Investing in Talent That Works for Kentucky

KWIB

KENTUCKY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Commonwealth of Kentucky
Workforce Investment Act
Program Year 2011 Annual Report

GOVERNOR STEVE BESHEAR
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

Introduction

When businesses consider whether to locate in Kentucky, the first thing they usually ask about is not taxes or financial incentives. Their top concern – and highest priority – is whether they will be able to find enough highly-skilled, highly-educated workers to make their site a success. We've learned what companies want most is a well-trained, educated, healthy and ambitious workforce. This is where Kentucky must improve.

Kentucky jumped 18 spots in two years to rank 25th on Forbes' list of best states in which to do business. That's an impressive leap, but it could have been greater. The list is based on six categories that display the Commonwealth's strengths and weaknesses. In the area of business costs, Kentucky ranks 12th best in the nation. In growth prospects, we rank 16th. But in the critical category of labor supply, we rank 45th in the nation.

The message is obvious: to succeed long term, Kentucky must strengthen its core – our people infrastructure, our human capital.

The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board is working to build a more collaborative environment where business, labor, government, educators and community leaders will work as a team to identify barriers, anticipate future workforce needs and develop innovative solutions to meet workforce challenges. It continues to implement *WORKSmart Kentucky*, a strategic plan that guides its vision and work.

This report is focused on the strategic goals and the significant accomplishments of the major workforce partners who have contributed toward meeting those goals. This document is not meant to be all-inclusive, but rather is intended to highlight successes that, when woven together, create a significantly more effective workforce development system.

We know the growth of our economy is dependent on the innovation and competitiveness of our people. With the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board's guidance, the Commonwealth is applying innovation, creativity and collaboration as we invest in talent that works for Kentucky.

Kentucky Workforce Investment Act
Annual Report - Program Year 2011

Table of Contents

Investment in Talent that Works for Kentucky....4
State Workforce Development System and Services 7
KWIB Highlights.... 8
Kentucky Office of Employment and Training 23
Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 25
Kentucky Office for the Blind 29
Office of Career and Technical Education.... 30
Kentucky Adult Education.... 32
Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges System.... 34
Bluegrass State Skills Corporation 36
Local Workforce Investment Areas.... 37
Map of Local Workforce Investment Areas 38
Barren River 39
Bluegrass.... 41
Cumberlands.... 45
EKCEP 47
Green River 51
KentuckianaWorks.... 53
Lincoln Trail.... 55
Northern Kentucky.... 56
TENCO 61
West Kentucky 63
NEG Grants.... 67
Gold Card Initiative.... 71
State Energy Sector....73
REA Grants....76
Costs and Evaluation.... 77
WIA Financial Statement.... 82
WIA Expenditure Summary.... 84
Measuring Success in Difficult Economic Conditions.... 85
Kentucky Waivers.... 86
Kentucky Workforce Investment Board Members 89
Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Leadership.... 90

Investing in Talent That Works for Kentucky
Program Year 2011

A year of benchmarking innovation and transformation

Program Year 2011 focused on implementation of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board's (KWIB) adoption of *WORKSmart Kentucky*, a plan to transform Kentucky's workforce development system. In fact, by the end of the year, 23 of 25 strategic initiatives were fully implemented, nearly complete or better than 50 percent complete.

Responding to the demand for talent

With more than three million American jobs going unfilled due to the lack of skilled workers, even at a time of high unemployment, Kentucky is focused on a variety of innovative solutions to create a system which responds to the talent needs of employers. These innovations are based on the concepts of business and industry leadership, data-driven investment decisions and customer-centric approaches to increasing use of the workforce system.

Leadership

Innovations like Kentucky's unique Work Ready Communities certification, High Impact Workforce Investment Boards framework, and Business Services Redesign place heavy emphasis on engagement of the private sector to communicate needs, assist in the design of programs and adapt to the speed of change. With employers in the driver's seat, an increase in ownership of the system itself is leading to stronger relationships, better training investments and expansion of partnerships to better leverage resources in an era of budget cuts.

Data-driven investments

With limited resources for training and talent development, every dollar invested is critically important and must produce a return for the economy, the taxpayers, employers and individual customers. One of the most significant changes to the Kentucky system was a move to sector-based approaches to investing workforce development resources, including WIA, Perkins and other funding streams. This approach works across a wide variety of funding streams and provides local leaders with a confidence level that they are developing the talent required to compete in a complex global economy. Our investment in data development and decision-making tools has resulted in the formation of statewide and regional industry partnerships to develop career pathways, sustainable training solutions and resource identification.

Customer-centric approaches

Understanding the needs, desires and demands of a dual-customer base is a complex undertaking. Responding to these diverse needs requires transforming a system from a long-held image of “the unemployment office” to a positive resource of choice for both workers and employers. The identity of the system needed a facelift, and we made the investment to make that happen. Research shows that our efforts to engage our customers in the development of that new identity has produced a brand promise, customer experience framework, name and logo which appeals to both groups.

Backing up our brand promise means implementing some technical and cultural changes to our system, and those have been proceeding with great alacrity. The Workforce Academy has been designed, rolled out and is making its way across the commonwealth to assure that state and local staff are all working toward becoming a team of experts to better serve our customers’ needs. The new Focus/Career and Focus/Talent components of our Internet-based services have also been rolled out. This intelligent software is helping us fulfill our promise to link workers with employers to meet both groups’ expectations, and our nearly completed redesign of business services will allow us to better serve business and industry with solutions instead of promoting government programs.

Return on Investment

Over the past year, we have had the good fortune to work with a former Toyota Motor Manufacturing executive to develop a series of key performance indicators to better help us understand how the system is working to meet everyone’s expectations. Because they were developed by our employer customers and the KWIB, these indicators will provide a more meaningful assessment of the system than the Common Measures method currently in place.

Moving forward

We have made tremendous strides over the past year developing a system and series of frameworks to meet the talent demands of Kentucky’s current and future employers, but there is more to be done. Recently, the KWIB approved a process to update our strategic plan which, although it is only two years old, needs additional focus on apprenticeships, technical education, entrepreneurship and implementation of our new return on investment model.

Twenty-five project champions and 25 project managers have kept the momentum of change moving despite innovation funding being redirected from our state to the federal government. Such an accomplishment is to be commended and is deeply appreciated by the KWIB.

In order to maintain this momentum, we will need to do even more with less in the coming year. But new partnerships with the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, the Kentucky Labor Cabinet and others will only strengthen our resolve and help us keep the perspective that WIA is only one piece of the workforce development puzzle.

KWIB Chair Ed Holmes

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

The role of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet is to oversee the work of educating, preparing and training Kentucky's current and future workforce.

The goal is to help all Kentuckians excel in academics and life. Lifelong learning through school, work and other training opportunities is a cornerstone philosophy of the cabinet as it supports the programs and work of its agencies.

Secretary Joseph U. Meyer
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Department of Workforce Investment

The Department of Workforce Investment connects Kentucky to employment, workforce information, education and training. In addition to providing labor market information, the offices within the department make resources and services available to employers, job seekers, youth and people with disabilities.

Commissioner Beth Brinly
Department of Workforce Investment

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board

The 42-member KWIB serves as an advisory board to the Governor on workforce training and development issues.

The KWIB is charged with creating a statewide vision for workforce development and adopting a plan to move Kentucky forward through workforce training and development.

Executive Director Tom West
Kentucky Workforce Investment Board

KWIB Highlights

Industry Partnerships

In 2011, the Commonwealth's key targeted industry sectors were identified through a data-driven process that included detailed industry analysis and was supplemented by stakeholders such as: Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), Cabinet for Economic Development's Office of Commercialization and Innovation, and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC).

As a result of the analysis, Kentucky's statewide target sectors were determined to be: 1) automobile/aircraft manufacturing, 2) transportation, distribution and logistics, 3) business services and research and development, 4) health care/social assistance, and 5) energy creation/transmission. The Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development's strategic plan, Kentucky's Unbridled Future, issued in early 2012, mirrors three of these sectors and adds two additional sectors: 1) sustainable manufacturing and technology, and 2) life sciences and data centers.

As strategic planning continued in June 2011, this information was shared with workforce system stakeholders during the World-Class Sector Strategy Institute. The institute provided tools for assisting local workforce investment areas with the identification of key industry target sectors that aligned with the needs of their regions.

Adding to the momentum of building and shaping the workforce through sector strategies, the Commonwealth has dedicated approximately $800,000 to promote and foster sector-focused, industry-led business partnerships. An industry partnership is a multi-employer collaboration that brings together management and labor around the common purpose of improving the competitiveness of a cluster of companies or organizations producing similar products or services and sharing similar supply chains, critical human resource needs, infrastructure requirements, business services, and/or retention/recruitment challenges.

The purpose of supporting existing partnerships or organizing new ones is to concentrate attention and resources on particular clusters of industries that provide good wages and benefits, have the greatest potential for economic growth and/or face serious challenges to growth or retention. By bringing together employers and their workers the public sector can learn significantly and qualitatively more about the opportunities and challenges facing a set of similar companies. These partnerships uniquely support the talent pipeline needed by employers and workers.

In January 2012, Kentucky awarded three Industry Partnership planning grants from among 12 submitted proposals. The recipients were Northern Kentucky Industrial Park Association (NKIPA), Bluegrass Area Development District (BGADD), and Northwest Kentucky Training Consortium (NKTC) for manufacturing.

In August 2012, an additional five partnerships were added. Those recipients were Bluegrass Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Manufacturing Development Collaborative (MDC), Daviess-Hancock Industry Partnership, Kentucky Energy Workforce Development Consortium (KEWDC), Kentucky Highlands SET Partners (Stronger Economies Together), and Talent & Evaluation: Advanced Manufacturing Partnership of Warren County. Additional grants will be awarded over the next few months.

NKTC: Strengthening Partnerships and Sustainability received $59,622 in an award. This program will provide needed training to member companies in the advanced manufacturing sector and leverage that training across the consortium to make it available at a low cost. The consortium also will work with Henderson Community College (HCC) and local high schools to evaluate educational needs for certificates and associate degrees that will meet industry needs, such as the development of programs in industrial electrician, engineering technology and machine tool technology.

Bluegrass Partnering Healthcare Initiative for Tomorrow was awarded $65,000 to bring the major healthcare stakeholders (government, industry, healthcare workers and non- profits) together as a region to build a unified workforce plan for this sector. Through community resource mapping, the Bluegrass Healthcare Consortium (BHC) will develop a strategy for promoting interagency collaboration to align workforce development programs and services related to healthcare. The map will be used to improve education, workforce development and economic development in the region by aligning and streamlining available services and resources and identifying areas of need.

A $65,000 grant was given to NKIPA – Management Council Industry Partnership. In order to properly plan for the manufacturing positions required today and over the next 10 years, a survey will be performed of the nearly 400 Northern Kentucky manufacturers that details the specific positions needed along with the key competencies required for each position. This survey will also help determine new technological equipment that will be purchased and skills that are required to operate it.

The Bluegrass Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: MDC received a $65,000 award. The MDC’s goal is to align development practices and paths for all serviced classes of workers into coordinated, seamless pathways.

Daviess-Hancock Industry Partnership was awarded $62,916 to strengthen the skill level of current and future workforce in advanced manufacturing by developing appropriate and cost-effective training programs.

Kentucky Energy Workforce Development Consortium (KEWDC) received a $65,000 award to provide support activities to develop a clear understanding of industry workforce needs, and an inventory of the current educational/training programs that prepare individuals for the energy sector.

The Kentucky Highlands SET Partners (Stronger Economies Together) received a $64,970 grant to develop an action plan that will preserve and expand rural health care practices as well as allied health care services throughout the 22 identified counties in southern and eastern Kentucky.

The Talent & Evaluation: Advanced Manufacturing Partnership of Warren County use its $65,000 grant to impact the advanced manufacturing sector in the following ways: identify employers' common needs, develop and support a strategy based on primary data and information, conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of skill sets for the sector, assist educational institutions and organizations in offering training to meet these skill sets, and educate workers about the core skills needed for entry-level jobs in the sector.

KWIB Highlights

During this fiscal year, the National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) initiative tracked the generation of almost 12,000 certificates throughout the state. Through the work of the Office of Employment and Training (OET), Kentucky Adult Education (KYAE), Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), a higher percentage of Kentuckians earned the gold level NCRC certificate than in the previous year. In most cases, attaining the gold certificates was a result of an improved performance by the examinees from the silver to gold level.

The performance of Kentuckians on the three tests that make up the NCRC (WorkKeys Applied Math, Locating Information and Reading for Information) has continued to improve with greater percentages of examinees earning certificates on the first try. Statistically, the Locating Information assessment continues to be a challenge, but this is in line with national trends that show most groups score one full grade point lower on the Locating Information test.

Compared to some of our neighboring states:

State	Platinum	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Illinois	44	3,786	9,700	3,724	17,254
Indiana	484	17,725	49,078	16,545	83,832
Kentucky	**359**	**11,323**	**32,973**	**11,057**	**55,712**
Ohio	377	19383	53828	13980	87568
Tennessee	34	20723	49117	18483	88357

As a percentage of total certificates, Kentuckians outperformed neighboring states in the highest level platinum NCRC by 0.6 percent. However, Kentucky was outperformed in the gold certification by as much as 3 percent.

The NCRC program came fully online in June 2011, making 2012 the first complete year of operation. Below is a comparison of the FY11 (from ACT and KYNCRC databases) and FY12 numbers from the KYNCRC database.

Two Year NCRC Analysis						
	FY11 Certificates	Percent Of Total	FY12 Certificates	Percent Of Total	Certificate Change	Percent Change
Bronze*	2,215	23	2,760	23	545	0
Silver	5,806	60.3	7,197	60	1,391	(0.3)
Gold	1,584	16.5	2,024	16.9	440	.4
Platinum	18	.2	14	.1	(4)	(0.1)
Total	**9,623**		**11,995**		**2,372**	

•Kentucky does not officially recognize bronze level certificates

Significant Projects:

There were several projects conducted throughout the year to help Kentuckians earn a certificate. OCTE tested all available graduating seniors at the state run area technology centers in February and March 2012. The more than 17,300 individual tests yielded more than 3,150 certificates. More than 55 percent of the certificates were silver or better.

Lake Cumberland Area Development District (LCADD) continued its project of testing most senior high school students in their region. Of the 1,420 certificates earned, more than 80 percent of students achieved a silver or better level. With the help of a WIA Incentive grant, KYAE and OET partnered to provide free GED and NCRC testing throughout the state from March - June 2012.

KWIB Highlights

Branding/Outreach

This year brought great strides in the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) branding and outreach initiative. In 2010, the brand promise was introduced to the workforce system leadership. In the fall of 2011, stakeholders attended a branding immersion session where they learned about the new brand guidelines and how to become champions of the new brand vision.

Regional Brand Champions were identified in each of the 10 WIA's to help roll out the branding throughout the state. A Brand Management Specialist was hired in February 2012. The spring and summer were dedicated to the internal roll out process and educating everyone in the workforce system on the brand promise and the cultural change that would take place. Many internal branding events were held throughout the state to introduce front-line workers to the KCC brand.

The two largest projects for branding and outreach are signage and a new user friendly website which are in the developmental stages. These two areas are most often the first impressions our customers get when being introduced to the agencies - whether it is from the job seeker visiting the center to utilize the resource center or from the business owner looking to hire a qualified employee via our online Focus/Talent portal.

Many other KWIB initiatives, such as One-Stop Certification and Workforce Academy, are going on simultaneously and are complements to the branding and outreach plan.

The external roll out for the branding and outreach initiative is scheduled for early 2013.

KWIB Highlights

Business Services Redesign

The Business Services Redesign, a KWIB initiative, was launched in the summer of 2011. The goal of the initiative is to ensure that Kentucky companies have access to workforce services throughout the business lifecycle by developing a collaborative, solution-based approach to meeting employers' needs. Consultants, Thomas P. Miller and Associates, LLC (TPMA) assisted the Commonwealth in its review of the current business services structure.

After reviewing the current structure, existing plans and identified goals, TPMA collected input from individuals with on-the-ground knowledge of implementing solution-based business services. Input was gathered through ten regional input sessions that included representatives from workforce development, education, economic development and industry. Stakeholder focus groups were facilitated by TPMA with Business Services Teams and individuals from economic development, chambers of commerce and manufacturing associations.

