### Trident Center One Stop Career Center

Paul L. Connerty      Manager

Richard Singleton Brown      Workforce Specialist

### Open Panel Discussion

### Nucor Steel

Walt Flowers      Human Resources

Meleah Barnhill      Human Resources

Brian Kurtz      Controller

Van Madray      Trident Technical College

Bill Brown      Trident Technical College

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: April 26, 2001, Oklahoma City, OK

Organization: Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center

Type of Entity: Public One Stop Operator

Contact Person: Norma Noble, Deputy Director

Phone: (405) 713-1890

Fax: (405) 713-1898

E-mail: [nornob@oklahomacounty.org](mailto:nornob@oklahomacounty.org)

Web Site: [www.workforceok.org/wfcenters/OKC-Eastside/](http://www.workforceok.org/wfcenters/OKC-Eastside/)

Key Area for Selection: Services to Employers

Promising Practice: Workforce Development Business Services

Heldrich Center Representatives: K.A. Dixon, Suzanne Guibert

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center is part of a collaborative system of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Board and its partners, including another Workforce Center located in downtown Oklahoma City, and various system satellite Workforce Offices, serving an area of over 900,000 people, including the 500,000 residents of Oklahoma City. It is a mixed urban, suburban, and rural location with the following major population groups: White and others – 60%; African American – 14%; Hispanic – 12%; Asian – 9%; and Native American – 5%.

After a late recovery during the early 1990s, the local economy is generally doing well, driven by the growth of small businesses. The unemployment rate for the three-county area is 2.3%; however, this figure does not reflect accurately the reality of unemployment in downtown Oklahoma City, which we calculate to be 26% when including the number of workers who are discouraged about looking for work. Four sectors dominate business activity in the Oklahoma City area: government (26% of the local economy, including Tinker Air Force Base, the largest employer in the area); health and education – (23%); and Manufacturing (22%). The call center industry has grown significantly in the last decade. The Oklahoma County area currently has 34 major call centers including Hertz, AOL, and several major airlines.

The Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection has been evolving as an integrated service delivery operation since the early 1990s when it began as a County Welfare – JTPA center. The Center received state grants for several pilot programs, which allowed the State Employment Service and Adult Education to locate within the Center in 1995 and 1996. In

1996, at the suggestion of the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, the Center successfully integrated the Oklahoma City State Employment Service office into the Career Connection Center. The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Manager assumed functional management of all center activities at this time. County and state staff currently operates in an integrated team structure. All partner agency chief executives serve on the leadership team. Staff from all partner agencies serves on cross-functional design teams, process improvement teams, and work teams. Today an array of agencies work under the organizational umbrella of the Career Connection, including AARP, Green Thumb, Wagner-Peyser, WIA, Adult Education, Welfare to Work, and Veterans staff.

The State of Oklahoma has established 12 Workforce Investment Boards, including the central WIB of Oklahoma that incorporates Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Canadian, and Logan Counties. The WIB of Central Oklahoma and the Local Elected Official Consortium selected the Career Connection as the One-Stop Center that began its operation under WIA in July 2000. The local WIB has been given broad authority by the State to establish workforce policies.

In 1998, the Mayor of Oklahoma City and the County Commissioners formed a four-member Local Elected Official Consortium and the city and county JTPA boards merged into one Workforce Investment Board (WIB) with 90 members. Today, the Workforce Oklahoma Career Center Connection is jointly supported by funding from: WIA Title I, Wagner Peyser, Veterans Services, TANF, Welfare to Work, City general funds, and county funds.

The Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection together, with the Oklahoma County Department of Training and General Assistance offer a wide variety of services at this location, including:

- Older Worker Services – Green Thumb and AARP;
- Employment and training services;
- Veterans Services;
- Business Services, including tax credit programs;
- Career Resource Room and career center services;
- County Pharmacy;
- County Cremation Program;
- Convalescent Care Program for the homeless;
- Youth and Family Services;
- Adult Basic Education;
- Rehabilitation services;
- Healthy Start – five year demonstration program to reduce infant mortality;
- Welfare-to-Work Services – work related services and tax credits for TANF clients;
- Youth Services – skills training, counseling, remedial education, Job Corps, GED Preparation and Testing, Life Skills Training, work-based learning and internships;
- Bridge Builders – a welfare to work program with transitional employment assistance including intensive services for substance abusers, education, training, mentoring, childcare;
- Special Populations Program – provides services to adjudicated youth, adults with employment barriers because of incarceration;

Although some staff from these agencies work in separate systems and organizational structures, customers experience integrated, seamless service delivery. Career Connection has developed a policy manual that defines the vision, mission and values for the unified Center. The stated mission of the combined center is to: “provide an easily accessible system of workforce development and human services to present and future employers and citizens of the community to empower citizens to achieve greater levels of self-sufficiency and to develop a healthier economy – through our commitment to excellent customer service.”

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

The One Stop partner agencies have been working together for almost a year to create a unified employer services system for the Career Connection Center. In May, 2000 the CCC partner agencies conducted an employer needs survey to identify their customers' needs for one-stop services. In March of 2001 the partners in the CCC leadership team established a mission to guide the organization: “to develop employers into business customers, by working with them, not just to obtain a job order, but to expand the universal services available in order to meet their needs, develop an ongoing relationship and provide maximum focus on their workforce development.” The CCC and its partners have created a unified employer services approach in order to accomplish the following service objectives:

- Responsive – meeting specific employer needs in a timely, effective and cost-efficient way;
- Accessible – providing wide access to workforce information, resources, development opportunities and services, moving toward universal access;
- Flexible – implementing specific policy priorities, such as welfare-to-work, with stronger support.

This promising practice is based on an employer needs survey. It provides a unified framework for customizing a service mix to meet specific needs of area employers. It utilizes the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) to help employers clearly define their employment needs by job title and skill bundles. The Career Connection Center hired a new staff person from the business sector to develop a Workforce Development Business Services Program and staff from several partner agencies all participate in this “single point of contact” service for all area employers. The Oklahoma Employment Security System's job order and application system has been adapted as a common intake tool throughout the partner agencies.

This Business Services Project is also part of a larger goal of the Career Center Connection to pilot, in September 2001, a Business Services/Employer Services System, Business Evaluation Systems Team (BEST). In this initiative, growth industry segments would be targeted by SIC Codes and assigned to Business Evaluation System Teams composed of staff supported by WIA, Wagner Peyser, TANF, Welfare to Work, WOTC, dislocated worker and other programs. Discussions/focus groups would be held with businesses to discuss needs.

Visits would then be made to employers, assessment of specific employer needs would be completed, and appropriate services offered. Customer satisfaction questionnaires would be used to look at results of the pilot. The success of the project would also be measured by determining whether or not there was a reduction in duplication of effort in reaching out to the same employers by the various agencies found in the Career Center Connection.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The Workforce Development Business Services team focused on providing personal service customized to the specific needs of business customers. Action teams from the Center sit down with employers, analyze their workforce needs and concerns and design an individual strategy for that employer.

The specific services offered to employers at the Career Center Connection are:

- Business Incentives and Tax Credits;
- Business Workforce Consulting – analysis of business workforce needs to develop a workforce employment plan;
- Current Worker Skills Development – Assessment of the needs for skills development of incumbent workers (personal or job);
- Development of On-the-Job or Customized Training Opportunities;
- Identification of Trends and Demands in the Local Labor Market;
- Recruitment Services – placement of job orders, referral of applicants, mass application processing, labor market information, tax information, unemployment information, job fairs, employer focus groups;
- Skills/Personality Assessment – assessment opportunities for applicants and current workers, identification of skills traits and abilities.

An example of how this process works is presented below:

At a meeting of the local Employer Council, a small metal fabricating employer (51 employees) expressed a need for trained welders. The employer also mentioned that he wanted to train the staff himself but did not have job specifications or any organized training material. A Workforce Development Business Services Team member visited the employer to determine specific needs and develop a plan of action for the employer. The Workforce Development Business Services Team member used O\*NET to put together a package of job descriptions and specifications, training needs and wage rates. With additional help from Career Center staff and the O\*NET package, master welders at the company were able to conduct the training. This employer is attempting to obtain state certification for this welding training program with help from the center team.

Another key practice of the team has been to promote the expansion of employer on-site recruitment. For example, employers using the office frequently for recruitment services have installed their own company tests in the Career Connection Center computer system. This facilitates the interviewing and screening process and improved service to both the

employer and applicant. Applicants no longer have to go to the employer premises on another day to take required tests and employers spend less time in the recruiting process.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Workforce Oklahoma Career Center Connection has a participatory management style that fosters an open organization and rewards creativity. From management to front line service staff, all partners are connected through self-directed work teams. The Career Center has a "Winner Circle" meeting of its team leaders once a week. At those meetings, team leaders review goals and objectives of each partner, review the functions and processes established to address the goals and continuously upgrade and improve those processes.

The desk level staff, or "Workforce One" Team meets twice a month on various issues of interest to the frontline staff. Additional teams – the Continuous Improvement Team and Computer Communication System Team - have also been established and meet periodically as the need arises.

The Center management team created an employee handbook that all partners reviewed and approved. For performance reviews, appropriate partners have an opportunity to share in the discussion of the performance before it is given to the employee; however, the partner team leader actually signs off on the final performance review.

The Center management publishes a newsletter for its staff, encourages staff to participate on committees, and empowers staff to act for management. Management provides organizational vision, and supports, promotes and recognizes talented supervisors. Management not only supports the team concept but they "live the team concept."

The Career Center Connection uses the state established PACE system for data collection. Monthly reports are produced from this system to measure productivity. The state currently has not implemented an operating system for case management but is looking into the Kansas Model as a possibility.

To develop its ability to implement a continuous improvement system, the Career Center Connection reviewed the Baldrige system and sent staff to the Baldrige Training sponsored by USDOL. As a result, the Center has established Center Teams to review center operations and to be the driving force behind implementation of a system of continuous improvement.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

Currently, the Workforce Development Business Services project uses the standard outcome measures collected under the Wagner-Peyser and WIA programs. It has not yet developed new specific outcome measurements for its program. However, plans for such a system are being developed and will be in place for the September 2001 kick off of the BEST pilot.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

The most important lesson learned from this initiative is that a sustained commitment by local and state partners in the CCC effectively established a unified service delivery system that has expanded over time. Beginning with a targeted segment of the population, welfare recipients, in the mid 1990s, this alliance has expanded to all job seekers and is now extending to unified and customer friendly services for all employers in the metro area.

Both customers and staff interviewed for this initiative identified the same underlying lessons learned:

- Believe in training and empowering staff;
- Be caring, capable and committed to high performance customer service
- Incorporate as many promising practices as possible from other successful organizations
- Keep talking with partners and don't assume that because there is a law, things will happen;
- Integration is an issue driven by strategic vision;
- Training staff to deal with customers in a seamless manner must be ongoing;
- Getting a computer system to support this level of connectivity is a very difficult task.

The promising practice initiative offers another set of important lessons for the workforce development system. By developing and implementing a coordinated Workforce Development Business Services program, the Career Connection demonstrates that the willingness to listen, respond, and develop strategic partnerships with employers is critical to meeting local labor market needs. These qualities are at the core of workforce reform defined by WIA.

### **List of Interviewees**

Roosevelt Turner	Director, OK County Training and General Assistance
Norma Noble	Center Director, Workforce OK Career Connection Center
Ray Gollhofer	Customer Service Team Leader
Doyle Paden	Business Services Development
Sandy Payne	Workforce Service Manager
Dorcas Roberts	Department of Human Services
Cindy Thompson	Employer, Area Manager, Manpower
Kristi Wagoner	Customer
Lakia Walters	Customer

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Boston Private Industry Council, Boston, Massachusetts**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: August 30, 2001, Boston, Massachusetts

Organization: Boston Private Industry Council, Inc.

Type of Entity: Private, Non-profit, Workforce Investment Board (One-Stop Manager)

Contact Person: Dennis Rogers, Career Center Program Manager, Boston Private Industry Council

Phone: (617) 423-3755 Ext. 213

Fax: (617) 423-1041

Email: drogers@bostonpic.org

Web site: [www.bostonpic.org](http://www.bostonpic.org)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop System Design and Management

Promising Practice: Chartering and Review Process

Heldrich Center On-Site Team: Duke Storen, Stephen Michon

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Boston is a diverse city of neighborhoods that also serves as the economic hub of the region. In 2000 there were 589,141 residents in the city. From the white-collar professionals in the downtown financial district to the residents of the federally designated Empowerment Zone that runs through the large minority neighborhoods of Roxbury, Mattapan, Dorchester, and South Boston, the city shows its diversity of populations, languages, and income.

The Boston economy has grown significantly over the last few years. The city recovered all jobs lost during the recession of the early 1990's. Through the first quarter of 2000, there were 702,877 jobs in Boston<sup>7</sup> -- a total that surpassed the city's peak during the last economic expansion by 50,000 jobs (1988 total employment was 649,104). The city serves as the center for financial services, health care and medical research, transportation, higher education, business services, and state and federal government offices for Greater Boston and beyond.

Home to Fidelity Investments, Putnam Investments, and State Street Corporation, to name a few of the city's large employers, Boston's finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) sector provides 15.3 percent of the city's employment (or 111,090 jobs through the first quarter of 2000 -- the highest point in the city's history).

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<sup>7</sup>Employment data for the city of Boston is from the Boston Redevelopment Authority, which is a composite of US Bureau of Economic Analysis and Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training employment series. Data for 2000 is a preliminary estimate.

Another strong employer is the city's health care industry. Health care employers such as Brigham & Women's Medical Center (almost 13,000 jobs) and Beth Israel/Deaconess Medical Center (more than 10,000 jobs) generate 13.3 percent of the city's jobs.

Educational institutions also contribute a large portion of the employment base in Boston. The city's 35 college and universities, including Boston University, Boston College, and Northeastern University, generate more than 32,500 jobs (almost 5 percent of Boston's total employment base). Jobs in hospitality and tourism industries as well as the high technology sector (most notably software- and biotechnology-related industries) are also strong contributors to the city's economic base.

Boston's unemployment rate has remained low over the last few years. Dipping to a 17-year low, the annual average unemployment rate in 2000 for the city of Boston was 2.9 percent. One reason for this relatively low rate is that Boston is a net importer of workers. For every one city resident in the labor force there are 2.4 jobs. The city imports hundreds of thousands of workers to meet employer job demand.

The city has not been immune, however, from the recent economic slowdown. The Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training places the city's July 2001 unemployment rate at 4.6 percent. While labor shortages were widespread throughout the city in 2000, many industries are announcing layoffs in 2001. Hardest hit by the economic downturn has been technology-related industries such as software, Internet services, and telecommunications.

Boston's Private Industry Council (PIC) influences much of the policy and programming of the city's workforce development system. The PIC works in close partnership with Boston's Mayor and his Office of Jobs & Community Services. The Boston PIC (which is also a state-designated Workforce Investment Board) oversees the operation of Boston's three One Stop Career Centers. It establishes policies and funding priorities for federal Workforce Investment Act training funds and selects vendors to provide WIA-funded services. In addition, the PIC is involved in four major initiatives -- Welfare to Work, School to Career, incumbent worker skills improvement, especially in entry-level health care and the Boston Compact. The Boston Compact is a 1982 agreement among the Boston Public Schools, labor, business, and other parties to improve the success of students in the city's public school system.

The Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training, the state's Employment Security agency, had a long-standing monopoly on the delivery of employment services in the city prior to 1995. However, in 1995 the PIC, through a state initiative, used a competitive-bid process to solicit proposals for potential operators of the Career Centers in Boston. The process drew a lot of attention in the state and city. The PIC's competitive process put all past operating models out to bid. In essence, the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training had to compete in a broader service delivery field to operate a career center. This was done with the

governor's commitment that no state employee would be laid off as a result of the competitive process. Opportunities for transferring to unemployment services were available, if needed for Employment Service employees. With support from the Massachusetts AFL-CIO (as a Board member of the PIC) for improved services and driven by employer desire for change, the competitive process proceeded and the PIC received seven bids. After an iterative process of review and refinement of each business plan submitted by the competing partners, the PIC accepted three groups to operate Boston's Career Centers.

In 1996 the PIC chartered three partnerships as operators of Boston's Career Centers. They are:

- **The Workplace**, a partnership between Jewish Vocational Services and the City of Boston's Jobs and Community Services. The center is located on Chauncey Street in downtown Boston. It has a strong reputation for serving the needs of Boston's downtown employer community in addition to various segments of the job seeker community. For example, The Workplace recently won a contract to provide job search and placement for non-custodial parents of families receiving TANF and a contract with the Suffolk County House of Corrections to provide current and ex-offenders with job search and career counseling. The Work Place also operates a satellite in South Boston, one of Boston's older blue-collar working class neighborhoods.
- **Boston Career Link**, a partnership between three Boston non-profit organizations, Morgan Memorial/Goodwill Industries, Dimock Community Health Center, , and Women's Educational and Industrial Union. Boston Career Link's primary location is on Harrison Avenue in the Roxbury neighborhood. Roxbury is home to many the city's African-American, Caribbean and Latino residents.
- **JobNet**, a partnership between the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training and the Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), the city's major Community Action Program. Drake Beam Morin, a private outplacement and job-service firm, was one of JobNet's original operating partners. Drake Beam Morin dropped out of the partnership in the second year of JobNet's operation primarily due to changing leadership at Drake Beam Morin's corporate level. The company also lost interest in career centers as a new business market. JobNet's Career Center is located on South Street, near downtown and bordering Chinatown. JobNet also operates a satellite center on Massachusetts Avenue in the Roxbury neighborhood.

The three Career Centers and two satellite centers serve more than 10,000 individuals and 1,000 employers each year. Each Career Center has a budget of approximately \$1 million to staff and carry out core services. A combination of customer-based fees (paid by either job seekers carrying vouchers or employers contracting for customized services) and specialized contracts (such as welfare to

work, non-custodial parent, and ex-offender contracts) constitutes the rest of the Career Centers' operating budget.

State agencies such as the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training, and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission contract with the Career Centers to provide core and specialized services<sup>8</sup> to their job seekers. Employers also have access to core services (referrals, employment competencies, and listings of government-funded training incentives) and fee-based services (customized recruitment, on-site career planning, and human resource functions). None of these relationships began with an MOU. MOUs with DET for employment services and DTA for services to welfare recipients grew out of developed working relationships. MRC and MCB have chosen to retain the contract-based relationship and there are no plans to change this at this time.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

The Boston PIC is responsible for reviewing and re-chartering each of the Career Centers in Boston. The PIC conducts an annual review of Career Center performance, in addition to re-chartering their operating partnerships every three years.

The philosophical construct for the PIC's original charters in 1996, and the annual reviews and re-chartering that have followed, originate from the very first RFP issued by the PIC in 1995. A newly created Career Center Committee at the PIC began the development of the RFP in 1995 with its own research question: Why did employers and job seekers not use the current Employment Services system? The PIC held a series of focus groups and public meetings to understand the question. The results were clear, simple, and based on improved service to customers.

Employers wanted Career Center staff to be professional, have knowledge of their industry, designate a single point of contact, and remove a job posting once the job was filled. Job seekers who used a Career Center wanted to be given respect by staff (e.g., have staff keep appointments) and be given some direction in their job search. These findings pushed the PIC to adopt a continuous quality improvement (CQI) framework to underpin the RFP, chartering, and annual review processes of the Career Centers. Each Career Center has to demonstrate the outcomes and components of a plan to satisfy the needs of its job seeker and employer customers through service excellence.

The PIC characterizes its commitment to service excellence by listing these goals for its Career Center initiative:

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<sup>8</sup> Core services include employability and career assessments, public-support eligibility assessment, job clubs, and access to labor market and job listings. Specialized services include career counseling, résumé preparation, in-depth job search, basic skills tutoring, and career-oriented workshops.

- treat employers as a priority customer in the design and operation of both the labor exchange and workforce development systems;
- become competitive by adopting standards of excellence (e.g., striving to reach performance standards of 100 percent) and develop the best possible technology and facility resources;
- remove bureaucratic constraints to provide the best possible service to employer and job seeker customers; and
- develop One Stop Career Centers that develop labor exchange services, serve as hubs within the workforce development system, are customer-driven, develop and integrate funding sources, and are quality-focused.<sup>9</sup>

Within this framework, the PIC gives the Career Centers wide latitude in establishing a market niche and model of service delivery. In practicality, it also allows for a diversity of operation among the Career Centers that can meet the many needs of the city's varied set of job seekers and employers.

For example, each of the Career Centers has established a unique niche of service to neighborhoods or disadvantaged populations. One Career Center specializes in serving ex-offenders, another targets the Asian community, and a third has made special in-roads serving people with disabilities. Boston's Career Centers also diverge in how they serve employers. Some have better fee-for-service markets, while others have unique one-on-one relationships with employers in terms of job placement.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The PIC re-charters the Career Centers every three years and conducts a charter review on an annual basis. Since the original charter in 1996, the PIC has re-chartered the Career Center operators once (in 1999) and conducted five annual reviews. The 1999 re-chartering did not use a competitive process, as the PIC believed the current providers were meeting its goals. The next re-chartering process will occur in 2002.

The PIC's re-chartering and annual review process have stayed primarily the same since 1997. The PIC bases each process on the same set of guiding principles and basic research activities, although the re-chartering process includes a more in-depth examination.

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<sup>9</sup> Memo from the Boston Private Industry Council's Career Center Committee to the Governance Boards of the Boston Career Link, JobNet, and The Workplace, October 6, 1997, regarding the FY 1999 Chartering Process.

The PIC's guiding principle is service excellence (or commitment to customer satisfaction), a quality that guides the process by which the PIC conducts its review. The PIC's basic requirements for review are primarily qualitative. It conducts research activities that help the PIC (1) develop a full description of where each Career Center is in terms of development, (2) understand each Center's strategies for success and growth, and (3) become familiar with each Center's governance structure, decision making process, and service delivery process. The PIC only reviews four qualitative measures of performance during the re-chartering and annual review processes.