Additionally, interviews were conducted with state and local workforce managers. Equipped with a thorough understanding of the Commonwealth's business services and after researching national best practices, TPMA developed a final report with the following recommendations:

- adopt a Business Services framework,
- define criteria for identifying businesses that are at-risk and poised for growth,
- establish roles and minimum standards for Rapid Response,
- adopt a customer relationship management system to facilitate information sharing, accountability, and transparency among all partners of the Business Services Team,
- increase networking and peer-to-peer learning opportunities,
- co-brand Business Services within the Kentucky Career Center brand guidelines, and
- leverage opportunities with Economic Development

At the conclusion of the study, TPMA provided a one-day statewide Business Services Team training. More than 100 workforce business professionals attended the training that included topics addressing the four pillars supporting the business services framework: regionalism, collaboration, solutions-based methods and proactive approaches.

Work Ready Communities Program

The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board in conjunction with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet is implementing a Work Ready Communities Program that certifies counties as “work ready” based on the quality of their labor force. The program raises the concept of “certified employability” from the individual to the community level. It also promotes cooperation among key community stakeholders (community college staff, secondary education, economic development professionals, elected and appointed officials, employers, chambers, school boards, community organizations, and others) as they work toward a common community goal.

Earning Certified Work Ready Community status ensures citizens have the talent necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require in the future. This certified status shows current and prospective employers that a county has the talented workforce that business demands - a sustainable, reliable pipeline that delivers the right workers with the right skills at the right time.

Work Ready Communities can

- attract new businesses and investment,
- gain a competitive advantage over surrounding communities,
- help existing companies grow and add jobs,
- recruit creative, talented and innovative people, and
- revitalize their economies and keep them humming.

Each community must gather local support and commitment and apply for the Work Ready Community designation. To earn the designation of a Certified Work Ready Community, counties have to meet and maintain certain criteria such as:

- demonstrating a commitment to meeting certain public high school graduation rates,
- driving current workers and the available workforce to earn National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRCs),
- emphasizing the importance of post secondary achievement,
- developing the soft skills sought by employers,
- expanding digital literacy, and
- building community commitment for meeting these goals.

In the long run, this is a program that will benefit individual communities as well as the entire state. By taking part in the effort, counties can transform their economies and give themselves a competitive advantage in attracting new businesses and jobs. By identifying both the needs of business and the available skills of Kentucky's workforce, the state can more effectively generate the right talent for the right jobs.

To date, Henderson, Daviess, Warren and Woodford counties have been certified as Work Ready Communities. Six counties have achieved Work Ready Community in Progress status because they are close to meeting the criteria to be certified. To achieve this level, a county must present a viable plan to meet all of the criteria within three years. The designation shows that a community is making strides and working with its business, education, workforce and economic development leaders to set and meet common goals toward certification. Those are Hopkins, Union, Adair, Madison, Russell and Montgomery counties.

This type of energy is what Kentucky needs to make long-lasting changes for the future. Leadership agrees that it is not what we do today, but more where we position ourselves for tomorrow that counts. The Commonwealth understands this clearly and is working diligently to construct a world class talent pipeline that businesses desire and demand. Through this program change is occurring, skill gaps are closing and Kentucky is emerging as a national leader while successfully competing in a global economy.

Woodford County wins 2012 Innovator Award

In recognition of its status as a Work Ready Community, Woodford County was recently selected by the Southern Growth Policies Board as a 2012 Innovator Award winner. The award was presented at the Board Chairman's Conference June 25 in Chattanooga, Tenn.

The Southern Growth Policies Board is a non-partisan public policy think tank based in North Carolina. Formed by the region's governors in 1971, the board develops and advances visionary economic development policies by providing a forum for partnership and dialog among the region's governors, legislators, business and academic leaders and the economic- and community-development sectors. Member states include Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

Innovator awards are presented annually to one organization in each of the board's 13-member states in recognition of initiatives and organizations that improve economic opportunities and quality of life in the region. The 2012

Innovator Awards recognized those who are successfully preparing southerners to meet the workforce needs of a globally competitive business sector.

The Woodford County Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Bluegrass Workforce Investment Board (BGWIB), applied for the Work Ready Community designation as part of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) Work Ready Community initiative.

Woodford County was nominated for the award by BGWIB based on the community's commitment to continuous workforce improvement. Work Ready Community certification builds on the concept of certified employability of the county workforce. To earn the designation, Woodford County was required to meet criteria on high school graduation and education attainment rates, community commitment, broadband internet access, evidence of soft skills programs and a plan for attaining the National Career Readiness Certificate.

Workforce Academy

The purpose of the Kentucky Workforce Academy (KWA) is to build the capacity of Kentucky's professional workforce staff to support of the broader vision for the transformation of the Commonwealth's workforce development system. The initial four-module training will be conducted in the local areas with a cross section of Kentucky's workforce system and partner staff, representing all different levels and positions.

At the end of the training the participants should be able to:

- understand and articulate a future vision for the Kentucky workforce system;
- understand their critical role in the future Kentucky workforce system, and how it is different from what they are doing now;
- own and accept being an advocate for change, and become a positive force in Kentucky's workforce system transformation;
- understand and articulate how the Future Vision better serves Kentucky's workforce system customers (both employers and job seekers); and
- begin to formulate ideas about the types of process changes and subsequent training that will be required to successfully implement system-wide change in Kentucky.

One of the defining moments during the pilot for this initiative and during the train-the-trainer segments was the discussion of Kentucky's talent pipeline and exploring the potential local and statewide impact. The talent pipeline shows how the workforce system is the convener and connector between all of our customers. It also shows how all of our project initiatives, together with our Brand Promise, work together to create the jobs that our customers want, train job seekers and connect them with those opportunities.

Developing a strong talent pipeline can satisfy ALL of our customers including job seekers, employers, educators and industries. For many who participated in the preliminary trainings, the vision of the transformation came to life through the illustrations that were used to depict a world-class talent pipeline in the Kentucky workforce system. When participants grasped the concepts, it was powerful.

The certified trainers for KWA are in place and are working with local area leaders to develop an implementation plan. It is anticipated that the local trainings will begin in early fall 2012 and be completed by the end of the summer 2013. The planning for the next phase of the academy curriculum has already begun to address the need for cutting edge continuous education for Kentucky's workforce system professional staff.

Partner for Success

The Partner for Success initiative is bringing partner agencies together as a unified system to increase efficiency and effectiveness by simplifying service delivery driven by the employer customer and the individual consumer vantage points. The efforts of this initiative include joint policy guidance, integrated case management, cross-training of staff and a solutions-based approach to business services.

Each partner agency representative is working as an integral member of the Partner for Success initiative and uses his expertise to assist with the development of training curriculum for staff, common policies and expected practices to be applied across all partner agencies. Representatives are also developing a simplified case management system that promotes information sharing and efficient delivery of services to both employer and individual consumers.

The Partner for Success initiative continues to identify common practices among the workforce partners and implement strategies to unify and simplify the system for the benefit of all customers working with the Kentucky Career Centers.

Unemployment Insurance Customer Service Plan

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Customer Service Plan establishes both short-term and long-term options for improving program efficiencies and cost savings for customers of the agency. The goal was to improve customer service through technology and a more knowledgeable staff.

The Division of Unemployment Insurance has met all of its short-term goals: creating a direct deposit option for claimants to receive UI benefits; improving the help desk by training resource persons and implementing a system that directs questions to the staff person best qualified to respond; and improving training for staff that interact with customers and for all new hires.

To begin addressing long-term goals the division has undergone a thorough business process analysis that studied the work flow of its respective organizational units (Tax, Benefits, First Payment Timeliness, Appeals, and Technical Services). The analyses resulted in recommendations to efficiently and expeditiously process the division's work.

These recommendations include the creation of claimant and employer accounts that allow customers to perform self-service functions and access information regarding their respective accounts. The Department of Technical Services has taken the first step toward realizing these new functions by initiating the implementation of "Public Sector," a system that allows greater customization and accommodates the needs of the division when creating the customer self-service portals.

Recommendations also will result in the re-organization of the Office of Employment and Training (OET) to place staff with particular skill sets in areas to make better use of their abilities in the agency. Through this reorganization and improved systems, the call centers will be of more use to customers, another long-term goal.

The final long-term goal, automation of the UI appeals and tax processes, will be made possible by implementing Public Sector, automated scheduling and case assignment. Another part of this goal, States Information Data Exchange System (SIDES), lets employers respond electronically to many division notices. Along with these improvements, customers will be able to file UI appeals and access documents and materials necessary to make appeals online.

Currently, the division is making public presentations on UI taxes, appeals and law changes to educate employer groups organized by our local workforce partners and labor groups. In addition, the division has created and posted a series of videos on the OET website providing tutorials on claim filing, employer contributions, appeals and tax issues. OET also has initiated a program to offer basic training in the areas of unemployment insurance, workforce and employment services, and specific training for its UI tax auditors and appeals referees.

OET and the division continue to work to improve the efficiency of their processes so they can best provide the necessary services to their customers.

Office of Employment and Training

Office of Employment and Training brings great talent and great businesses together with Focus Suites

The Office of Employment and Training (OET) provides job services, unemployment insurance services, labor market information and training opportunities for Kentuckians.

An exciting addition during the last year, Focus/Suites™, will better match available workers with employers who need their skills and experience. Job seekers searching for new or better work opportunities can create a Focus|Career™ account online or visit a Kentucky Career Center where computers are available.

Features allow job seekers to

- build a professional resume using the interview wizard, and print, save or email it directly to employers;
- find job leads instantly that match their work and transferrable skills;
- schedule job alerts daily or weekly to send to their inbox; and
- explore career options and paths to reach their education and employment goals.

Whether creating the first resume or updating a previous one, Focus|Career™ offers an easy-to-use resume builder that virtually writes it for the job seeker. With required and optional sections, the system offers flexibility in designing a resume that reflects the job seeker's skills, knowledge and abilities.

Users can check leads often and set up to five job alerts to search for specific types of positions. The program uses artificial intelligence to match skills to jobs and rank them to indicate how well the person qualifies for a position.

The Focus/Suite™ employer job-posting portal, Focus/Talent™, allows employers to create an account easily, post job advertisements and search resumes. The easy tab navigation helps users move through the process.

Once submitted, Focus/Talent™ automatically filters the job posting for language and EEO requirements. If the job meets requirements, it is posted. If the job contains questionable language, employers may be asked to edit terminology and/or the post may require OET staff review, which should occur by the next business day. Then resumes are matched to the job opening.

Focus/Talent™ allows employers to search resumes in Kentucky's Focus/Career™ using options such as keywords, jobs posted and job order number. The employer can save the search and be notified by email of new resumes that match a posting.

Unlike traditional job-match systems that rely on code-based classification and keyword searches, the engine behind Focus/Suites™ casts a much wider net to find the skills a job requires. The employer will no longer receive job matches only for the most qualified candidates, but also for those who possess some of the skills requested. This new job-match system offers the greatest number of candidates to employers and the greatest number of opportunities to job seekers.

OET
Office of
Employment and Training

Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Partnerships pay off for business and customers

The Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) offers quality services to people with disabilities to help them become more independent and obtain or maintain employment. Services including assessment, guidance and counseling, training, supported employment, job placement, assistive technology, as well as many others individually designed to meet the needs of the consumers are available. OVR employs approximately 140 rehabilitation counselors in more than 50 offices covering all 120 counties in Kentucky.

OVR is divided into two divisions, the Division of Program Services and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center (CDPVTC), that work together for the mission of assisting Kentuckians with disabilities achieve suitable employment and gain independence.

The Perkins Center had an extraordinary year serving 1,074 Kentuckians during FY 2011. There were 498 referrals made by OVR counselors. The center continued efforts to generate revenue from third-party payers such as Medicare. Referrals for the Outpatient Medical Rehabilitation program available at the center grew significantly from 99 the previous year to 130 as a result of serving more individuals whose therapy is paid for by Medicare.

The Perkins Center continued to maintain strong levels of customer satisfaction based on the results of surveys conducted with both students and OVR counselors. Customer satisfaction for students actively enrolled was recorded at 92 percent. Counselors rated the quality of services provided by the Perkins Center to persons they referred at 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.

The fiscal year saw the center expand opportunities for OVR consumers to receive driver education. In addition to a full-time instructor in the program, occupational therapists on staff at the center began assisting consumers who need to obtain their driver's license through behind-the-wheel instruction.

The Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) continues to be a bright spot for OVR as it had one of its best years in FY 11. It processed 178 applications for assistive technology, approving 92 applications for a total of $785,136.

Hearing aids and vehicles with modifications remained the most requested items. The program enables qualified applicants to borrow funds for the purchase of assistive technology. The impact it has on an individual's life is reflected in this comment received from one borrower: "Very satisfied with the services. Really blessed to meet the needs we had. We adopted a child who needed a vehicle to be mobile, and we felt like this program was a blessing."

The Rehabilitation Technology Branch continues to assist consumers to reach their vocational goals by assessing, recommending and providing appropriate assistive technology solutions. A total of 1,311 consumers received equipment and services that allowed them to successfully prepare for, gain or maintain employment. Of that number, 98 received modifications to their personal vehicles at a total cost of more than $1.197 million, 142 individuals received driver evaluations and 105 received driver's training, providing yet another step to successful employment. A total of about $2,336 million was spent on assistive technology equipment and services for OVR consumers.

During FY 11, 3,544 individuals with disabilities obtained or maintained employment after receiving services from the Kentucky OVR. Their average weekly earnings rose from $108.11at application to $391.31 at the closure of their cases for an average increase of $283.20 in weekly income. At their application, 25 percent (899) reported that their primary source of support was through employment compared to 89 percent (3,161) that listed employment as their primary source of income at case closure. About 32 percent (1,129) were receiving health insurance benefits through their employer.

As a group, OVR customers increased their federal income tax payments by an estimated $7.8 million, their state income tax payments by about $3.1 million and their Social Security payments by an estimated $8 million (including employer contributions).

They work an average of 32 hours per week with an average hourly wage of $11.53.

For FY 11, a total of 720 Social Security recipients obtained employment after receiving services from OVR. Social Security reimbursed OVR for 103 claims totaling $1,472,899. In addition, OVR received $26,238 in Ticket to Work Milestone/Outcome payments, increasing the total Social Security income to $1,499,137 for the year.

Transition services for students moving from high school to the workforce or postsecondary education were a focus for the agency in FY 11. A total of 8,271 consumers on counselor caseloads in FY 11 were referred from secondary schools.

Of the agency's 3,544 Positive Employment Outcomes (PEO), 18.5 percent (654) had been referred by secondary schools. In FY 2011, OVR continued to provide quality services to transition-aged youth with disabilities in all 174 school districts in the Commonwealth. According to the Kentucky Post School Outcomes Study, OVR ranked as the agency that most often provided services to youth with disabilities covered by an Individualized Education Program. Much of our efforts are enhanced through partnerships with 67 school districts in the Community Based Work Transition Program. In FY 11, 839 students worked with employment coordinators exploring individual vocational interests and training for jobs in their communities across the state.

Kentucky OVR has played a vital role in the establishment and implementation of supported employment services in the Commonwealth. Through partnerships with agencies, organizations and funding services for persons with severe disabilities, the agency is able to assist many people who have a supported employment goal in achieving PEOs. In FY 11, Individualized Plans for Employment were developed by OVR counselors with 661 consumers who needed supported employment. More than 80 Supported Employment vendors affiliated with the agency delivered services for 1,126 individuals, resulting in 397 PEOs.

The Dartmouth Supported Employment (SE) Initiative, serving OVR consumers in four pilot sites in Paducah, Maysville, Elizabethtown and Covington/Florence, had a very successful year. This project is a collaborative venture with the KY Division of Behavioral Health, and the University of Kentucky Human Development Institute.

Funding for technical assistance comes from Dartmouth/Johnson and Johnson. Approximately 30 people with mental illness were employed during the year as a result of this project. The SE staff worked with the Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities to develop and submit a new Medicaid waiver that will include enhanced supported employment service strategies and fees.

Kentucky Office for the Blind

Humana Military Project

In November 2010, the Office for the Blind (OFB) was approached by a National Industries for the Blind affiliate regarding creating a partnership with the Humana Military Project (HMP) in Louisville. The partnership was developed as a pilot project with a goal to place five individuals who are blind at the Humana corporate office in Louisville as call center representatives. The entire HMP staff was very open to this project and provided excellent support to our consumers.

The Kentucky OFB screened and recruited five candidates who possessed excellent screen reading skills along with a background in call center work. Each consumer participated in a four-week training with HMP prior to being placed on site. Each candidate understood that this was an excellent opportunity that would have a long-term impact nationally with this employer. They realized that after the four-month pilot was finished they could feasibly secure employment.

OFB provided the assistive technology for each consumer's work station. Not only did HMP spend a lot of time working with the technology to make sure all applications were accessible, but they also provided an excellent wage for the consumers.

Due to the visionary approach of HMP, the workforce has grown to 15 consumers who are now making a competitive wage and giving back to their community. OFB is thankful for this employer partnership and their willingness to give visually impaired candidates the opportunity to succeed.

Office of Career and Technical Education

Kentucky Tech Students Participate in National Career Readiness Certificate

College and career readiness represents the new measure of educational excellence at the high school level in both Kentucky and the United States. While this measure has become a focal point in the Office of Career and Technical Education's (OCTE) new direction, its momentum has helped define organizational objectives that include testing senior students in area technology centers through the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) – ACT WorkKeys® system.

In a partnership between OCTE and the Office of Employment and Training (OET), the NCRC-ACT WorkKeys® test was adopted system-wide to validate whether Kentucky Tech students are prepared to succeed at the next level – attending college or beginning a career.

Because WorkKeys® is a job skills assessment system, it complements the career and technical education curriculum. It also stands as a nationally recognized credential supported by industry, education and policy leaders because it measures "real-world" skills that are critical to job success. During OCTE's continuous improvement process, "college and career readiness" was thoughtfully incorporated into the Kentucky Tech School District's vision statement as a means to prepare career and technical education students with the skills and knowledge considered essential for college and workforce readiness.

Across the country, career readiness and evidence-based credentialing have become synonymous in today's workplace for employee selection, hiring and training. Why? It's a matter of time, performance, production and profitability.

Simply earning a high school diploma is no longer enough in this diverse, increasingly complex, technology-driven world. To be successful after high school, OCTE is taking the necessary steps to ensure that its career and technical education students are prepared to succeed at the next level – whether they choose to attend college or go into the workforce.

In the final analysis, the NCRC – ACT WorkKeys® testing initiative provided Kentucky Tech senior students with a documented silver (qualified for 65 percent of jobs); gold (qualified for 95 percent of jobs); or platinum (qualified for 99 percent of jobs) certificate. The positive outcome for Kentucky Tech was 2,406 students earned a silver skill level certificate, 478 students earned a gold skill level certificate, and three students earned a platinum skill level certificate. This is a testament to what Kentucky Tech teachers are doing in their career and technical programs, and how OCTE is actively engaging students in the mastery of academic and technical skills needed to be ready for college and a career.

Kentucky Adult Education

The mission of Kentucky Adult Education (KYAE) is to prepare adults for college and careers by delivering a world-class education. KYAE is committed to a quality adult education system that is accountable, efficient and meets the needs of students. Across the Commonwealth, KYAE programs help students gain the academic skills and credentials they need to transition to postsecondary education, function productively in the workforce and support their families.

For Kentucky to be successful, the nearly 410,000 Kentuckians age 18-64 (15 percent of the working-age population)* without a high school credential must have the opportunity to prepare themselves for college and careers, an opportunity that KYAE programs provide. Consider the following:

- A person with a high school credential earns nearly $9,500 more per year than a high school drop-out. The potential increased earnings for the 9,469 GED graduates in 2011-12 alone will be more than $2.7 billion over a 30-year career. The accompanying chart illustrates the relationship between education, earnings and employment.
- Parents are powerful educational role models. For Kentucky's schools to be successful, we must help adults achieve their educational goals.
- Individuals without a high school credential are more likely to be unemployed, three times as likely to be in poverty and eight times as likely to be incarcerated.
- Increased education has a positive effect on health status.
- Human capital infrastructure reflected as an educated and trained workforce plays a significant role in economic development efforts.

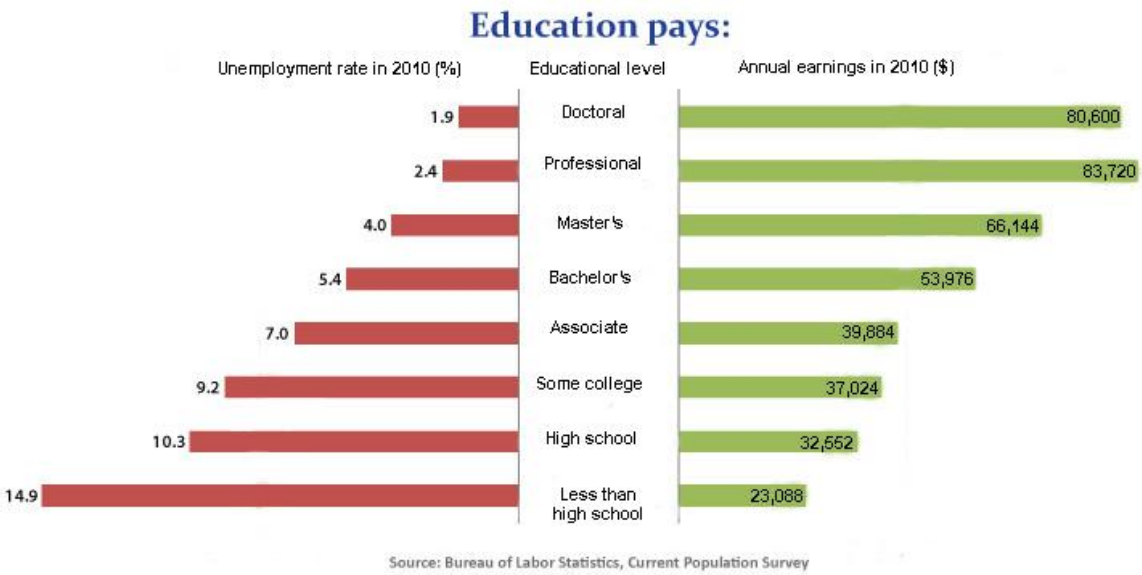
In today's economy, however, earning a high school credential is simply not enough. A recent study by the Georgetown University Center of Education and the Workforce, *The College Advantage: Weathering the Economic Storm*, provides a strong financial argument for the necessity of postsecondary education. According to the study:

- Employment growth since 1989 has been driven entirely by workers with education beyond high school.
- Within every industry, the more educated individuals fared better in the recession and in the recovery.
- New jobs in all industries are demanding more education.

In looking at the Great Recession that began in December 2007, the study concludes:

“College has proved to be the best umbrella in this historic economic storm and the best preparation for the economy that is emerging in recovery. For college graduates, the dark clouds have come with a silver lining. It is a tough job market for college graduates, but far worse for those without a college education.”

For these reasons, KYAE is committed to ensuring that Kentucky adults have the opportunity to earn a GED that prepares them to be successful in college and in life.



KENTUCKY ADULT EDUCATION
LEARNING FOR LIFE

Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Kentucky's Primary Provider of Workforce Education

The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) is the state's primary provider of workforce education, delivering programs and services that address the full spectrum of needs faced by business and industry, as well as programs for individuals who want to upgrade their skills. The system's 16 colleges located on 68 campuses are strategically located to provide accessible education and workforce training that is relevant and responsive to the needs of Kentucky's students, business and industry leaders, and the communities they serve. Since its founding in 1998, KCTCS has transformed the lives of more than 500,000 Kentuckians by providing them with the skills and education they need to succeed in today's economy.

KCTCS offers certificates (some as short as six weeks) and diplomas as well as two-year associate degrees in more than 600 credit program offerings. Through the education and training they received from KCTCS, Kentuckians with:

- an associate degree experience on average a $245,000 increase in lifetime earnings,
- a diploma are associated with increases in earnings of 22 percent for men and 41 percent for women, and
- a certificate(s) are associated with increases in earnings of nine percent for men and three percent for women.

While emphasizing its historical mission to provide general education, KCTCS is expanding its focus on occupational/technical education. Through its Workforce Solutions program, the organization is focused on providing education and training in high growth, high wage jobs, particularly in key industry sectors such as health care, manufacturing, energy, banking and financial services, and construction and trades.

This year, the program provided workforce services to more than 5,900 businesses and industries, provided training to 62,131 employees and conducted 88,700 workplace assessments.

Through the Workforce Solutions program, KCTCS offers customized employee training, helping businesses across the Commonwealth transform into more advanced, more productive competitors in today's economy. KCTCS colleges provide training in multiple formats, making it easy to find the solutions that work for Kentucky's business and industry to continually upgrade the skills of their employees. In addition, KCTCS colleges offer open enrollment classes for hundreds of topics to help individuals and companies meet their workforce training goals.

In 2012, Kentucky launched the Accelerating Opportunity initiative which is a joint project with KCTCS, Kentucky Adult Education, Office of Employment and Training and the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board. Accelerating Opportunity focuses on jobs, the economy, and improving opportunities for adults. This four-year initiative aims to drive economic recovery for individuals and communities by substantially increasing the number of adults who earn the credentials and skills they need to get and succeed in family-sustaining jobs.

For more information about KCTCS go to www.kctcs.edu.

Bluegrass States Skills Corporation

Developing a Talented Workforce

The Cabinet for Economic Development's Bluegrass State Skills Corporation (BSSC) was established in 1984 by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky as an independent de jure corporation to stimulate economic development through customized skills training programs. The BSSC, in cooperation and coordination with other training organizations, has the capability to customize a comprehensive program of skills training services for new and existing business and industry.

To assist companies in developing a talented workforce, the BSSC administers a grant-in-aid and tax credit program. The BSSC grant-in-aid program provides reimbursement funds for entry level and skills upgrade training of employees of Kentucky's new and existing companies. This past fiscal year (July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012), the BSSC Board of Directors approved 156 skills training grants valued at $8,117,059 to train 24,381 Kentucky resident employees.

The Skills Training Investment Credit (STIC) program provides tax credits to offset a portion of a company's costs to support skills upgrade training. Eligible companies must have been engaged in qualified activity within Kentucky for not less than three years. This past fiscal year the BSSC Board of Directors preliminarily approved STIC applications for 34 companies valued at $2,144,444 to train 9,441 Kentucky resident employees.

The BSSC continues to strengthen its working relationship with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB), the Labor Cabinet, and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System to leverage resources and create a talent pipeline for our business and industry partners in Kentucky.

A key initiative in accomplishing this is the WorkReady Communities project initiated by the KWIB. An initiative that certifies a counties workforce and empowers local communities to create a talent pipeline for their local business and industry partners. BSSC staff has been instrumental in establishing this program serving both on the statewide steering team and the application review committee.

Local Workforce Investment Areas

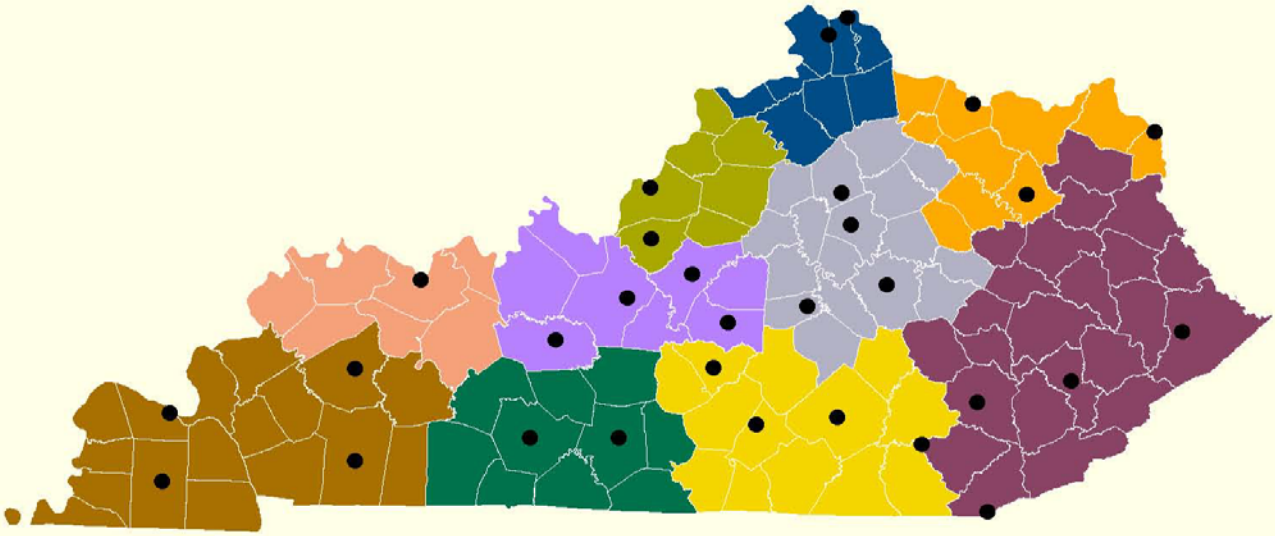
Investing in people can bring long-term reward for individuals and communities

Kentucky's current workforce system consists of 31 comprehensive one-stop centers and 75 service sites throughout the state's 120 counties. Fifteen area development districts and 10 workforce investment areas act at the local level across the state to deliver needed services. Local area representatives take the lead on service delivery by working with state representatives and regional peers to meet local level needs.

Kentucky, like other states, struggles to meet the challenges of providing more and better services during tough economic conditions and tightening budgets. Funds provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) have helped provide programs across the state that are bringing new skills training and job opportunities for more Kentuckians as local offices continue to receive a high volume of customers.

The success of the workforce system involves more than just typical workforce investment areas and one-stop partners. Education institutions, economic development, industrial development authorities and chamber of commerce organizations must all work together to meet the needs of employers by strengthening the workforce system to keep and attract businesses to the state. There is a renewed effort in the Commonwealth to bring these partners together to achieve a more collaborative approach to building a stronger workforce for Kentucky.

Local Workforce Investment Areas



● One-Stop Career Centers

West Kentucky

Counties: Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, Muhlenberg, Todd, Trigg

Sheila Clark, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
300 Hammond Drive
Hopkinsville, Kentucky 42240
270-886-9484
270-886-3211 (fax)
Sheila.Clark@ky.gov

Lincoln Trail

Counties: Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, LaRue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, Washington

Sherry L. Johnson, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
PO Box 604
Elizabethtown, Kentucky 42702
270-769-2393
270-769-2993 (fax)
sherry@ltadd.org

Green River

Counties: Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McClean, Ohio, Union, Webster

Tonya Logsdon, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
3860 US Highway 60 West
Owensboro, Kentucky 42301
270-926-4433
270-684-0714 (fax)
tonyalogsdon@gradd.com

TENCO

Counties: Bath, Boyd, Bracken, Fleming, Greenup, Lewis, Mason, Montgomery, Robertson, Rowan

Denise Wietelmann, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
201 Government Street, Suite 300
Maysville, Kentucky 41056
606-564-6894
606-564-0955 (fax)
dwietelmann@btadd.com

EKCEP

Counties: Bell, Breathitt, Carter, Clay, Elliott, Floyd, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Wolfe

Jeff Whitehead, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
941 North Main
Hazard, Kentucky 41701
606-436-5751
606-436-5755 (fax)
jwhitehead@ekcep.org

Cumberlands

Counties: Adair, Casey, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, Laurel, McCreary, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Russell, Taylor, Wayne, Whitley

Darryl McGaha, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
PO Box 1570
Russell Springs, Kentucky 42642
270-866-4200
270-866-2044 (fax)
darryl@lcadd.org

Barren River

Counties: Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson, Warren

Debbie McCarty, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
177 Graham Avenue
Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101
270-781-2381
270-782-6141 (fax)
debbie@bradd.org

Bluegrass

Counties: Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, Woodford

Jennifer Compton, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
699 Perimeter Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40517
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859-269-7917 (fax)
jcompton@bgadd.org

Greater Louisville

Counties: Bullitt, Henry, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, Trimble

Michael Gritton, Director
Local Workforce Investment Area
410 West Chestnut Street, Suite 200
Louisville, Kentucky 40202
502-574-2500
502-574-4288 (fax)
Michael.Gritton@kentuckianaworks.org

Northern Kentucky

Counties: Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen, Pendleton

Barbara Stewart, Director
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Florence, Kentucky 41022
859-283-1885
859-283-8176 (fax)
Barbara.stewart@nkadd.org

Layton Blick was employed at Luvata in Franklin for 13 years prior to being laid off as a result of company downsizing. Married and the father of two children, Layton was faced with a tough decision about how to provide for his family. After attending a Rapid Response meeting, he learned that he was eligible for the WIA Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program.

Determined to take advantage of the program, Layton enrolled in classes at Austin Peay University in Clarksville, Tenn., in the fall of 2012. He pursued an associate's degree in chemical engineering technology, which complimented his work experience at Luvata. Layton graduated from Austin Peay in the fall of 2011 with a 3.79 GPA.