The re-chartering review in 1999 consisted of the following activities:

- a Career Center Self-Assessment with the purpose of (1) identifying critical elements that are or are not being implemented, as well as current commitment and capacity to continue implementation, and (2) helping the PIC understand how the Career Center works as an organization and how staff make, implement, and evaluation decisions;
- documentation of service levels and performance to job seekers and employers using the Career Center's case management software and the state's Career Center office;
- customer feedback through point of service interviews, surveys and focus groups of job seeker and employer customers (performed by PIC staff);
- a site visit by PIC staff to (1) document key organizational systems, processes, and capacities, and (2) document consistency with the PIC's vision and overall objectives for Career Centers; and
- a Business Plan Update (the business plan is a central component to Career Center operation and was required in the original RFP).<sup>10</sup>

Each of these tasks included detailed protocols, survey tools, and forms for response. For example, the PIC developed detailed questions for each Career Center's self-assessment and a "Voice of the Customer" Job Seeker Focus Group Protocol to guide discussion with job seekers. The self-assessment form included many CQI-related questions, such as customer flow, capacity for CQI implementation, and staff empowerment. PIC staff completed their re-chartering process by writing a summary report for each Career Center. The report became the basis for recommendation to the PIC's Career Center Committee concerning charter extension.

The intent of the annual charter reviews have been similar to the 1999 re-chartering process conducted by the PIC, albeit the annual reviews have required less detail. During an annual review the PIC conducts a site visit, asks for a business plan

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<sup>10</sup> Boston Private Industry Council, Overview of the Charter Renewal Process for Boston Career Centers, October 1997.

update, documents level of service, and solicits customer feedback through survey or focus group.

The PIC has also used the annual review as a means to focus on specialized areas of Career Center operation each year. For example, one year the PIC asked Career Centers to assess their employer relationships and to build plans around achieving better customer satisfaction among employer customers. More recently, the PIC focused on serving specialized populations such as disabled job seekers. To re-emphasize the focus, the PIC uses subsequent annual reviews to revisit each Career Center's implementation plan and performance related to the specialized area.

One notable change in the evolution of the PIC's charter reviews has been the use of more explicit language of Baldrige. The PIC has refined the categorization of the three core areas it uses to organize the charter reviews: (1) Organization Development and Center Management, (2) Service Delivery Processes and Product Lines, and (3) Performance Results. Each of these core areas corresponds to Baldrige criteria. For example, the PIC focuses on Baldrige Criteria 1 (Leadership) and Criteria 2 (Strategic Planning) to assess the development of each Career Center in terms of the Organization Development and Center Management core area.

As the Career Center initiative in Boston continues in its seventh year, the PIC is planning to undertake its second re-chartering process (FY2002). The structure and emphasis of the 2002 re-chartering process will be similar to the 1999 process.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

A defining feature of the Boston PIC is its management structure. Boston's Workforce Investment Board includes 35 members of the city's private, public, and nonprofit community. The WIB's 35 members delegate certain decision-making authority to an Executive Committee elected by the WIB Board. This Executive Committee also acts as the PIC's Board of Directors. The eleven person Executive Committee determines day-to-day policy and program directions for the Boston PIC and Boston's Workforce Investment Board. The Executive Committee consists of six CEOs from the private sector, the President of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, the Superintendent of Boston Public Schools, the head of University of Massachusetts, Boston a community representative and the Mayor's Chief of Staff.

A structure of committees and subcommittees support the Executive Committee. Each Council member is asked to participate in a committee. For example, the Workforce Development Committee consists of three subcommittees, the Employment and Training Systems Subcommittee, Welfare to Work Subcommittee, and Employed Worker Training Subcommittee. At one point a Career Center Committee oversaw policy and direction of the PIC Career Center initiative. The Employment and Training Systems Subcommittee now oversees the Career Center initiative.

PIC staff and staff from the mayor's Office of Jobs & Community Services provide research support to and carry out policy for the Executive Committee, Committee, and Subcommittee structure. Staff at the PIC mention that the system of checks and balances and the flow of information up and down the committee structure is critical in producing well-researched, thought out, and effective policy for the city. Staff notes that it is commonplace for policy directives to be sent back and forth between staff, Subcommittee, Committee, and Executive Committee many times before policy is accepted.

The strong presence of employers and organized labor on the PIC's Board has helped the PIC retain a focus on meeting customer needs and avoid getting into bureaucratic turf wars. Six of the eleven Executive Committee members are CEOs of Boston's largest and most influential private sector institutions. The President of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO and the Mayor's Chief of State joins them. This strong employer-driven focus has helped the Career Center initiative to cross many thresholds, one of them as sponsor of a competitive-bid process soliciting private or public operators for Boston's three Career Centers. By allowing employers and labor to drive the need for change, the PIC as part of a state initiative was able to develop competitive career centers.

## **VI. OUTCOMES MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

In keeping with its focus on customer satisfaction through CQI processes, the PIC uses only four quantitative indicators to measure Career Center performance.<sup>11</sup> The four measures include two for job seekers and two for employers:

- Ninety (90) percent of all job seeker customers will be enrolled in an education and training program or service;
- Ninety (90) percent of all job seekers placed in a job will stay at least six months;
- Ninety (90) percent of all employer customers that accept a job seeker for hire will keep the employee for at least six months; and
- Ninety (90) percent of all employer customers who use the Career Center will return within two years for additional services.

The PIC uses qualitative measures as the primary vehicle to measure Career Center performance. The quality measures examined through qualitative data collection include:

- strategic planning processes,
- customer flows,

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<sup>11</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts law does not allow public or private entities to use Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage data, unlike most states, to track individual or employer employment records. The PIC will begin using a newly created, statewide management information system (called MOSES) to begin tracking progress of job seeker outcomes.

- employee education and training,
- methods of staff empowerment,
- balancing-funding stream fragmentation with service integration,
- matching customers and services,
- partnering processes,
- methods of gathering data for product improvement,
- processes by which data is analyzed,
- mechanisms that empower staff to implement findings from data collection, and
- budgeting and staffing.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

The PIC's re-chartering and annual review processes bear out a number of lessons for the field. Among them are:

**A chartering process is only as good as its process. A focus on excellence in customer service ensures quality programs and outcomes.** Boston's Career Centers report that the PIC's focus on excellence in customer service during the re-chartering and annual review processes reinforces their larger mission in the city's workforce development system; that is, to meet the needs of job seeker and employer customers and avoid "silo-ing" programs. If the re-charter and review process is able to test the ability of the Career Center to meet the needs of customers, and if these customer groups are defined and agreed upon, then measures for program quality and outcome will likely be met. It is this focus on service and quality principles that create a successful chartering and re-chartering process, not the very fact that a chartering process exists in and of itself.

**The PIC's strong employer and organized labor presence and committee structure has allowed it to create and maintain a culture of change in Boston's employment exchange and Career Center system.** Strong private sector and labor control of the Executive Committee has influenced the practices and directions of the PIC's workforce development activities, and, by extension, the PIC's chartering and review of the city's three Career Centers. The PIC has been able to avoid many funding and program pitfalls by keeping its focus on and taking direction from its employer constituency.

**The commitment to continuous quality improvement (CQI) is easy to let slide.** Boston's Career Centers have found that an effective means to institutionalize CQI is to hire a dedicated staff person or consultant with expertise in CQI practices. This so-called "Continuous Quality Improvement Manager" is responsible for educating and challenging the organization to implement the guiding principles and methods of CQI.

**An annual review process focused on prospective service delivery provides an important opportunity to institute continuous quality improvement.** Both the Boston PIC and the Career Centers view the annual review as an opportunity to focus on

service delivery, not on required reporting. This prospective focus is achieved by asking each Career Center to update their business plan, a plan focused on articulating how the center can better serve the job seekers and employers in their community.

**The choice of CQI principles not only speaks to the performance qualities that the PIC expects from the Career Centers (customer satisfaction among its employer and job seeker customers), it also organizes the structure and tasks of the PIC's review itself.** The review is collaborative in approach, with a heavy emphasis on continual learning among partners (including among PIC and Career Center staff). PIC officials are careful to use the word "review" rather than "monitoring process" when describing the re-chartering and annual charter renewals.

**Having multiple career centers creates healthy competition and differentiation.** With three different Career Centers chosen via a competitive process, the Boston PIC is able to meet the very different needs of different job seeker and employer populations. This complimentary service delivery is balanced by healthy competition between Career Centers that often compete for contracts.

## List of Interviewees

Dennis Rogers	Career Center Program Manager Boston Private Industry Council
Shelly Desimone	HR Specialist/Quality Coach, The Workplace
Bill O'Heaney	The Workplace
Rosemary Alexander	Director, JobNet
Kent Wampler	Learning Organization Specialist, JobNet

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Montgomery County Job Center, Dayton, Ohio**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and location of Site Visit: April 3-4, 2001, Dayton, Ohio

Organization: Montgomery County Job Center

Type of Entity: One-Stop Career Center

Contact Person: Linda Shepard, Deputy Director

Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services

Phone: (937) 496-6700

Fax: (937) 225-6203

Email: [shepal@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:shepal@odjfs.state.oh.us)

Web site: [www.thejobcenter.org](http://www.thejobcenter.org)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop Design and Management

Promising Practice: Collaboration involving 47 partners in the creation and management of the Job Center.

The Heldrich Center Representatives: Bernadette DeVito, Richard W. Roper

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Montgomery County, which is 95% urban, is located in the southwestern part of Ohio. The population of approximately 558,427 is about 78% white, 19% African-American, 1.5% American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut Asian and Pacific Islander, and 1% Hispanic. The minority population comprises about 22% of the total. Dayton, with a population of approximately 167,475 is the largest of the ten communities that make up the county. In 1998, annual average civilian labor force estimates for the county were: total labor force – 281,000; employment – 269,600; unemployment – 11,400; and unemployment rate – 4.1%. Montgomery County ranked 55<sup>th</sup> in unemployment among Ohio's 88 counties and was 4.7% below the state unemployment rate. That year the service industry employed the most workers, 92,289, and the finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) sector was the fastest growing employment sector.

Montgomery County's workforce and economic landscape has been historically dominated by manufacturing and government related enterprises, with the highest dependence being on a few long-standing employers in the automotive and aerospace industries. Over time, those industries slowly contracted and new industries created new demands, marking a radical change in the type and number of local jobs. The county found itself pressured to quickly respond to the loss of jobs due to a shift towards a service- and knowledge-based economy. Many county residents were unprepared for this change.

To adjust to the new reality, the county in the mid-1990s began discussing potential solutions to maximize its labor force, interagency and public/private partnerships,

and public investments in a concerted and focused way. A local business leader, Fred Smith, former CEO of the Huffy Corporation, who had a history of involvement in social services and had chaired a study on self-sufficiency between 1988 and 1992, took an interest in welfare reform. Mr. Smith recognized the need to reevaluate human services delivery in the Dayton area. He became aware of Kenosha County, Wisconsin's integrated services approach and, after visiting to observe how it operated, proposed that Montgomery County consider replicating the Kenosha County model. In 1995, the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners organized a task force, which was called the Job Center Work Group (JCWG), composed of representative from the local Chamber of Commerce, the United Way, and City of Dayton and Montgomery County officials. The WCJG was asked to develop an integrated service delivery model based upon a "no-wrong door" and county and community-wide approach. The intent was to develop a structure that would facilitate change in the current welfare system by effectively using existing employment and training resources within the community to reduce the number of families dependent upon public assistance. The concept was incorporated in the JCWG application for and subsequent receipt of a grant from the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services for the implementation of a One-Stop Career Center System in Montgomery and Preble Counties.

The result was the Montgomery County Job Center, which was opened in June 1997. The facility in which the Job Center is housed – occupying eight and a half acres – is leased to Montgomery County and the other core participating agencies by the St. Vincent DePaul Society of Dayton. It opened with 35 participating agencies and now has 47 partners, including all of the required WIA partners, co-located on site; it employs over 1,100 people. The Center provides a single place where employers can access a pool of qualified, job-ready workers. Job seekers, in turn, can find jobs on their own, be matched to jobs, be placed into subsidized employment, or be placed in a work experience position that can lead to paid employment. The Job Center is the only place in Montgomery County where an individual can apply for unemployment and training services and/or public assistance programs (i.e., Medicaid, Food Stamps, Emergency Assistance, JOBS, TANF ). The Montgomery Job Center is the largest of its kind in the nation. (The partners participating at the Job Center are listed in Attachment A).

In addition, in 1999 the County Department of Job and Family Services (MCDJFS), the county welfare agency and the principal tenant in the Job Center, established a program that funds local community-based organizations to assist TANF recipients. Through the Targeted Community-Based Collaborative (TCBC) the MCDJFS contracts with 13 community-based organizations that serve as fiscal agents/intermediaries for smaller community organizations that provide outreach services to clients who are reluctant to come to the Job Center or who simply prefer to obtain services in their own neighborhoods. The Ohio Department of Family Services provides the TANF funds under its Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) program to support this outreach activity.

The TCBC facilitates cooperation between the Job Center and community-based service providers, helps reduce service duplication, and contributes to improved retention. Many of the contracts are performance-based and their dollar values range from \$40,000-\$225,000 per year. The 13 intermediaries work with 70-75 smaller community-based organizations in delivering outreach services. The fiscal agents/intermediaries include:

- Dayton Urban League
- Greater Dayton Christian Connection
- Highrise Services
- Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance
- Lutheran Social Services
- Miami Valley Literacy Council
- St. Mary's Development Corp.
- Parity 2000
- Camp fire Boys & Girls
- City of Kettering
- Daybreak
- Omega community Development
- Old North Dayton Development Corp.

In 1997, when the Job Center opened, Montgomery County workforce development programs received approximately \$50 million in state and federal pass-through funds. It is estimated that the Job Center partner agencies now expend approximately \$700 million in services each year and about \$2.8 million are WIA funds.

In addition, Montgomery County provides \$1 million a year to maintain the Job Center and provide support services to the co-located partners. The Job Center director and his staff, for example, the cost of producing Job Center reports and other publications, and the cost of operating the reception area are paid out of the county's own source funds. The TCBC is funded at the level of \$2 million annually.

### III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE

There are several promising features of the Montgomery County Job Center that are recognized as promising practices:

- ***The Job Center Partners Council*** – The Job Center's policy making structure is fairly traditional in nature, but the involvement of the on-site partner staff in operations management is a noteworthy means of assuring buy-in on the part of the partner agencies. The agencies bring their own resources/funding streams to the Job Center and lease space in the facility. The Job Center Director, who has a Ph.D. in organizational behavior, said that the partners share goals and achieve a remarkable degree of collegiality. In part, this may be due to the existence of the Partner Council, on which sits a representative from each partner agency. The Council meets bi-monthly in sessions that may last from two to eight hours to discuss Job Center operations issues, solve

problems, share information, and provide general management oversight of the facility. The Council makes decisions through consensus rather than formal votes. Subcommittees are typically formed to address specific issues.

- ***Job Center Physical Layout*** – The Job Center is housed in a building that covers eight acres (Job Center operations currently occupy five acres); it is a sprawling one-story structure that could be difficult to navigate if inadequate attention was paid to the movement of people through the building. Fortunately, the staff recognized the need to make the facility layout customer friendly. The reception area is large but has no seating. Customers are asked for minimal information as they arrive. Once the service need is indicated, customers are given color-coded cards, which direct them to the location in the building where they can obtain the help they seek. The corridors are color-coded and colored flags hang above the hallways to assist in guiding customers to services. There are no waiting lines. There are some shared-space areas, e.g., the reception area, the Job Bank, the cafeteria, and the conference rooms.
- ***Targeted Community-Based Collaborative (TCBC)*** – Linking community-based organizations with the Job Center is an effective way for the county to build bridges to the neighborhoods in which these organizations provide services. The purchase of service agreements the MCDJFS enters with the organizations are not unlike such arrangements in other communities, but it appears this is a new and untried feature of welfare service delivery in Dayton and Montgomery County. As such, it is a local innovation in terms of the relationship between government and non-government service providers.
- ***Outcome Measurement Framework*** – The Framework was developed over three years ago with the help of the KPMG consulting firm. Much of what has been done to date with respect to performance measurement has been based on past “gut-level” practices that are now being refined. The framework defines a process in which the Executive Committee of the Partners’ Council proposes an initial determination of broad performance goals. The Executive Committee’s definition of goals is really nothing more than a statement of what should or could be accomplished. Specific outcome goals for the partner agencies are determined by the individual agencies themselves. Each agency tracks its own outputs and measures success in terms of how well performance approaches agency goals. The partner agencies use the outcome measurement framework to monitor progress and see if they are on track. The Workforce Policy Board uses this outcome data to prioritize budget allocations and to identify new areas that might require resources.

These above four features of Job Center operations are critical to its ability to serve customers in a pleasant, professional, and efficient manner. The partners seems to take to heart the need to make the Job Center an inviting environment that serves customers in a way that respects the dignity of each and accords each important-person status. This kind of environment can only be achieved when the partners work

in close collaboration and the Job Center works in cooperation with the neighborhoods; this appears to be the case.

Both the Job Center director and the deputy director of the MCDJFS maintained that there were few major obstacles encountered in bringing the Job Center into being. They also said that the Employment Services bureau was brought into the Center only after the Ohio Governor personally directed it. The relationship between that partner and the Job Center is now quite favorable. This may be related to the fact that Employment Services is soon to be folded into the State Social Services Agency, which cooperates closely with the Job Center.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The Job Center features services that are targeted to meet the needs of employers as well as the needs of area families and individuals. These services include:

- *Community-wide Employment and Training Coordination:* Coordination of employer outreach, the sharing of job orders, an integrated team of job developers, and the joint marketing of hiring incentives for employers.
- *Job Bank Resource Room:* A multi-agency staffed room equipped with resources available to employers for recruiting and interviewing. For job/career seekers, equipment is provided for self-directed job searches, résumé writing, access to local/state/national labor market information, job postings, individualized job match services, career testing/counseling, and electronic databases that facilitate job and career seeking/matching activities.
- *Integrated Work Teams:* Teams are made up of side-by-side inter-agency staff, with shared and common caseloads, goals, and outcomes. These teams provide public assistance support, welfare-to-work activities, access to child support actions, eligibility determinations, authorizations for services, and other supportive services under unified supervision.
- *Single General Reception Areas and a Unified Telephone System:* Provided for all agencies in the core center.
- *A Mutually Accepted Case-Management Protocol:* This protocol is used by all the agencies/programs in the center, including the commitment to share the information with the prior approval of the customer.
- *An On-site Child-Care Playroom:* This service is available on a short-term basis to customers (parents) who are using the center.
- *Access to On-site Education, Training, and Job-Preparation Activities:* These activities include basic education, computer literacy training, job clubs,

motivational training, and goal setting/budgeting training (through contracted providers), as well as post-secondary education registration/admission processing.

A promotional piece on the Job Center says, " The Center's customer service philosophy is a strong belief in an unconditionally positive regard for all people, resulting in respectful treatment for all Job Center visitors, service and benefit seekers, and staff. Quality customer service, along with a reinforced message to the able-bodied public assistance recipient that you are expected to be successful and become employed by using the resources and supportive services available both in and outside the Center, will enable the Center to reach and even exceed its goal of becoming the area's primary source for employment opportunities and workforce development while reducing the welfare caseload."

The Center has approximately 2000 visitors per day on average, half a million visitors per year, and 685 job seekers per month visit the job bank.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Job Center is overseen by a Workforce Policy Board (WPB), which was established by the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners in July, 2000. The WPB provides overall direction for the Job Center and is composed of public and private sector representatives who are appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The Center Director is an employee of the Montgomery County and reports to both the Board of County Commissioners and the WPB.

The Job Center is one of four components in the Montgomery County Workforce Development System. The Four WPB substructures, called Councils, provide oversight and coordination of the County's Workforce Development System.

- The Job Center Partners Council is made up of representatives of the organizations that have entered into memoranda of understanding with the WPB and are co-located at the Job Center. It promotes programming at the Job Center, sets Center policy based on outcomes, completes memoranda of understanding with the Job Center partners, advises partners on programming, and assures compliance with federal and state legislation.
- The Employers' Council includes members of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce's Workforce Development Committee. It is responsible for the workforce needs required to meet or exceed the economic needs of the community.
- The Youth Council includes school, business, and youth organization representatives; it is responsible for providing input on the design and implementation of the youth related programs.

- Adult Education and Training Council – includes representative from education and training organizations that have had demonstrated performance success, businesses which use the Job Center on an on going basis, and outgoing members of the defunct Private Industry Council. It is responsible for providing input on the design and implementation of adult programs.
- The Job Center director is responsible for promoting coordination and collaboration among all the Job Center partners. The Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services (MCDJFS) is the fiscal agent for the WIA funds in the service delivery area and acts as the One-Stop operator.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

To determine if the collaboration among the Job Center partners is successful, the Center attempts to measure its effectiveness. The measurement is described as the “Outcome Model or Framework.” The Job Center Council meets several times a year to create outcome measures for the Center. This process successfully created a system that defines the services provided by each partner, and how those services are focused on common outcomes.

1997 was the start-up year for the Framework, and since then, the goals for subsequent years have been based on that benchmark information. The Outcome Model includes three specific components to achieve the ultimate goal – “Customer Achieving Self-Sufficiency.” The three components include inputs, activities, and outputs. The model has three levels of outcomes: initial, intermediate, and long-term.

The county also collects “community indicators” (i.e., percent of low birth weight babies, unemployment rate, avoiding poverty) and compares outcomes with that of ten similar urban Ohio counties to determine how well Montgomery County is faring.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

Those involved in the operation of the Montgomery County Job Center believe that there are three keys to the success of their enterprise: climate, collaboration, and champions. First, with respect to climate, the air of professionalism and respect for customers is viewed by the partners as important to the Center’s success. Staff members of the partner agencies appear willing to go the extra mile to serve customers; they are not concerned about self-preservation but doing what’s best for the customers and community. The Job Center aims to look beyond WIA to workforce development, broadly defined. It seeks to address the needs of the whole person. Moreover, the Job Center is viewed by those involved as a community center, not a welfare center.

Second, the partner agencies were encouraged to be responsive to the needs of all county residents, both employers and job seekers, and to work collaboratively to achieve the best possible results for them. And third, the active promotion of an

integrated service delivery system by a leading businessman and his ability to enlist the support of the local Chamber of Commerce made it difficult for others to reject the concept and this approach to service delivery.

The care devoted to planning by those involved in thinking through the details of the service delivery system also appears to have been a very important ingredient in the development of a One-Stop that appears to work very well. The cooperation achieved among the various state and local agencies and organizations, both public and private, is particularly impressive.

### List of Interviewees

Gary Williamson, Ph.D.	Job Center Director
Linda Shepard	MCDJFS Deputy Director
David Richardson	MCDJFS Supervisor
Lucious Plant	Job Bank Coordinator
Rosemary Smith	MCDJFS Division Administrator
Lynette Reed	MCDJFS TANF Eligibility Specialist
Vickie Moiser	Chief Steward, ASFME MCDJFS Outreach Unit
Tondalay Fields	MCDJFS TANF Caseworker-Two Parent Families
Bill liames	MCDJFS Deputy Director
Don Vermillia	Former County Administrator
Phil Freeman	MCDJFS Supervisor of Contracting
Joyce Gerren	Job Center Outreach Consultant
Ethel Washington	Dayton Power and Light
David Snipes	Ohio Dept. of Employment Security

Attachment A

**Job Center Partners:**

Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services  
CBS Personnel Services  
Clothes That Work  
Curtis & Associates  
Dayton Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Dayton Power & Light  
Dayton Public School  
Dayton Public Schools/ABLE  
Eastco/Eastway  
Excel Communications  
EXTRAhelp Staffing Services  
Franciscan Health Center  
Interim Norrell Services  
Job Bank  
Job Corps  
Learning Links  
Legal Aid Society of Dayton  
Lutheran Social Services  
Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities  
Miami Jacobs College-NATP (Nurse-Aide Training Program)  
Miami Valley Career Technology  
Miami Valley Child Development Center, Inc.  
Montgomery County Children Services  
Montgomery County Department of Human Services  
Ohio Bureau of Employment Services  
Planned Parenthood  
Samaritan Counseling Alternatives  
Senior Aide Program  
Sentry Security, Inc.  
Sinclair Community College New Directions Program  
St. Joseph Treatment Center  
St. Vincent DePaul Fast Track  
St. Vincent DePaul Offices  
Staff Resources  
Supporting Council of Preventive Effort  
Womanline  
Workplace Reconnections

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Kenosha County Job Center, Kenosha, Wisconsin**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: April 5-6, 2001, Kenosha, Wisconsin

Organization: Kenosha County Job Center

Type of Entity: Public/Collaboration

Contact Person: John Milisauskas, Job Center Manager

Phone: (262) 697-4586

Fax: (262) 697-4585

Email: [jmilisauskas@co.kenosha.wi.us](mailto:jmilisauskas@co.kenosha.wi.us)

Web site:

[www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS/Divisions/DWD/JobCenter/JobCenterDescription/KenoshaCountyJobCenter.htm](http://www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS/Divisions/DWD/JobCenter/JobCenterDescription/KenoshaCountyJobCenter.htm)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop Design and Management

Name of "Promising Practice": One-Stop Service Integration

Heldrich Center Representatives: Laurie M. Santos, Ronnie Kauder

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **I. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

Kenosha County, located along Lake Michigan midway between Milwaukee and Chicago, is a mixed urban/suburban/rural area of approximately 145,000 people. More than half of the county's population (88,000) lives in the City of Kenosha, which is the major commercial and residential center. For many years, the mainstay of Kenosha's economy was a large automobile assembly plant that manufactured the American Motors Rambler. As recently as 1972, the plant employed 18,000 people. Between 1972 and 1988, during difficult economic times for U.S. automakers, employment at the plant fell from 18,000 to 8,000, and American Motors was sold to Chrysler. In 1988, Chrysler announced that it would not assemble automobiles in Kenosha any longer, and would lay-off an additional 6,500 workers. While Chrysler (now Daimler Chrysler) retains a presence in Kenosha, and currently makes automobile engines there, it now employs fewer than 1,000 workers.

The loss of jobs at the area's largest employer became the catalyst for the political leadership of the community to mount a concerted effort to recover from this blow to the local economy. Although much of this effort involved the successful marketing of economic development incentives, it also included an overhaul of the way public workforce development and income support programs were delivered.

Over time, and with the help of a strong state and national economy, Kenosha County's economy has recovered and prospered. The County's population grew 11% during the 1990's, faster than both the state and national rates. With Kenosha's affordable land and housing prices, many Chicago-area commuters have relocated to the area. Currently, almost 40% of all employed Kenosha residents work outside the County, mostly in

Illinois. Within Kenosha County, the economy is no longer dependent on one employer and has a healthy mix of industries. It still has a large, relatively high-wage, manufacturing sector. Approximately 24% of employment is in manufacturing, followed by services at 23% and retail trade at 21%.

Kenosha County had an unemployment rate of 4.2% as of April 2001, slightly lower than the state rate of 4.4%, and exactly the same as the national rate. For the last several years, Kenosha County has been experiencing a labor shortage, and demographic trends indicate that this is likely to continue. As with the nation as a whole, there are signs of a recent economic slowdown. Demographically, the area is 89% white, 4.4% African-American, 5.5% Hispanic and 1.2% other, although the minority populations are growing at a faster rate.

## **II. PROMISING PRACTICES INITIATIVE**

Kenosha County has long been a national leader in the development of One-Stop systems. The major loss of employment in automobile manufacturing noted above was the catalyst for unprecedented collaboration among public sector entities. In an effort led by the Kenosha County Executive, publicly funded agencies put aside their bureaucratic and institutional differences for the benefit of those in the community who needed their services.

At approximately the same time that Kenosha was experiencing continuing declines in automobile manufacturing employment, Wisconsin became one of the first states to begin to experiment with welfare reform. In 1987, Kenosha became one of four counties in Wisconsin to begin a pilot welfare reform program.

It was these two unrelated developments that led to the formation of the Kenosha County Job Center, which opened its doors in December 1989. Much of the initial funding and many of the early innovations were part of the welfare reform pilot. A new, attractive building was identified and renovated; integrated service teams – with members from different programs and agencies -- were formed; staff were assigned functionally, rather than by agency; staff were all committed to the mission of welfare reform to reduce dependency by empowering welfare recipients to take control of their lives and prepare themselves for economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

As the welfare reform program became integrated, it became clear that all employment and training agencies in Kenosha County should be united in the same location. The Kenosha County Job Center currently houses 22 agencies that provide a multitude of services. A listing of agencies and programs is included as Attachment 2. Over the years, staff have been cross-trained, and all are knowledgeable about the services available through each of the participating agencies. A single point of entry makes services more understandable and accessible, and cuts down on customer travel time among agencies.

Within the framework of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Kenosha is part of a Tri-County Workforce Development Board.<sup>12</sup> Each of the three counties has its own Workforce Development Board, which is responsible for its own particular area. By agreement with the Tri-County Board, Kenosha receives 36% of all WIA formula funds that flow into the area.

There is a high level of trust among the partners at the Kenosha County Job Center, and a culture of collaboration has developed. Until the requirement emerged under WIA, there were no written Memoranda of Understanding among partners, because none were needed. Staff at the Center do not think in terms of programs and do not identify themselves by agency. They are all staff members of the larger Center.

The Kenosha County Job Center has truly evolved into a community-wide workforce development resource. The Center's motto, developed by the staff, is ***Expect Success***. The principles of operation are:

- Excellent service
- Focus on customer satisfaction
- Collaboration and coordination
- Integration
- Universal access
- Comprehensive services
- No duplication
- Quality environment

### III. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The Kenosha County Job Center provides services to the public in a customer-focused, convenient, integrated way. The single location, occupying space within a former shopping mall in the City of Kenosha, truly functions as a One-Stop Shop.

The Job Center has integrated its programs, central services and physical environment based on the needs of its customers. This "seamless" service delivery means that the person coming in does not have to worry who is providing the service. Staff from the various agencies and program areas sit together based on related functions and common caseloads, not agency affiliation or program funding.

The Kenosha County Job Center includes the following functional service components:

- ***Information Point*** provides a common general reception area, information services, and a waiting area. *Information Point* also provides applications and pre-screening for economic support and migrant related services. It handles the Center's unified telephone system, central answering system and messaging services. During the last year, 71,000 calls were received at this central console, and 40,000 people came in to request information, direction, or appointments.

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<sup>12</sup> The other two counties are Racine and Walworth.

- **Employment Central** offers a full range of self-service and staff-assisted resource room services as well as assessment services. Job-search related workshops, both short-term and longer, are offered in this area. This is considered the “hub” for providing services to the general public and businesses. It is staffed on a multi-agency and multi-program basis. *Employment Central* experiences 600-700 customer visits per week. Many more than that use the Internet for job search.
- **Specialized Services** are offered “Behind the Great Wall,” as referred to locally. These include integrated service teams related to Wisconsin Works (the State’s TANF program), Food Stamps and Medical Assistance. It also includes case management services related to WIA programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Workforce Attachment and Advancement (Wisconsin’s program for the working poor), Job Corps, Senior Aides, Child Support, Migrant Services and HUD Housing Section 8.

Customers are serviced for programs that have particular eligibility requirements. Staff that work for a variety of different organizations provides the integrated service teams and case management services. Some are public employees, generally of the County Department of Human Services or the State Department of Workforce Development; others work for non-profit organizations such as Goodwill Industries or the AFL-CIO; still others work for private-for-profit organizations that have contracts for particular programs or services. All identify themselves as Job Center staff members. During the last year, 719 individuals were enrolled in TANF/Wisconsin Works (W-2) services, and more than 9,500 hundred were eligible for Medical Assistance.<sup>13</sup> More than 600 individuals were enrolled in WIA programs.

- **A Child’s Place** provides drop-in childcare services for parents who use Job Center resources. Half-day Head Start programs are also offered there, as is full-day on-site childcare, primarily for the children of TANF recipients who are involved in required activities or who have recently started work. As is the case with every function at the Center, staff in *A Child’s Place* draw their paychecks from different organizations. Some work for Goodwill Industries; others for the Kenosha Unified School District.
- **Training and Education** services are offered through an Adult Learning Lab and a Computer Skills Learning Lab on-site run by Gateway Technical College. Customers can upgrade their basic skills, take GED/high school equivalency instruction, and learn computer basics as well as common software applications. Within the last year, more than 400 individuals have used the Learning Lab and almost 200 have used the Computer Skills Lab.

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<sup>13</sup> Staff at the Center reported that, with reductions in cash assistance programs, many former cash assistance recipients remain eligible for Medical Assistance programs, Food Stamps and other non-cash programs.

- The ***Employer Relations Team*** provides area employers with a single point of access to a wide range of offerings. The employer relations unit is staffed by individuals from a number of organizations -- private, public and non-profit-- and is financed by a variety of funding sources. Offerings to employers include:
  - Recruitment services, including on-site recruitment at Kenosha County Job Center, job fairs, marketing job postings, and development of recruitment strategies
  - Internet resources to Wisconsin's JobNet and America's Job Bank/Talent Bank
  - Customized Training
  - Publications & Forums, including Resume Matrix (which contains brief profiles of candidates), an employer newsletter, marketing portfolios, and employer forums
  - Labor Market information
  - Services for Small Business
  - Incentives, such as on-the-job training, tax credits and other programs
  
- The ***Health Clinic*** provides limited services, mostly related to lead poisoning and contamination.

Additional space at the Center is currently being renovated and will soon house a number of additional agencies and programs. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, within the State Department of Workforce Development, will be moving in, as will a number of additional units of the County Department of Human Services, including the Divisions of Disability Services, Aging Services, Children & Family Services, Veterans Services, and Health.

#### IV. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

It is clear that the management philosophy of the center is one of consensus and mutual respect. The driving force for the Center is what is best for customers. A great deal of time was invested early on and throughout in "getting to know each other" and in laying the groundwork for collaboration. In keeping with progressive management philosophies, staff are empowered to make decisions and take care of issues at the lowest level possible.

The Center is managed on a team basis:

- The ***Executive Management Team*** consists of the directors of all agencies involved in the Center. The original members of this team were the "visionaries" who were instrumental in bringing this integrated Job Center into being. Key early players included the County Executive, the Social Services Director, the Director of the Private Industry Council (under the Job Training Partnership Act), the District Director of the Job Service of Wisconsin, Goodwill Industries, Gateway Technical College, and Professional Services Group. Current leaders, notably the Director of the Department of Human Services, are equally committed to the

growth and development of the One-Stop concept, and are taking steps to include more agencies and functions at the Job Center. The current Executive Management Team has 12-15 members and meets once each month.

- The Kenosha County Job Center (KCJC) **Operations Management Team** consists of the highest-ranking individual on-site from each organization represented at the center. There is some overlap between the Executive Management Team and the Operations Management Team. This team is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the center. It incorporates feedback from line staff and is a general forum for providing the latest information on all programs, services, and developments. This team meets once each month.
- **Work groups** on particular topics are formed as needed. Examples include: staff training and development, service delivery, and communications. A work group developed the Center's **Expect Success** motto. These groups usually have 6-8 members.

The Center has a total of approximately 200 employees, although this has been as high as 225 in the past. One of the Center's recent challenges has been dealing with funding cuts. As the Job Center collaboration was forming, employees of all agencies were consistently reassured that the collaborative effort was not going to result in anything being taken away from any agency. When funding reductions necessitated staff cuts in 1999, all of the 22 employees whose positions were eliminated were employees of contractors. The Center faced challenges in adjusting services to accommodate the funding cuts, but was guided by its unwritten rule of providing the best service possible to its customers.

The Center contracts out for Assessment, Case Management, Employer Services and Youth Services, although some of these functions also include public agency staff. Requests-for-Proposals are issued on a three-year cycle.

The Center follows a **Host Service** model, where one agency coordinates administrative services and facilities functions. Sharing common resources and services reinforces the concept of integration and working together on behalf of the Center's customers. For most of the Center's existence, Goodwill Industries leased and maintained the space. As the leaseholder and Host Agency, Goodwill provided a variety of administrative and facility services. In 1999, Kenosha County purchased the building and now serves as the Host Agency, managing administrative and facilities functions. The Job Center Director, an employee of the Host Agency, also coordinates all services at the Center.

## V. OUTCOME MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The Center measures its success in several ways. Even with a completely integrated structure, the Center keeps track of all program-specific statistical and fiscal information, and is able to report this to funding agencies and to the public. Thus, the Center measures its success partly by how well it accomplishes the goals of all of the different

funding sources. It appears that the Center has been successful in meeting program-specific goals.

The most important outcome measures appear to be related to customer use, customer satisfaction and customer success. Data is collected on customer use in all areas of the center. The Center is able to report on such diverse items as the number of people receiving assessment services, the number of veterans receiving services and the number of Job Net sessions that occurred at the Kenosha Center. All staff, whether serving employers or job seekers, are conscious of whether the services are meeting the needs of their customers, not what is in the best interest of the agency or the system.

Another important outcome measure appears to be whether the Job Center is of value to the political leadership of the County. The Job Center has positioned itself so that it is involved in all aspects of workforce development. It has close ties to economic development and is developing ever-closer working relationships with educational institutions in the area, which are working with the future workforce.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

Because Kenosha County has been in the spotlight throughout the development of One-Stop systems, and has had many visitors, it has developed its own **14 Steps to an Integrated Service Center** based on the lessons it learned through its successful collaboration and integration.. These are<sup>14</sup>:

1. **Lead Vigorously from the Top.** Executive management leadership is essential, preferably a single strong political leader who commands the respect and cooperation of agency heads.
2. **Approach All Obstacles, Barriers, Problems as Resolvable.** A positive attitude is essential. To achieve success, one must expect success. Management must create an environment for success for customers and staff.
3. **Integrate – Not Just Collocate.** It is not enough to locate different agencies in the same building. Services and functions need to be integrated to the largest extent possible to reduce duplication of effort and ensure quality customer service.
4. **Plan – But Do Not Over Plan.** Just do it. Let the collaborative adventure evolve naturally.
5. **Include All Levels of Staff and All Affected Agencies in Planning.** The cost of collocation and integration lies mostly in the cost of staff time needed to work out the details. This normally requires an infinite number of meetings of staff at all levels.
6. **Articulate a Common Mission.** The time and energy needed to develop a mission statement that is inclusive and mutually supported is well worth the effort.
7. **Implement Incrementally.** Begin small. Pilot integrated services with voluntary staff. Let the success of initial efforts convert reluctant participants.

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<sup>14</sup> The following is taken from Kenosha County Job Center's "14 Steps to an Integrated Service Center."

8. **Confront Corporate Cultural Differences.** When different agency perspectives indicate different approaches to program delivery, identify the underlying corporate assumptions to build a consensus and find a common ground based on understanding other points of view.
9. **Identify New Funding Resources for Start-Up Costs.** It is difficult to start a collocated and integrated delivery of services with funds in current operating budgets.
10. **Establish Inter-Agency Knowledge Base Prior to Collocation.** Fear of the unknown is one of our greatest nemeses. Bridge the knowledge gap first.
11. **Collocate a Mix of Public and Private Agencies.** Agency diversity in terms of size, specialty, type, and institutional culture made it possible to accomplish what may not otherwise be possible.
12. **Allow for Future and Unforeseen Developments.** Flexibility in office layout and space are good investments in these days of rapid changes in program content, funding levels, staffing levels and client demand.
13. **Be "State of the Art."** Incorporate the most effective program models as well as the latest in computer and telecommunications technology.
14. **Develop a Strong Identity within the Community.** Find a location with good visibility, advertise the facility through the use of building signage, provide tours of the facility to interested groups and allow community groups to use portions of the facility.

To these homegrown lessons, we would add the following:

- ***Be guided by customer needs, customer satisfaction and customer success.*** The real success of the Kenosha County Job Center is in the pride its staff and management take in the quality service they provide and the positive outcomes for their customers.
- ***Build a culture of collaboration, which will outlast staff and management changes.*** The staff of the different agencies learned "how the whole picture fit together" and realized that by pooling the resources of all agencies they could have professional equipment, signs, publications, functions, and an image that was too expensive for any one agency's budget. Over time, managers and staff realized that collaboration is giving, and that it feels good.
- ***Collaboration must be locally driven; it cannot be forced from above.*** A One-Stop Center must be a player in its local community, and satisfy local employers and job seekers.
- ***Those in a position to move collaboration forward must be willing to do so.*** Kenosha was fortunate in having not only the political leadership, but also bureaucratic leaders who were willing to put customer service ahead of agency self-interest. This is extremely rare.

## List of Interviewees

### Job Center Staff

John Milisauskas	Job Center Manager, County of Kenosha
Rhonda M. Jolly	Asst. Job Center Manager, County of Kenosha
Dennis R. Schultz	Dir., Dept of Human Services County of Kenosha
James Kennedy	Asst, Dir, DHS County of Kenosha
Bill Richard	District Director, Job Service of Wisconsin
John Van Benthuyzen	Employer Relations Coord., LJJ Assoc. in Mgmt, Services
Kevin Loef	Director, Kenosha Programs, Goodwill Industries
Terri A. Johnson	Project Coordinator, Wisconsin AFL-CIO
R. Casey Jones	Jobs Training Coordinator, Gateway Technical College

### Employer Customers

Brad Foley	Human Resource Manager, Asyst Technologies, LLC
Paul Kristoffersen	Human Resources, Martin Petersen Company, Inc.

## Attachment A

### Kenosha County Job Center – Organizations and Programs

#### Partner Organizations

##### Kenosha County

- Department of Human Services
  - Office of the Director
  - Division of Workforce Development
  - Economic Support
  - Child Support
  - Division of Health/Clinic
  - Aging & Disability Resource Center
- Sheriff's Department – Special Investigative Unit

City of Kenosha, Housing Authority, HUD Section 8

Gateway Technical College

Goodwill Industries, Inc.

Hoppe & Orendorff

Job Corps

Kenosha Literacy Council, Inc./Referral Off-site

Kenosha Unified School District – Head Start

LLJ Associates in Management Services

Professional Services Group

SE WI Labor-Management Council, Inc.

Seniors in Community Service, Inc.

Small Business Development Center/UW-Parkside

State of Wisconsin, Department of Workforce Development, Job Service

State of Wisconsin, Department of Workforce Development, Unemployment Insurance

United Migrant Opportunity Services/Referral Off-site

#### FUTURE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

State of Wisconsin, Vocational Rehabilitation

Kenosha County, Department of Human Services

- Division of Disability Services
- Division of Aging Services
- Division of Children & Family Services
- Division of Veterans Services/County Veterans Service Officer
- Division of Health

## Programs

BadgerCare  
Bonding Services  
Business Growth Development  
Business Human Resources Support

- JobNet/Account Services
- On Site Recruitment
- Resume Matrix
- Job Fairs
- Human Resource FAQs

Business Workforce Development

- Employee Retention
- Employee Advancement

Career Connections/Assessment & Career Planning  
Child Care/On-site, Resource & Referral  
Child Support/Enforcement & Collections  
Emergency Services Network  
Food Stamps  
GED/HSED Instruction  
Head Start  
HUD Subsidized Housing  
Job Corps  
Job Preparation & Search  
Literacy Tutoring  
Medicaid Transportation  
Medical Assistance  
Medical Relief  
Pre-Employment Skills Development  
Prevention Services Network  
Senior Aides  
Small Business Development Center  
Trade Adjustment Act  
Unemployment Insurance  
Unemployment Insurance Profiling  
United Migrant Opportunity Services  
Veterans Services  
Wisconsin Works (W-2)  
Workforce Attachment and Advancement  
Workforce Investment Act/Adults  
Workforce Investment Act/Dislocated Workers  
Workforce Investment Act/Youth

## **SITE VISIT REPORT:** Creekside WorkSource, Lynnwood, Washington

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: June 27, 2001, Lynnwood, Washington

Organization: WorkSource Lynnwood One Stop Career Center

Type of Entity: Collaborative, managed by the Department of Social and Health Services

Contact Person: Cyndi Schaeffer, Administrator

Phone: (425) 673-3006

Fax: (425) 672-2295

Email: [schaecj@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:schaecj@dshs.wa.gov)

Web site: [www.worksourceonline.com](http://www.worksourceonline.com)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop Design and Management

Promising Practice: One-Stop Partnership

Heldrich Center Representatives: K.A. Dixon, Ronnie Kauder

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE STOP DESCRIPTION**

Lynnwood, Washington is located just north of Seattle, in southern Snohomish County. Snohomish County is large, with a population of 625,000 and an area that covers 2,900 square miles. The southern portion of the county, which is served by WorkSource Lynnwood, is more populous and is predominantly suburban to the Seattle/King County area, while the northern portion of the county, served by WorkSource Everett, is more rural.