Armed with a college degree, Layton was ready to re-enter the workforce. On Jan. 2, 2012, Layton began working at the Division 5 Fabricators and Erectors in Russellville as operations manager.

Mehmed Salihovic was laid off from Bowling Green Freight in 2005 after three years of employment. While filing for unemployment insurance at the Bowling Green one-stop career center he met WIA intake specialist Marty Elmes who encouraged him to attend a WIA orientation.

Mehmed had a very impressive work history but he needed to further his education in order to compete in today's job market. In the spring of 2010, Mehmed took advantage of the WIA services and enrolled at Bowling Green Technical College majoring in engineering technology.

In the fall of 2011, Mehmed completed his degree with a 3.89 GPA. On Feb. 14, 2012, Mehmed started his new job at Kobe Aluminum Automotive Service as a maintenance technician, earning more than ever now that he had completed his degree program.

After 33 years at A O Smith in Scottsville, Eva Cline was overwhelmed to learn of the plant's decision to move operations overseas. After attending a Rapid Response meeting, the 55 year old realized that she could make a new start through the TAA program. Eva enrolled at Western Kentucky University (WKU) in August 2009 seeking a degree to become a registered nurse (RN).

In December 2011, Eva graduated from WKU and then found employment at the Medical Center in Franklin as an RN. What seemed to be the worst of times turned out to be just what Eva needed to fulfill her dreams of getting a good education and a great job.

Summer Youth Program

Summer Bibb participated in the Summer Youth program last year and earned valuable work experience and confidence. Summer was placed at the L & N Depot in Bowling Green where she gave tours and worked in the gift shop.

"This program has really helped her with her communication skills. Summer was very shy at the beginning of the program but is much more outgoing since taking this position," said program coordinator Sharon Woods. "She has been a great mentor to the other summer youth workers this summer. She expressed to them the worth of the program and how it has helped her."

Upon completion of the program her employer wants to keep her on the job.

Bluegrass Area Workforce Investment Board

The Bluegrass Workforce Investment Board (BGWIB) found many opportunities to join with other state agencies, colleges and businesses to promote education and hiring during the past year.

Nursing Care Tech Program
BGWIB is partnering with Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) and University of Kentucky (UK) Healthcare to offer nurses' aide training to qualified applicants in the Bluegrass.

The Nursing Care Tech Program will equip up to 15 people with the skills required to be qualified nurses' aides, especially at long-term care and UK Healthcare facilities. Following completion of the program, students will have an opportunity to participate in a paid internship with UK Healthcare and apply for open positions within the organization.

The partnership had a similar program two years ago. Of those who successfully completed the program and were hired by UK Healthcare, 80 percent are still employed.

First Annual Medical Career and Science Institute
The Bluegrass Healthcare Consortium (BHC) hosted a one-week Health Careers Camp in June at Spencerian College. The Medical Career and Science Institute is designed to help middle school students jump start a career in the health field.

During the camp, 23 students participated in an educational curriculum that included lectures and labs in algebra, anatomy, physiology, trigonometry and chemistry. They also gained hands-on experience in phlebotomy, radiology, first responder training and EKG. Camp highlights included a trip to the Sullivan School of Pharmacy and the Minimally Invasive Surgery Lab and Science Center at UK.

BGWIB and CEDIK Partnership
A new partnership with Dr. Alison Davis, executive director for Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) at the UK, and the BGWIB will give a comprehensive picture of what is happening in the region by identifying, estimating and reporting workforce and economic development indicators and outcomes.

Some of the activities will include creating industry reports on each sector identified as vital to the growth of the Bluegrass economy and identifying emerging or declining industries or clusters. Additionally, Alison will create workforce profiles for the region and each county that will include economic variables, largest employers, occupational trends and potential gaps in skills and education.

Bluegrass Workforce Investment Board Scholarships

One of the most important functions of the BGWIB is to help ensure that the region's workforce is trained in high-demand career fields and to assist them in obtaining the skills area employers require. To help people with limited skills, the board has established a scholarship fund for those interested in furthering their education in the region's most high-demand career fields. BGWIB scholarships provide up to $7,500 per year for tuition, books and other support services for up to two years. Scholarships are available for programs leading to a certificate, license, diploma, associate's degree or completion of the last two years of a bachelor's degree.

Amteck Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship Training

Amteck, a large international electrical contractor based in Lexington, has had difficulty finding employees qualified for entry-level positions, so the BGWIB is partnering with the company to offer a "Quick Start" electrical program. The intense two-week class prepares participants with the skills required for entry-level electrical work, the background needed to be selected for employment by Amteck and possible recommendation for entry into an electrical apprenticeship program.

"Steppin' to a New Beat" Graduation Ceremony

On April 17, the first graduation ceremony was held at the Fayette County Detention Center for seven inmates that had completed the Steppin' to a New Beat Re-Entry program. The LFUCG Division of Community Corrections has joined with the BGWIB to provide the 12-week program for individuals with barriers to re-entry such as unemployment, poor conflict resolution skills and no housing.

The goals of the program are to equip the individual with the necessary tools to become a productive member of society and reduce recidivism. By utilizing the program, inmates of the Fayette County Detention Center learn employability skills such as resume development, interviewing skills, money management and computer skills.

Now, BGWIB is expanding the program by developing a new partnership with Corrisoft, a Lexington-based business dedicated to reducing recidivism through the use of technology. Corrisoft is donating access to its service, the Alternative to Incarceration via Rehabilitation (AIR), to New Beat clients. AIR uses cell phones with GPS capabilities to safely monitor clients while also providing a connection to employment opportunities, social service programs and other resources. AIR users are given phones that provide text messages on job referrals, links to service providers and the opportunity to meet with a behavioral counselor if needed, all at no charge to the program or client.

“Clients of the program get jobs because we eliminate the excuses,” said Mike Edwards, director of Operations for Corrisoft. “If a client says, ‘I can’t go to an interview because I don’t have transportation,’ we can say, ‘we’ll get you transportation.’”

Corrisoft also works to reduce the stigma attached to job seekers with a criminal record by establishing relationships with local employers who are aware in advance of the applicant’s history. “Employers know they are getting someone with a criminal record, because we contact them,” said Edwards. “That removes a lot of the pressure going into an interview.”

After a presentation about AIR, 15 clients took immediate advantage of the opportunity. The AIR program has proven to be exceptionally effective. In the first two months, 31 New Beat clients received phones. Seventeen clients are now employed and another 12 continue to receive job referrals via AIR on a regular basis, while only two clients have opted out of the service.

Positive Change Equals Progress for Former Inmate

For Brian Keith Coleman, change has not been easy but it has been worth it. With a strong support system, his faith and help from the “Steppin’ to a New Beat” Re-Entry program, he has gone from inmate to entrepreneur.

For more than a decade, Brian had been in and out of prison for robbery, drugs and parole violations, but in April 2009 he became determined not to go back to that life. Brian had a strong foundation at home in his wife Cleo, who he refers to as his “best friend” and “love of his life.”

Through her support and his connection with Team Ministries and Pastor Malcolm Leatherwood, he found the support to help him start the journey to a new life. In eight months, Brian found work in shipping and receiving at a local specialty store. Although he was promoted four times and eventually became head of a department, he lost his job after two years when the business was bought by another company and he was terminated because of his previous felonies.

Through his church, Brian became involved in the Steppin' to a New Beat Re-Entry program and the WorkNow program, a short-term employment opportunity paid by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for people experiencing long-term unemployment.

Once Brian completed the WorkNow program, he realized that the best way to ensure he has work would be to make his own and that's when Coleman Care Household Services was founded. Brian's business is beginning to take off and he is getting leads on bids for jobs including apartment complexes, a local television station and some government agencies. Brian is seen as such a great example of what can happen when positive changes take place that he was the spotlight speaker at the monthly Bluegrass Re-Entry Council meeting.

BGWIB Hosts annual Steps to Success Youth Competition
More than 100 youths challenged their individual and teamwork skills at the BGWIB's seventh annual Steps to Success Youth Competition at Spencerian College in Lexington.

The one-day competition gave participants the opportunity to showcase employment-related skills obtained throughout the year and to earn play money to spend at an auction of items donated by Bluegrass businesses. Competitions included Public Speaking, Decision Making, Employment Techniques, Scrapbook, Service Learning, Logo Design, Essay and Carpet Maze. Following the competition, competitors and guests attended an awards banquet and dinner celebrating their achievements.

Getting Back to Work Means Success for Richmond Graduate
Two years ago, Sandra Allen didn't think her future looked very bright after receiving the news that her company would be experiencing massive layoffs and shipping the jobs overseas. With limited skills and education, the Richmond resident knew that she needed additional career training to make it in this tough job market. She began looking at her options and found the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA) through her local career center and a way to pay for college.

Sandra's hard work in the classroom paid off as she was recently hired to work in the accounting department for a Fortune 500 company just weeks before she finished her associate's degree from the business administration-accounting program at National College. She said that she never would have been able to return to school without the financial support received through TAA and National College's Workforce Development Grant, which matches funds to many federal, state and local workforce development and worker training programs.

Sarah Waldrip, Kayla Wesley and Ashley Eldridge, participants working at the Somerset Career Center through the Other Work Experience Program (OWEP), have transitioned to full-time employment. These customers were able to improve their skills, update their resumes and obtain referrals while working at the career center.

Working in the reception area, they gained experience in operating multi-line telephone systems, printers, copiers, facsimile and PC software. By providing more detail to their work history, listing additional skills and expanding their job search they were each able to eventually secure employment.

Vickie Cordell, local program coordinator, noted that the Somerset Career Center is a great fit for the program, providing a means for those most in need to improve their employability while gaining additional working knowledge.

Campbellsville resident Mike Moore named New Century Scholar
For the fourth time in the past five years, a Somerset Community College student has been named to the Coca-Cola New Century Scholars program. Mike Moore, a physical therapist assistant (PTA) program student from Campbellsville, was chosen as the top scoring student from Kentucky in 2012.

Moore is one of only 50 community college students from the United States, Canada and Guam to be named a 2012 New Century Scholar. More than 1,700 students were nominated from more than 800 community colleges for the recognition.

Judges consider grades, leadership, activities and most importantly, how students extend their intellectual talents beyond the classroom.

As part of his honor, Moore received a $2,000 scholarship, recognition at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Convention in April 2012 in Orlando, Fla., and was featured in USA TODAY, AACC's Community College Times and Community College Journal and on Phi Theta Kappa's website.

According to Dr. Ron Meade, PTA program coordinator, Moore was an excellent choice for the award.

“Mike has really been the ideal student,” said Meade. “He has excelled academically and has been very active in his community and within the physical therapy profession. He is the type of student every instructor hopes to have in the classroom.”

According to Moore, who grew up in Columbia, he got mixed up with the wrong crowd during his early teenage years and was on a wrong path. He ended up dropping out of school before completing his high school diploma.

“I was blessed enough afterward to have a pastor, who along with my mother, gave me discipline and tough love and helped me get on a good path,” said Moore. “A few years later I fell in love with my best friend and wife. After we married, I worked my way up in the manufacturing world, receiving seven promotions with one company and later moved on to another company to take a very challenging position.”

Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc.

EKCEP

Throughout 2011, the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc. (EKCEP) made great strides toward being increasingly relevant to job seekers and employers across its 23-county service area by being nimble, creative and responsive in its approach to delivering its array of workforce services.

In response to findings in its landmark 2010 “The Workforce Opportunity Project” research study that featured direct input from 100 employers and company decision-makers in the region, EKCEP unveiled in 2011 a vastly different service model that is changing the landscape of workforce development, training and employment in the region.

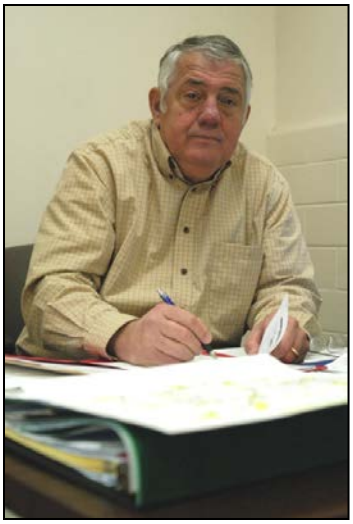
EKCEP’s new model sets its sights on highlighting the services of the region’s career advisors in such a way as to create innovative avenues to access the workforce system and help people better navigate hurdles to get a job, a better job or launch a targeted career.

The centerpiece of this new approach is Job Clubs of Eastern Kentucky, a regional initiative that features regular support group meetings for unemployed and underemployed citizens in 15 locations throughout EKCEP’s service area.

Sponsored by EKCEP, the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training (OET), and Community Action Agency partners in EKCEP’s JobSight workforce network, Job Clubs features small groups of job seekers who meet weekly with local workforce experts to improve their job searches.
The Job Club group members provide support for each other while networking, sharing job leads, and learning techniques for improving their job searches from workforce experts, local business people and other invited guests.

The combination of support, networking, and job-search education has proven time and again to make Job Club members much more successful at getting a job than people who search alone.

One such person was Larry Lanning, a 20-year Army veteran who had been out of work for eight months when he discovered the Floyd County Job Club through his local OET office.



At first he was skeptical, Larry, 61, said, but he soon realized that it was a place where he could meet other people who were in the same situation, and a place where members and staff were pulling for everyone to succeed.

“I didn’t feel like I was in it all by myself anymore. I felt like I had people to go to bat for me,” Larry said.

Other big benefits of attending a Job Club are getting leads on unadvertised jobs (the “hidden job market”) and building strong networking contacts.

Through getting to know OET staff at the Floyd County Job Club, Larry found out about a vacant disabled veterans’ representative position with OET, a job he ultimately landed and continues to work in and enjoy.

Reva Kidd, one of the Big Sandy Area Community Action Program (BSACAP) career advisors who worked with Larry at the Floyd County Job Club, said he always took full advantage of all the resources Job Club provides.

“He was very dedicated to finding employment,” Reva said.
Larry often recommends Job Clubs of Eastern Kentucky to other job seekers, including the veterans he serves.

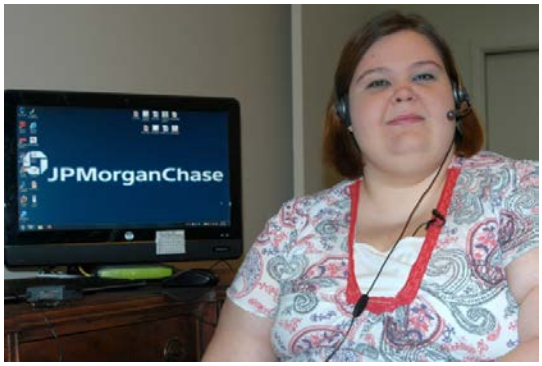
“I’m a big believer in Job Clubs,” Larry said. “It really is people helping people to get jobs.”

EKCEP in 2011 also worked to diversify opportunities for employment by helping the region’s citizens enter the global work-from-home job market through the launch of the Kentucky Teleworks initiative.

Kentucky Teleworks is a free service that connects job seekers with information and job listings for work-from-home job opportunities, and also employs career advising tactics to prepare them to apply for and compete for those jobs.

Because it is an EKCEP service, Kentucky Teleworks is also able to work with Community Action Agency partners in its JobSight workforce network to offer job seekers a variety of workforce development services such as resume preparation, interviewing skills and career planning with professional career advisors that can give them an edge over other applicants for the same jobs.

Victoria Boston of Barbourville is one of about 3,000 Kentuckians who Kentucky Teleworks has helped enter the work-from-home job market. Before learning about Kentucky Teleworks upon visiting KCEOC Community Action Partnership, Victoria had applied for every job she could think of in the Barbourville area without any results.



Once Victoria signed up with Kentucky Teleworks, Bonnie Cain, a Kentucky Communities Economic Opportunity Council (KCEOC) career advisor, helped Victoria get her resume in shape and find the right job for her.

Because she had experience working in a call center in Victoria and liked helping people, the right fit proved to be a job with a company called VIP Desk. Using her computer in her home, Victoria helps people with questions about EBT cards for JP Morgan Chase Bank.

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“When I used to think about working online I thought it was just scams,” Victoria said, adding that Kentucky Teleworks helped her find safe, legitimate employment.

Kentucky Teleworks researches and evaluates all companies and telework jobs before adding them to its online jobs directory. This eliminates scams and produces a focused list of solid jobs with proven, reputable companies.

Victoria said she tells her friends who are looking for work to try Kentucky Teleworks.

“Whenever I tell someone about it they say ‘Hey, I want a job working from home, too,’” she said.

In addition to fundamental changes in how it places job seekers in contact with critical workforce services, career advising and job opportunities, EKCEP also worked to directly respond to the identified skills needs of the region’s employers.

Fast Forward to Work launched as a way to help employers address soft-skills deficiencies among employees in key areas such as following instructions, communication, decision-making ability, conflict resolution and negotiation, personal effectiveness, creative problem solving, team building, work ethic and proper attitude and appearance.

Fast Forward to Work accomplishes this through a short-term, intensive work-readiness training course led by certified professional instructors that utilizes focused content, hands-on exercises, and dynamic class modules in communications, customer service, and employer expectations and workplace principles.

EKCEP's Fast Forward to Work quickly hit the mark with key employers in the region.

"We are so pleased that we scheduled the Fast Forward to Work program at Taylor Regional Hospital," said Continuing Education Coordinator Gayle Bright, RN, BSN.

"Here, we value each individual and work together to explore new ways to improve the quality of life for all," Gayle continued. "This program will definitely aid in our commitment to excellence."

Charlotte Ledington, recruiting assistant for Xerox Business Services in London, echoed those sentiments.

"We're pleased that we chose to use the Fast Forward to Work training," Charlotte said. "We have seen an improvement in skills, production, quality, work habits and attendance."

As for the program year ahead, Executive Director Jeff Whitehead said EKCEP plans to continue being responsive to the identified needs of job seekers and employers through the growth and development of sector-based industry partnerships; the development of a strategic workforce plan for the region that is inclusive of industry, education and other key partners; and the continued growth of the new initiatives launched this year that benefit both sides of the workforce equation.

"We're very proud of the success we're seeing with the new direction EKCEP has charted for the delivery of our workforce and employer services — but we've only just begun," Jeff said. "We're committed to remaining responsive, innovative and strategic in order to maximize our relevance to our region's job seekers and employers."

JOB CLUBS OF EASTERN KENTUCKY

KENTUCKY TELEWORKS

Green River Workforce Investment Board

The Green River Workforce Investment Board (GRWIB) provides services to two distinct groups of job seekers who are dealing with drug and alcohol addictions, many of whom have one or more felonies on their records.

The Daviess County Detention Center's GOALS Program and the Owensboro Regional Recovery, a collaboration of several community partners use employability skills workshops to assist groups that have difficulty making a transition to employment after treatment. Workshop content include job searching, identifying barriers to employment, filling out employment applications, developing a resume, creating of a general cover letter, interviewing techniques and keeping a job.

The GOALS Program, supervised by director Linda Welch, offers 16 hours of bi-monthly intensive, hands-on employability skills training. Class sizes range from 9-14 inmates. Since January 2012, 39 clients have been served off site with others coming into the career center for additional services after their release.

The Owensboro Regional Recovery Program's workshop is overseen by Travis Morrison. This monthly three-hour workshop is held at the Owensboro office of the Kentucky Career System. Since the beginning of 2012, 77 clients have been served on site with some coming back for additional services.

Green River WIB – 2012 Outstanding Employer Award - Alliance Coal
For several years, the Green River Area Development District (GRADD) has been developing on-the-job training contracts with Alliance Coal, River View Mine in Union County. Jamie Rhoads and Michelle Drake have placed 145 inexperienced underground miners in contracts to gain the necessary skills to obtain an experienced miners certification and earn significant wages and benefits. These are some of the best paid jobs in the region.

By combining the pay and benefits with the excellent teamwork and organizational culture of Alliance, the OJT participants have been successful at keeping these jobs. Every client placed in an OJT with this company is excited and thankful to be given such an amazing opportunity. Working with the staff at Alliance has been a pleasure for the GRADD staff. When the staff needs information about clients or projected future growth, the team at Alliance is timely, responsive and helpful. GRADD and Alliance staff work so well together that the OJT process is now virtually seamless. As a result, Alliance Coal was awarded the agency's 2012 Outstanding Employer Award.

Green River WIB – 2012 Outstanding Dislocated Worker Award
Randell Fulkerson

Randell Fulkerson owned his own automotive business for 11 years until he lost his company because of the downturn in the economy. He then went to work for an automotive company, only to lose that job due to downsizing. Fulkerson decided to “take a leap of faith” and enroll in school and try a much different career path, one that he felt would provide job stability and a level of satisfaction that he had been missing in his previous jobs. He enrolled in the clinical lab technician program at Henderson Community College.

Randell soon realized that attending college classes and experiencing satisfaction in his daily life was something that he had missed. He became very determined to make up for lost time and completely engaged himself in his studies and lab work. He would often stay after class to put in extra time on coursework because he “simply wanted to be the top student in the CLT class.” In addition, Randell would stay after class to help tutor students who were struggling with lab procedures.

Randell graduated from HCC with a perfect 4.0 GPA and was the co-recipient of the Outstanding CLT Student award. He is currently working full-time at Community Methodist Hospital as a lab technician and is teaching a urinalysis class at HCC. Additionally, he is enrolled at the University of Cincinnati working on a bachelor degree in medical technology. Robert Jenkins, Randell’s training coordinator, commented that not only does he have an impeccable work ethic, but also a true passion for learning and has the energy and focus to accomplish whatever he attempts.

He modestly summarizes his career change as “I was just a guy working on automobiles with grease underneath my fingernails all day long” until he was forced to make a change. Now, Randell is thriving in his new career and was named the agency’s 2012 Outstanding Dislocated Worker.

KentuckianaWorks

Young adults in six counties can get help obtaining GEDs, college and jobs

Brittany Wilson had such severe migraines that she couldn't sit up let alone go to school. Though she was an A-B student as a freshman, her grades started slipping in her sophomore year, and she dropped out.

Today, the 17-year-old Henry County resident's migraines are managed and less frequent. And with assistance from the newly expanded services of the KentuckianaWorks Youth Career Center in Bullitt County, she was able to complete her GED in November 2011.

She enrolled at the Shelbyville campus of Jefferson Community and Technical School in the fall. She will take classes to become a certified phlebotomist in the high-demand field of health care.

"I talked to them at the KentuckianaWorks Youth Career Center about paying for the GED," Wilson said. "They said the center is more than just helping you get your GED. It's helping you get into postsecondary school, doing your FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and helping you get a job."

Just like Wilson, out-of-school youth, ages 16-21, in Bullitt, Henry, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer and Trimble counties now can get tutoring assistance and financial incentives to complete their GEDs through the KentuckianaWorks Youth Career Center in Bullitt County. Young adults in these counties also can explore financial assistance for college and job training, receive career counseling and get help applying for college and job training.

"Employers tell us that they need workers who have good job skills. They want to hire employees who can read and understand directions, who have basic math skills and who know their way around a computer," said Michael Gritton, executive director of KentuckianaWorks. "Getting a GED is the first step in helping these young adults become more job ready. After that, we can help them find training to increase their skills and get a job or find financial assistance for college."

Finding support to succeed
“I think if I hadn’t come across the KentuckianaWorks Youth Career Center, I wouldn’t have been as persistent – very persistent – to get my GED, to study for it,” said 17-year-old Trevor Cameron, a former Henry County resident. “They offered as much help as possible. They did a great job for me.”

Christina Burns, the youth specialist at the Youth Career Center, worked with Cameron to find out what he wanted to do after he got his GED, why he chose that area of study and where he wanted to live and work. “She helped me locate the cosmetology school,” he said. “She told me that if I needed any tutoring or anything like that, they would tutor me. They were very helpful, actually.”

Centers offer help
KentuckianaWorks Youth Career Centers have operated for several years in Bullitt and Jefferson counties and have a proven track record of helping young adults complete their GEDs and jump start their careers. The Bullitt County office currently serves 268 youth in the six counties.

From July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012, the center has helped 39 youth in the six counties attain their GEDs and nine attain occupational credentials such as CNA (certified nursing assistant).

During that time, 11 youth entered short-term postsecondary training, and five enrolled in college. Career specialists at the center helped 79 youth find employment.

"My job is to be supportive,” Burns said. “These young adults can accomplish so much but sometimes they need that extra push to help them reach their goals. I want them to see that they *can* succeed. One success gives them the confidence to continue reaching higher."

When Flex Films, an Indian owned company, chose Elizabethtown to build its first U.S. site, the Lincoln Trail area and state agencies had to collaborate to meet the manufacturer's needs.

The flexible packaging company began the hiring process for the Elizabethtown site in January 2012. From the very beginning partners from the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training, Lincoln Trail Area Development District, Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Kentucky Adult Education, Elizabethtown Community and Technical College, and the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development worked together with Flex Films to make sure they could provide all services needed for the company's success.

During joint meetings, a plan was developed to take resumes and applications, determine training needs and available funding, and plan a job fair. This collaboration produced a very successful job fair with more than 1,300 applications being taken. Bluegrass State Skills was used to provide testing and training and the employer was satisfied with the quality of applications and resumes. This collaborative effort follows the model of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board's vision of transformation in the state.

Flex Films has been very satisfied with the services received and has 47 new employees hired as of July 2012. They continue to use our services and LTWIB is continuing to place the remainder of their employees.

Bob Disch worked for a company for 25 years until it closed and moved to Mexico. About the same time as his last day of work, Bob's 88-yearold uncle was diagnosed with cancer for the fifth time. Bob spent the next eight months searching for work in a bad economy while being his uncle's caregiver. When Bob's uncle passed away, the job market was still weak, so he decided to enroll in classes with the help of the Trade Assistance Program (TAA). Bob felt this was the last chance he would have to make a big difference in his career goals.

Bob enrolled in classes at Gateway Community and Technical College where he earned two associate degrees, one in the electrical field the other in energy.

Bob says he was able to make it through those two years with support from his wonderful wife and daughter. In addition, he received help from the people at the one-stop career center and the TAA program. "Without them I could never had done this," Bob said. "In these hard times they have been a God send."

Bob says it was a great feeling walking to the podium to get his degree from the dean and knowing that he made the Dean's List all through school with a grade point average of well over 3.5. He was the first one on his side of the family to get a college degree.

When Linda entered the Career Connections program she had recently been separated from her employment with Orient Engine, a Trade-affected company. This was Linda's second company closure after long-term employment but this time was different. This time Linda decided to take advantage of the training benefits offered through Trade Assistance Program (TAA).

She took the initiative to educate herself on the benefits offered through TAA and map out a career path that would allow her to gain a credential in her current skill set.

By adding an associate's degree to her more than 20 years of managerial/payroll experience, Linda felt confident that her employment opportunities would expand.

Linda finished the two-year business administration associate degree program in 18 months. She often corresponded with her career advisor about how good she felt that she was able to continue her education. She shared that her children complimented her often and told her how proud they were of her accomplishments.

Linda secured employment with National Cylinder Head and loves her position as administrative assistant. Linda has increased her previous income by $5,000 annually and has potential to continue her climb up the business ladder.

Carolyn came into the Covington one-stop career center to receive unemployment services after losing her position as librarian for Covington Independent Schools. Carolyn had hoped to retire from her previous position, but because of the economic conditions she found herself seeking new employment at the age of 63.

Carolyn's resourcefulness landed her a job at Coney providing some landscaping assistance to the groundskeepers. The income from this position was not sufficient for Carolyn, so she continued to search for other employment. While visiting the one-stop career center Carolyn obtained information about Career Connections and decided that she would work through the process. As her savings depleted and she struggled to maintain her basic needs on unemployment and her seasonal job, she decided that upgrading her skills may be the best thing she could do in order to re-enter the workforce.

Carolyn first met with her career advisor and expressed her desire for training in the information technology industry. Carolyn already possessed a master's degree in education and had life-long experience in that field. She felt one of her primary obstacles with securing new employment was her lack of computer skills and her age.

Carolyn explored her job search methods and since she felt basic computer skills would get her back into the workforce she decided to begin with the GCFLearnFree.org website. Carolyn's advisor suggested she apply for employment at places like hospitals and other nonprofit agencies that could utilize her teaching experience in an adult atmosphere where her age would allow her the credibility she had earned.

Carolyn began receiving calls for interviews and contacted her advisor for assistance with current etiquette and interview questions. Soon after she secured a position as a trainer with National Energy Education Development Project (NEED). Carolyn is happy with her new position, and the ability to be self-sufficient as well as travel the nation.

Jennifer Eskridge got caught up in the whirlwind created by the plummet of the housing market. As a teacher of 10 years, Jennifer didn't expect the calamity of budget cuts, job shortages and downsizing. Falling victim herself in 2010, Jennifer started searching for positions in the field she loved – teaching. Even with a wider, more intensive search, Jennifer struggled to even find schools with job openings.

Resigned to the fact that she was not finding success on her own, Jennifer sought assistance through Career Connections. Having done her homework, like she would have encouraged her students, she was determined to enroll in school at Northern Kentucky University to expand her skills and certification into the high-demand field of special education. With tuition assistance through Career Connections and the WIA program, Jennifer threw herself into her training program, making A's all along the way. After two years of the training program, she achieved a Rank 1 status, allowing her to make more money than she had previously, and a certification in special education.

Before she even completed applying for her new certification, Jennifer accepted a job for the upcoming school year.

Dave McKinney was unemployed for nearly two years before realizing that he needed help making himself more marketable. In addition, Dave's unemployment insurance was about to end.

In his previous two jobs he started out as a local delivery driver and then worked his way up through the company. Looking back Dave realized that he had been happiest as a driver and decided he would attend truck driving school. Although he had reservations about driving over-the-road and being away from his wife and two sons, he realized he had to provide for his family.

After two weeks of truck driver training, Dave was offered a job at a local building supply company. Dave worked full-time as a truck loader through the week, and was able to continue his training on the weekends with Napier Truck Driving School. Once Dave completed truck driver training and received his commercial driver's license, the building supply company recognized his work ethic and promoted him to a local truck driving position. Dave is now happily driving the open road, and is home each night with his wife and kids. His new employment has allowed him to provide for his family and given him a career he loves.

Tama worked in the health field for many years until May 2009 when her company closed and she lost her job. At this point Tama didn't know where to turn. She had a great deal of experience in the health care industry, but she did not have a degree or certifications to back it up. She found it difficult to obtain employment in the health field without additional education.

After researching many training programs, Tama decided on occupational therapy assistant (OTA). But with the high cost of training, Tama needed some additional financial assistance. Tama checked on the WIA program for resources and found out she was eligible as a Dislocated Worker for WIA training funds.

After two years of training, Tama graduated from her OTA program with high honors. She took the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy exam and passed the first time. Within three months of graduating, Tama obtained full-time employment at Victory Park Healthcare Group. She started out earning $27 an hour and continues to work full time as a certified occupational therapy assistant there. Because of her training, she is now in a career earning an hourly wage that is almost double what she was earning previously without holding a degree.

As a native of Senegal West Africa, Lat had to overcome several barriers to attend school in the medical assisting associate degree program. Lat was unemployed with a non-working wife and three children when he enrolled. He heard about the WIA grant and decided to apply because he knew that it would be financially impossible for him to train without funding assistance.

English is a second language for Lat and during the WIA grant application process he immediately noticed how difficult it was for him to pass the Test of Adult Basic Education exam. Although Lat's scores were lower, he demonstrated his ability to be successful by working his way through the WIA grant approval process with great motivation and excitement. He explained how he desperately needed an education to better his employment opportunities to support his family. The career counselor knew that Lat's determination and self-confidence would help him succeed no matter what the obstacles.

While taking classes, Lat was faced with many challenges including an instructor whose broken English he could not understand and a wife in school at the same time taking CNA classes. Lat also had car breakdowns that required costly repairs, lost his apartment because he no longer could afford it and the arrival of his fourth child. But eventually his perseverance began to pay off, and his wife landed a CNA job.

Lat proved to be one of WIA's best clients. After completing an internship for Met Lab, Lat was offered a full-time, permanent position as a phlebotomist with the company eventually making $11.70 per hour. Lat now works for the University of Cincinnati Hospital as a phlebotomist and is pursuing a bachelor of health administration program and continues to be grateful for the opportunities the WIA scholarship provides him.

Jose Morales came to the United States in hopes of creating a better life for himself and his family and to offer his children a better future. Jose settled in Northern Kentucky and began working two jobs, one at Regional Elite and the other DHL. Jose learned that he would be laid off from his job at Regional Elite and worried how he was going to support his family.