The local area served by WorkSource Lynnwood has a diverse population, and includes many immigrant groups from Asia, Latin America and Europe. The major industries in the area are those that dominate the greater Seattle area – aerospace (Boeing), technology (Microsoft) and manufacturing. The presence of Microsoft has encouraged numerous dot.coms and other emerging technologies in the area. Further north in the county, agricultural industry, especially lumber and logging, are still present, though diminished. Based on its assessment of local economic trends, Edmonds Community College has focused on high-tech areas, construction, service occupations (e.g. paralegal) and medical-related careers. These are indicators of future growth areas in the region.

In recent years, Washington State as a whole has experienced unemployment rates that are at least one percentage point higher than the U.S., although the Seattle metropolitan area has been at approximately the national rate. The unemployment rate in Snohomish County was 4.5% in April of 2001, lower than the Washington State rate of 5.6%, but the same as the national rate. At the time of the visit, in late June 2001, there was concern about energy costs and the effect this might have on the local economy. Washington State is highly dependent on hydroelectric power, and

has had less rain and snow than usual this year. [There have since been major forest fires in Washington State, and news sources report that the area is experiencing its worst drought in 50 years.] In addition, local power companies have sold power to California to ease its energy problems.

The State of Washington has developed both a brand name (“WorkSource”) and a process for certifying One-Stop Career Centers. WorkSource is also the name of Washington State’s job matching system, available to the public at [www.go2worksource.com](http://www.go2worksource.com). WorkSource Lynnwood has been in operation for two years and was “validated” by the State on March 24, 2000.

Collaborative planning had been taking place for some time before the current center opened, and had been encouraged from a number of directions. In August of 1998, the state began to provide policy direction regarding the development of One-Stop Centers. At approximately the same time, Snohomish County identified six key areas that were necessary for “healthy communities” within the county. Employment was considered #1 of the six areas. In addition, the enactment of WorkFirst (welfare reform) five years ago dovetailed well with local planning trends.

The leaders of partner agencies locally began to work together as part of an employment coalition that evolved into a very strong partnership. They were, and are, committed to giving customers the best service possible by working together and eliminating “silos.” In creating WorkSource Lynnwood, local agency and organization heads used the maximum authority they had; sometimes taking risks within their own agencies, to create a high quality integrated system. As the Center evolved, the positive peer pressure power of the group energized the partners to set aside self-interest and work together.

Within the context of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the designated One-Stop operator (called “manager” locally) is the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), which was unanimously recommended by the partners to the Snohomish County Workforce Development Council (the local workforce investment board). Under the agreement for WIA adult and dislocated worker services, staff from six different partner organizations working at the career center are funded in whole or in part through WIA.

WorkSource Lynnwood is located in a brand-new building owned by the Department of Social and Health Services. It is well located, attractive, professional, and busy.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The strong partnership that has produced an active and growing One-Stop Center, the pride partners take in being a part of this effort, and the collaborative practices that this partnership has engendered, together form the promising practice that is the subject of this profile.

The absolute focus of the partners is on customer service and quality service delivery. As they developed their vision, one key element was to have all possible services in one location. They believe that they are in the human service business and that physical co-location is more suited to this customer group than a “virtual” approach.

The following partners, representing a host of programs and funding sources, are housed at the WorkSource Lynnwood Center:

- Employment Security Department
- Operation Improvement (YWCA)
- TRAC Associates
- Work Opportunities
- Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Snohomish County Human Services
- Snohomish County Housing Authority
- Refugee Forum
- Community Trades & Careers/Sunrise Services
- Department of Social and Health Services, Creekside Community Service Office
- Edmonds Community College

The emphasis is on a holistic approach to services. The integration model blends the programs, services and resources of all programs to provide more “comprehensive, effective and accessible” services. For example, all staff of all agencies are skilled in providing basic labor exchange services, including assistance in the Resource Room, offering Job Seeker workshops, and otherwise providing services that address the needs of consumers. The local model is seamless to the customer, integrated in service provision and uses an interdisciplinary approach to staff utilization.

Although the partnership has been in existence for several years, the Center is relatively new – less than two years old. An enormous staff training effort was made before opening, with each staff member receiving 180 hours of training before the Center opened its doors and more provided on an ongoing basis. When the Center first opened, a major marketing effort was undertaken, with radio, newspaper and poster advertising, as well as recruitment through all partners. The Center has been so successful and is so busy that current customers usually learn of the Center through referral or word-of-mouth.

Both the physical layout of the center and the staff are blended. There is a single point of entry for all services. Customers and staff have access to integrated areas (reception, Resource Room, workshops) and can also access specialized services of the partners housed on site (vocational rehabilitation, social service programs, WIA intensive and training programs). There is combined case staffing, with

representatives of the various agencies sharing case management for each individual that receives services through multiple funding sources,

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The following represent some of the key components of this strong partnership, and the Center created by it:

**Resource Sharing Agreement.** All partners at the WorkSource Lynnwood share resources and pay a share of the costs. One cardinal rule agreed to by the partners is that all partners must pay their fair share of rent (including utilities and janitorial services), supplies, copy machine rental, non-date processing repairs and data processing repairs. Every partner is charged the same cost per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff person. Telecommunications are charged as a flat rate based on each partner's levels of FTE participation. In the current agreement, the total monthly cost for these items is \$28,000. With 30 staff people housed at the Center, the monthly cost per FTE is \$960. This may be adjusted quarterly by written agreement of the partners.

**Professionalism.** One of the "ground rules" is the professionalism of all staff. The partners have produced a written piece giving guidance to staff on the meaning of this concept. This covers professional appearance (e.g., dress, cubicle decorations, cleanliness of work area) as well as conduct (language, acting with compassion and understanding, responding in a timely way, dignified and polite demeanor, rules of confidentiality). The underlying premise is that staff attitudes and behavior towards customers and co-workers has an impact on how well they are able to serve customers and each other. Staff are reminded that WorkSource is a new business cooperative and that all interactions with the public should identify WorkSource as the primary entity. This includes answering phones, greeting people and decorating cubicles.

**Rotation of job functions.** All staff housed at WorkSource Lynnwood rotate job functions to provide core, intensive and training services to all WorkSource customers, including adults and dislocated workers, TANF and public assistance clients and the universal general population. All staff offer Job Success workshops, considered "core" services. A five-module course (most of which was developed by the State of Washington) is offered every week. The modules are: Orientation & Goal-Setting; Interviewing & Applications; Resumes (including electronic resumes) and Cover Letters; Job Search Information, and Basic Word. All Career Consultants are trained to offer these workshops.

**Extended hours.** WorkSource Lynnwood is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, and from 9:00am to noon on Saturdays (Saturday hours were suspended during the summer). This allows for more flexibility for those who cannot participate in activities during the standard workday.

**On-site offerings of Edmonds Community College.** The college is planning to move its self-access Learning Center to Lynnwood WorkSource. This will allow the following services to be provided on-site: academic prevocational basic skills, preparing for and taking the GED test, upgrading keyboarding skills, computer literacy classes, business technology computer applications, customized training for consumer needs.

**Attention to detail.** Even though there is a high level of trust and collaboration at the partner managerial level, a review of written agreements and understandings reveals that these understandings are translated into detailed agreements.

**Promotion of computer literacy.** Many job seekers do not having sufficient computer skills to be competitive. Through all of its activities (workshops, Resource Room assistance, on-site courses), the Center promotes computer literacy as a key component.

**Emphasis on customer service.** The Center works hard to offer value to both job seekers and employers. When employers have agreed to come on-site, the Center markets heavily to attract sufficient job seekers. The Center has responded to job seeker demands for more self-access, workshops and on-site interviews by employers.

**Attention to groups with particular needs.** While providing quality universal service, the Center also pays attention to the needs of sub-groups of job seekers. This includes workshops designed for people with limited work histories as well as activities designed for professionals, such as the Professional Networking Group, which meets weekly (facilitated by a staff person) and operates through a volunteer network.

**Being a central source for job seekers and employers.** The Center has positioned itself as a focal point for both employers and job seekers in the community. This includes an informative and use-friendly website at [www.worksourceonline.com](http://www.worksourceonline.com).

The partners' vision was to create a center that was integrated and interdisciplinary, with agency affiliations transparent to the customer ("seamless services"), and with staff involved in decision-making. Their successful experience has led them to believe that once you start, the possibilities are exponential.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The partners have created a center with non-hierarchical management. Although the One-Stop manager technically works for the Department of Health and Social Services, has adopted a leadership style that emphasizes consensus building, open communication and service to the customer. The manager believes that the One-Stop operator cannot be territorial and that it is her job to keep staff invested in the partners' vision. When issues with staff arise, the manager works with the on-site and

agency managers to resolve them. With a background in social work, strong mediation and negotiation skills, listening and other communication skills – the manager exudes a positive attitude at all times.

There are formal vehicles for decision-making and communication. The Oversight Management Team, consisting of representatives of all partner organizations, meets at least twice each month. They discuss issues and make decisions. As a result of a decision made by this team, there is now a “Coordinator” of WIA programs, funded through the Center’s WIA contract. There are center staff meetings every Thursday afternoon, at which all staff are truly welcomed to participate.

The Center uses continuous quality improvement processes as well. As a part of the State’s certification process, the Center was required to do a “Simply Better” self-assessment. As a result of this, two items were identified for attention. The Center has established Quality Improvement Teams (QIT) to address these two – communication and outcomes. They use a QIT “breakthrough” model to identify problems and work on solutions. There is a standing “quality team” on core & intensive services. As a result of recommendations of this team, the Center is currently redesigning its lobby and resource area to provide better and even more integrated services. The point was made that no redesign would take place without this type of process.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

The partners measure the success of the Center in terms of whether it has accomplished their vision. They are also conscious of the fact that different partner hierarchies expect particular outcomes. Therefore, success is measured in different ways.

In terms of the overall vision, the Center has improved service to job seekers. This is borne out by the numbers. When the Center first opened, volume was in the 100’s per month. Now, between 3,000 and 3,400 job seekers use the Center every month. The Center addresses each person in a holistic way. Fewer people are being “lost between the cracks” due to increased on-site access to many programs that address a variety of issues customers face.

Staff can make better referrals. Clients with disabilities have increased access to meet with DVR staff and receive faster services. People with housing issues can meet with housing staff to facilitate housing solutions. Contractors on-site have expertise in working with various issues, such as domestic violence (YWCA, Pathways for Women), mental health issues (Pathways for Women, TRAC, Operation Improvement, CTC) physical problems (Work Opportunities, Community Trades and Careers) and limited English speaking (Refugee and Immigrant Forum).

Job seekers are not being frustrated by the system. Services are convenient – there is one place to go for virtually any service in the community. This is an advantage for both staff and customers. Individuals can take advantage of a continuum of services. All customers have increased access to employers, due to integration of functions and increased employer contacts.

Employer services have improved. There is one focal point for employers, allowing greater convenience. Multiple services are available to employers through that one point of contact. Many employers are surprised at the extent of resources available through the Center. Relationships have improved and trust has been building. Also, there is greater access to a larger applicant base, with integrated (among job seeker groups) job fairs held.

The partners also look at customer and employee satisfaction, as well as TANF and WIA outcomes.

In a recent presentation to representatives of the WorkFirst (welfare) funding source, WorkSource Lynnwood illustrated how the blending of programs and resources has improved services and outcomes for TANF clients. For example:

- Increased access to career center services for WorkFirst clients, with extended hours and a much greater staff availability
- Increased access to employers, with employer recruiting on-site, a large variety of employers at job fairs, and the combined resources of all agencies, especially those that receive Wagner-Peyser and WIA funds
- Increased access to educational opportunities, with on-site classes in job search, job retention, computer skills and GED, and easier access to other training funds
- Increased access to a variety of services, such as those to address issues such as limited English, functional limitations resulting from a disability, homelessness, overwhelming personal problems or mental health issue

For TANF clients, this has resulted in more clients engaged in job search and successfully entering employment, a reduction in returns to TANF, and greater wage progression and client self-sufficiency,

Conversely, having the social service capability on-site has meant that job seekers can be offered food stamps, childcare or other assistance for which they qualify. These are separate from the cash assistance provided by TANF.

In terms of WIA, Rapid Response services have improved because the parties are now able to speak with one voice. Lynnwood WorkSource must meet the goals for adults and dislocated workers contained in its WIA agreement. This does not appear to present any problem.

Lynnwood WorkSource also measures the satisfaction of its job seeker and employer customers (external) as well as the satisfaction of its staff (internal). There is a

general belief that satisfied staff will not only feel better but will provide better services to external customers.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

**There is a high degree of collaboration and responsibility.** The WorkSource Lynnwood partnership works because everyone feels responsible for the outcome. The partners are passionate about what they have created, but they hold themselves and each other accountable. They have created a structure in which decisions are made by consensus but then every partner organization must demonstrate its commitment.

**In order to have an integrated career center, a common identity must be forged.** At WorkSource Lynnwood, the primary identity of all staff is WorkSource, not their individual employing organizations or programs. The telephone is answered as WorkSource, and all written materials, including staff business cards, have this identification. The process of creating a common identity is not easy. Some staff of various agencies was initially afraid of losing their identity. The process of creating an integrated center must offer staff members another identity, one with which they will feel comfortable.

**A common culture must also be developed.** The partnership of WorkSource Lynnwood developed professional guidelines and standards that both reflect and promote the vision of the partners. These were developed with maximum participation from line staff as well as agency managers. The agreements made by the partners were then supported and communicated to line staff.

**An integrated career center and common culture require an “incredible time commitment.”** Management staff and line staff must have time to plan together and work together. It takes time to listen to the staff and to connect them to one another. In addition to the 180 hours of training before the center opened, there is training every week. Staff have had the opportunity to discuss what they do and what they need.

**Set up structures with open lines of communication.** At all levels (staff, partner, customer), communication is critical. First and foremost, this includes open communication among the partners – everything is shared. In Pacific Northwest fashion, the partners have “no moose under the table.” There is an atmosphere of safety where sensitive issues can be raised. In addition, staff have opportunities to work together on committees and to train together.

**Openness to progress and change is energizing.** At WorkSource Lynnwood, there is the sense of always looking to move to the next stage of development. The partners and One-Stop manager are not afraid of admitting that something is not working well and changing it. There is a refreshing spirit of growth that allows staff and managers to feel that they can be creative; that they can come up with good ideas and see them implemented.

**All partners must pay their fair share.** It is bedrock principal that every organization must pay rent and share other costs. There are no exceptions. This is a sign of commitment to the partnership and the vision.

**The physical environment is critical.** WorkSource Lynnwood has a very pleasant environment. The building is brand new and the quality of the space is excellent. It has a professional look and feel. Because of the priorities of the partners, it was necessary to have enough space to comfortably house the partners in one location.

**Those in a position to make change happen must use their leadership skills and authority.** The point was made often that this is a local partnership, locally driven, and locally accomplished. It is especially noteworthy that local leaders who work for State agencies were willing and able to facilitate change because this is often more difficult within State hierarchies. The One-Stop manager is accessible, open, caring and fosters bonding among the different partner organizations. There is a notable lack of ego in the way this role is played.

The partners voiced the opinion that this locally driven partnership succeeded “in spite of it all.” The feeling was that reducing competition among agencies is always a win-win situation.

### List of Interviewees

Cyndi Schaeffer	Collaborative Members Administrator, Department of Social and Health Services
Bob Bradley	Coordinator
Larry Cluphf	Program Director, Operation Improvement, YWCA of Seattle, King County, Snohomish County
Daria Consiglieri	Acting Administrator, Employment Services Division
Sherry Falk	Supervisor, TRAK Associates (rehabilitation private vocational firm)
Jerrillee Mosier	Vice President, Workforce Development and Training, Edmonds Community College
Dan Payton	Department of Social and Human Services
Cathy Schindler	Lead Resident Resources Coordinator, Housing Authority of Snohomish County
Gary Weber	Veterans & Business Resource Consultant, ESD
Lynn Wikstrom	Director of Vocational Services, Work Opportunities
Mark Mattke	<u>Staff</u> Career & Business Resource Consultant
Jan Strand	Coordinator, WorkFirst Services
Ernestine Thornton	<u>Customers</u> Recruiter, Washington Mutual Job Seeker

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center, Morganfield, Kentucky**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: June 28, 2001, Morganfield, Kentucky

Organization: Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center

Type of Entity: public, non-profit

Contact: Glenn Floyd, Community Relations Manager, Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center

Phone: (270) 389-2419

Fax: (270) 389-1134

Email: [gfloyd@jcdc.jobcorps.org](mailto:gfloyd@jcdc.jobcorps.org)

Web site: [www.clementsjobcorps.org](http://www.clementsjobcorps.org)

Key Area for Selection: Services for Job Seekers

Promising Practice: Job Corps Relationship with One-Stop System

Heldrich Center Representatives: Laurie Santos, Duke Storen

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION COLLABORATIVE**

The Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center is located on a 200+ acre campus in Morganfield, Kentucky. Morganfield is in rural Henderson County in the Green River Area Development District (GRADD). GRADD is a fairly large WIA area that serves customers in Union, Webster, Daviess, McClean, Ohio, Hancock and Henderson counties. The GRADD district also includes the counties of Vanderberg, Warrack, Posey and Gibson in southwestern Indiana. With an average annual income around \$27,748, the area's unemployment rate hovers between five and six percent. Employment, however, is projected to see an increase of about 12.5% by 2005. Agriculture is the predominant industry, and soybean wheat, and corn are the main crops. Home health care and retail service occupations are projected to increase by 90% to 95% over the next five years.

The mission of the Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center is to "promote personal, professional and social growth with dignity, fairness and human consideration in a safe, secure and productive environment." Of the 56 Job Corps centers throughout the country, the Earl C. Clements Job Corps is the second largest with 1660 students from all over the southern United States and 550 staff members. All students who enter the Job Corps system must meet poverty guidelines and have no criminal history. The Clements Job Corps has a 3:1 male/ female ratio and ranges in age from 16 to 21. The Earle C. Clements Job Corps, like other Centers throughout the country, is a public/ private partnership operated by ResCare Incorporated. Other partners involved include state agencies, federal agencies, and labor unions. The Center is in operation 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Job Corps, as an organization, boasts it is the nation's largest, most comprehensive residential education and job

training program. The Clements Job Corps Center is among the oldest centers in the country. It has been in existence since the national organization was founded in 1964. Clements trains students in 25 different trades and offers general education degree (GED) and High School Equivalency completion programs. The average student spends between nine and 18 months at the Center. Once a student's curriculum is completed, students are assisted in making their career transition by accessing services from the Career Development Services unit. Students can access services for up to one year following graduation from the Center. The Clements Job Corps reports an 80% or greater job placement rate for their graduates.

Kentucky had been operating under the One-Stop system, through use of State One-Stop grant funds, since 1998. Once WIA was passed, Kentucky was well poised to become one of the thirteen early implementing states. The Kentucky WIA allocation was \$15,183,245 for program year 2001. The local GRADD allocation was roughly two million dollars. The GRADD WIB works directly with local elected officials in each of the seven counties and is overseen by a Board of Directors. The GRADD area has two certified comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers located in Henderson and Owensboro. The Clements Job Corps has a strong physical presence in both of these sites. In addition to the comprehensive centers, the GRADD area also has four certified satellite centers located in the counties of Ohio, Henderson, McClean, and Hancock. Because of the proximity to Indiana, the Earle C. Clements Center works very closely with the Evansville Career Center, a comprehensive One-Stop in Evansville, Indiana.

Since the development of the One-Stop system in Kentucky, staff from the Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center has maintained a visible presence. In fact, the Center's executive director is a member of the workforce investment board and the community relations manager maintains a seat on the youth council. Staff from the Center also play active roles on the Kentucky consortium which conducts industry assessments to identify where youngsters need training; and on the Industry Council, an entity comprised mostly of employers that identifies the skills and education workers need to fill jobs in their industries. The labor market information attained from these connections helps the Job Corps customize its training programs and better prepare their students for the labor market.

Since the goal of the Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center is to prepare young people for personal and professional advancement, it is logical for it to work closely with the One-Stop Centers. The Job Corps Center relies on the One-Stops for valuable labor market information to help them develop more focused and relevant curriculum. Perhaps more importantly, the One-Stop Career Centers provide a perfect portal for referrals and recruitment. Young people who are searching for training and/or work have access to even more of the training that will improve their marketability in the workplace. The staff at the Clements Job Corps say the goal of their relationship with the One-Stops is twofold: 1.) increase referrals and 2.) increase high-quality job placements through the established relationships between One-Stops and local employers. Certainly, both goals are consistent with the overall organizational goals of both One-Stops and Job Corps.

### III. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The mutually beneficial relationship between the Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center and the One-Stop Career Centers consists of many important and unique service activities. The majority of these services are conducted by the Job Corps, providing concrete financial and service benefits to the One Stop systems in Kentucky and Indiana. The One-Stop Career Centers in this area are granted access to the capital facilities of the Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center, refer young adults to the Job Corps for training and other services, and will be establishing a satellite One-Stop Career Center on site at the Clements Center. In turn, the Job Corps has seen an increase in the number of referrals from the One Stop system, helping to dramatically increase enrollment from local residents. The following section outlines the service activities conducted by the Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center as part of its commitment to the WIBs in its local area.

With the passage of the Workforce Investment Act, the Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center made a pledge to participate in One-Stop systems in its geographic area (11 Workforce Investment Board areas in Kentucky and one in Indiana, including eight full service One-Stop Career Centers). Not having a clear notion of how to best participate in the One Stop System, representatives from the Job Corps participated on various WIBs and on their respective committees, taking time to build relationships and identify opportunities. Coming from the relationships developed through this interaction, the Job Corps Center now provides the following services to various One-Stop Career Centers.

- **Job Corps services for local youth.** The Job Corps Center is a no-cost vendor for local youth coming through the One-Stop Career Center systems. Having both residential and non-residential programs, the Job Corps Center offers over 25 training programs including culinary arts, advanced truck driving training, and advanced automotive training. Most construction trades are taught in addition to some service sector training such as health and medical programs and office support.
- **Free transportation services for participants.** The Job Corps Center offers free transportation services to local youth participating in its programs. The transportation service picks up participants at the local One-Stop Career Centers and brings them to the Job Corps center for a commuter program, a new service delivery option initiated in an attempt to increase referrals from local One Stops.
- **Provide space and refreshments for meetings.** The Job Corps Center has many capital facilities as well as a culinary arts program for its students. As part of its commitment to the local workforce system, the Job Corps provides meeting space and refreshments at no cost to the WIBs and their partner organizations. These in-kind contributions facilitate the planning and implementation of workforce activities.

- **Provide space for training programs external to the Job Corps.** The Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center provided space at no cost for a customized training program for a local One Stop.
- **Provide information services at local One Stops.** The Job Corps center has information at each participating One Stop, provides One Stop staff an on-site orientation to the Job Corps, and makes on-site visits, as necessary, to local One Stop centers for candidate screening.

The sum total of these activities results in the Job Corps being a significant partner in the One-Stop system in Kentucky and Indiana. Taken individually, these services may not appear innovative; however, the promising practice is the full commitment of a Job Corps center, not the specific services that reflect that commitment. Instead of being a mandated partner at the fringe of service delivery, the Earl C. Clements Job Corps center has made a commitment to fully participate in the workforce systems in Kentucky and Indiana. Through its participation on the WIBs, its generous granting of available resources, and its effective services to youth, the Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center has set the standard for Job Corps participation on the One-Stop system.

According to both One-Stop and Job Corps staff, the key ingredient to the successful partnership is the time spent on building relationships. Starting with attendance at all WIB meetings and cross-training activities, and continuing through sub-committee meetings and social gatherings, it is the interpersonal relationships that appear to drive this successful partnership. Staff indicated that strong interpersonal relationships created an atmosphere of trust, allowing them to take risks and innovate.

#### **IV. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center is committed to the One-Stop system from the top down. Attendance at all WIB meetings, including sub-committee meetings is encouraged and expected by senior management at the Job Corps Center. Participating staff is given the flexibility in their time and their job tasks to meet the commitments of their respective WIBs.

The most significant data collected that reflects the success of this partnership is the local enrollment of youth at the Job Corps Center. As this measure is basic information for the Job Corps Center, it is easily collected and used. Communication between the Job Corps and One Stop staff also inform how successful the partnership is and how to identify continuous improvement opportunities. Staffs from both organizations were more than willing to praise the cooperation of everyone involved and continue to consistently communicate ideas and suggestions in an effort to keep improving the relationship.

## **V. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

The success of the relationship between the Job Corps and the One Stop system can be measured in many ways, most of them inappropriate for quantitative measures. The most concrete quantifiable measure is the increased referrals and placement of local youth to the Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center. Before working closely together, there were no referrals from local One Stops; in the past year, approximately 106 local youth were placed at the Job Corps center, the majority of who were referred directly or indirectly from the local One Stop systems. Placement rates as a result of the partnership are routinely reported to the senior management at both the Job Corps Center and at the One-Stops.

The increased placement of local students to the Clements Center is the definition of success from the Job Corps perspective. From the One Stop system perspective, the placement rate of their customers that helps improve their performance is one measure. Also from the perspective of the One Stop, referrals of students who do not graduate from the Job Corps and who then become registered under WIA help to improve enrollments for One Stops is another measure of success. Other measures, not enumerated by the One Stops, include financial savings from free meeting space, refreshments, and program space.

## **VI. LESSONS LEARNED**

For a successful partnership between a local Job Corps and its One Stop system, relationships need to be established between the staff of partner organizations. This relationship building should include both cross training and awareness of one another's service activities as well as time spent establishing positive interpersonal relationships. Job Corps centers should provide their senior staff with the time and encouragement to attend all WIB meetings, including sub-committee meetings. In addition, the assets of the Job Corps Center – whether they are space, culinary arts, or staff time – should be offered as in-kind services to the local One-Stop system. As in Kentucky and Indiana, these efforts should yield a strong connection, increased placements, and high quality services for at-risk youth.

### List of Interviewees

#### Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center

John Crosby	Executive Director
Glenn Floyd	Community Relations Manager
Nyra Ford	Community Relations Liaison
Mona Bloodworth	Career Connections Center
Donna Klausmeier	Employment Service Supervisor Department of Workforce Development, State of Indiana
Mike Balard	Region Manager Vocational Rehabilitation Services, State of Indiana
Mickey Landers	Program Director, Career Choices (WIA Program)

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: The City of Peoria and the Central Illinois Workforce Development Board, Peoria, Illinois**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: March 21-22, 2001, Peoria, Illinois Workforce  
Organization: The City of Peoria and the Central Illinois Workforce Development Board

Type of Entity: Public/Collaboration

Contact Person: Bashir Ali, Director

Phone: (309) 495-8920

Fax: (309) 495-8999

Email: [bali@workforcenetwork.com](mailto:bali@workforcenetwork.com)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop Design and Management

Promising Practice: Community collaboration in the creation and management of the **Workforce Network Center**, a **One-Stop** housed at **One Technology Plaza**.

Heldrich Center Representatives: K.A. Dixon, Richard W. Roper

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

One Technology Plaza, the home of Peoria's Workforce Network Center, is located in downtown Peoria, IL, situated midway between Chicago, IL and St. Louis, MO. The city's population is approximately 110,000 and the metro region the One-Stop serves has a population of approximately 350,000. The major employers in the region are Caterpillar, Inc. with some 18,000 employees, St. Francis Hospital with 4,250 employees, Methodist Medical Center with 2,600 and the local school district with 2,850 employees. Unemployment in the region in April 2000 was approximately 4%. Per capita income in the region in 2000 was almost \$19,000. The city, which serves as a regional business, cultural, and governmental center for the surrounding rural communities in the four county area, is approximately 15% minority, with African-Americans comprising about 25% of the total population.

In 1989, Peoria was selected by the Governor of Illinois as a site to pilot the concept of integrated employment and training services at the local level. Discussions involving state and local organizations were held and the City of Peoria and the Central Illinois Private Industry Council were asked to chair the effort. In 1990, the Central Illinois Workforce Network was created with the participation of the Illinois Department of Employment Security and Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Department of Public Aid, Illinois Board of Education, Illinois Central College, Peoria Public Schools, the City of Peoria, and the Private Industry Council.

The network created an interactive voice messaging system, a common application, and an integrated database and established a toll-free number that linked the partners in the eight-county "pilot area." The Central Illinois Workforce Network had its official kickoff in 1994 and in 1995 was selected as one of ten One-Stop Learning Labs by the U. S. Department of Labor (DOL), and received a grant of \$500,000. Also during 1995, the City of Peoria, the Central Illinois Private Industry Council, and the Illinois Department of Employment Security were awarded a three-year grant of \$185,000 by the State of Illinois to plan and implement a One-Stop system. The planning for the One-Stop proceeded through 1998 and involved the design of an implementation strategy that included the development of an integrated services strategy, services operational model, and the co-location of staff to a new facility.

In 1997, a proposal to develop a Career and Technology Center along the Peoria waterfront emerged as an appealing concept to the One-Stop planners. The following year, the City of Peoria, Illinois Central College, Caterpillar, and a local developer invested \$37 million in a new office complex, which included space for the new one-stop Workforce Network Center. The City of Peoria, and Peoria, Woodford, Marshall, and Stark counties then established the "Central Illinois Workforce Development Board" to begin the process of crafting a true "workforce development system" from the various publicly funded programs in the local area. A few months later, Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the City of Peoria was designated the local WIA grant recipient.

In 1999, the new Workforce Network facility at One Technology Plaza was completed and staff began the process of co-locating operations to the new facility. Twelve partner organizations began offering programs and services through the Workforce Network in 2000 and in October Assistant Secretary Ray Bramucci presided at the official ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening activities for the one-stop center at One Technology Plaza.

The One-Stop is under the supervision of the Workforce Development Board, composed of leaders from 39 business, labor, education, economic development, community-based organizations and one-stop partners. The One-Stop is administered by Peoria Workforce Development Department, and its director reports to the City Manager. Workforce Development Board members are appointed by the mayor of Peoria and the four (Peoria, Woodford, Marshall, and Stark) county government leaders; The Board is chaired by a local business leader.

The One-Stop offers services to residents in the four-county area seeking employment assistance, and provides employers with assistance in identifying and securing workers. The activities of the One-Stop are funded by the participating partners, largely through TANF and welfare-to-work grants. It is estimated that \$2.5–3 million were expended by the partners during 2000. The partners include:

- Central Illinois Agency on Aging
- Central Illinois Employer's Association
- City of Peoria – Workforce Development Department

- Del-Jen/Job Corps
- Illinois Central College
- Illinois Department of Employment Security
- Illinois Department of Human Services – Rehabilitative Services
- Illinois Department of Human Services – TANF E&T
- Illinois Migrant Council
- Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity
- Peoria Housing Authority
- Peoria Regional Office of Education – Adult Education
- Peoria School District 150 – Adult Education

These agencies have agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Central Illinois Workforce Development Board in which they commit to participate in and deliver services through the One-Stop. In addition, there are several associate agencies that cooperate with the One-Stop Center but are not parties to the MOU. The associates are:

- American Association of Retired Persons
- Association for the Developmentally Disabled in Woodford County
- Central Illinois Higher Education Consortium
- Children’s Home Association of Illinois
- Fulton Area Vocational System
- Heartland Partnership
- Newlun Center
- Tazewell County Area Education for Employment

The Workforce Development Center, according to its staff, is demand driven in that it provides training, programs, and services to area job seekers based on what employers indicate are the skills their employees must possess.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The Workforce Development Network, whose activities are administered through the Workforce Development Center, brings together more than a dozen state and local partners to provide in a one-stop setting all the services an employer or a job seeker might require in order to meet their respective employment needs. This initiative brought together agencies and organizations with little history of sustained working relationships. Private sector involvement and leadership was critical to the success of the effort to create the Network and to construct One Technology Plaza, which houses the Network. The funds needed to establish the Plaza came from public (City of Peoria - \$9 million) and private (\$28 million) sources.

Three challenges were addressed as the Network was being formulated that had to be resolved before the Workforce Development Center could achieve any level of success. First, the partners had to agree that the Center would serve a universal population and would not be restricted to assisting only the poor. Acceptance of this

as an operating principle meant that the Center would have to be an attractive place to visit and that it be organized so that customers using it would feel that they were being treated as first class citizens. The inclusion of the Center in One Technology Plaza, an attractive, modern, renovated building, reflected this view of the Center.

Second, the partners had to overcome a “stove pipe” mentality in their service delivery approach. There had to be a willingness by the partners to rearrange some agency operating procedures so that customers could be served with the minimum of bureaucratic constraints. Working out these arrangements was time consuming and difficult but had to be accomplished if customers were to avoid a maze of agency specific hurdles in order to access services.

Third, the partners had to come to terms with the benefits of co-location. For many this was not a problem, but it was for some. Agency tradition and culture with respect to who was served and how services were provided caused a few agencies to question whether they could function effectively as part of the Center. These agencies had to be convinced that they would not have to give up their distinct character nor change the nature or quality of the services they provided if they participated in co-location.

The ability of the Network to resolve these challenges was directly tied to the involvement of the public and private sector leadership in the city and surrounding counties. The civic infrastructure was determined to make the One-Stop work and pushed the reluctant into cooperation. The active involvement of the Workforce Development Board and the support it receives from regional leaders has been critically important in keeping the Center and the partners focused on mission and goals.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The One-Stop Center, through its New Business Services Center, offers area businesses job-matching services and makes customized labor market research information available on request. Businesses can also take advantage of the Center’s training packages designed both for new and current employees, participate in job fairs and use the Center’s multimedia conference room for special meetings and workshops.

The Resource Center, another component of the One-Stop, assists individuals, businesses, schools, and community organizations seeking information about available jobs and job seekers. It houses 28 computers with software that can assist in creating and updating resumes, cover letters, and conducting job searches on the Internet. Job Search and Job Readiness workshops are offered through the Center by Workforce Network partners. Some of these services supplement those provided on an ongoing basis by the co-located partners. In addition, the Network has satellite offices in the outlying counties of Marshall, Woodford, and Stark where customers can access services and information from partner agencies.

## V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The strength of the Network is directly related to the involvement and commitment of the members of Workforce Development Board. According to both the Center director and its staff, board members invest time in the operation's decision and policy-making process. The board meets every other month and board committees meet monthly. In addition, some board members visit the Center as much as twice a month in order to stay abreast of developments and activities. The staff appreciates the board's interest and does its best to provide the members with as much information as they need to perform their policy-making and oversight role.

Meetings of the board are usually at 7:30 a.m. and tend to run for 1 ½ hours. Attendance is monitored and participation is very high. Meetings focus on general administrative issues but each session also has a special presentation on an issue of some significance to the role and mission of the Center.

Staff maintain that the board is very business-like in its operations and business oriented in outlook. Staff say the board has a global focus and an outlook that reflects concern about economic prospects in 20–30-year timeframes. The board provides policy guidance to the director of the Workforce Development Center and his staff. The staff have responsibility for maintaining the Center's activities and insuring that the partners' facility needs are met.

Staff of the center collect activity data from the partners and compile reports for the board and the community. The center produces an annual report describing highlights from the preceding year, which is distributed throughout the region. A newsletter has been developed that provides updates on partner activities and briefly describes activity levels (enrollments/terminations, expenditures, and performance standards) in WIA programs, the Resource Center, Employer Services, Special Projects and the Computer Training Program. The newsletter is an internal communications document intended primarily to update the partners.

## VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

The Workforce Development Board recently finished formulating its goals and objectives for 2001. This goal setting activity had not been performed in years past but is now in place following the opening of the Center. The goals will be monitored by the board throughout the year. The goals and objects as spelled out by the board are:

- Goal 1.** Develop a well informed, representative, and dynamic board
  - Objective 1: Develop ways to keep the board well informed and active.

- Objective 2: Develop strategies to assist the organization and or community to embrace change.

**Goal 2.** Address the Workforce needs of the community

- Objective 1: Identify the forces impacting the Central Illinois economy and workforce.
- Objective 2: Mobilize the community to address short and long-term workforce challenges.

**Goal 3.** Expand access to workforce development programs in Central Illinois

- Objective 1: Determine what workforce development programs are operating and how they may be accessed.
- Objective 2: Expand the availability of workforce development programs.
- Objective 3: Maintain/improve the quality of the workforce development system.
- Objective 4: Identify barriers to communication and integration.

**Goal 4.** Continuously improve performance and customer satisfaction

- Objective 1: Develop a package of customer driven services.
- Objective 2: Develop an approach to regularly measure key aspects of organizational performance.
- Objective 3: Build customer satisfaction.

**Goal 5.** Get our customers and stakeholders to know who we are, what we are, and what we do

- Objective 1: Develop and implement a formal, annual marketing plan.
- Objective 2: Conduct activities that develop community awareness and “buy-in” of the board and its activities.

The board and the Center staff are engaged at present in developing the means and mechanisms necessary to implement the goals and objectives described above.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

The individuals involved in the design and implementation of the Network and the Center through which it works, including board members, Center staff, and partners with whom the evaluators spoke, indicated that there were several key lessons embodied in the success of Central Illinois Workforce Development Center and they are:

- An initiative of the type that requires cooperation among many different agencies with different cultures and styles of operating, it is essential to get public and private sector leaders involved in order to make things happen. It would not have been possible to bring all of the partners

together without the strong support of the mayor, the county government leaders and leaders in the private sector. These civic heavy weights insured that the organizations and agencies that needed to participate for the Center to succeed did so.

- Be sure to develop programs based on a factual assessment of community needs and structure services that respond to those needs. This means that community leaders at the grass roots must be involved in the development of the initiative from the very beginning and that the partners must be prepared to listen to what the community leaders have to say. The partners must then be prepared to shape their services to be responsive to community input.
- Insure that the key public and private leaders are comfortable with the strategy to be used in setting up and implementing the initiative. If the mayor and the major corporate leaders are satisfied that the proposed initiative is well designed and will accomplish the goals specified, the implementation of the initiative should not be too difficult to carry out.
- Those charged with implementation must be prepared for happenstance and must have the ability to seize opportunities when they become apparent.
- To get good people to make a complicated social service system work, you must be willing to pay good salaries to attract good people.

The director of the Center maintains that if what is listed above is in place in a given community, that community can develop the kind of One-Stop in place in Peoria, Illinois.

### List of Interviewees

Bashir Ali	Workforce Department (WD) Director
Connie Pritchard	WD Systems Manager
Hope Long	WD Management Analyst
Jennifer Graph	WD Operations Manager
Holly Cupper	WD Administrative Specialist
Susan Hill	Assistant Administrator Illinois Department of Human Services
Bhikkhu Mahinda	Job Training Division Illinois Department of Employment Security
Brady Shaw	JobCorps

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: CareerLink, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: July 12-13 2001, Pittsburgh/Allegheny County Pennsylvania

Organization: Pittsburgh/Allegheny CareerLink

Type of Entity: One-Stop Administrator

Contact Person: Joe Stratico, Executive Director

Phone: (412) 552-7100

Fax: (412) 552-7051

Email: [jstratico@dli.state.pa.us](mailto:jstratico@dli.state.pa.us)

Web site: [www.pittsburghpartnership.org/careerlinkcenters.htm](http://www.pittsburghpartnership.org/careerlinkcenters.htm)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop Design and Management

Promising Practice: Inter-agency Cost Sharing and Functional Management

Heldrich Center Representatives: Carl Van Horn and Don Baumer

List of Interviewees: Attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County Workforce Investment Area has a population of roughly 1,280,000 people, 350,000 of whom live in the city of Pittsburgh. Allegheny County is part of a six-county Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) with a total population of 2.4 million. The metro area population has been declining for some time, although the population in the surrounding counties has increased in recent years. As the steel industry and manufacturing generally have declined, Pittsburgh and Allegheny County have gradually developed a diverse economy over the last 30 years.

Presently, manufacturing makes up just 15% of the employer base in the county (85% in services), and the leading industries include banking, communications, education, health, business services, and retail. The top three employers are US Airways, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. The metro area boasts a stable economy, high quality of life, and well-qualified workforce. The unemployment rate in the county is 3.9% and in the city it stands at 4.3%; according to the 2000 census, the poverty rate was 10.9% (below the national average). Still, the Pittsburgh region confronts serious workforce problems. Real wages in the metro area have declined since 1995. In addition, surveys of local businesses have revealed dissatisfaction with the work readiness skill levels of local high school graduates. Pittsburgh/Allegheny County is an area with a proud history, and civic pride is still very much in evidence. Perhaps the most tangible form this history and civic pride takes today is the network of charitable foundations that supports a myriad of local historical, artistic, and social service endeavors.

Under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Pittsburgh and Allegheny County operated separate employment and training systems. However by 1996-97, Governor Ridge and the Pennsylvania and National Department of Labor (DOL) promoted a new framework for workforce development that emphasized one-stop delivery, customer service orientation, and provider accountability. During this time, Pittsburgh and Allegheny County took part in planning groups and discussions that led to the decision to consolidate workforce development operations under WIA and to establish joint one-stop centers. Local business leaders strongly recommended consolidation of the Pittsburgh and Allegheny County systems.

One important set of discussions centered on a group of public agencies, community based organizations (CBOs), and educational institutions. They formed a "Steering Committee," which was chaired by the dean of the business school at Duquesne University. Dozens of agencies were represented on the committee. Key participants (major stakeholders) included the Pittsburgh Partnership, a city agency that ran JTPA programs, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs and a variety of welfare programs (for single mothers, pregnant youth, fathers, etc.); the Allegheny County Department of Human Services; and the regional office of the state Bureau of Employer and Career Services (BECS - employment service).

Much of the early discussion focused on the new emphasis on partnerships, customer satisfaction, and accountability, which informed CBOs and training providers that the future would not mirror the past, with traditional providers receiving funding to run separate classroom training programs. The climax of these discussions was the implementation of the "bring your checkbook" philosophy; a series of meetings in which the agencies that were prepared to share resources to bring the one-stop concept into reality sat down to iron out the details. The participants in this meeting were: the Pittsburgh Partnership, Allegheny County Human Services, BECS - employment service, the district office of the state Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Goodwill Industries, and the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council. This was the genesis of the regional CareerLink Center in downtown Pittsburgh and McKeesport.

The other principal forum for regional workforce discussions in the late 1990s was a group called the Working Together Consortium, which formed a special task force chaired by Mark Nordenberg, the chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, to create a regional workforce plan. The Working Together Consortium included many of the top business leaders and the heads of major foundations in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. Because of this leadership, the Nordenberg plan had great legitimacy in the community and with local elected officials, most importantly the Mayor of Pittsburgh and the Allegheny County Commissioners. One of the leading recommendations of the Nordenberg Report called for more focused efforts in supporting industries that had been identified as having special potential to drive future economic growth in southwestern Pennsylvania. The Nordenberg Report was the primary influence that led the foundations located in Pittsburgh to form and fund a group called Workforce Connections. Workforce Connections relies on the Nordenberg Report as its blueprint

for regional workforce development activities. After the passage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) the city and county were effectively lobbied by the private sector to forge a joint Workforce

Investment Board (WIB) even though each, as a designated sub-state area, could have had their own. The joint WIB, the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB) was formed in 1999. In January 2000, the county changed from a three-member commission form of government to a county executive led government.

The present one-stop system in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County includes two full service CareerLink Centers, one in Pittsburgh (opened in 1999), and one in McKeesport (opened in 2000), and five "mini-centers." The CareerLink Centers offer the full range of workforce development products including core services, intensive services/training, business development services, and youth services; the mini-centers offer core services only. The CareerLink system is statewide, and the state has developed standards, based on Baldrige principles, for the chartering of CareerLinks by local WIBs. The mini-centers must also be chartered by the WIBs. Most WIBs in the state, including the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB), have criteria that go beyond those required by the state for CareerLink centers and mini-centers. The TRWIB plans to have 10-11 mini-centers in operation in the city/county area in the near future. Four of the mini-centers chartered to date are in the city of Pittsburgh, and were employment centers supported by modest CDBG funding before the passage of WIA. The fifth mini-center is located in eastern Allegheny County in a vocational technical school.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

The CareerLink offices in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County have achieved an unusually high level of operational integration among the provider agencies. This includes detailed cost sharing arrangements and a functional service delivery and management system that has teams of employees from different agencies working together to serve job seekers and employers. This means, among other things, that the staff members who manage functional teams will have employees of several different agencies under their supervision. The goal in setting up the centers this way is to make the most efficient possible use of the staff and physical resources, but such thorough operational integration raises a host of organizational issues and problems. The commitment and resolve of key officials and partners to implementing this type of approach to one-stop workforce service delivery is truly impressive, and the result is a promising practice.