While attending a Rapid Response session, Jose learned about the tuition assistance offered through the Career Connections program and the types of training that were approved. Because of his work with DHL, Jose became interested in obtaining a Class A CDL and started to explore how this credential could assist him with his position at DHL. Jose expressed a strong interest in attending Napier Truck Driver Training and was approved by the program.

Jose's supervisor at DHL considered him a prime example of an exceptional employee willing to work his way to the top, and offered Jose a promotion upon completion of the training program. After working with DHL for another year, he was recruited by Coca Cola to become a lead driver.

I-Train Grant
Maysville Community and Technical College received a Department of Labor ARRA Health Care grant which included a partnership with the TENCO LWIA to increase the number of registered nurses in the area to meet employer needs. What made this proposal stand out was twofold, it provided a mechanism to use current lab and classroom space by offering night and weekend programs and it provided a full-time allied health care case manager. TENCO's partnership involved utilizing both grant funds and WIA funds to support the case manager position. The case manager is a TENCO employee who has an office on the Maysville campus, thus providing both valuable encouragement and linkage to community resources, job placement, tutoring and tuition assistance in the form of a 'mini' career center on the college campus. This program graduated 44 nurses which had an immediate positive impact in the health care community.

TENCO Career Center Staff and Partners Training
TENCO continues to recognize the value of career center staff and partners training which has been held for five of the past six years. In April, 51 individuals participated in a day-and-a-half training which fosters both partnership and professional development in provision of services to career center customers.

TENCO Holds First Community Forums during Strategic Planning
For the first time ever, TENCO hosted three community forums to solicit community input that was used by the TENCO Workforce Investment Board in the strategic planning process. Forums were held in Maysville, Morehead and Ashland and were attended by elected officials, employers and interested community partners.

TENCO promotes the value of the NCRC
In an effort to increase awareness in the value of the NCRC to employers and job seekers, TENCO provided speakers for various functions that included plant managers, and economic development and human resources professionals, and with individual companies regarding how NCRC can assist in the retention of employees. TENCO also paid for testing the senior class of a local high school where the majority earned a certificate.

Morehead Career Center Reaches Out to Tornado Victims
The Morehead Career Center assisted in the collection and distribution of food for West Liberty and Menifee County. Both experienced extreme devastation in the wake of tornados in the area.

TENCO Provides Series of Workshops Geared to Individuals with Felonies
TENCO, for the first time, provided a series of four workshops specifically geared to the unique needs of individuals with felonies. Referrals were received from the Mason County Probation and Parole office and two individuals were employed at the conclusion of these workshops.

TENCO Hosts Job Fairs
TENCO Career Centers hosted job fairs, for the first time in three years, an encouraging sign that employment opportunities are on the increase in the area. Combined, these job fairs had more than 300 employment opportunities for job seekers. Additionally, workshops were held focusing on resume writing and interview skills to enhance employment opportunities.

West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (WKWIB) Operation Workforce event funding offers the 17 counties of the Purchase and Pennyrile regions the opportunity to submit proposals tailored to their local workforce needs. These collaborative efforts, most often led by the area chambers of commerce or economic development agencies, are encouraged to partner with local and regional educational institutions. Operation Workforce events may highlight workforce activities, local businesses, and/or employee preparedness providing information to citizens seeking new or better employment opportunities.

The 2012 cycle marked the ninth year of funding for projects, including:

Trigg County's Ultimate Youth Creative Challenge Cup
The first annual Trigg County's Ultimate Youth Creative Challenge Cup was held on May 3, 2012, at Lake Barkley State Convention Center. This one-day engineering event created awareness for students in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and creative patentable ideas.

In one contest, teams of five fifth graders participated in a Mars Rover race to collect moon rocks for science experiments with their prototypes. In another challenge, senior students in the Capstone Course Engineering Design and Development at Trigg County High School presented their patentable ideas to a judge's panel.

Todd County Job Opportunity Fair
A grant to the Todd County Industrial Foundation helped sponsor the Todd County Job Opportunity Fair April 19. More than 100 job seekers attended the event in Elkton. Hopkinsville Community College (HCC), as well as seven area businesses participated in the event.

Madisonville – Hopkins County Job and Career Expo 2012
The Madisonville – Hopkins County Job and Career Expo 2012 on May 15 showcased education and employment resources and provided an opportunity for contact between employers and job seekers. The Madisonville-Hopkins County Chamber of Commerce headed this collaborative effort held at Madisonville Community College's Brown Badgett Energy and Advanced Technology Center. More than 40 employers participated.

Christian County's First Annual Entrepreneurs, Inventors & Innovation Conference
The Christian County Chamber of Commerce, HCC, MEDI of Western Kentucky and Pennyrile Area Development District partnered to host Christian County's First Annual Entrepreneurs, Inventors and Innovation Conference on March 7 at HCC. The goal of the conference was to promote entrepreneurial skills in the workforce by providing training, networking and motivation for new businesses. The conference hosted workshops which assisted individuals to find resources, analyze business opportunities and develop relationships with other entrepreneurs in the region.

Project Water
Beginning in April 2011, a series of heavy rainfall blanketed the WKWIB area. Flooding and flash flooding swept through the Paducah area forcing families and businesses to evacuate. Waterways, bridges and roads were flooded and damaged as rain and flood waters continued to rise.

On May 4, 2011, President Obama granted a disaster declaration to the Commonwealth of Kentucky clearing the way for a National Emergency Grant (NEG) from the Department of Labor for cleanup efforts. Some of the funds received in the Purchase Area were used to implement Project Water, a program to help counties rebuild and cleanup areas that were hard hit by the disaster flooding.

Project Water has served many purposes for the region and for individuals who live in the impacted counties. For example, temporary flood-related cleanup jobs were created for dislocated workers and the long-term unemployed.

One Project Water worksite in Paducah is located at the McCracken County Road Department. Cleanup efforts have been underway since the summer of 2011 and have primarily focused on cleaning up debris on and around flooded roads and bridges. Their work freed the road department crew to focus on other needed repairs in the county.

Marshall County resident Mitchell Styers had a hard time finding permanent full-time employment near his home. Before finding temporary employment through the WKWIB's Project Water, Mitchell was only able to find short-term, low paying jobs.

He began visiting the one-stop career center for job search and employment assistance. In August 2011, Mitchell heard about Project Water and travelled to the Murray Career Discovery Center to complete an application.

He was called for a work placement with supervisor Russell York at the Marshall County Road Department. He was excited to be part of the team working to get his hometown back on its feet. Mitchell's job with Project Water ended in February 2012, but the Marshall County Road Department was so impressed with his work that it led to a full-time job.

Mitchell said, "Without the assistance and support of the West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board I would have not been able to make my dream of finding great full-time employment possible."

Frederick Pierce
Frederick (Freddie) Pierce left the Army in September 2001, but he struggled to transition into the civilian workforce and find long-term employment. He worked several temporary and short-term jobs until he found full-time employment at a local production facility. In February 2009 he was laid off and began a long job search. While receiving services from the one-stop career center, Freddie chose to attend Austin Peay State University to get a degree and find a better job.

Freddie had been out of work for 130 weeks when he became eligible for the On-the-Job Training National Emergency Grant (OJT NEG) program and went on to work with FP International. He was hired through the WKWIB program in July 2011 and remains employed with the company.

Program Successes – Youth/Adult Co-enrollment
Before Kayela Day was accepted into the Madisonville Community College You Make A Difference CNA program funded through WKWIB, she was employed as a part-time cashier making $7.50 per hour. After completing the CNA program, Kayela continued her education and became a registered nurse (RN).

The Adult WIA program provided financial assistance for Kayela to receive her Associate in Applied Science degree, a stepping stone to becoming an RN. Kayela is currently employed at Regional Medical Center in Madisonville as a full-time RN. After receiving services from the Youth and Adult WIA programs, Kayela increased her wage by $13.28 per hour.

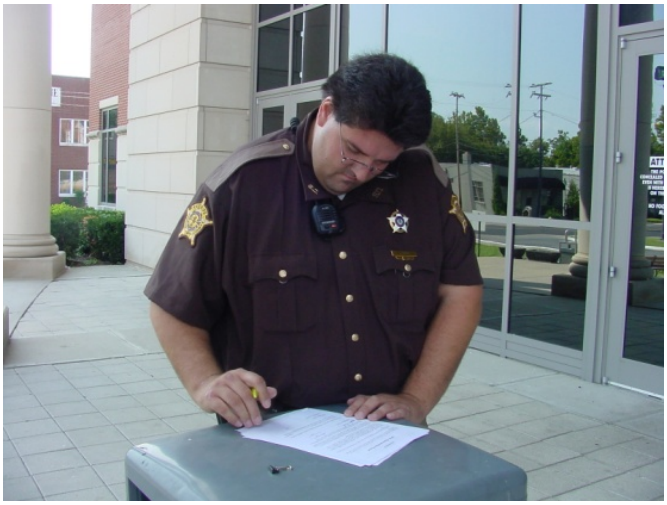
Program Successes- Trade Program

Lisa McKenzie worked at Autoliv in seat belt assembly for more than six years when the Madisonville plant closed and moved to Mexico. She went to the JobNet Career Center for assistance following a Rapid Response event held at the plant and decided to go back to school through the TAA program. In December 2011, Lisa graduated from Madisonville Community College with an associate of applied science degree in business administration.

Following graduation, due to a lack of work experience, she worked with the JobNet Career Center and completed an internship program. Through this program, she gained valuable work experience as a human resource clerk at Land O' Frost. Currently, Lisa is employed full-time at Knight & Sons Monuments Company and credits the WKWIB staff with helping her start her new life.

Program Successes- Dislocated Workers

Jonathan Good found a fresh start at the Breathitt Career Center after he was laid off from White Manufacturing after 13 years. After speaking with a friend in a similar situation, he visited the center and decided to resume college classes. He recently completed a two-year degree in criminal justice at Hopkinsville Community College, and is currently employed with the Christian County Sheriff's office.



NEG Grant

Natural Disasters

Kentucky received an $859,793 National Emergency Grant (NEG) to assist with cleanup and recovery efforts following severe storms that struck Kentucky Feb. 29 - March 3.

The funds, awarded to the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, were used to create 65 temporary jobs for eligible dislocated workers to assist in cleanup and recovery efforts. The counties of Bath, Campbell, Carroll, Grant, Grayson, Kenton, Johnson, LaRue, Lawrence, Laurel, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, Ohio, Pendleton, Rowan, Russell, Trimble and Wolf were offered assistance under this grant. Those counties, among others, were declared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on March 6 to be eligible for its Public Assistance Program.

NEG Grant

Natural Disasters

Kentucky received a $4,276,514 NEG to assist with cleanup and recovery efforts after severe storms, tornadoes and flooding struck Kentucky in April, 2011. The funds were used to create temporary jobs to assist in recovery efforts.

As a result of the severe storms, tornado and flooding, President Obama declared the Commonwealth of Kentucky a disaster area. On May 4, 2011, FEMA declared the following counties eligible for FEMA's Public Assistance Program: Anderson, Bath, Boone, Boyd, Bracken, Butler, Caldwell, Calloway, Campbell, Carroll, Carter, Clay, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Franklin, Fulton, Gallatin, Grant, Graves, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Henry, Kenton, Lawrence, Lee, Lewis, Logan, Lyon, Mason, Mercer, Monroe, Morgan, Nicholas, Oldham, Owen, Owsley, Pendleton, Robertson, Spencer, Todd, Trigg, Trimble, Union and Washington. All of the counties under the declaration received assistance under this grant.

Project Water

In the Paducah area, waterways, bridges and roads were flooded and damaged as rain and flood waters continued to rise forcing families and businesses to evacuate. Some of the funds received in the Purchase Area were used to implement Project Water, designed to help counties rebuild and cleanup areas that were hard hit by the disaster.

One Project Water worksite in Paducah is located at the McCracken County Road Department. Cleanup efforts have been underway since the summer of 2011 and have primarily focused on cleaning up debris on and around flooded roads and bridges. Project Water workers at McCracken County Road Department have stayed very busy working around and underneath flooded bridges.

They have also emptied literally thousands of sandbags used during the flooding. This freed up time for the road department crew to focus on other needed road work and related tasks in the county.

Three bridges in McCracken County have been significantly improved by Project Water workers. Bridges located on Downs, Womble and Childress roads have been cleaned around and underneath the bridge pilings.

NEG Grant (EKCEP Community Impact)
Kentucky received an $808,316 NEG to assist about 128 workers affected by multiple small layoffs at 77 companies throughout eastern Kentucky, providing them with the training and re-employment services crucial for finding new jobs in growing industries. These job losses have occurred in a variety of industries, including construction, mining, auto parts, computer/IT services, trucking, manufacturing, tax services, education, health, law, banking, retail and pharmacy.

This community impact grant was operated by the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. Community impact grant projects are designed to assist workers in a primarily rural workforce investment area where multiple small dislocations over a six-month period have a significant impact on the local unemployment rate.

NEG Grant (Bell and Knox Flooding)
Kentucky received a $291,440 NEG from the U.S. Department of Labor that created about 25 temporary jobs for eligible dislocated workers in Bell and Knox counties to assist with cleanup efforts as a result of the severe storms and flash flooding that struck Kentucky in June 2011. The money helped these counties rebuild and created temporary work for job seekers.

The NEG, awarded to the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, funded a variety of services, including temporary employment on projects to assist with cleanup, repair, renovation and reconstruction of roads and waterways damaged by the floods.

NEG Grant (Multiple Industries)
Kentucky received a $4,883,709 grant to assist about 1,000 workers affected by layoffs and closures at 21 companies in multiple industries, including three auto suppliers, located throughout Kentucky.

Awarded to the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, this grant is operated by the following agencies: Bluegrass Area Development District, Cumberland Workforce Investment Area (WIA), Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program Inc., KentuckianaWorks, Lincoln Trail WIA, Northern Kentucky Area Development District and TENCO WIA.

A number of the workers covered by this grant also were certified as eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance. Those eligible for TAA received "wrap-around" and supportive services such as dependent care and transportation assistance through the grant.

National Career Readiness Participant Honored

JoAnn Lewis thought she had found a job she could retire from when she began working at Verizon as a telephone operator in 1995. Fast forward 15 years and a recession later, JoAnn found the Verizon office in Lexington closing its doors, leaving her and co-workers facing a lay off in some of the toughest economic times since the great depression.

On March 27, 2010, JoAnn moved from a world of employment, making nearly $17 an hour with benefits, to one of the unemployed. While searching for a job during the next year, JoAnn worked with the WIA program on improving her job search and interviewing skills. She also took the WorkKeys test, but she did not qualify for training based on her scores.

While JoAnn continued her search, WIA was working on securing a NEG to assist clients who had been laid off and experienced long-term unemployment. In the spring of 2012, BGWIB was awarded an NEG grant. The clients who qualified were provided additional training. As part of those services, JoAnn was offered the WorkKeys test again, and after scoring higher on the test, qualified for additional training. JoAnn took classes at New Horizons Learning Center for Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint and received her certification in Word and Excel. Locating work continued to be difficult but she never gave up hope and continued to network.

On Aug. 15, 2011, JoAnn was recognized along with 33 other NEG clients at the National Career Readiness Certificate ceremony at the Lexington Career Center for scoring at least a four in all three categories on the assessment. During the presentation, JoAnn received fantastic news. She was offered a job with Centene as a customer service representative making $12.50 an hour plus benefits.

Kentucky Office of Employment and Training offers new employment assistance for veterans

Gold Card initiative provides post-9/11 era veterans with priority services

Nearly 6,000 veterans residing in Kentucky will be eligible to receive priority employment services through a new Gold Card initiative. The program is made available by the U.S. Department of Labor through Kentucky's Office of Employment and Training (OET). The Gold Card provides unemployed post-9/11 era veterans with job search services for up to six months to help them succeed in today's job market.

Post-9/11 veterans who were discharged or released for other than a dishonorable discharge may be eligible for intensive individual services which may include job readiness assessment; development of an individual career plan; career guidance; labor market and skills transferability information; referral to job openings and registered apprenticeship opportunities; information about training providers, information about financial assistance for training; and individual assistance of an employment specialist.

The 2011 national annual unemployment rate among veterans who have served since Sept. 11, 2001, is 12.1 percent or about 3 percent higher than the general population, according to the latest U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. As the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq end, the federal government is concerned that the number will rise.