The downtown Pittsburgh CareerLink Center is located on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> floors of the former headquarters of Alcoa. This building now houses a wide array of economic and workforce development programs sponsored by the city, county, and private non-profit organizations. The one-stop staff are divided into four functional areas – core services, intensive services and training, business development, and youth services. The functional managers come from several different agencies. For example, core

services are jointly managed by staff members from BECS (employment service) and Goodwill, and business services is managed by a member of the Pittsburgh Partnership staff. These functional managers are responsible for handling all issues associated with workflow, client service, reporting, and related duties. In addition to this group each agency has designated an off-site supervisor who handles personnel issues that may arise for employees of each partner agency. Thus if a Goodwill employee working in core services at the CareerLink Center has an issue with vacation or sick pay, he/she would deal with her off-site supervisor to have this resolved. If the issue involved his/her specific assignment within the core services team it would be taken up with the functional manager. By all accounts, this system is not without its stresses and strains, but it is working to serve employers and job seekers better than any of the partner agencies could do on their own.

Overseeing the entire CareerLink Center is an executive director. In the case of the Pittsburgh CareerLink, the executive director's employer of record is BECS. The Executive Director was hired by and reports to a group called the Leadership Council, which consists of top officials in each of the partner agencies. Thus the Pittsburgh Partnership is represented on the Leadership Council by the city's director of personnel, a senior city government staff member who reports to the deputy mayor. Also on the Leadership Council is the regional director of BECS, who was the executive director's supervisor before the CareerLink Center opened. In this way all the partnering agencies maintain a kind of supervisory presence over the CareerLink Centers. In fact, the Leadership Council has two site committees, with slightly different membership; one meets regularly with the executive director of the Pittsburgh Center and the other meets with the executive director of the McKeesport Center.

The Leadership Council reports to the TRWIB, which has a membership of 60 and a staff of 5 professionals. It is important to note that all of the Leadership Council members, and both CareerLink executive directors, were active participants in the discussion described above that preceded the passage of WIA and paved the way for the creation of the one-stop centers. Furthermore, the executive director of the TRWIB is the former JTPA director for the Pittsburgh Partnership. Therefore, nearly all of the key players in the WIA system share a history that goes back 4-5 years.

One of the most difficult challenges to implementing this functional approach to one-stop-center operations was working out a cost sharing arrangement among partner agencies. This took many meetings and resulted in nine different allocation formulas. The basic formula is that all partners contribute to the operation of the Centers in proportion to the number/percentage of employees they have working at the Center. In the case of the Pittsburgh Center, this means that the Pittsburgh Partnership (city), which has 18 employees working there, is responsible for roughly 45% of the cost (the total FTE at the Center is 39.5). However there are some activities/expenses, such as marketing, to which some of the partner agencies are prohibited (by law or charter) from contributing. In such cases other allocation formulas are used, most of which have the effect of increasing the percentage paid by the largest partner – the Pittsburgh Partnership. Another important piece of the financial picture is that

Goodwill serves as the financial agent (makes purchases and pays the bills) for both of the CareerLink Centers. This means that WIA funds from the county and city are disbursed to Goodwill in large packages, which helps to reduce the number of bureaucratic obstacles (for example, city council approval) they encounter.

The McKeesport Center is run very much like the Pittsburgh Center. The site is a former Pennsylvania Job Service facility, which was extensively renovated to house the new operation. In this Center the functional areas are called Front Door (core), Mediated Services (intensive/training), and Employer Services. There are functional managers for each service team, and employer of record supervisors to handle personnel issues for employees of the various agencies. The Executive Director is an employee of Goodwill; the largest partner is Allegheny County. Other partners include BECS (employment service), Goodwill, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation; neither the Pittsburgh Partnership nor the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council is a partner, but a group called Life's Work that specializes in vocational rehabilitation is. The cost allocation formula(s) is similar to that used in Pittsburgh. As in Pittsburgh, supervision runs from the site committee to the Leadership Council and then to the TRWIB. The McKeesport and Pittsburgh CareerLink share virtually all information on job seekers and employers so as to avoid duplication; the directors and staff managers of the Centers meet together frequently.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

The Pittsburgh and McKeesport CareerLink Centers offer a full array of workforce services. For jobseekers, much of the activity is centered in the Career Resource Rooms that feature numerous computers (as well as telephones and fax machines) with access to local, state, and national job listings. The Resource Centers are staffed with professionals who provide job search assistance and career counseling, and referrals for support services, literacy and computer training, detailed assessment and training (for WIA eligibles), vocational rehabilitation in the case of the disabled, Veterans' and other services. As jobseekers enter the Center they are met by a STAR (Smart, Team-Oriented, Amiable, Resourceful) greeter, and shortly thereafter enrolled in the CareerLink and given a membership card. (Swipe card technology is not yet available, but the directors anticipate moving in that direction soon.)

The Centers also have Employer Resource Rooms where employers can access information about job seekers, conduct interviews, and receive other technical assistance (such as certification of alien workers). They also have staff members who visit and meet with employers to learn about the aptitudes and skills of potential employees, and to provide employers with labor market information. If layoffs occur, outplacement assistance is available for dislocated workers. The mini-centers provide core services, which include access to computers, telephones and faxes, job search workshops, computer training, internet access, and basic skills assessment.

The CareerLink Centers do seem to be reaching their customers. The Leadership Team has supported an ongoing marketing program that uses a variety of media to spread the word among job seekers and employers about the location and services

available at the Centers. The Pittsburgh Center has roughly 2000 jobseekers using its facilities in any given month, and of these 25-30% are new customers. The volume of job seekers traffic in McKeesport is about half of that in Pittsburgh. In 2000 the Centers worked with 573 registered employers, up from just 132 in 1999! In the first six months of 2001, they have registered 426 employers. When the planned addition of 5-6 mini-centers in Allegheny County is complete, officials believe they will have achieved their goal of easy access to workforce services for all jobseekers and employers, in the city and county.

Although Pittsburgh/Allegheny County Career Centers have achieved an admirable level of integration among operating partners and offer an extensive package of services for employers and job seekers, there are some areas where partnering and integration are less than complete. The welfare system in Pennsylvania, including Allegheny County, has resisted full partnership with the WIA systems. In the Pittsburgh Center a major welfare program for single mothers operated by the city is located one floor below the CareerLink and does coordinate some of its activities with the Center. In McKeesport, the county welfare-to-work program is co-located with the CareerLink; there is some degree of functional integration between it and the CareerLink, but it is less than complete. Another missing partner in the CareerLinks is the local community colleges. The leadership of the Allegheny Community College system decided not to show up for the "checkbook meeting," and there has been no sign of interest in greater cooperation since then. The community colleges are on the WIA preferred training provider list and could receive training contracts from the CareerLinks. Finally, most of the youth funding and programming is separate from the CareerLinks. There is a small youth services program operated out of the Pittsburgh Center, but most youth programming in the area is sponsored by an agency called Youth Works (tied to the WIA Youth Council), which combines city/county WIA funds with foundation funds to support numerous youth programs run by numerous organizations in the area.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Leadership Council recognized that the functional approach they decided to take in the CareerLinks would pose a number of difficult challenges, beyond cost sharing, for the staff members and managers involved. Some of the county and BECS employees belonged to unions, the partner agencies had different holiday schedules, pay scales, and cultures. Therefore, these leadership groups decided to pay for an ongoing staff and management-training program.

An outside consultant was brought in, and she has worked with both CareerLink staffs since their respective openings. The training involves many meetings, a retreat, and lots of communication up and down the organization. Early training focuses on team building, managing change, and getting all members of the staff to buy into the team concept. Extensive discussions among team members and supervisors take place to ensure that everyone feels as if their input has been registered and appreciated. As the teams are being built, an emphasis on customer service is also

being instilled in each team member. This involves, among other things, the development of customer service standards to which all staff members subscribe.

More recently the focus has turned to helping supervisors and managers become better "coaches." With staff members from different agencies working together closely it is critical that agreed-upon values and standards of performance are promoted and maintained, but not through assertions of authority. A coach leads by example and helps team members understand and embrace organizational values and standards.

Within the first year of training and operation, the consultant and the CareerLink staffs undertook a formal organizational assessment. This is basically a report card on what is working and where the problems lie. The organizational assessment then provides a blueprint for future training and corrective action. For example, the organizational assessment for the Pittsburgh CareerLink revealed that many staff members were unhappy with the existing means of recognizing and rewarding performance and with communication between the leadership and the staff. The consultant then met with the Leadership Council and initiated a program of regular meetings between members of the Leadership Council (top officials in the partner agencies) and the CareerLink staff so that staff members had a direct means of communication with the leadership. Discussions between the consultant and the executive directors also resulted in a new employee recognition initiative. The CareerLink directors and the Leadership Council are pleased with progress to date, but see the in-staff training as an ongoing necessity.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink Centers aspire to employ outcome measures to assess organizational performance. As mentioned above, they have developed customer service standards for job seekers and employees, and use surveys and focus groups to determine customer satisfaction. They are assisted in these efforts by graduate programs in area colleges and universities. Customer satisfaction data are then used by the staffs to make needed changes in services and processes. They have also participated in statewide survey of customer satisfaction. However, the biggest problems in this area have to do with the state.

The state WIA plan calls for a unified Management Information System (MIS), but that system is not yet up and running. The Centers can generate basic counts of customers served, but they cannot do the more detailed analyses, including those related to performance standards, as they had planned. This means that the amount and type of information the directors can report to the Leadership Council and the TRWIB is much more limited than they would like. The state also supports and manages a website for the CareerLinks. Although the website is operational, it does not allow local workforce areas to customize the site to their own specific needs to the extent they would prefer. This hinders marketing efforts in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County.

Although frustrated with the ongoing problems with the state MIS and website, officials in Pittsburgh/Allegheny County credit the state with making steady efforts at improvement, and some progress. Apparently the state has joined the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC), which aims to provide all Wagner-Peyser and WIA data for members. Once this system is fully operational, it will enable the Pittsburgh/Allegheny CareerLinks to achieve the reporting and case management capacity to which they aspire. It will also enable them to provide the TRWIB with information that will help it to better perform its workforce development planning and standard setting. The state is also in the process of making its website more user friendly for local CareerLinks.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County WIA experience points out the value of careful preparation for implementing important changes in social service delivery systems, the ability of committed organizational partners to overcome obstacles that typically thwart thorough inter-organizational cooperation, and the importance of political and organizational leadership in realizing change. The work that was done prior to the passage of WIA, undertaken primarily by the Steering Committee, was key in paving the way for the rapid implementation of one-stop workforce centers.

Major stakeholders were informed that employment and training operations in the area, and thus their funding, would likely change in the near future, and this message was supported by the mayor and other elected officials. The employment service (with support from a regional director) joined in as a full partner, and soon the county and the county commissioners (and later the county executive) also signed on to the idea of using partnerships and one-stop delivery centers to meet the workforce needs of the entire county. Driven in part by limited resources, those leading the pre-WIA discussions came up with a bold and innovative plan for organizational cooperation.

Making the decision to have all the partner organizations participate in functional service delivery teams set aside the conventional wisdom that employees of different organizations, different unions, of different salary and benefit schemes, could not be fully integrated in a common worksite. By the time the TRWIB was formed and started meeting, the WIB Director and the Leadership Council were able to present a fairly complete plan for implementing one-stop workforce service centers, and thus enable the TRWIB to achieve a significant accomplishment at the very beginning of its organizational life.

Since the establishment of the CareerLink Centers and mini-centers, the TRWIB has completed a strategic plan and embarked on a process of identifying industry "clusters," defined largely for their potential for employment growth. The TRWIB hopes to form, in partnership with Workforce Connections, the Pittsburgh Technical Council, the Small Manufacturing Council (SMC), the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and Duquesne University, advisory groups for each cluster so as to better inform itself about workforce development needs and opportunities. So far they have identified five clusters: life sciences (health care and biotechnology), manufacturing,

information technology, business and financial services, tourism and hospitality. The TRWIB has been aided greatly in the process Workforce Connections. Most recently, the TRWIB, in concert with Workforce Connections, has initiated a series of “workforce summits” for each cluster.

These summits include industry leaders, foundation heads, economic development groups, training providers, academics, and TRWIB members. The TRWIB has also hired its own labor market information specialist to work with each of the clusters in refining labor market information and identifying specific occupations within the clusters for which training is needed. This information will then be used as the basis for guiding service delivery and performance standards at the CareerLinks. The TRWIB Director, again in cooperation with and funded by Workforce Connections, is developing a process “map” to illustrate how information gathered with and for industry clusters will be translated into specific services for job seekers and employers. The goal is to complete a circle of information and action connecting state-of-the-art workforce planning undertaken by the TRWIB and the day-to-day operations of the CareerLink Centers.

### List of Interviewees

Joseph C. Stratico, Jr.	Executive Director Pittsburgh CareerLink Center
Barbara Parees	Director Pittsburgh Department of Personnel and Civil Service
Judy Hill	Manager Pittsburgh Partnership
Ronald D. Painter	Executive Director Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board
Ella Holsinger	Executive Director McKeesport CareerLink Center
Pauline George	PG Training & Consulting, Pittsburgh PA.

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego, California**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and location of Site Visit: April 9-10, 2001, San Diego, California

Organization: San Diego Workforce Partnership

Type of Entity: Private non-profit organization (staff to the local workforce board)

Contact Person: Rebecca Bianconi,

Phone: (619) 238-1445

Fax: (619) 235-8105

Email: [Rebecca@workforce.org](mailto:Rebecca@workforce.org)

Web Site: [www.sandiegocatwork.com/sdaw/splash\\_page.jsp](http://www.sandiegocatwork.com/sdaw/splash_page.jsp)

Key Area for Selection: Services for Job Seekers

Promising Practice: Virtual One-Stop

The Heldrich Center Representatives: Laurie Santos, Kristin Wolff

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

San Diego County is a Southern California coastal county of close to 3 million people. Having almost doubled in size between 1990 and 2000, the county is now the second most populated in California. San Diego is the major city in the County (1.3 million) and the seventh largest city in the nation, but a significant number of the 18 smaller cities throughout the county are increasingly important players in regional planning and development, including Chula Vista (175,000), Escondido (127,000), and Oceanside (160,800). In addition, over 500,000 people live in the 17 unincorporated areas in the county. The coastal communities in North County (La Jolla, Oceanside, etc.) exhibit greater concentrations of wealth (fewer working families, more older residents, and tourist-dependent economies), while the affordable housing in the inland and southern communities attract younger, working families.

This sizeable population is also an educated one. The City of San Diego has more PhDs per capita than any other U.S city; 82% of the population graduated from high school, and 29% from college. Students in high schools in San Diego County score in the top 93% percent (average) in California on standardized tests.

As is true of the state of California, the San Diego region has witnessed a radical demographic shift from an overwhelmingly Caucasian population to one considerably more diverse. Currently, whites comprise only about 55% of the county's residents; Latinos represent 27% (up 43% since 1990); Asians 9%; and African Americans 6%. Another unique feature of San Diego is its proximity to Mexico. A borderless map would likely reveal that Tijuana, together with other populated south-of-the-boarder urban zones, is a key part of San Diego's labor market. Every day, Mexican residents

with diverse skills and experience cross the boarder to come to work in the state—the reverse is also true, but to a lesser extent.

San Diego's economy is currently rooted in a rich mix of science and technology-based industries, including information-tech, biotech, and defense-related business, as well as professional services industries such as telecom, tech, and consulting, manufacturing, construction; and hospitality/tourism. Remarkably, despite the scope and scale of convention-related expansion and growth, defense-related research and manufacturing, and the telecom sector (Qualcomm was founded there), San Diego remains dominated by small business which comprises 95% of all the county's employment. The unemployment rate is a very low 2.6%, despite recent dot.com layoffs.

The economic development story associated with San Diego is something of a legend. The Naval Training Center, shipyards, and presence of defense contractors comprised the central economic drivers in the 1970s and 80s. The early 1990s downsizing in the post-cold-war area resulted in thousand of layoffs and dislocations. However, the combination of talented technology workers (who had worked for defense contractors and the military), the relocation of Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR), and significant investment in San Diego's colleges and universities again supported the region's successful conversion. This time, the tech sector became the beneficiary of local talent and the new driver of the local economy.

Major employers asranked by number of employees include: Qualcomm, Sharp Health Care, Scripps, Pacific Bell, Kaiser, Science Application Int'l, Sempra Energy, Sony Technology Center, National Steel and Shipbuilding, and Solar Turbines.

It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of scale and scope of workforce issues in California. There are 52 local workforce areas in the state. The San Diego workforce area is the size of Connecticut. Perhaps because of its size, the state of California has a tradition of locally driven workforce systems. As a result, most staff interface with the state workforce system locally. These workforce professionals, regardless of what funding stream they represent, interact with their state colleagues everyday in their communities.

Like other local areas in California, San Diego had evolved its One-Stop system under the One-Stop grant beginning several years before Workforce Investment Act Implementation. Unlike many other areas however, the San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP) began preparing to engage in a full-blown procurement process in the first year of WIA implementation, getting out of the direct service business. Staff worked with system partners for well over a year on the planning for this process, realizing that privatizing the system would mean the formation of new private for-profit and non-profit entities and the laying off of numerous SDWP employees. In addition, the relationships that had developed over the years under JTPA were likely to be compromised as new players entered the system and secured SDWP contracts.

The process went forward in Spring 2000, and new contractors (including a variety of not-for-profit entities) successfully bid on the management of the County's six One-Stop Career Centers. These include North County Career Center in Carlsbad (managed by Lockheed Martin), Inland North County Career Center in Escondido (managed by Lockheed Martin), San Diego Metro Career Center at Kearny Mesa, East County Career Center in El Cajon (housed in the East County Regional Education Center), South Metro Career Center in San Diego (collocated with the YO! Center an Employment Development Department facility), and South County Career Center in Chula Vista. Each of the Centers is unique—managed by different entities, serving different communities, and working with different partners.

At the same time, Board staff moved quickly into new circles in an effort to establish a presence in the local economic development and policy arenas. During this same time period, SDWP began working with local partners on ways to extend the reach of the One-Stop system through on-line services and supports. This work had resulted in [SanDiegoAtWork.com](http://SanDiegoAtWork.com), the local area's "seventh one-stop." It, too, was launched during the transition to WIA—it is the focus of this profile.

The San Diego Workforce Partnership staffs the local Workforce Investment Board and oversees the One-Stop Career Center system in San Diego County. Although a One-Stop Center in Escondido was visited, the specific focus of the visit was the [www.SanDiegoAtWork.com](http://www.SanDiegoAtWork.com) electronic job search and career management system that serves all of the One-Stops (staff and individual and employer customers) and the community as a whole, to the extent that customers access the system electronically.

### III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE

The web-based career management system [www.SanDiegoAtWork.com](http://www.SanDiegoAtWork.com) was designed and developed to accomplish several objectives. First, the system would support the transition to WIA by providing a means of reaching more customers with fewer resources. Secondly, it would help the One-Stop system address digital divide concerns among customers while assisting the workforce systems in moving information and data collection systems into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Additionally, it would lend credibility to board staff as they provided solutions to meet the needs of stakeholders beyond WIA partners. However, providing self-access service and value-added information to San Diego's employer community was significant.

Although there had been staff turnover at SDWP –largely because of the transition to privatized services, which pulled some staff from SDWP to the provider level and the reverse – and not all respondents were at SDWP when [SanDiegoAtWork.com](http://SanDiegoAtWork.com) was under development, most indicated that it was a management-driven effort. A few respondents "owned" the initiative and

appeared to be champions of it from fairly early on; others expressed mixed opinions (possibly colored by recent implementation challenges).

There was a clear, consistent vision about the capacity of the system at the onset, and intentional decisions about what was and was not included in version 1.0. Staff agreed that the key content piece would be the job matching function, but that additional content that enabled customers to manage their careers (individuals) or accounts (employers) was also important. Considerable time and resources were invested in decisions about how the job match function would work.

A variety of organizations were involved in the development and design of the system—both on the technology and the workforce sides. Workforce staff clearly understood the project as a priority—a cross-functional content team spent a great deal of time working through content issues. SDWP contracted with a technology firm, Interactivate Inc., to provide primary support and development of the technology.

What differentiates this tool from other electronic one-stop career/hiring support systems within the publicly funded employment and training system is that it *transacts business*. While numerous other One-Stop web sites offer either information about where to find jobs, or self-standing programs (e.g. resume builders), San Diego's site enables users to transact business in several ways—job seekers can seek out jobs and apply for them without the assistance of a middle-person, store resumes and manage their job search activities and information. Employers can post job openings and manage the result of their searches, and email good candidates. Both employers and job seekers can customize their home pages.

The San Diego Workforce Partnership is using the power of the Internet to broaden their pool of customers to which they can deliver important services. Using technology and the Internet to deliver local workforce development services allow people access to services and opportunities outside the confines of business hours restrictions, transportation and child care limitations. It also encourages a broader participation of employers and job seekers who might not have accessed public workforce development services otherwise.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Customers choosing to use [SanDiegoAtWork.com](http://SanDiegoAtWork.com) will have access to many functions that one-stop centers provide, but from the comfort of their own home, office or at a locale closer to their residence than the one-stop center.

The system currently allows users to develop a résumé and apply for jobs online, with employers who make this option available. A key innovation is the ability of the system to match skills of individuals to requirements of jobs, displaying the

information as a percentage match. Information, such as labor market or health and human care, is readily available through links to other sites. Jobseekers can also localize their search to specific geographic areas. Users can store and manage information about their career search including the applications they have completed and keep a record of interviews. Staff identified this function as a good way for customers who have used the self-access services to move into intensive services more quickly because they could demonstrate their use of "core services."