“Giving post-9/11 veterans intensive one-on-one career assistance is just one way of saying thank you for your service to our country,” said Bill Riggs, deputy secretary for the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

“Military personnel are returning to a tough job market at the same time they are trying to transition from military to civilian life. They have the skills they need to be successful but we can help them in navigating the job search, utilize the new programs that are available to them and match them with the best employer,” Riggs said.

The Gold Card is one of several programs offered under the Veterans Opportunity to Work Act of 2001 (VOW), a patchwork of programs designed to help unemployed veterans find work. The bill includes tax credits for businesses that hire veterans and new regulations that will help members just leaving the service to secure employment before their End of Active Service (EAS) date.

Under the plan, employers get tax breaks of up to $9,600 per veteran, depending on how long the veteran has been out of work and whether he or she has a service connected disability.

A new online resource called MyNextMove.org is an easy-to-use tool that allows service members or veterans to type in their military occupational code and discover what civilian opportunities and occupations they might qualify for. It also provides information on career field salaries, apprenticeships and training programs.

The Veterans Job Bank search engine helps veterans find jobs with companies committed to hiring them. The site is live with about 500,000 "tagged jobs." The search capability was made possible by a cooperative effort among Google, Yahoo and Bing. The jobs bank is being supported by Monster.com, Military.com, Indeed, Simply Hired, and social networks such as Linked-In, Twitter and Branch-Out.

There also is new money for a transitional assistance program, and veterans can now apply for federal jobs before their EAS. It also extends the GI Bill by a year to veterans who want to attend technical school or community college to work in high-demand jobs, expands vocational rehabilitation assistance to disabled veterans and gets the Board of Labor involved in translating military skills into civilian certifications.

The federal initiatives complement current programs that support veterans throughout the Commonwealth. Last year, Gov. Steve Beshear signed legislation that gives hiring preference to military veterans applying for jobs in state government.

State Energy Sector

Energy creation and transmission was one of five state sectors that were identified as a growth area for the state based on detailed industry analysis. As outlined in the *WORKSmart Kentucky* strategic plan, two WIBs have been working on aligning the training necessary to provide skilled workers in the energy sector for local employers.

Cumberlands Workforce Investment Board

Smart Grid Technology and Building Performance Institute Energy Auditor/Rater Project

Cumberlands WIB has met the grant deliverable of training 300 individuals. There have been seven GIS/Smart Grid Software classes and three Smart Grid AMI Hardware Lineman classes completed to date.

The Smart Grid AMI Hardware class for lineman students are planned to begin in August 2012. Currently, the BPI Energy Auditor/Rater training is being evaluated to measure the success. Classes began in August 2012.

In addition, East Kentucky Power Corporation enrolled seven people for upcoming Smart Grid ArcGIS Desktop Mapping Software classes. Staff has been recruiting participants through the rural electric cooperatives, property valuation offices, city utilities, transportation officials, 9-1-1 communication centers, engineers and geologists for upcoming GIS/Smart Grid Mapping Software classes.

Three hundred individuals have participated in SESP training programs with 296 individuals having completed classes. There are 184 individuals who have completed the Smart Grid AMI Hardware trainings, 29 have finished the BPI Energy Auditor class and 83 have completed the GIS/Smart Grid AMI Software class. Thirty-four out of 296 from the classes are continuing to look for jobs. Nineteen of the 27 students completed Smart Grid Lineman training this summer.

West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (WKWIB)
Chemical Engineering Training/Journeyman Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters (Going Green Project)
LWIB monitoring visits were held with Hopkinsville Community College (HCC) and West Kentucky Community and Technical College (WKCTC) during June 2012 and there were no findings or corrective action from the visits. The energy coordinator met with both the contractors and local career center employees during the quarter to provide technical assistance in outreach and recruitment.

The energy coordinator also attended the “Best Green Energy Solutions” local conference, the KY Association of Manufacturing Energy conference in Louisville and the Kentucky Energy Workforce Development (KEWD) Consortium in Winchester.

An entrepreneurial coach was hired for the Purchase Region beginning May 1, 2012. The coach has been working with the “Project Going Green” facilitator at WKCTC to gather information on the training needs of the businesses they serve. He also has been talking with new and existing clients about their interest in going green and offering them more in-depth assistance on the process.

The entrepreneurial coach also attended the “Best Green Energy Solutions” conference at WKCTC. He is working on a manual that will highlight local, state and federal incentive programs and local utility providers. The manual also will include contact and reference information for each business/provider.

West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (WKWIB)
Chemical Engineering Technology
Journeyman Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters (Going Green Project)

The sub-grantees continue to work with local community partners and employers in building long-lasting relationships. Discussions related to the sustainability of both projects have been initiated. One of the many responsibilities of the entrepreneurial coach hired for the Purchase Region will include working with local community partners and employers to help build business in the region.

HCC enrolled nine clients for summer 2012. They will transfer to Austin Peay University (APU) to complete their associate’s degree in chemical engineering in the fall of 2013. Currently there are 12 clients enrolled at APU who will graduate in December 2012.

Outreach activities have increased and two additional information sessions were held in April 2012 to encourage Kentucky residents to enroll and complete the associate's degree in chemical engineering. WCTC has 285 participants that have completed training. They continue to serve clients by helping them obtain additional certificates to upgrade their skills. The number of incumbent workers employed after training was 176.

Four participants have successfully completed training and obtained jobs through the chemical engineering technology program. Twelve have transferred to APU to complete their training. Thirty-six clients have dropped out or changed their major, while 24 have retained or obtained employment.

The "Best Green Energy Solutions" conference on May 3, 2012, at WKCTC's Emerging Technology Center offered a hands-on learning experience for 60 industry leaders, administrators and educators. The conference gave them the opportunity to broaden their understanding of materials and processes leading to more energy efficient building products and home solutions.

REA Grants

Kentucky's Office of Employment and Training (OET) received two grants totaling approximately $1.2 million from the U.S. Department of Labor to implement the Re-employment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) initiative for Kentuckians receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits to help them find a job.

Kentucky is one of 42 states that received approximately $65 million in grants to implement or continue the REA initiative. According to recent evaluations of existing programs, the use of REAs expedites the re-employment of UI claimants.

"The re-employment of Kentuckians who are receiving UI benefits is a high priority for us," said Beth Brinly, commissioner of the Department of Workforce Investment in the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. "We have found that when we increase our efforts to assist UI claimants by using focused, individual services, the claimants find jobs quicker, they need fewer weeks of UI benefits and there are fewer erroneous payments. The REA initiative addresses these priorities and helps people get back into the labor force sooner."

The funds will be used to conduct in-person assessments of individuals receiving UI benefits at the state's one-stop career centers. Each assessment must include the development of a re-employment plan for the claimant; labor market information that is appropriate to the claimant's location and employment prospects; a complete review of the claimant's eligibility for UI benefits; and a referral to re-employment services and/or training that are outside of the UI program and delivered by the one-stop career centers.

OET is focusing attention and resources on better integrating and connecting unemployment compensation with employment and training services that are available through the state's one-stop career system. The goal is to ensure that these claimants have access to the full array of employment and training services as they comply with the state's requirement to actively engage in seeking work as a condition of receiving benefits.

Cost of Program Activities Relative to Program Outcomes

July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

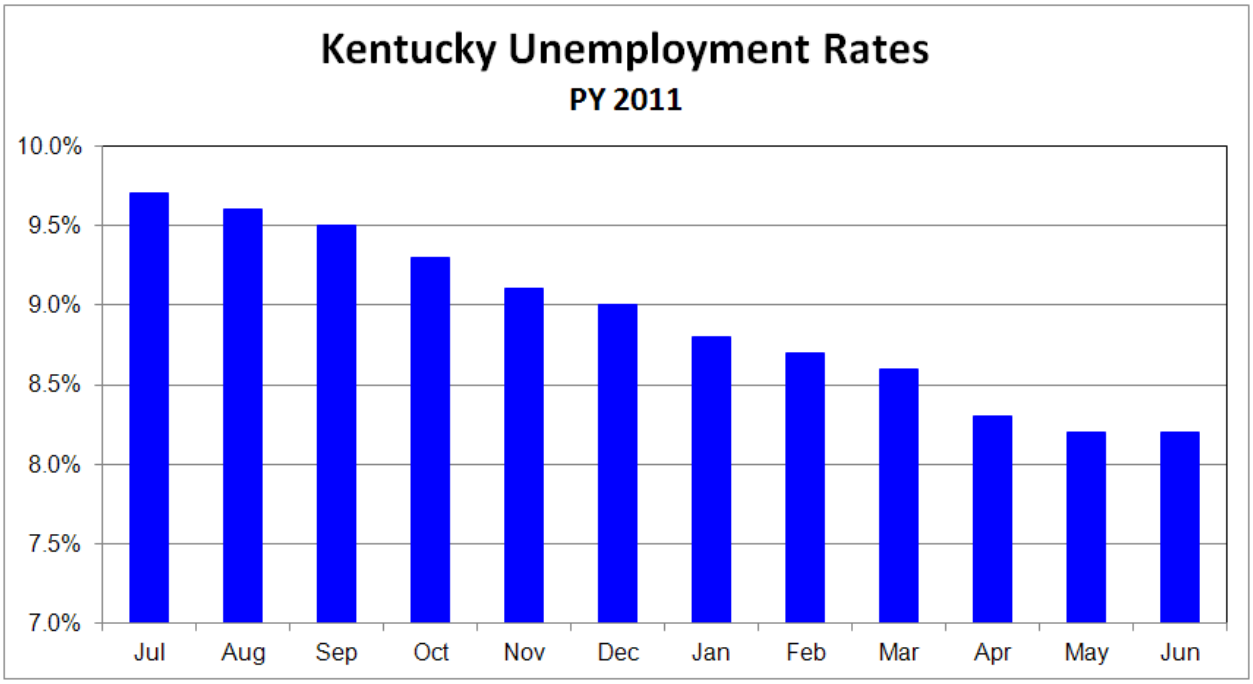
	PY 2011 Expenditures (Formula funds)	PY 2011 Customers Served	PY 2011 Exiters	PY 2011 Cost Per Customer Served	PY 2011 Cost Per Customer Exited
Adults	$10,087,170	4,338*	2,737	$2,325	$3,685
Dislocated Workers	$9,170,630	8,502	4,562	$1,079	$2,010
Youth	$10,571,460	4,098	2,263	$2,580	$4,671

**Does not include 250,377 Adult Self –Service Only*

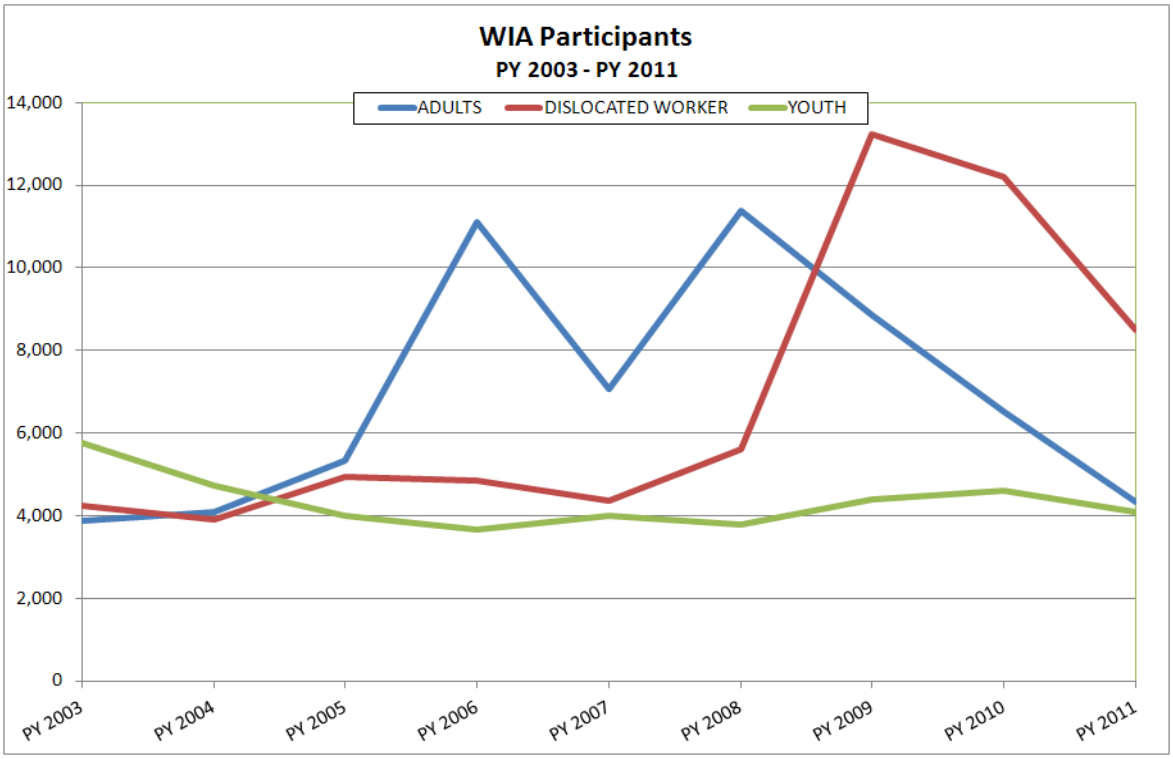
The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) has established priorities to deliver positive returns for the Commonwealth's employers and job seekers by investing in resources and expertise to build strong relationships with industries, business organizations, education and economic development. Additionally, KWIB is committed to investing time and training in staff, ensuring the proficiency and knowledge required to create a sustainable economy.

The recession is over, and now the Kentucky economy is in a recovery mode. Though the unemployment situation in Kentucky has improved considerably from a year ago, the improvement has been slower than in other states. In June 2011, Kentucky had the 12th highest unemployment rate among the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The number of people employed increased by 24,000 in PY 2010, and by 20,400 in PY 2011. Unemployment rates averaged 9.9 percent in PY 2010 and fell by a full percentage point to 8.9 percent in PY 2011. By June 2012, the unemployment rate was 8.2 percent compared to 9.6 percent a year earlier.



The number of dislocated workers has declined in response to the strengthening economy. The WIA participants chart illustrates the sharp decline in dislocated workers in PY 2011. The number of dislocated workers is still higher than the pre-recession level, but the number of adult participants has fallen to the PY 2007 level.



In PY 2011, Kentucky reported serving 8,502 dislocated workers compared to 12,197 dislocated workers in PY 2010. This is the second year for a decline from PY 2009 when 13,243 dislocated workers were served.

During PY 2011, Kentucky carried in more than $3.7 million in Dislocated Worker funds – in PY 2010 about $5.5 million was carried in. Total Dislocated Worker funds available in PY 2011 decreased by 25 percent compared to available funds in PY 2010. Training services continued for many of the dislocated workers in PY 2011 through National Emergency Grants (NEGs) received the previous year. These include the On-the-Job Training NEG, statewide Multi-Company NEG and the Eastern KY Community Impact NEG. Additionally, the Commonwealth provided employment opportunities through four different disaster NEGs. Dislocated workers were employed in storm and flood affected communities across the state to assist in cleanup efforts.

The number of dislocated workers that received training under the Trade Act totaled 1,594. Training expenditures for dislocated workers qualifying for services under the Trade Act totaled more than $9 million. Nearly $1.4 million was expended for Trade administration and case management.

As with the Dislocated Workers funds, the Rapid Response funds available in PY 2011 decreased from PY 2010. In PY 2010, Kentucky had available $10 million in Rapid Response funds – in PY 2011, only $6.8 million was available. Total Rapid Response funds available in PY 2011 decreased by 33 percent compared to available funds in PY 2010. The Commonwealth spent $4.4 million or 65 percent of funds available during PY 2011.

As the WIA participant chart above indicates, the number of adult participants enrolled in intensive and training services has declined over the past three years. From PY 2010 to PY 2011, Kentucky experienced a 33 percent decrease in the number of WIA adult enrollments. However, the number of adult customers seeking services (other than intensive and training) increased from 209,259 in PY 2010 to 263,124 in PY 2011, a significant increase in the demand for more core services. In PY 2010, Kentucky had available adult funds in excess of $17.7 million – in PY 2011, the adult fund availability decreased to $17.6 million.

Kentucky continues to provide exceptional services to low-income youth who face barriers to employment. As depicted in the WIA participant chart above, the number of WIA-enrolled youth participants has remained steady since PY 2003. The number of youth served decreased from 4,608 in PY 2010 to 4,098 in PY 2011. The number of youth who exited the program increased from 2,139 to 2,263. The number of youth participants decreased slightly as did the youth funding, however the expenditure rate for the past two years has remained about the same. Available youth funds in PY 2010 were $16,840,388 and $16,182,510 in PY 2011. PY 2010 carry-in funds totaled $4,682,749 and PY 2011 had $4,293,319.