Employers can post job listings and enter as much or as little information as they like, enabling them to simply collect résumés, or to allow individuals to apply on-line through their own web site or by following the specific instructions the employer placed on the site. The skills match feature allows employers to match the specific job requirements to the skills individuals indicate in their profiles. A significant benefit to employers is the résumé/talent search/screen/sort feature. Employers can search existing résumés and sort them in a variety of ways without posting a specific job. Again, labor market and other business information is also available on the site.

There are many impressive features of SanDiegoAtWork.com. Navigation is easy and does a good job answering the basic questions (where am I? where have I been? where am I going?) The structural and embedded links are clear. The site does not have complicated pictures that could slow down loading and there are few dead links.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Early on in project development, the site generated considerable enthusiasm throughout the One-Stop system and SDWP staff. Key practices that contributed to that positive reaction include:

- Staff cheerleaders for developing this technology at all of the one-stops;
- Significant input from user groups together with a process for decision-making and subsequent communication;
- Management commitment to the project;
- Use of outside expertise.

Initially, when staff (particularly the Employer Services Representatives) were notified that the site was ready for launch, it took three days to registers nearly 650 jobs—this made it easy to attract individual users. However, traffic has since not been as high as SDWP had anticipated—staff is gearing up for a second launch and strategizing around key challenges.

Immediately after launch, and in the beta testing phase, there were numerous improvements to the system based on user, staff, and customer feedback. Current planned improvements include a planned second launch (marketing to employers in particular, but job-seekers as well), with continued marketing to

associations or groups of employers on a fee basis (the week we visited, SDWP had a major success here—they established an agreement with Channel 10, the local ABC affiliate, to replace Channel 10 job search site with SDWP's SanDiegoAtWork.com).

Other scheduled improvements include a planned effort to better integrate the site with One-Stop operations, the development of a plan for ongoing maintenance, support, and future development, development of an improved process for decision-making about what changes get made, and a more defined process for report analysis.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

The SDWP collects customer satisfaction information, but not in a way that integrates on-line and One-Stop Center-based data. For example, the One-Stop we visited surveyed customers with great frequency—by service, by workshop, by visit, and then again during the follow-up period.

The on-line system contains two mechanisms that support customer satisfaction—one direct-email-comment-to-staff feature, and an on-line survey. To our knowledge, no data had been pulled from the on-line system and aggregated in the form of a report.

Employers who are currently using the system reported being overall satisfied with SanDiegoAtWork.com. Both employers interviewed during this site visit use many different mechanisms to recruit employees but prefer to use the Internet. One employer who hired an employee off the website reported that using it cut recruitment time down by three to four days. Additionally, both employers reported being especially pleased with the services of the website being free to them. This was a significant motivator in posting their jobs to the site. Another important feature that one employer, a small internet development company, reported was that the site attracted many different types of job seekers. This was ideal to him because his staffing needs varied from programmer to receptionist and SanDiegoAtWork.com could assist him at all levels.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

Staff involved in the development and operation of SanDiegoAtWork.com learned several key lessons from this project: clearly define the initiative for staff, develop a strategy for next steps and follow-up, and develop and maintain a plan for continuous improvement.

The logic of the initiative must be clear to all staff. Staff were universally confident that the upfront commitment to the new system was strong. People knew what SDWP was doing, but there were gaps in their understanding, including questions such as: Why? for Whom? How? Therefore, it was difficult for some staff to prepare for the impact of the new system on their jobs, some of it

unavoidable due to the size of the local workforce system and the speed of the many changes occurring simultaneously. Defining the logic of the initiative keeps staff on the same page on key strategic questions for major initiatives. The SDWP leadership found that some staff were uncertain about the target audiences for the electronic tools in relation to the One-Stop, and uncertain about next steps. This makes the job of the cheerleaders particularly difficult.

Secondly, planning, planning and more planning is essential. SanDiegoAtWork.com is a savvy and sophisticated homegrown product. Understandably, the up-front costs were even more considerable in this initiative than originally planned. Local areas should keep this in mind when thinking about integrating technology such as SanDiegoAtWork.com, as opposed to purchasing an off the shelf product. Staff indicated that there was a strong "whatever it takes" message through the launch of SanDiegoAtWork.com in late July, and then not enough attention to next steps. The post-launch process was also not sufficiently well planned to generate momentum on the marketing side, or for tracking on the results side. As a result, when individual and customer registrations waned, management did not have a clear strategy for dealing with these results.

Finally, a plan or strategy for continuous improvement is essential to the relevance of the site as a tool for staff. Early on, a list of both "requirements" and "desirables" for the system was identified. As changes began to be made, however, there was some confusion about what issues get addressed in what order (e.g., do the fixes come before the wish list? Are there priorities within the wish list?). Also, staff had different ideas about what the value proposition of the site was in relation to current business objectives, and new tools and competitive products that had emerged. Staff acknowledged that since websites require continuous improvement, a collective eye must be fixated on the market during the development of new products, with resources being committed to continued development.

## List of Interviewees

Rebecca Bianconi	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Mary Sabillo	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Joseph Moran	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Jackie Abston	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Tony Bingham	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Beverly Garcia	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Ron Oliver	San Diego Workforce Partnership
Berni Haskell	Lockheed Martin/North Inland One-Stop
Tracy Forsha	Secure Staffing Services
Kent McIntosh	Interactivate Inc.

## **SITE VISIT REPORT: NOVA CONNECT! Sunnyvale, California**

### **I. SITE VISIT INFORMATION**

Date and Location of Site Visit: April 4-5, 2001, North Santa Clara Valley, California

Organization: NOVA Career Center and Youth Employment Office

Type of Entity: One-Stop Administrator/Partner

Contact Person: Michael J. Curran, Executive Director, NOVA

Phone: (408) 730-7232

Fax: (408) 730-7643

Email: [mcurran@novaworks.org](mailto:mcurran@novaworks.org)

Web site: [www.novaworks.org/](http://www.novaworks.org/)

Key Area for Selection: One-Stop Design and Management

Promising Practice: Strategic Planning and Performance Management

Heldrich Center Representatives: Carl Van Horn, Don Baumer

List of Interviewees: attached

### **II. ONE-STOP DESCRIPTION**

The North Santa Clara Valley Workforce Investment Area (NOVA) includes seven cities – Cupertino, Los Altos, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale – that occupy the northern part of Santa Clara County and have a combined population of approximately 525,000. It does not include San Jose, which is in the southern end of the county, and is by far the largest city in the county with a population of more than 800,000. The NOVA area lies at the heart of the legendary Silicon Valley, and is roughly 40 miles south of San Francisco. As is well known, this area is densely populated and home to a host of high-technology firms including Advanced Micro Devices, Applied Materials, Hewlett-Packard, Cisco Systems, Intel, Lockheed/Martin, Apple Computer, Solectron, Sun Microsystems, and many others. These larger companies are supported by thousands of small, specialized firms engaged in manufacturing, research, and services. The area's workforce is highly educated and affluent, property values are very high, and the poverty rate is low. In recent years the unemployment rate has been fairly low (around 3%), but there is a history of employment volatility in this area. For example, in the early 1990s, Lockheed reduced its workforce by nearly 40%; more recently, a number of high-tech firms have announced lay-offs or reconfigurations of their workforces in response to changing demands for their products or services.

NOVA, operating under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), is the direct descendant of its Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) predecessor that served roughly the same area. Indeed, the city of Sunnyvale entered the employment and training world as a prime sponsor under CETA in 1976, when its population officially exceeded 100,000. Sunnyvale took the lead in connecting the other cities in northern Santa Clara county to form NOVA at the beginning of JTPA. The city of Milpitas joined the consortium in 2000 at the inception of WIA. In a somewhat unusual arrangement, the city of

Sunnyvale has full responsibility, and liability, for receiving and administering the employment and training funds for the area (the mayors of the other cities have agreed to this). Most of NOVA's staff members (about 70%) are municipal (Sunnyvale) employees. (The others are contract employees supplied by Spherion Staffing Services.)

The city of Sunnyvale has a history of innovation; for example, it has long practiced performance/outcome-based budgeting and management, and over the last 25 years it has always invested a great deal and expected a great deal from its employment and training system. Thus NOVA's history of innovation owes a debt to Sunnyvale's commitment to something other than municipal business-as-usual. Under JTPA, at the city's insistence, NOVA's private industry council (PIC) was visible and had high expectations: the same pattern is evident under the new Workforce Board (WIB), which has about fifteen members in common with the former NOVA PIC.

NOVA began implementing its version of a "one-stop system" in the late 1980s when the NOVA PIC assembled a holistic service package for displaced workers, as part of a program developed with state and later federal funds. These services are dubbed STAR – Skills Testing, Assessment and Reemployment. Unemployed skilled workers are given an assessment that is thorough enough, with training provided if necessary, so that the displaced worker can transfer his/her skills to current labor market opportunities. NOVA became so good at this that they later started marketing the services to area employers undergoing workforce restructuring. As an example of their effectiveness, Lockheed-Martin contracted with NOVA to provide their outplacement/retraining services to its laid-off workers rather than retain another unit of Lockheed-Martin that also provides these services.

The CONNECT Collaborative is now the name of the one-stop system in the NOVA area and includes some 27 partner organization. Partners at the One-Stop Center include the Employment Service (Employment Development Department – EDD), Human Services (welfare & others), Vocational Rehabilitation, the community colleges, the Council on Aging, the city's public library and several others; including, in conjunction with the U.S. Patent and Trademark office, a Center for Innovation, Invention & Ideas. When recent sharp increases in property costs threatened the future existence of CONNECT!, the city of Sunnyvale purchased the facility to ensure future operations. They also have a Youth One-Stop located a few blocks away in a city shopping mall.

### **III. PROMISING PRACTICE INITIATIVE**

What are the keys to NOVA's remarkable success? According to the Director, Michael Curran, much of NOVA's performance is attributable to a systematic planning and management system that forces his agency to be innovative, flexible, attuned to the preferences of area businesses and job seekers, and focused on achieving measurable outcomes. As mentioned earlier, the city of Sunnyvale has long employed performance-based budgeting and management, and a "total quality management" culture pervades Silicon Valley. Therefore, throughout the JTPA period the NOVA PIC,

reflecting the values of Silicon Valley businesses, pushed the NOVA organization toward constant reinvention, better customer relations, and stronger performance. By responding positively to these challenges, NOVA was accepted in the area business community as an important partner.

In the mid-1990s, NOVA immersed itself fully in quality management through its participation in the DOL's Enterprise Initiative that emphasized the business principles endorsed by the Baldrige Awards. As a result of this exercise, NOVA won the National Performance Excellence Award for Outstanding Business Practices in 1998. This experience gave NOVA a great advantage in preparing the organization to implement many of the new directions embodied in WIA.

Rather than rest on its past laurels, the NOVA WIB is in the process of carrying out a new strategic planning exercise that draws on the qualities and experiences described above, and incorporates several new principles and practices as well. The starting point for the strategic planning process NOVA is currently undertaking is determining the mission for the local workforce system and identifying a series of initiatives the various organizations involved will pursue. In the case of NOVA, the process began at the WIB retreat in January 2001. The WIB has over 30 members, with the required majority of private sector members and others with affiliations to government, education and labor organizations. The understanding between WIB members and the NOVA Director from the beginning was that WIB membership is not a ceremonial post. Rather it entails active involvement in planning and overseeing NOVA enterprises. In exchange for their involvement, WIB members clearly set the direction for the workforce development system (Attachment A).

During the January retreat the WIB embraced a broad vision for their organization: "We are a regional catalyst shaping and influencing the Silicon Valley workforce development system to promote economic opportunity and shared prosperity." They also adopted this mission: the "NOVA Workforce Board provides strategic leadership to continuously improve the workforce development system by: providing guidance to the One-Stop delivery system, being responsive to what our customers value, being accountable to our investors, and holding service providers accountable for results."

NOVA's vision and mission have been translated into seven Strategic Initiatives: 1. Adult Workforce Development, 2. Business Community Relationship, 3. Funding Development, 4. Performance Accountability, 5. Youth Workforce Development, 6. Legislative/Policy Impact, 7. Board Development with specific goals attached to each one. For example, the Adult Workforce Development initiative specified as a goal "to provide opportunities for adults to increase their skill levels and career mobility to enable workers to live as well as work in the Silicon Valley." This is an ambitious goal when one takes into account the cost of housing in the Silicon Valley.

The WIB then formed task forces composed of five to six board and staff members, to develop measurable objectives (for example, the percentage of adult/dislocated workers who obtain employment after using One-Stop services) and performance measurements (such as customer satisfaction surveys and interviews) for each

goal/initiative. These task forces are also responsible for identifying the partner organizations that will undertake key activities needed to realize the specified objectives. Partner organizations are expected to sign memoranda of understanding (MOUs) listing the activities they will undertake in order to achieve the goals and objectives the WIB task forces have identified. They are also expected to delineate how they will measure the success of these activities relative to the goals. The task forces are scheduled to report on their work during the May 2001 WIB meeting.

The core element of the strategic planning/performance management approach used by NOVA is customer satisfaction, known within NOVA as the "Voice of the Customer." Responsiveness to customers is deeply engrained in the NOVA culture and dates back at least ten years. The organization constantly challenges itself to upgrade and refine its performance in relation to customer expectations and needs. NOVA routinely surveys both one-stop clients and area businesses in order to better understand how their services are being perceived and, more importantly, to determine the extent to which they are valued.

NOVA has frequently consulted, and worked with, experts from educational institutions (business schools) and the private sector in its efforts to improve its feedback from employers and job seekers who do or do not use their services. For example, in 1996 when they wanted to determine the potential market for their fee-based personnel development and outplacement services (described above), they conducted a set of interviews with officials in high-tech companies, with the help of a group called TACTICS. On the advice of TACTICS they used open-ended interviews and recorded their verbatim responses, rather than simply collecting quantitative data on this subject. As in the case of Board leadership, a necessary precondition for success in using customer satisfaction data is the willingness of an organization to listen to and understand what its customers are saying, and to change its behavior in response to this information. NOVA has repeatedly shown a willingness and ability to do so.

Presently they are organizing a new customer satisfaction effort known as "Voices into Choices," which is based on a book of the same name that was published by a non-profit group called the Center for Quality of Management. The director of the West Coast office of the Center for Quality Management is a member of the NOVA WIB. She and another private sector WIB member will lead the rest of the entire board and the NOVA staff through the "Voices for Choices" methodology. This methodology posits that there are three crucial elements to a successful customer satisfaction system: a Customer Expectation Process (CE), a Customer Satisfaction Index/Measurement Process (CSI), and a Corrective Action & Improvement Process (CAP).

The Customer Expectation Process involves several steps: first, the project has to be properly framed, its purpose clarified, and its customers identified. Second, the resources to carry out the process must be organized. Third, the data have to be collected, interviews with customers conducted. Fourth, the voices have to be understood, the data analyzed. Fifth, organizational action must be selected, a

response to the findings undertaken. The WIB sees this “Voices into Choices” endeavor as being an essential part of its effort to determine the measurable objectives and needed organizational activities for the Adult Workforce Development, Business Community Relationship, Youth Workforce Development, and Performance Accountability initiatives it articulated in January. They expect to complete the CE process in six months. Teams of board members and staff will conduct the interviews with current and potential customers.

#### **IV. KEY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

NOVA hosts a truly impressive array of programs and services, many of which are funded outside of WIA. Because of relatively low local unemployment and poverty rates, and congressional appropriation decisions, NOVA’s formula allocations have declined steadily in real terms since the beginning of JTPA. Despite this funding challenge, the NOVA Director and the PIC set a course in the mid-1980s that called for larger and larger annual budgets, an expanded staff, and enhanced services to local employers and job seekers. By 1995, NOVA’s formula funding under JTPA was \$2.4 million (it was \$2.2 million in 1982), but its overall budget was approximately \$16.0 million (with about \$2 million coming from fees paid by private employers), which supported a staff of over 100 (see National Association of Private Industry Councils, *Facing the Future: Private Industry Councils in the 90s*, NAPIC: New York, 1995). A similar funding picture holds today; for FY 2001 NOVA was allocated \$1.8 million from WIA formula grants, but has almost \$13 million at its disposal when one takes into account competitive federal government (mostly Department of Labor), state government, and foundation grants, and contracts for services with private employers. The competitive grants cover programs for displaced workers, youth, welfare-to-work clients, businesses, and the service delivery system.

NOVA’s success in securing additional resources is matched by its ability to implement effective programs and services. At the core of the NOVA operation is the STAR service package referred to above, but they have ventured far beyond the conventional approach to offering such services. NOVA was successful enough in matching employers and dislocated workers that by the 1990s employers retained NOVA to provide services, especially for outplacement, and pay for these services if the employees served were not eligible for JTPA/WIA or if the needed services were not allowable under existing grants. NOVA prides itself on being able to put together customized services for employers undergoing downsizing or other difficult transitions, and many Silicon Valley companies are grateful that they have an option to enhance services to their affected employees. NOVA assigns “rapid response” teams of professionals to work with companies in transition, often offering assessment services on-site, in order to minimize the negative effects of difficult changes on employees and management. They are now able to boast of a sizeable and distinguished list of local employers for whom they have provided “comprehensive outplacement solutions.” There is no doubt that NOVA has carved out an important niche for itself by providing services that are highly valued by area employers.

Job seekers visiting the CONNECT! campus receive state-of-the-art assessment, career counseling, job search assistance, skill enhancement, and referrals for classroom and on-the-job training. The typical point of entry is either EDD or the Career Connection Resource Center, both of which feature job listings and Internet access. The CONNECT! One-Stop also has a Learning Lab that provides computer-based education on a wide range of subjects from science and mathematics to literacy and remedial skills.

Many job seekers are encouraged to participate in the Professional Effectiveness Program (PEP), which focuses on the so-called "soft skills," such as effective oral communication, team-building and problem solving that many employers in the Silicon Valley would like to see in their employees. EDD has developed in partnership with NOVA a special program for highly skilled unemployed professionals called ProMatch. Unemployed individuals, including engineers, managers, financial analysts, and sales professionals form groups to share information, offer advice to one another, and make themselves known to potential employers through their own Web site. Most of the ProMatch activities are designed and implemented by the participants themselves who meet as a group in weekly plenary sessions.

Another important component of NOVA's workforce development apparatus is the labor market studies group. Beginning in 1987, NOVA seized the opportunity to conduct its own labor market surveys and studies when the state decentralized this responsibility. Since then NOVA has received funding from the EDD and private foundations to expand upon and complement these studies. NOVA staff found that talking with businesses about their current labor market needs and future expectations yields very valuable information and contact with employers.

In addition to required state reports, the NOVA staff produces Labor Market Information Plus (LMI+) reports that describe labor market trends, make forecasts, and identify the skills that employees will need for jobs in different area industries. The emphasis is on identifying growing and emerging industries, in an area where growth and decline can occur rapidly. The most recent study detailed trends in the building and construction industry. Earlier studies have focused on the health care, high-tech manufacturing, services, digital media, biosciences, computer software, and hospitality industries. The NOVA staff unit that conducts these studies is co-located with EDD at the EDD center on the CONNECT! campus. The information and contacts developed through the labor market unit educates planning and operational units of the Collaborative and is used effectively to the benefit of job seekers and employers.

A very unusual branch of the NOVA operation is the Sunnyvale Center for Innovation, Invention & Ideas (SC[II]). This facility, located on the CONNECT! campus, is intended to help inventors and entrepreneurs, as well as lawyers and paralegals in the intellectual property field, deal with patent and trademark issues. Those seeking patents or trademarks have access to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) databases and commercial databases in order to conduct patent and trademark searches (customized by Center professionals). Such individuals can also schedule

secure teleconference meetings with PTO examiners to pursue their patents. In addition, a training program that yields a certificate is offered to intellectual property practitioners. (The practitioners pay fees for these services, which help to subsidize the cost of helping the nascent inventors.) The videoconferencing facility is well equipped and sophisticated, and can be used (for a fee) by any business or individual in the area for meetings, consultation, training, hiring interviews, etc.

The Youth One-Stop Center, which opened in 1993, offers young people in the area a full array of services for finding jobs and exploring career possibilities. Located in a local shopping mall, the entrance to the Center displays a group of computers youth clients can use to get a sense of the jobs, work experience opportunities, internships or apprenticeships that might be available to them (this on-line system is called [Youth@Work](http://Youth@Work), [www.youthatwork.org](http://www.youthatwork.org) ) Local employers can enter their job openings into the system on-line, and at any given point in time there will be roughly 2,000 job listings, mostly in food services, customer services, sales, and clerical fields.

NOVA staff members find that the computers help to attract youth, thus breaking down some of the barriers to using the facility. However, youth coming into the center are not merely set loose to work at computers. A case manager works with every youth client by enrolling them in pre-employment workshops, conducting individual assessments, determining eligibility for subsidized work experience or training, and developing a service strategy that often draws on the resources of multiple partners. Youth counselors may refer youth to employers or other service providers, and are responsible for conducting follow-up (including arranging for continuing services). For out of school youth, the strategies include a means of obtaining needed educational credentials. The assessment, counseling, and job referrals are free to all youth regardless of eligibility; of course, certain of the education, training, and work experience opportunities depend on youth meeting eligibility requirements.

The history of NOVA youth funding in JTPA and WIA follows the same pattern as described above for adults: steady decline since the early 1980s. At this point, NOVA's youth formula grant under WIA is just under \$300,000, a 60% reduction from the previous year. NOVA has responded to declining funds by seeking grants from other sources (they presently have several contracts with the County of Santa Clara), and by increasing efforts to form effective partnerships with other youth agencies. As a result, they have leveraged WIA resources to make other services available to as many youth as possible. Accordingly, the NOVA Youth Employment Office features nine active partners including EDD, the Department of Rehabilitation, the Regional Occupation Program (vocational education), the San Jose Job Corps, the California Conservation Corps, the Sunnyvale Parks and Recreation Department (a large provider of summer jobs for youth), Social Advocates for Youth (non-profit that works with troubled youth), Columbia Neighborhood Center, and Junior Achievement. Most of these organizations have assigned staff to work out of the NOVA Youth One-Stop Center. In addition, NOVA staff members make frequent outings to local schools to make youth and teachers/counselors aware of [Youth@Work](http://Youth@Work) services, and to invite them to visit the Center. The results are impressive; they have roughly 1,000 youth entering the system per year.