Statewide Activity expenditures decreased significantly from more than $12 million in PY 2010 to $5.4 million in PY 2011 – a 56 percent decrease. Due to the recent congressional action to reduce the statewide reserve allocation to states from 15 percent to 5 percent, funding for Kentucky's statewide reserve projects has been significantly reduced. Projects funded through the statewide reserve allocation are anticipated to be finalized in PY 2012. Therefore, a decrease in expenditures is noted due to the planned completion of projects. As illustrated on the Financial Statement, Kentucky has a statewide reserve carry-forward balance into PY 2012 of $3,921,369.

Statewide projects include the following Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) initiatives:

- Workforce Development Academy,
- High Impact WIB,
- Rapid Response Redesign,
- Partners for Success,
- Branding Outreach-Phase I, and
- Industry Sector Partnerships.

Other statewide projects include:

- Kentucky Scholars Initiative,
- Kentucky Educational Television (KET) GED,
- Louisville Construction Pipeline initiative,
- Jobs for Kentucky Graduates (JKG) - a partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education,
- Kentucky Home Performance-Building Performance Institute (BPI) training for incumbent workers,
- Northern KY One Stop Staff Professional Development,
- Louisville Youth Sector Strategy,
- Bluegrass Sector Strategy Internships, and
- Local Workforce Investment Area performance incentive awards.

Kentucky's total WIA formula fund expended percentage rate for PY 2011 is 63 percent, down from 72 percent in PY 2010. The carry-in funds for PY 2012 are $23,350,593 compared to the carry-in funds in PY 2011 of $22,530,715 – a slight increase over last year. The Commonwealth and local workforce investment areas are committed to meeting the challenges ahead to turn the nation's economy around through innovative programs, providing the necessary and vital training services necessary to compete in the 21st century economy.

Other projects not included previously in this report

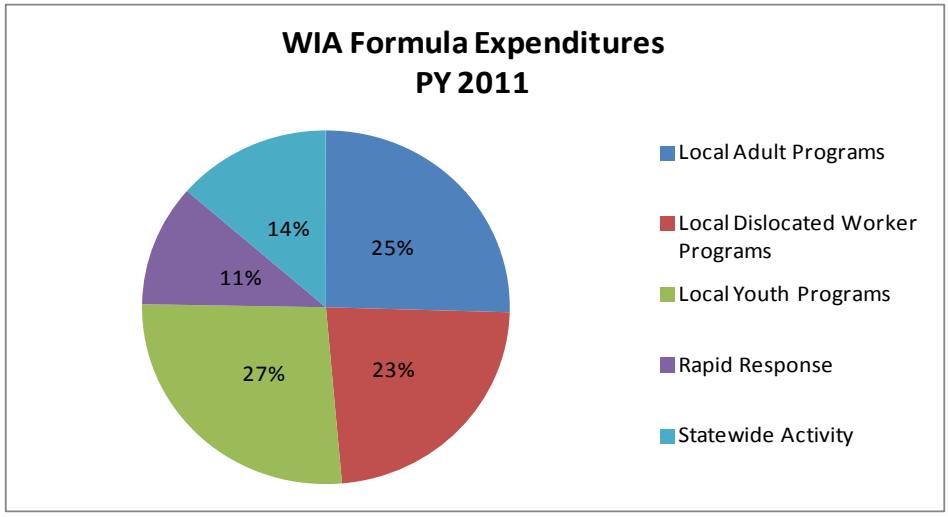
Project	Amount Awarded	Total Amount Expended
NEG – Base Realignment and Closure	$1,500,000	$642,895
NEG – ARRA – HCTC	$3,600,000	$2,968,151
ARRA-State Energy Sector Partnership	$4,740,457	$2,123,896
PY 2009 Performance Incentive-Title V	$964,785	$909,416
Career Pathways	$60,000	$52,586

WIA Financial Statement Program Year 2011-2012

Operating Results		Available		Expended	Percentage Expended		Balance Remaining
Total All Formula Fund Sources	**$**	**62,975,450.34**	**$**	**39,624,856.41**	**63%**	**$**	**23,350,593.93**
Current Year Funds	$	40,444,735.00	$	21,192,592.44	52%	$	19,252,142.56
Carry in Monies (Non-Additive) (1)	$	22,530,715.34	$	18,432,263.97	82%	$	4,098,451.37
Adult Program Funds	$	13,510,692.37	$	5,948,349.83	44.03%	$	7,562,342.54
Carry in Monies (Non-Additive)	$	4,152,012.62	$	4,138,820.54	99.68%	$	13,192.08
Dislocated Worker Program Funds	$	9,282,003.98	$	5,525,758.81	59.53%	$	3,756,245.17
Carry in Monies (Non-Additive)	$	3,745,100.94	$	3,644,870.74	97.32%	$	100,230.20
Youth Program Funds	$	11,889,190.15	$	6,287,502.91	52.88%	$	5,601,687.24
Carry in Monies (Non-Additive)	$	4,293,319.87	$	4,283,956.70	99.78%	$	9,363.17
Rapid Response Funds	$	3,740,611.75	$	1,638,506.80	43.80%	$	2,102,104.95
Carry in Monies (Non-Additive)	$	3,050,844.39	$	2,766,785.00	90.69%	$	284,059.39
Statewide Activity Funds	$	2,022,236.75	$	1,792,474.09	88.64%	$	229,762.66
Carry in Monies (Non-Additive)	$	7,289,437.52	$	3,597,830.99	49.36%	$	3,691,606.53

Cost Effectiveness		C/E Ratio
Overall, All Program Strategies	$	3,120
Adult Program	$	3,685
Dislocated Worker Program	$	2,010
Youth Program	$	4,671

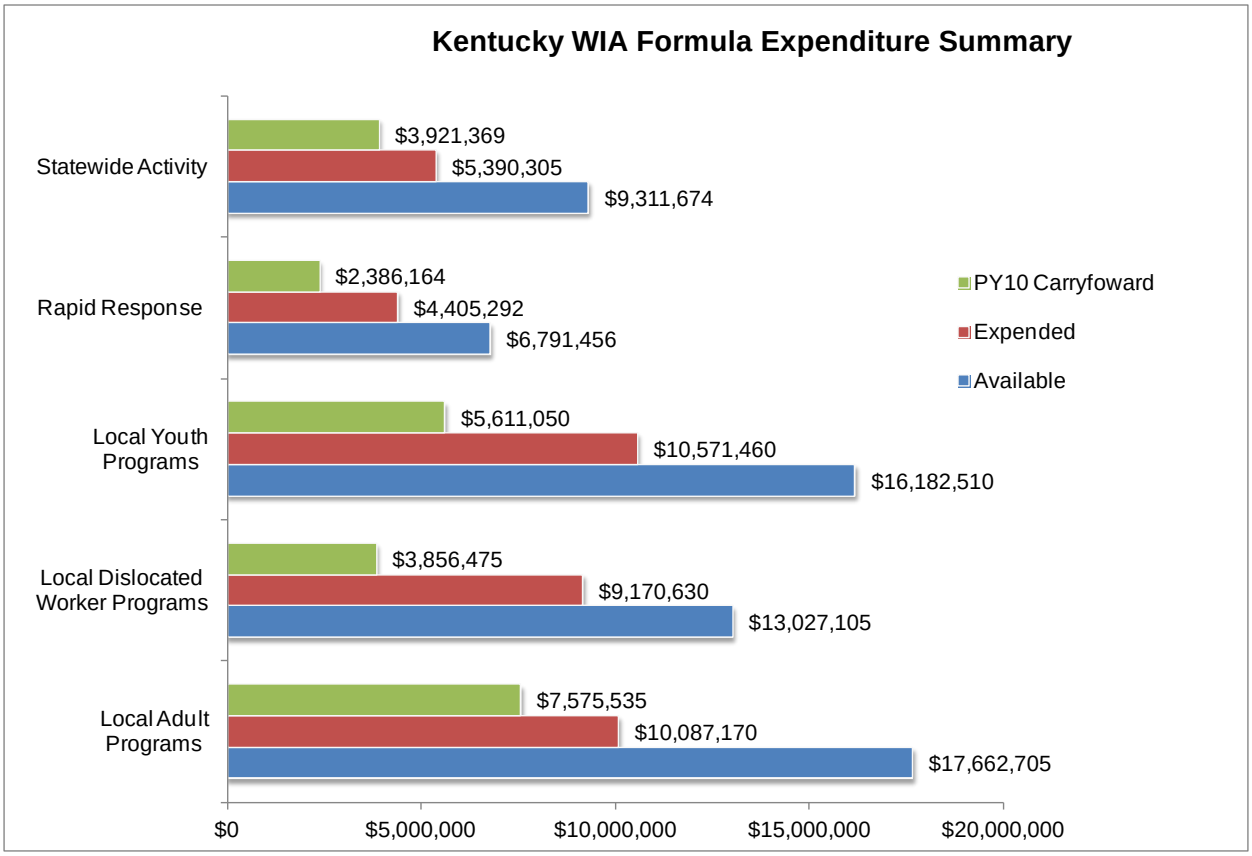
Period of Availability on Balance Remaining:		
Through June 30, 2013 (PY 2010 funds)	$	4,098,451.37
Through June 30, 2014 (PY 2011 funds)	$	19,252,142.56
Balance Remaining	**$**	**23,350,593.93**



During PY 2011, the Commonwealth of Kentucky spent $39,624,856.41 of WIA formula funds.

As represented in the chart, Statewide Activities constitute 14 percent ($5,390,305.08) of total expenditures.

Program Year 2011 WIA Formula Expenditures		
	Available	Expended
Local Adult Programs	$ 17,662,704.99	$ 10,087,170.37
Local Dislocated Worker Programs	$ 13,027,104.92	$ 9,170,629.55
Local Youth Programs	$ 16,182,510.02	$ 10,571,459.61
Rapid Response	$ 6,791,456.14	$ 4,405,291.80
Statewide Activity	$ 9,311,674.27	$ 5,390,305.08
Totals	$ 62,975,450.34	$ 39,624,856.41


Kentucky WIA Formula Expenditure Summary
Statewide Activity
$3,921,369
$5,390,305
$9,311,674
Rapid Response
$2,386,164
$4,405,292
$6,791,456
Local Youth Programs
$5,611,050
$10,571,460
$16,182,510
Local Dislocated Worker Programs
$3,856,475
$9,170,630
$13,027,105
Local Adult Programs
$7,575,535
$10,087,170
$17,662,705
PY10 Carryfoward
Expended
Available
$0
$5,000,000
$10,000,000
$15,000,000
$20,000,000

Measuring Success in Difficult Economic Conditions

WIA AND Wagner-Peyser PY 2011 Performance		
WIA	**PY 2011 Negotiated Rate**	**PY 2011 Actual**
Adult Measures		
Entered Employment Rate	83.5%	82.8%
Employment Retention Rate	86.0%	89.4%
Avg. Six Month Earnings	$11,200	$16,197
Dislocated Worker		
Entered Employment Rate	84.0%	86.4%
Employment Retention Rate	89.0%	91.3%
Avg. Six Month Earnings	$13,200	$17,764
Youth		
Placement in Employment or Education	65.0%	68.1%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	54.0%	68.6%
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	48.0%	63.1%
WAGNER-PEYSER		
Entered Employment Rate	60.0%	55.0%
Employment Retention Rate	75.0%	80.0%
Avg. Six Month Earnings	$11,400	$14,649

Kentucky's 10 Local Workforce Investment Areas PY 2011 Performance Results

Adult Measures	Exceeded	Met	Failed
Entered Employment Rate	5	5	0
Entered Retention Rate	8	2	0
Avg Six Month Earnings	9	1	0
Dislocated Worker			
Entered Employment Rate	10	0	0
Entered Retention Rate	8	2	0
Avg Six Month Earnings	10	0	0
Youth			
Placement in Employment or Education	9	0	1
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	9	0	1
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	7	2	1

KENTUCKY WAIVERS

The U.S. Department of Labor allows states to request waivers to general statutory and regulatory authority to affect program improvement. Additionally, waivers provide flexibility to states and local areas and enhance their ability to improve the statewide workforce system. The Commonwealth requested and received the following waivers:

Fund Transfer Authority.

Waiver allows local areas to transfer up to 50 percent of a program year allocation for adult employment and training activities and up to 50 percent of a program year allocation for dislocated worker employment and training activities between the two programs. The waiver provides local workforce investment boards the ability to better respond to changes in the economic environment and the local labor market. Resources are channeled to the population with the greatest need. The Transfer Authority waiver has empowered the local boards to be more responsive to the volatile economic climate.

Incumbent Worker Training-Utilizing Local and Rapid Response Funds.

Kentucky has two waivers to provide incumbent worker training beyond the available Statewide Reserve funds. These waivers allow up to 10 percent of local dislocated worker funding and up to 20 percent of rapid response funds to be expended on incumbent worker training activities. The waivers promote maximum investment of these funds as well as increased levels of service. Incumbent worker training provided with local or rapid response funds focus on employer and worker layoff aversion and competitiveness through skills upgrade training. In previous years, this waiver has enhanced the state's efforts toward job retention and rapid re-employment as well as providing new job prospects for presently employed individuals. However, in PY 2010 all Rapid Response funds were utilized to assist dislocated workers, providing training and case management.

With the increasing global competitiveness, it is imperative that businesses and industries have the most skilled and knowledgeable employees. With skill-upgrading, businesses may be able to remain viable and prevent layoffs and closures. Employers will have the human resources to remain competitive and, in some instances, expand. Upgrading the skills of incumbent workers allows them to quickly move into more specialized jobs within their industries, creating new job possibilities for the lower skilled workforce to enter.

Minimize the collection of participant data for incumbent worker training programs.

The waiver simplifies the process of serving businesses and incumbent workers and allows program outcomes to be captured without the burden of extensive collection of data not applicable to incumbent workers or incumbent worker training. Eliminating the requirement to capture information that does not impact program outcome, allows local areas to timely assist employers in averting layoffs and improving employer customer service.

Required 50 percent employer match for customized training.

The waiver eliminates the current 50 percent employer contribution requirement for customized training and substitutes a sliding-scale contribution based on size of employer. The waiver has afforded more customized training opportunities for smaller businesses or businesses with smaller training budgets. Specific goals to be achieved are to: 1) Improve the ability of the Commonwealth to respond to changes in employer and industry needs; 2) Increase employer/Board collaboration to address industry needs and worker training; 3) Allow the smaller employer to grow and expand; 4) Provide the employer with a trained workforce; and, 5) Provide greater flexibility in designing and implementing WIA programs.

Increase the employer reimbursement for on-the-job training (OJT)

The waiver allows for the reimbursement of up to 90 percent to employers with 50 or fewer employees and up to 75 percent of the costs for employers with 51-250 employees. Businesses with more than 250 employees are reimbursed at the 50 percent rate.

Employers, WIA customers and job seekers benefit through this waiver. As the economy improves and more employers are able to access OJT training, the participant becomes more valuable to present and future employers.

Replace the performance measures at WIA Section 136(b) with the common measures.

The waiver facilitates system integration and streamlines the reporting process across partner programs. It assists in achieving the goal of a fully integrated workforce system; provides clear and understandable information to stakeholders, improves service coordination and information sharing; simplifies and streamlines performance measurement system; assists in the realignment of youth program designs to better implement the Department of Labor's Youth Vision—targeting

out-of-school youth; and reduces labor intensive data collection. Outcomes include a more integrated case management system, improved customer service and operational effectiveness.

Utilize Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for Older Youth program participants.

The waiver has allowed continued flexibility in utilizing Youth funds to provide training services while retaining the limited Adult funds to be used for Adult training services. It has increased the efficiency and customer choice for older youth. The workforce system has a full array of services to offer older youth that can benefit them in decision-making processes, such as choosing a rewarding career, selecting a training provider and making smart financial decisions.

Extend the period of initial eligibility for training providers on Kentucky's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

The waiver has allowed training providers to offer continuous, uninterrupted service to WIA customers. WIA customers continue to have the ability to choose their training providers and access training services in their local areas with the highest degree of informed customer choice possible. The primary goal of this waiver is to ensure that the increasing numbers of adults and dislocated workers have a system that can offer training options ensuring maximum customer choice. The number of providers on the Eligible Training Provider List is over 900, allowing participants to choose the best possible program and provider to enhance skills and further their education and career goals.

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