## **V. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

After the task forces finish their work, the strategic initiatives, complete with goals, measurable objectives, performance measures, partners and their activities identified, are then passed along to the staffs of each partner organization. Although each organization prepares its work plan for the activities in its own manner, NOVA is trying to model a design process that more actively engages staff members at all levels. As part of this process, each unit of NOVA details an action plan through which the planned activities will be performed. The same process is applied at the individual level, with each staff member identifying a set of actions he/she will take as part of an organizational activity and how his/her success in these actions will be measured. Thus the measurable outcome regimen extends from the board chair, through the senior staff, to the front line customer service staff of NOVA. The goal is to make sure that everyone in the workforce development system understands how their personal performance affects the larger goals of the organization. Interviews with several staff members confirmed that they both understand and endorse this management initiative.

The NOVA organization has utilized performance management, with measurable outcomes and input from customers for many years. The annual personnel evaluations include 360-degree assessments, with the main criteria being the accomplishment of specific, measurable, tasks that the employee and his/her supervisor agreed to earlier in the year. The emphasis throughout is on taking risks, setting ambitious goals, being innovative and flexible, listening to the customers, and pursuing strategic alliances. A byproduct of this is tolerance for failure, as long as one is working toward important organizational objectives. What isn't tolerated is rigidity, indifference to the big picture, going through the motions, or an unwillingness to listen and respond constructively to others.

## **VI. OUTCOME MEASURES/EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

NOVA employs outcome measures at all levels: to measure the system's success in meeting its strategic goals and initiatives, to measure its success in performing activities that contribute to the initiatives, and to measure the performance of individuals in accomplishing specific tasks that contribute to the realization of larger objectives. Many of the outcome measures NOVA employs include input from customers. Often this input produces surprises. A recent set responses to surveys of One-Stop customers revealed that the job seekers going through the system were very satisfied with their interactions with NOVA staff members, but far less complimentary of NOVA facilities. This led to a decision by NOVA to make a significant investment in equipment and furniture for the One-Stop Resource Center and Learning Lab. In addition, the new and attractive furniture provided clients with more privacy. Perhaps the clearest indicator of NOVA's success is simply this: it has managed to make itself a central and effective component player in strengthening workforce and economic development in northern Santa Clara County.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

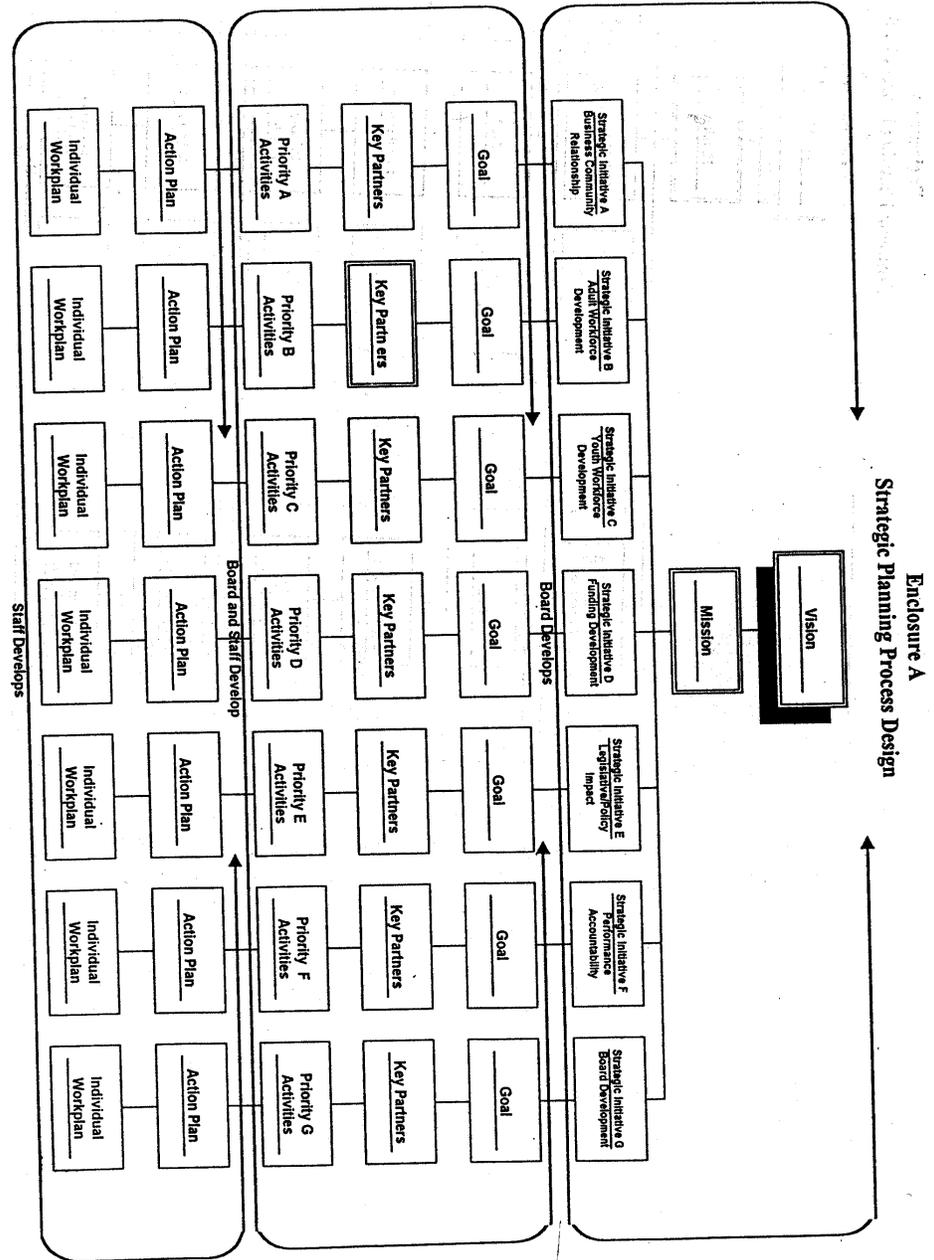
Looking at NOVA's approach, the primary lessons to be learned are these: responsiveness to customers, building strategic and mutually beneficial alliances, maintaining organizational vitality, and effective leadership. NOVA connects with the articulated needs of Silicon Valley employers and shapes its operation in conformance with the views and preferences expressed by its customers. Furthermore, NOVA staff and board do not assume that the workforce needs expressed by the business community today will accurately reflect those needs tomorrow. They are constantly taking the pulse of the business community. And, although NOVA has shown a strong entrepreneurial spirit by expanding its staff to provide quality services to job seekers and employers, it does not ignore other organizational resources in the area. For example, NOVA works successfully with the local EDD office. Rather than expecting massive changes in EDD practices, they approached this partnership with an understanding of the EDD bureaucracy and its requirements. As a result, NOVA and the local EDD staff have worked together to ensure that they both satisfy the expectations of their customers. Relationships with partners have sometimes required a sense of urgency and at other times patience; NOVA has been able to demonstrate both when it was strategically important to do so.

NOVA's organizational vitality is a product of the management philosophy and practices. These strategies can also be traced to the support offered by the city of Sunnyvale and the NOVA WIB, the competency of the NOVA staff, the support of the partnerships, and the leadership of NOVA's senior management team. Most of the members of NOVA's large staff are city employees. They receive good salaries and benefits by social service agency standards. Thus the stress on innovation and flexibility is balanced somewhat by the job security that comes with city employment. Still, all of the ingredients described thus far would not work without exemplary leadership. The NOVA WIB and the NOVA Director embody all the qualities the organization values – creativity, flexibility, openness, and a strong commitment to providing the best services for customers. Their success in getting the business community and public social service agencies to understand each other, to agree on workforce development strategies, and to work together to achieve results, has been truly impressive and exemplary.

**List of interviewees:**

Michael J. Curran	Executive Director, NOVA
Judy Gentry	Program Quality and Operations Manager, NOVA
Vonna Gissler	Employment and Training Manager, NOVA
Brenda Larsen	Supervisor of Youth One-Stop, NOVA
Chris Familetti	Youth One-Stop staff, NOVA

Attachment A: Workforce Board Planning Process:



## APPENDIX A. PROMISING PRACTICES SITES ARRANGED BY AREA FOR SELECTION (CHART A)

SITE	ORGANIZATION/WEB SITE	CONTACT INFORMATION	AREA FOR SELECTION	PROMISING PRACTICES
1. Aberdeen, WA	Grays Harbor Career Transition Center <a href="http://www.gotowork.org">www.gotowork.org</a>	Ronnie W. Schmidt, Manager (360) 538-2340 <a href="mailto:rschmidt@ghctc.org">rschmidt@ghctc.org</a>	Services to Employers	Services to Employers experiencing high turnover/ retention problems
2. Boston, MA	Boston Private Industry Council, Inc. <a href="http://www.bostonpic.org">www.bostonpic.org</a>	Dennis Rogers Career Center Program Manager (617) 423-3755 Ext. 213 (617) 423-1041 - fax <a href="mailto:drogers@bostonpic.org">drogers@bostonpic.org</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	Certification and Selection of One-Stop Operators
3. Bridgeport, CT	The Workforce Center operated by JobLink, Inc. <a href="http://www.workplace.org/joblink.htm">www.workplace.org/joblink.htm</a>	Madeline Primeau, Executive Director (203) 333-5129 x350 (203) 339-3799 - fax <a href="mailto:primeau@workplace.org">primeau@workplace.org</a>	Services to Job Seekers	Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)
4. Burlington, VT	Vermont Department of Employment & Training <a href="http://www.det.state.vt.us/">www.det.state.vt.us/</a>	Ann Marie Nichols, Manager (802) 658-1120 (802) 763-7655 - fax <a href="mailto:anichols@pop.det.state.vt.us">anichols@pop.det.state.vt.us</a>	Services to Job Seekers	Jump Start Youth Center
5. Clarksville, TN	Workforce Essentials, Inc. <a href="http://www.workessentials.com">www.workessentials.com</a>	Robin Dunn Director, Commercial Services Division (931) 551-9110 (931) 551-9026 - fax <a href="mailto:rdunn@workforceessentials.com">rdunn@workforceessentials.com</a>	Services To Employers	Commercial Services Division
6. Dallas & Tarrant County, TX	Dallas Workforce Board <a href="http://www.worksource.org">www.worksource.org</a>  Tarrant County Workforce Board <a href="http://www.workadvantage.com">www.workadvantage.com</a>	Glenn Weinger, Manager (972) 276-8361 x133 (972) 272-6469 - fax <a href="mailto:glenn.weinger@twc.state.tx.us">glenn.weinger@twc.state.tx.us</a> Judy Bell, Business Services Coordinator (817) 531-6760 (817) 531-6754 - fax <a href="mailto:judy.bell@twc.state.tx.us">judy.bell@twc.state.tx.us</a>	Services To Employers	Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Airport Coalition  Alliance (Airport) Opportunity Center
7. Dayton, OH	Montgomery County Job Center <a href="http://www.thejobcenter.org">www.thejobcenter.org</a>	Ms. Linda Shepard, Deputy Director (937) 496-6700 (937) 225-6203 <a href="mailto:shepal@odjfs.state.oh.us">shepal@odjfs.state.oh.us</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	One-Stop Collaboration

CHART A: PROMISING PRACTICES SITES ARRANGED BY AREA FOR SELECTION *continued*

SITE	ORGANIZATION/WEB SITE	CONTACT INFORMATION	AREA FOR SELECTION	PROMISING PRACTICES
8. Denton, TX	North Central Texas Workforce Center in Denton, managed by the North Texas Human Resource Group (NTHRG)	Lloyd Webb, Executive Director (940) 566-1402 x321 (940) 382-1124 - fax <a href="mailto:lloyd.webb@dfwinfo.com">lloyd.webb@dfwinfo.com</a>	Services to Job Seekers	Career Center's Resource Room
9. Detroit, MI	Detroit's Work Place A MICHIGAN WORKS! Agency Affiliate <a href="http://www.detroitworkplace.org">www.detroitworkplace.org</a>	Alberto R. Uribe Executive Director (313) 962-9675 (313) 962-4884 - fax <a href="mailto:auribe@detroitworkplace.org">auribe@detroitworkplace.org</a>	Services To Job Seekers	Services to Persons with Significant Disabilities
10. Kenosha, WI	Kenosha County Job Center <a href="http://www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS/Divisions/DWD/JobCenter/JobCenterDescription/KenoshaCountyJobCenter.htm">www.co.kenosha.wi.us/DHS/Divisions/DWD/JobCenter/JobCenterDescription/KenoshaCountyJobCenter.htm</a>	John Milisauskas, Job Center Manager (262) 697-4586 (262) 697-4585 - fax <a href="mailto:jmilisauskas@co.kenosha.wi.us">jmilisauskas@co.kenosha.wi.us</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	One-Stop Service Integration
11. Louisville, KY	Career Resources, Inc. <a href="http://www.careerresourcesinc.org">www.careerresourcesinc.org</a>	Flo Barber Vice President, Business Services Division (502) 574-3824 (502) 574-1286 - fax <a href="mailto:fbarber@louky.org">fbarber@louky.org</a>	Services To Employers	Business Services Division
12. Lynnwood, WA	WorkSource Lynnwood One Stop Career Center <a href="http://www.worksourceonline.com">www.worksourceonline.com</a>	Cyndi Schaeffer, Administrator (425) 673-3006 (425) 672-2295 - fax <a href="mailto:schaecj@dshs.wa.gov">schaecj@dshs.wa.gov</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	One-Stop Partnership
13. Morganfield, KY	Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center <a href="http://www.clementsjobcorps.org/">www.clementsjobcorps.org/</a>	Glenn Floyd Community Relations Manager (270) 389-2419 (270) 389-1134 - fax <a href="mailto:gffloyd@jcdc.jobcorps.org">gffloyd@jcdc.jobcorps.org</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	Job Corps relationship with One-Stop System
14. Napa County, CA	Napa County Job Connection <a href="http://www.northbayemployment.org/county_sites/napa.asp">www.northbayemployment.org/county_sites/napa.asp</a>	Ms. Marty Finnegan (707) 259-8362 (707) 259-8362 - fax <a href="mailto:mfinnegan@co.napa.ca.us">mfinnegan@co.napa.ca.us</a>	Services To Employers	Industry Cluster Strategies
15. North Charleston, SC	Trident One-Stop Career Center <a href="http://www.toscc.org">www.toscc.org</a>	Paul L. Connerty (843) 574-1800 (843) 574-1808 – fax <a href="mailto:paulc@toscc.org">paulc@toscc.org</a>	Services To Employers	Company-specific Employment Services Initiative
16. Oklahoma City, OK	Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center <a href="http://www.workforceok.org/wfcenters/OKC-Eastside/">www.workforceok.org/wfcenters/OKC-Eastside/</a>	Norma Noble, Deputy Director (405) 713-1890 (405) 713-1898 - fax <a href="mailto:nornob@oklahomacounty.org">nornob@oklahomacounty.org</a>	Services To Employers	Workforce Development Business Services

CHART A: PROMISING PRACTICES SITES ARRANGED BY AREA FOR SELECTION *continued*

SITE	ORGANIZATION/WEB SITE	CONTACT INFORMATION	AREA FOR SELECTION	PROMISING PRACTICES
17. Oswego County, NY	Department of Social Services, Employment and Training	Kathleen Casella, Director (315) 963-5294 (315) 963-5263 - fax <a href="mailto:KathyC@co.oswego.ny.us">KathyC@co.oswego.ny.us</a>	Services to Job Seekers	Service Grid
18. Peoria, IL	The City of Peoria and the Central Illinois Workforce Development Board	Bashir Ali, Director (309) 495-8920 (309) 495-8999 – fax <a href="mailto:bali@workforcenet.com">bali@workforcenet.com</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	Community Collaboration
19. Pittsburgh, PA	Pittsburgh/Allegheny CareerLink	Joe Stratico (412) 552-7027 (412) 552-7051 – fax <a href="mailto:jstratico@dli.state.pa.us">jstratico@dli.state.pa.us</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	Inter-Agency Cost Sharing and Functional Management
20. Portland, OR	Northeast One-Stop Career Center <a href="http://www.workworkwork.org">www.workworkwork.org</a>	Abdul Majidi Executive Director (503) 280-9675 (503) 241-4649 - fax <a href="mailto:amajidi@pcc.edu">amajidi@pcc.edu</a>	Services To Job Seekers	Job Link Retention Project
21. San Diego, CA	San Diego Workforce Partnership <a href="http://www.sandiegowork.com">www.sandiegowork.com</a>	Rebecca Bianconi (619) 238-1445 (619) 235-8105 - fax <a href="mailto:Rebecca@workforce.org">Rebecca@workforce.org</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	Website and Virtual One-Stop
22. Springfield, MA	FutureWorks Career Center <a href="http://www.futureworks-now.com">www.futureworks-now.com</a>	Rexene Picard, Executive Director (413) 858-2801 (413) 858-2810 - fax <a href="mailto:rpicard@futureworks-now.com">rpicard@futureworks-now.com</a>	Services To Job Seekers	Services to Job Seekers with Limited English Skills
23. Sunnyvale, CA	NOVA Career Center and Youth Employment Office <a href="http://www.novaworks.org/">www.novaworks.org/</a>	Michael J. Curran Executive Director (408) 730-7232 (408) 730-7643 - fax <a href="mailto:mcurran@novaworks.org">mcurran@novaworks.org</a>	One-Stop Design & Management	Strategic Planning in Performance Management
24. Thumb Area, MI	Thumb Area Michigan Works! One Stop Center <a href="http://www.thumbworks.org/">www.thumbworks.org/</a>	Marvin N. Pichla (517) 635-3561 (517) 635-2230 - fax <a href="mailto:pichlam@thumbworks.org">pichlam@thumbworks.org</a>	Services To Job Seekers	Specialized Job Training Assistance Voucher Programs
25. Victoria, TX	Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board <a href="http://www.gcworkforce.org">www.gcworkforce.org</a>	Laura Sanders, Executive Director (361) 576-5812 x281 (361) 573-0225 - fax <a href="mailto:laura.sanders@twc.state.tx.us">laura.sanders@twc.state.tx.us</a>	Services To Job Seekers  Services To Employers	Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Process  Process Technology Program Consolidated Employer Services Unit

## **APPENDIX B. PROMISING PRACTICES SITES ARRANGED BY THEME (CHART B)**

### **Integrating Programs And Services**

Montgomery County Job Center, Dayton, OH  
*One-Stop Collaboration*

Kenosha County Job Center, Kenosha, WI  
*One-Stop Service Integration*

WorkSource Lynwood One Stop Career Center, Lynwood, WA  
*One-Stop Partnership*

Pittsburgh/Allegheny CareerLink  
*Inter-Agency Cost Sharing and Functional Management*

Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center, Oklahoma, OK  
*Workforce Development Business Services*

Department of Social Services, Employment and Training, Oswego, NY  
*Service-Grid Matrix*

Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board, Victoria TX  
*Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Process*

### **Universal Access**

Denton Texas Workforce Center, Denton, TX  
*The Career Center's Resource Room*

Career Resources, Inc., Louisville, KY  
*Business Services Division*

WorkSource Lynwood One Stop Career Center, Lynwood, WA  
*One-Stop Partnership*

Kenosha County Job Center, Kenosha, WI  
*One-Stop Service Integration Turnover/ Retention Problems*

Workforce Oklahoma Career Connection Center, Oklahoma, OK  
*Workforce Development Business Services*

The City of Peoria and the Central Illinois Workforce Development Board, Peoria, IL  
*Community Collaboration*

Tarrant County Workforce Board, Fort Worth, TX  
*Alliance Opportunity Center*

NOVA CONNECT! Sunnyvale, CA  
*Strategic Planning and Performance Management*

Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board, Victoria TX  
*Process Technology Program and Consolidated Employer Services Unit*

## **Empowering Individuals**

The Workforce Center, Bridgeport, CT  
*Individual Training Accounts*

Thumb Area Michigan Works! One-Stop Center, Marlette, MI  
*Specialized Job Training Assistance Voucher Programs*

Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board, Victoria TX  
*Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Process*

## **Sectoral Strategies For Employers And Job Seekers**

Grays Harbor Career Transition Center, Aberdeen, WA  
*Services to Employers Experiencing High Turnover/ Retention Problems*

Vermont Department of Employment & Training, Burlington, VT  
*Jump Start Youth Center*

Workforce Essentials, Clarksville, TN  
Commercial Services Division

Dallas Workforce Board, Dallas/Fort Worth, TX  
*Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Airport Coalition*

Detroit's Workplace, Detroit, MI  
*Service to People with Significant Disabilities*

Tarrant County Workforce Board, Fort Worth, TX  
*Alliance Opportunity Center*

Career Resources, Inc., Louisville, KY  
*Business Services Division*

WorkSource Lynwood One Stop Career Center, Lynwood, WA  
*One-Stop Partnership*

Earl C. Clements Job Corps Center, Morganfield, KY  
*Job Corps relationship with One-Stop System*

Napa County Job Connection, Napa, CA  
*Industry Cluster Strategies*

Trident One-Stop Career Center, North Charleston, SC  
*Company-specific Employment Services Initiative*

Northeast One-Stop Career Center, Portland, OR  
*Job Link Retention Program*

FutureWorks, Springfield, MA  
*Services for job seekers with limited English language skills*

Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board, Victoria TX  
*Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy and Process*

### **Using Information Technology To Improve Service Quality**

Denton Texas Workforce Center, Denton, TX  
*The Career Center's Resource Room*

Kenosha County Job Center, Kenosha, WI  
*One-Stop Service Integration*

Northeast One-Stop Career Center, Portland, OR  
*Job Link Retention Program*

San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego, CA  
*Website and Virtual One-Stop*

FutureWorks, Springfield, MA  
*Services for job seekers with limited English language skills*

NOVA CONNECT! Sunnyvale, CA  
*Strategic Planning and Performance Management*

### **One-Stop Effectiveness Measures**

Boston Private Industry Council, Inc., Boston, MA  
*Certification and Selection of One-Stop Operators*

WorkSource Lynwood One Stop Career Center, Lynwood, WA  
*One-Stop Partnership*

NOVA CONNECT! Sunnyvale, CA  
*Strategic Planning and Performance Management*

